GUIDE TO WRITING THE SEMESTER PAPER/PROJECT

(Graduate Students)

Introduction
Graduate students are required to complete everything required of undergraduates plus prepare and submit a graduate project report. This report will be 15 – 20 pages in length on an approved topic that typically involves the application and integration of the topics covered in the course to a particular organization. There is an option for up to three students to form a project team (individual contribution must be clearly defined and prepare a report on their approved topic. The proposal for the semester paper/project must be formally submitted by 3 April 2006. However, it would be prudent to share your ideas with the Instructor before this date to make sure that you are complying with the intent of this course requirement.

This Guide will outline your responsibility for this report and provide you with information on how it should be prepared. It supplements the information in the Course Responsibility section.

Semester Paper
The semester paper should help you integrate the various topics that are covered in the course so that you can help a “virtual” business or city department define its path to sustainable development. It will be like a management consultant’s report to the “virtual” entity that presents them with a complete picture of what they need to do in order to move down that path to sustainable development. Partnerships with local companies, institutions, organizations and individual citizens will be part of this effort.

The following businesses or organizations are considered to be acceptable to the Instructor:

• Dry cleaning business
• Nail salon
• Hotel
• Restaurant
• Supermarket/Grocery Store
• A vehicle fueling operation with biodiesel
• A school
• Drinking water treatment facility
• Sewage treatment facility.
Once you select your organization, the Instructor can send you information to get started. If you would prefer to work on another type of operation, please send the Instructor an e-mail in early March as the latest. He will help you gather the information and narrow the topic for the semester report.

You paper should open with an introduction to the operation that you have chosen to present. Next you should address each of the topics covered in the course and tell how the operation could realistically use the information to move down the path to sustainable development. Finally you need to present a series of recommendations that are clearly stated and practical from the point of view of the case discussions on the course discussion board. Your recommendations must be supported by references and web site citations using the APA citation guide. You are required to submit a formal prospectus and outline to the Instructor by 3 April 2006. This requirement is described below. More information about the preparation and format of the report is provided in sections below.

**Semester Project**

*In lieu of* preparing a semester paper, you can work on a semester project. There are two types of semester projects that will be considered acceptable by the Instructor:

1. A critical examination of how your own company or local government is moving down the path to sustainability as portrayed in this course. You will cover each topic covered in the course and show how the organization could improve its movement down the path by better integrating the topic areas and incorporating the activities into its core operating philosophy.
2. A project involving yourself (individually) and/or as many as three students that examines some elements of the case for another type of local business or local government operation.

Once you have an idea for a semester project, you should contact the Instructor by e-mail and get some guidance on how you should proceed. Even having had this contact, you are still responsible for submitting the prospectus for the project as described in the next section. More information about the preparation and format of the report is provided in sections below.

**Prospectus for the Paper/Project**

If you plan to prepare a semester paper on one of the approved topics, you should still submit a 1-page prospectus outlining the topic and how you expect to cover that topic along with a 1-page proposed outline of the paper. If you wish to select an operation that is not on the list, you should exchange e-mails with the Instructor in early March to determine if the Instructor will accept the topic and be in a position to provide you with some information on that operation. You will need to still submit a 1-page prospectus outlining the topic and how you expect to cover that topic along with a 1-page proposed outline of the paper. This prospectus must be submitted no later than 3 April 2006.
In order to obtain permission of the Instructor to submit a semester project, you must prepare a 1-page prospectus/proposal describing the nature of your proposed project and submit it to the instructor with a 1-page proposed outline of the paper no later than 3 April 2006 when you return from the Spring Break. You should send an e-mail to the Instructor in early March to explore the idea to make sure it will be considered to be acceptable and to get any assistance the Instructor may offer.

