

## Structure Requirements for Written Case Deliverables

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**Course:** BUS 302  
**Title:** *The Gateway Experience* (3 units)

“The skill of writing is to create a context in which other people can think.”  
---Edwin Schlossberg (1945-)

### Introduction

The purpose of this document is to enumerate the requirements for all written case assignments in this course, except as indicated differently by the instructor in class. Students will lose points for not following the instructions below. Some work deliverables have a wide degree of flexibility in structure (for example, in management or marketing contexts). However, many work deliverables have little or no flexibility in structure (for example, in accounting and law contexts).

If this document is unclear, please contact the instructor. Substantial deviation from this document requires prior approval from the instructor. (Note: The order of presentation in this document is the order the sections should appear in the written case reports.)

### Electronic Submission

Each written case must be submitted electronically via email to the instructor. The subject line of the email must begin with “[CSUN Bus302 <classnumber>]” where <classnumber> is the appropriate, 5-digit class # (without the chevrons). The rest of the subject line must contain both an abbreviation of the specific case (such as “Spa case”) and the team number (such as “Team 1”). The body of the email may contain a brief paragraph regarding the submission as necessary. The attachment to the email must consist of a single file and that file must be the same document that will be submitted in printed form. The file format is to be MS-Word (.doc). Users of Office 2007 or higher should convert their document to .doc format before submission. The electronic submission is to be received in the instructor’s Email InBox no later than 1 hour before the printed copy is to be submitted (that is, no later than 1 hour before the beginning of class). For cases other than NorthWestern State University, the email must also contain one additional attachment—a single Excel (.xls) workbook file containing the mathematical calculations used in the written case document. Users of Office 2007 or higher should convert their workbook file to .xls before submission. Strong teams incorporate these deliverable requirements into their planning structures.

### Print-based Submission

Each written case must be submitted in printed form. The printed version of the case is to be submitted immediately at the beginning of class. The beginning of class should be interpreted to mean no later than 1 minute after the class starts. Again, strong teams incorporate this deliverable requirement into their planning structures.

## **Document Binding**

Each written case report must be submitted as a single unit. There should be a single staple in the upper-left hand corner of the document. In addition to the staple, teams may elect to use a binder clip (9/16" or 3/4" in size) in the upper-left hand corner of the document.

## **Cover Page**

Each written case report must have a cover page. There is no single "one" format for this page; in fact, some teams may choose a more professional format and some teams may choose a more creative format. Either is acceptable, as long as the following information is clearly identifiable—team number (and team name, if applicable), all of the team members (with the last name underlined), class # (or day/time identification), case name, and due date. The cover page must not have a page number.

## **Cover Letter**

Each written case report must have a cover letter. The cover letter is written in general memorandum format. The "Date:" is due date. The "To:" will usually be identified in the case. The "From" will be your team number. The "Subject:" is the name of the case. The cover letter should consist of a single paragraph that indicates the general nature of the case (two sentence summary) and what you did to analyze the case (again, a two-sentence summary—for example, "our team consisted of professionals with complementary backgrounds," or "we analyzed the facts and issues of the case, including potential strategy and ethical implications." The cover letter should end with an expression of gratitude, such as "It was our pleasure to work with your firm on this case; please do not hesitate to contact us if you require more information." There is no single "one" format for this page. The cover letter is similar to a "transmittal letter" as taught in traditional business communications courses. The cover letter must not exceed one page. The cover letter must not have a page number.

## **Table of Contents**

Each written case report must have a table of contents. Every section of the team report, including the including the table of contents itself (but not the cover page and not the cover letter), should be included in the table of contents. It is likely that the "main body" section of the report will probably have three or more sub-sections and these too should be in the table of contents (appropriately indented). Each section should be numbered, and the section numbers in the report may use either Arabic numbers or Roman numerals. The page numbers must use Arabic numbers, not Roman numerals, for all page numbers,

including for the table of contents. The table of contents must use standard “dot leaders” to connect the section name with the section page number. The table of contents must not exceed one page. The table of contents must be page 1.

