

# Instructions for Blind Reviews

## 1.0 Purposes for Blind Reviews

In general, academic and professional journals employ blind reviews for four key reasons:

1. To determine if the papers submitted to the journal are of sufficient quality, relevance, and currency to merit publication;
2. To minimize any biases that might be caused by the author's gender, culture, or stature within the professional community;
3. To ensure that articles are factually accurate and employ the standard methods that are accepted within the community;
4. To provide the authors with feedback that will assist them with making any needed changes in content, organization, format, and style.

Because the papers written for ENSC 803 are simulations (i.e., the papers won't actually be submitted for publication in most cases), and you may be able to deduce the authorship of the paper you are reviewing, we won't be emphasizing the first two points mentioned above. However, you are expected to devote significant effort (i.e., 4-6 hours) to determining the factual accuracy of the paper and to providing the author with useful feedback in terms of organization and style.

## 2.0 Method for the Blind Review

1. Read through the paper that you are reviewing and note any initial reactions that you have to the content, organization, format, and purpose (persuasive, informative, etc.). Write down those initial reactions to the paper on a separate sheet of paper, but don't suggest any specific changes at this time. I also recommend that you *do not* respond to any issues of style or correctness that you happen to see during this initial reading.
2. Read through the paper a second time and examine carefully the style that is employed. If you find any of the stylistic flaws noted on the next page, circle a few instances of the flaw and make the appropriate change (please use a black pen). Make these changes on the paper you are reviewing. **Note that you should not edit and correct every problem with the paper; instead, you should identify patterns of stylistic flaws or grammatical errors, and then point out as well as "correct" a few examples of them for the author.** Also include any observations about content, organization, and format that you noted earlier

3. On the supplied *Blind Review Form*, summarize any problems you discovered and recommend appropriate changes in light of your initial reading and your more detailed stylistic analysis. **Please note that your summary should not be entirely critical in tone because the author also needs positive feedback about the elements of the paper that work well and should, therefore, not be changed.** Also note that you may discover certain stylistic flaws in the paper that you are reviewing, but may feel that these flaws need not be addressed by the author in the rewrite because they are part of the standard engineering discourse (e.g., use of the passive voice, noun strings, and/or nominalizations). If this is the case, note that in your summary. Exercise some judgment here.
4. Submit **2 hard copies** of the marked-up paper and the completed *Blind Review Form*. I will pass on a copy of your review to the author of the paper, and I will assess the quality of your blind review

### 3.0 Stylistic Flaws You Should Note

As well as making general comments about the content, organization, format, and rhetorical purpose of the paper you are reviewing, you are expected to analyze the style of the paper in detail. In particular, you should look for the stylistic flaws mentioned in the following table (please read pages 188-244 of the course textbook for definitions and examples). **In addition to these specific issues of style, you should comment upon any other problematic stylistic and grammatical patterns that you find in the paper.**

<b>Order Problems</b>	Paragraphing problems	(pp. 190-194)
	Embedding of large phrases and clauses	(pp. 196-197)
	Weak sentence openers (“there are” and “it is”)	(pp. 198-199)
	Passive constructions	(pp. 199-202)
<b>Connection Problems</b>	Lack of (or inappropriate) repetition	(pp. 203-204)
	Faulty parallel structure	(pp. 204-206)
	Vague “this” subjects	(pp. 206-208)
	Lack of (or inappropriate) transitional tags	(pp. 208-212)
<b>Clarity Problems</b>	Excessively long or short sentences	(pp. 212-214)
	General language	(pp. 214-215)
	Misuse of acronyms	(pp. 217-218)
	Lengthy noun strings	(pp. 218-221)
	Strings of prepositional phrases	(pp. 221-223)
	Punctuation flaws	(pp. 223-224) & (pp. 234-239)
<b>Conciseness Problems</b>	Inappropriate nominalizations	(pp. 224-229)
	Dependence upon talkie verbs	(pp. 229-232)
	Wordy phrases	(pp. 232-234)