**Semester Paper/Project Specifications**
As a graduate student, your paper or project report should not be longer than 20 pages (not including references, figures and tables) using the following specifications:

- **Single spaced**, paragraph justified to left, double space between paragraphs
- Font size #12 (Times New Roman)
- 1 inch (2.5 cm) margins
- All citations use the APA format
- Spelling, grammar and appearance are important and will be taken into consideration when grading the report.

The semester paper or project report, if clear and concise, will merit a “B” for a grade. We expect that you will include additional readings (with properly cited references – see the reference guide) and pertinent web sites. You will have to make an extra effort for an “A.” This may involve posing an original idea, some further research on the topic or other aspects that indicate a truly exceptional effort.

**DO NOT PUT OFF THE WORK ON THIS PAPER OR PROJECT REPORT UNTIL THE END OF THE SEMESTER!** You should start writing as you are preparing for the mid-term examination in April. **No extensions of time will be granted for completing the papers at the end of the semester. The semester report/project paper is due on 8 May 2006.**

**Writing Standards**
Your papers must have a clearly defined focus. Your writing must be coherent and have a consistent focus on how the subject can use the information presented in the narratives to move down the path to sustainable development. You must provide specific evidence, details and examples from the narrative, independent research and the discussion board to support your points. Your paper must have a clear and logical structural plan for the development of the recommendations. The level of English language proficiency must be at or above a standard acceptable for college-level work in the United States. Please make sure that you respond to the components mentioned in the outlines presented in this Guide.

Students taking this course have access to the Harvard Extension School Writing Center to help you with your writing. You can learn more about the Writing Center on their web page - [http://www.extension.harvard.edu/2005-06/resources/writing.jsp](http://www.extension.harvard.edu/2005-06/resources/writing.jsp) There is a good on-line guide to “Common Problems in Grammar, Punctuation, and Usage” in a Harvard
Grading Policy

Grades reflect the quality and quantity of a student's work submitted throughout the term according to the standards listed below. The following grades will be assigned to the students:

- **A** and **A-** represent work whose superior quality indicates a full mastery of the subject, and, in the case of A, work of extraordinary distinction. There is no grade of A+.
- **B+, B, and B-** grades represent work of good to very good quality but which does not merit special distinction.
- **C+, C, and C-** designate an average command of the course material.
- **D+, D, and D-** grades indicate work that shows a deficiency in knowledge of the material.
- **E** is a failing grade representing work that deserves no credit.

The grade of “B” represents the benchmark for the Harvard Extension School. It indicates that the student has demonstrated competency in the subject matter of this course; i.e., has fulfilled all the course requirements on time, has a clear grasp of the full range of course materials and concepts, and is able to present and apply these materials and concepts in clear, well-reasoned, well-organized, and grammatically correct responses.

Only students who fully meet this standard and, in addition, demonstrate exceptional comprehension, integration and application of the course concepts can earn a grade of “A.”

Academic Honesty

Due in part to the ease with which students may download material from the Internet, the Harvard Extension School has seen a disheartening number of plagiarism cases referred to its Administrative Board for review. Despite written warnings from the Dean of Student each year and postings in the course responsibilities sections, we are concerned that students are not fully aware of the consequences of presenting someone else’s work as their own, whether they download material from the Internet, copy passages from a book, or collaborate on writing the paper – each without proper acknowledgement of the source(s).

The responsibility for learning the rules governing the proper use of sources lies with the individual student. In registering for this course, students agree to abide by the policies printed in the Harvard Extension School catalogue, which contains brief descriptions of plagiarism, cheating, and computer network abuse. The teaching staff in this course recommends that you become familiar with the Harvard Guide – *Writing with Sources*. It has been prepared by the Harvard Expository Writing Program. This document is available online at [http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~expos/sources](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~expos/sources). We suggest that you
either bookmark this site for your frequent use or you print out a copy of this valuable guide and use it whenever you post to the discussion board.

Students found guilty of academic dishonesty by the Administrative Board face a range of sanctions, including probation, required withdrawal from a course, suspension form the Extension School for one or more terms, and required withdrawal from an Extension School degree or certificate program. It is just not worth it to violate this policy! Contact any member of the teaching staff if you have questions on how to properly cite materials on the course bulletin board.

