

# ENGR 125CS

Midterm Essay Assignment

Monday 2 October 2006

Draft (BRING *TWO COPIES* TO CLASS) for peer review: **Monday 16 October 2006**

Final paper due: **Wednesday 18 October 2006 at the start of class**

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Consider the construction of a skyscraper. We have examined several high-level issues for skyscrapers, such as structural engineering, architecture, civic pride, safety, efficiency, funding, etc.

We have also observed that at least four major groups are involved in a skyscraper construction project:

- Development group (financing)
- Architecture group
- Engineering group
- Construction group

Based on the lecture topics, reading assignments, and video presentations considered in this class, write a 3-4 page essay that addresses the skyscraper construction process in terms of the interactions among the four major stakeholders. Please write your essay assuming that the audience is one of your peers: an undergraduate college student at MSU.

Your essay must include a clear thesis statement, such as:

"In the building of a skyscraper, the four project groups (development, architecture, engineering, and construction) play important roles, and each group has justifiable reasons for feeling 'ownership' of the building."

or

"One of the biggest challenges in building a skyscraper is that four project groups play important roles, feel ownership for the project, and must collaborate for a successful project."

or

"In the building of a skyscraper, the four major project groups involved use {different} (or) {similar} processes to get their part of the work done."

or a similar, related thesis statement of your own choosing.

Depending upon your choice of thesis statement, you might want to organize your thoughts in a structured manner, such as:

1. Summarize the responsibility of each group, how the groups must interact with each other, and the implications of having distributed authority.
2. Analyze whether each group follows a *scientific* process, an *engineering* process, or some other strategy to get its part of the job done. Explain and defend your reasoning using examples.
3. Describe the ways in which each group might justifiably feel "ownership" of the building once the project is done.
4. Consider how a large project must be coordinated and managed in order to keep each group engaged and productive.

The essay needs to follow a standard format:

- Your name, date, and "ENGR 125 Midterm Essay" at the top of the first page.
- Introductory paragraph – expresses the thesis statement, your interpretation in terms of the skyscraper construction project, and the concise set of points you will cover in the rest of the essay.
- Supporting paragraphs – plan 4-8 paragraphs that contain the examples and commentary you use to support your points. Each paragraph must include a topic sentence and be self-contained to the extent possible.
- Concluding paragraph – a short, final paragraph to summarize your ideas and theme.

Your essays are to be prepared using a word processor and good quality printer. Use double-spaced lines with margins of one inch on each edge of the sheet.

Remember, in ENGR 125 there are NO LATE SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED. If you know you will be missing class on 10/16 for the peer review session or on 10/18 for the final paper submission, please make arrangements in advance by email contact with the instructor.

### **Grading**

I will grade each essay using a holistic method: the overall quality of the written material, including the strength and validity of your claims, the clear organization of each paragraph, and the mechanical/grammatical integrity. The grading scale will be as follows:

3 = top score. The essay not only has a viable thesis statement, but also clearly addresses the thesis statement. The arguments presented are well thought-out and creatively presented. Carefully chosen, *concrete* examples are used to support all statements and claims. The organization of the essay complements the thesis statement and makes effective use of transitions. The writing style is appropriate for a college paper, is suited to the designated audience, and is noted for excellent spelling and grammar.

2 = acceptable score. The essay is judged adequate, but with one or more shortcomings in content, organization, or appropriateness for the audience. Spelling and grammar are excellent, and at least some aspect of the essay can be considered outstanding. A paper in the '2' category might include a somewhat weak argument, incompletely formulated examples, or seem to underestimate the intelligence of the audience.

1 = poor score. A score of '1' indicates that the essay is below expectations in most areas (content, responsiveness to the thesis statement, organization, appropriateness for the audience, spelling, grammar). An essay in the 'poor' category will have fundamental flaws in organization, content, and/or writing mechanics.