

INFO 203, Spring 2012, Assignment 2:

How to decode your score:

You could score a maximum of 10 points for part I. These were the criteria (which were specified on the assignment sheet and are the same as assignment 1):

- 1 - fully answering all aspects of the question (3 points)
- 2 - understanding of course readings and concepts (based on how you reference them in your essays) (3 points)
- 3 - the logic of your claims (2 points)
- 4 - your extension of concepts and arguments from course readings to new situations/topics (2 points)

You could score a maximum of 5 points for part 2.

We were looking for (1) a clearly described topic area (2) a specific problem or problems you are engaging with (3) a justification for why this problem is important (4) a bibliography (5) bibliographic references that include a mixture of course readings and readings you found yourself

A 15 is once again a 100% and an A+. **Overall, the scores shifted upward and many students improved on the second assignment.**

12 - 15.5 (A range)

8.5 - 11.9999 (B range)

Below 8.5 = needs improvement

Administrative issues:

- **Bibliography - citations need to be formatted in some consistent way.** There are lots of options for formatting a bibliography and we don't really care which one you use (ALA, APA, MLA, Chicago Style, etc....whichever!) but you should have **some** format. ***A list of URLs is not a bibliography.*** A lazy Google search that produces a list of URLs referring to non-academic references, Wikipedia pages, news articles is not going to cut it for your final paper! In general a citation should include: author name, article/book title, year of publication, publisher and city of publication (for books), volume and/or issue (for journal articles) and page numbers (for journal articles, book chapters).

General Feedback on Assignment 2:

Read the questions carefully and answer them completely. This continued to be an issue (though much less than it was for assignment 1). Some students forget that part 1 had a single overarching question to be answered in two parts. For some the second part (about work roles and values) was answered in a way that was disconnected from the larger question "is the paperless office now possible?" A few people entirely forgot to explicitly and clearly answer this larger question!

Logic and argument – the question was to consider the **possibility** of a paperless office. It is too obvious to state that we have not **achieved** a paperless office and that was not the question you were asked to answer. Smart answers to this question did not go to either extreme of answering simply yes or not, but specified *under what conditions* or *in what ways* the paperless office was or was not possible.

Lack of extension – some people answered the question "is the paperless office now possible" with a 'no' and then referenced some problems of going paperless that were mentioned in our book The Myth of the Paperless Office. For example, some mentioned the need for spatial arrangement of documents or shared visibility for collaboration. However, without noting any of the changes in technology over the past 10 years such an answer did little more than summarize and restate arguments from the book and failed to show any *extension* of course concepts.

Missing elements - in some cases there was no reference to the paper diary on your own work practices or a diary entry was attached without any reference to it in the answers to part 1 questions.

Final paper topic and references:

- Check any tendency you might have to take personal experience as a factual starting point for making an argument. Personal experience might inspire some interesting questions and good reflection, but it is important to keep in mind that your own experience may be quite different from that of others or from what is typical. In other words, they do not *prove* much of anything.

- There are still some final paper topics that are too broad. Some are really two or more paper topics rolled together into one. We didn't dock points for this, but it is noted on your part II if we noticed this problem.
- Some final paper topics still do not seem clearly connected to 203 concepts and issues. If you got this note and are not sure what to do, please come talk to us!
- For some final paper topics, students did little more than summarize a set of readings. Please consider what argument you can make about your topic. What angle will you take on the topic, i.e. what theories or concepts from class might you bring to bear on the issue that will give you a unique view on it that is different from the already published accounts?

Cited references for Part II (your bibliography):

- **Too general** – you reference to readings should be as specific as possible to your research topic. Your research topic should also be properly scoped so you are able to make strong claims and engage deeply enough in your analysis and argument. You could include course readings in your bibliography, but too many course readings probably meant a too general bibliography.
- **Not academic** – A list of news articles on the topic also won't suffice. **If a news article cites a research report you need to go and locate the research report and cite *that*.** Wikipedia entries are possibly a good starting point for your topic but are not a sufficiently scholarly reference. You might start with a Wikipedia entry get a feel for your topic but you should then follow up with the listed citations on the Wikipedia page.

Some specific issues with readings:

- ***Affordances* from *The Myth of the Paperless Office*** – some of the reflection on tools and how easily they afford certain activities was very non-specific. What specifically about the properties of paper make certain activities “easier?” Simply stating that one tool is easier to use for an activity than another is *not* a very convincing or precise claim – what specifically makes it easier? The notion of affordances requires that you go deeper into the mechanics of work; to examine how work activities are connected to particular tools. This should lead you to think about issues such as: the indirectness of the mouse and keyboard in relation to the screen vs. touch screens, the spatial constraints of a laptop screen (vs. a large desktop monitor).
- ***'Resistance to change' as a work value?*** The argument of the Novek piece on a drug distribution system was NOT that resistance to change among nurses was a kind of work value in and of itself. The argument was that nurses see autonomy over their time as necessary to their **role** and caring

and attentiveness to others as a particular **value** of nursing as a profession. They perceive the drug distribution system to be at odds with these aspects of their role and professional values. Furthermore, the Novek reading did not give us any reason to second-guess nurses own understanding of their work roles which a few students tried to argue in answering this question.