**Citing Sources on the Discussion Board**

It is expected that you will use external sources in your discussions. There are many ways of citing resources; however, we expect you to use the following format to facilitate the posting of your material to the discussion board. The information provided is based upon the Gordon Harvey’s “Writing with Sources: A Guide for Harvard Students.” You can find this document located at [http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~expos/sources/](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~expos/sources/). If you are unfamiliar with using references, we highly recommend that you go to this website and read or browse the full guide as it contains many useful examples and easy to follow descriptions.

**Basic Principles Behind Using A Source:**

1. Sources should be used as concisely as possible and only to support your own ideas or thoughts.
2. It is critical that your reader can distinguish between your thoughts and the material from a source.
3. Your source(s) must be clearly related to your discussion.

**When to Cite:**

1. When you use information or an idea that is not your own in the form of a quote, a summary or a paraphrase.
2. You present factual information you have found in a source.
3. When ever you use a direct quote.
4. Whenever you summarize, paraphrase, or otherwise use any ideas or thoughts that have been arrived at by another person.
5. Whenever you mention another person’s work that isn’t common knowledge.
6. If you are in doubt whether or not you should cite a reference, cite it.

**When Not to Cite:**

1. When dealing with common knowledge, i.e. the knowledge is available from numerous sources and doesn’t reflect an individual’s interpretation (i.e. dates, distances, common phrases, etc.)
2. When referring to ideas that have grown out of a conversation either with a friend, teaching assistant or professor (unless you are taking credit for their ideas without the addition of any of your own thoughts).

**Using A Quote:**

1. Quote only what you need to make your point.
2. Your paragraph or sentence should flow smoothly around the quote.
3. Carefully announce the upcoming quote in the proceeding sentence.
4. Punctuation is important in a quote.
   a. Commas should only be placed before quotes if grammatically required.
   b. The quote should be contained within quotation marks.
   c. A period or comma following the quote should be contained within the quotation marks.

If you quote more than five lines, you should indent the passage and the proceeding line should be written so that it ends with a colon mark. The sentence following the quotation text block should explain your rationale for including the text.

In this course, you will be expected to use the American Psychological Association (APA) Guide for all of your citations. If you are a candidate for the ALM Degree in Environmental Management or have plans to get your ALM degree, you will need to prepare a thesis using the APA Guide. All the other courses in the Environmental Management program at the Harvard Extension School are requiring that you use the APA Guide for reference citations (or will soon be requiring this). A handy reference for you to use is the *Pocket Guide to APA Style* by Robert Perrin (Houghton Mifflin Company 2004). This is a required textbook in the Proseminar (ENVR E-200) course. A number of web sites also provide information on citing sources with the APA Style:

- APA Style Essentials
- Researching and Documenting Sources
  [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/index.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/index.html)

**Information on the Environmental Libraries at Harvard**

If you are a candidate in the ALM in Environmental Management program, you have borrowing privileges at the Harvard University libraries. If you are not a candidate in this program, you can pay a fee to gain use of the Harvard University libraries. Many of their services are available on-line. Harvard has one of the largest private library holdings in the world. It is a great resource for research projects. Descriptions of what is available in the environmental and science areas can be found at the following sites:

- [http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/#eic](http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/#eic)
- [http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/#cabot](http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/#cabot)

The Hollis Catalogue is available on-line at:

- [http://lms01.harvard.edu/F/1NKJ24J7DRDRRA2HGUMG2XJKS82AYVDP55QG7P34XBCYDN9VMB-72741?func=find-b-0&local_base=pub](http://lms01.harvard.edu/F/1NKJ24J7DRDRRA2HGUMG2XJKS82AYVDP55QG7P34XBCYDN9VMB-72741?func=find-b-0&local_base=pub)