MEMORANDUM

TO: Susan Jones, BUS 3700 Student
FROM: Jo Wiley, Master Faculty Specialist
SUBJECT: Development of Basic Memos
DATE: XXXX XX, XXXX

This memorandum contains information essential to the proper layout, development and writing of basic memos.

Notice the word “memorandum” centered at the top of the page. Because memos are used for internal communications, company letterhead is generally not used. Instead, businesses often create their own memo template. Always follow your company’s established template or layout. The following is the required layout for memos written in this class.

· Center, capitalize and bold the word memorandum at the top of the page.
· Capitalize and bold the headings (to, from, subject, & date) and follow them with a :.
· Set a tab at 1” and tab to it after each heading before entering the information relative to each heading (so that heading information lines up when printed).
· After printing, sign your initials following your name in the “from” line.
· Double space after the date line before beginning the body of your memo.
· Single space within paragraphs and double space between them.
· Unless you are using a bulleted list, use a block format so that all lines begin flush with the left margin.

Be sure you pay close attention to the development of your subject line. The subject line must be accurate and provide enough information to engage the reader. It must also accurately represent the subject, content, and focus of the memo and also aid in the filing and retrieval of it. Consider the difference between the following subject lines:

Expense Accounts
Submitting Expense Accounts

Basic memos address only one subject, and adequate development is crucial to a memo’s clarity. Even though you are communicating with co-workers, you must never assume that your reader will know what you are talking about. You must provide enough information in the opening of the memo to familiarize your reader with the purpose (transmit information, initiate action, comment on or interpret an action taken, etc.) and context (reason for or situation surrounding the communication) of the memorandum. Background information is particularly important in records that serve as written company records. This information constitutes the opening statement (whether it is a single sentence or a full paragraph) and is the first piece of information to follow the heading lines. The following is an example of an opening statement. “As required by company policy, this memorandum is submitted as a formal termination warning due to excessive absenteeism.”

The remainder of the memo body should have an organized flow with the most important information first and the rest of the information presented in descending order of importance. Include only relevant information showing a concern for detail. Conclude by summarizing points and recommendations and asking for action, if appropriate. DO NOT type or sign your name at the bottom of the memorandum. Your initials at the top serve as your signature. A basic memo is typically (but not always) a single page. Longer memorandums should have abbreviated subject line and page number as a header on all additional pages.