

# How to Do Well on Your CPR Assignment

**Number 1** - Be aware of the deadlines and don't miss them. It is very important to your score. If you miss the deadline for Part 1, you cannot continue and you will miss most of your score! (Note: The grading criteria vary from course to course. The scoring presented here may not be what is used in your class.)

**There are 4 parts to a CPR Assignment (You are usually given about 1 week to complete Part A (1) and about 1 week to complete Part B (2,3,4) - see your schedule.)**

- Part A Part 1 (usually 20 pts) - Writing your paragraph
- Part B Part 2 (usually 30 pts) - Calibrating your skills as a reviewer
- Part 3 (usually 30 pts) - Reviewing your peers
- Part 4 (usually 20 pts) - Reviewing your own paragraph

## **Part 1: Writing your paragraph (usually 20 pts).**

- DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST HOUR - you may experience technical problems and then it may be too late to fix them.
- If you have any technical problems, contact your instructor immediately.
- Read the information and go to the links - DO THE RESEARCH BEFORE WRITING.
- Make sure your writing is at the level specified by your instructor.
- You can resubmit your paragraph as many times as you wish up until the deadline.
- Write in a word-processing program - then paste it into the block. If you take too long writing your paragraph directly on the website, your browser may terminate the connection and your submitted work will be lost. Keep a copy, so that if there is a problem, you can resubmit.
- Include ALL the answers to the Guiding Questions in your paragraph, but be sure that your paragraph reads smoothly.
- Make sure you have an introductory sentence.
- Make your sentences "tighter" to get within the word limits. Most assignments do not involve unnecessary words. It is a real skill to be able to write a summary or abstract. Pick your words carefully. Instead of long sentences with lots of prepositional phrases, use adjectives.
  - For example: The reaction occurring between acids and bases involves the formation of a salt and sometimes water is also formed.
  - Rewritten: Acid-base reactions form salt and sometimes water.
- Always check your paragraph using spell and grammar check. The process is not always perfect since most spellcheckers are not set up to read scientific explanations but it helps. Make sure you use complete sentences and that the subject agrees with the verb - plural subjects require the plural form of the verb. Also, if a word is used incorrectly but is spelled correctly, spell check won't find it, but it is still considered to be a misspelling.
  - For example: The main principal used in equilibria is LeChatelier's Principle.
  - Problem: "Principal" is the person in charge of a school, the word required here is "principle."
- Have a friend read your paragraph or simply read it out loud yourself and see if it makes sense.
- Ask your TA or instructor to give you some pointers to help guide you.
- Visit the University Writing Center in Evans Library. UWC is located on the second floor of the Evans Library in Room 1.210 B. It is open Monday-Thursday 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. or online at <http://uwc.tamu.edu/>. Appointments are recommended, but the consultants will take walk-ins as time allows. You can even submit your paragraph on-line for advice. For more information call (979) 458-1455 or send questions by e-mail to [uwc@tamu.edu](mailto:uwc@tamu.edu). They are aware of CPR and how it is handled.
- Use a minimum of html tags in your paragraph - they can count as words if used improperly and make your essay difficult to proof.
- BEWARE: If you do NOT submit your paragraph on time, you CANNOT do the rest of the assignment and you lose the majority of the points! If you do miss the deadline - contact your instructor immediately. Sometimes, but not always, they will submit your paragraph for you.
- Your grade will depend on your peer's evaluation of your work, but if you think your peers were in error, please contact your instructor.

## **Part 2: Calibrating Your Skills As a Reviewer (usually 30 pts - 10 pts per calibration).**

- There will be 3 calibrations. You will be given a good paragraph, a fair paragraph and a poor paragraph on the topic (not necessarily in that order). To pass a calibration, you must (a) get most of the style questions correct, (b) get most of the content questions correct, and (c) your overall score of the paragraph must be close to the rating given by the composer of the assignment - how close depends on the instructor. To pass the calibration, you must do well on (a), (b) and (c). You will have 2 chances for each calibration. If you do a good job on your second try, you will still get full credit. You do have a chance to change your answers on your recalibrations, but once you look at your calibration results, you can't go back and change anything. The better you score, the more your peer reviews count.
- Be a fair reviewer. Don't think you are doing a favor by grading easy - you will only hurt yourself.
- Content is usually more important than grammar, spelling and style - but check with your instructor. You usually are safe if you use the questions as your grading rubric. If 30% of the questions deal with style (grammar, spelling, etc.) then it is a good rule of thumb to deduct a maximum of 2 - 3 points out of 10 on the overall score for bad style, which includes bad grammar, spelling errors, absence of an introductory sentence, etc., but check with your instructor.
- To check for spelling errors and grammar problems, copy the paragraph into a word-processing program and do a grammar/spell check. The program will catch most of the problems. You can also visit the University Writing Center.

## **Part 3: Reviewing Your Peers (usually 30 pts - 10 pts per review).**

- You will be reviewing 3 of your peers, just like you did the calibrations. In this class, for you to get the full 10 points per review, the score you give your peer's paragraph (out of 10 pts), must be within a certain range of the weighted average rating given by all the reviewers. This value is set by your instructor. The scorings made by reviewers who did well on their calibrations will be weighted heavier; the scorings made by reviewers who did poorly on their calibrations will not be given much weight at all. If your rating lies outside this range, you will get a 0.
- Be a fair reviewer. Don't think you are doing a favor by grading easy - you will only hurt yourself. On the other hand, don't give someone a terrible grade undeservedly because somehow you think that will help you or the class curve. That person will likely complain about your review to the instructor, have the scoring changed and you will lose all your reviewing points.
- Content is usually more important than grammar, spelling and style - but check with your instructor. You usually are safe if you use the questions as your grading rubric. If 30% of the questions deal with style (grammar, spelling, etc.) then it is a good rule of thumb to deduct a maximum of 2 - 3 points out of 10 on the overall score for bad style, which includes bad grammar, spelling errors, absence of an introductory sentence, etc., but check with your instructor.
- To check for spelling errors and grammar problems, copy the paragraph into a word-processing program and do a grammar/spell check. The program will catch most of the problems. You can also visit the University Writing Center.

## **Part 4: Reviewing Your Own Paragraph (usually 20 pts).**

- To get the full points, your self-assessment must be within a certain range of the weighted average given by your peers, let's say,  $\pm 1.5$ . To get 10 points, you must be  $\pm 2.5$  of your peers' assessment. So, for example, if you wrote a poor paragraph, judged to be a 3.5 by your peers, and if you gave yourself a 5.0, you are  $\pm 1.5$  of the judgment of your peers and you get 20 points. If you gave yourself a 6.0, you are  $\pm 2.5$  of the peers' assessment and you get 10 points. However if you give yourself a 7.0, you get 0 points for your self-assessment. These ranges may be different in your class.
- Be a fair reviewer of yourself. Many times a person will give themselves a 10, even if they have obvious spelling mistakes. To check for spelling errors and grammar problems, copy the paragraph into a word-processing program and do a grammar/spell check. The program will catch most of the problems. You can also visit the University Writing Center. Of course, you should have done this before your paragraph was submitted!
- Your grade will depend on your peer's evaluation of your work, but if you think your peers were in error, please contact your instructor. He or she has the final say.