## **Executive Summary**

Each written case report must have one and only one executive summary page. This page must have either two or three paragraphs. In the three paragraph format, the first paragraph is a brief summary of the material issues in the case, the second paragraph is a brief summary of the kinds of analyses your team performed, and the third paragraph is a brief summary of the recommendations. In the two paragraph format, the issues and the analyses are combined into a single paragraph and the recommendations are in a single paragraph. The executive summary must not exceed one page. The executive summary page must have a page number.

## **Main Body**

The main body is the central part of the document. There is no single “best” structure for the body of the business report. In general, the narrative begins with facts and issues and ends with findings and conclusions. Along the way, individual questions are raised and analyzed. If specific questions are explicitly handed out in class, please make sure these questions are clearly identified and addressed. Use sub-section headings to delineate specific parts of the report. The “main body” usually contains at least one table and at least one figure, chart, graph, or diagram; however, the specific requirements for each case differ slightly (and are available to the student under separate cover). Often, the table is a summary of accounting or statistical data and the figure is an exploratory distribution that precedes a formal statistical test. In addition, the main body must contain at least one reference to the case itself in the textbook and one reference to each item in the “library” in the textbook. The “main body” section must be no less than ten pages and no more than twenty pages. Each page in the “main body” section must have a page number.

## **Strategic Considerations**

Each written case report must have a “strategic considerations” section. This section focuses on issues that may alter the vision, mission, objectives, or goals of the organization, are inherently long-term, have far-reaching impacts, or may impact other parts of the organization, industry, or market. This section must be organized around one or more the major frameworks in the textbook section on “Planning and Strategy” (e.g., “Porter’s five forces,” “generic strategies”) or the model presented in the “Strategic Thinking” paper. You may also use ideas from other lower-division or upper-division courses. The “strategic considerations” section is to be no less than two full pages and no more than three full pages. Each page in the “strategic considerations” section must have a page number.

## **Ethical Considerations**

Each written case report must have an “ethical considerations” section. This section focuses on the values and decisions that may impact other parts of the organization, industry, or market. This section usually begins with an identification and enumeration of all of the direct and indirect stakeholders. This section must be organized around one or more the major frameworks (e.g., “Tucker’s Five Questions”, “Pastin’s Approach”) in the textbook section on “Ethics.” Strong teams will address all of the ethical theories (e.g., “categorical imperative,” “rights theory”) in this section. You may also use the “Summary of Steps for an Ethical Decision” approach delineated in the textbook. Your primary sources for this section are the two sections on “Ethics” in the textbook; your secondary source of materials is the “Ethics” section (presentation) in the coursepack. You may also use ideas from other lower-division courses, such as philosophy or humanities. The “ethical considerations” section is to be no less than two full pages and no more than three full pages. Each page in the “ethical considerations” section must have a page number.

## **Recommendations**

Each written case report must have a “recommendations” section. The “recommendations” section is to be no less than one full page and no more than two full pages. Each page in the “recommendations” section must have a page number.

## **References (“Works Cited”)**

Each written case report must have one and only one reference page. The reference page is also sometimes called a “Works Cited” page. Use the APA style guide for formatting requirements. There must be at least one reference; the one required reference is to the case in the textbook. There may be more than one reference, for example, if the case report refers to material in the associated Case Library or a Lower-Division Core textbook. The reference page must have a page number.

## **Appendices**

Each written case report may have one or more appendices. There is no single “one” format for any appendix. There is neither a minimum nor a maximum number of pages for the appendix. Each page in each appendix must have a page number.

## Structural “Flow”

### “Front Matter”

Cover Page

Cover Letter

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

### “Main Body”

Facts And Issues

Address Questions

Strategic Considerations

Ethical Considerations

Recommendations

### “Back Matter”

References

Appendices  
(may not be needed)