

State-of-Art Project: Spring 2012

Instead of taking a final exam, each of you will complete a State-of-Art (SOA) project. This opportunity introduces you to the benefits of following up a literature search with personal contacts. These experts help you to achieve **an up-to-the-minute grasp of an important aspect of pollution prevention.**

Important Deadlines:

SOA Project Deadlines		Total Points
Select Topic	Wednesday, February 01, 2012	5
Detailed Outline and Background Paper	Wednesday, February 15, 2012	10
Phone Notes from at Least Two Contacts	Wednesday, March 21, 2012	20
Phone Notes from at Least Two New Contacts	Wednesday, April 11, 2012	20
Turn in PowerPoint	Wednesday, April 25, 2012	5
Final Paper	Wednesday, May 02, 2012	30
Presentation	Wednesday, May 02, 2012	10
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		100

Criteria for your State-of-Art project are as follows:

- **Select a topic that is of substantial interest to you.** Please OK your choice with me by February 1st (fourth class). **By February 15th (sixth class),** I will need your state-of-art outline and a copy of a key background paper to assist me in keeping up with you. The background paper is a peer-reviewed paper that gives a general overview of your topic. These may be submitted electronically or hard copy.
- Keep your scope sufficiently narrow to **avoid superficial coverage and simply summarizing standard references.** Include a **brief** introduction (one page max); make liberal use of subheadings. In your writing, assume that I have a basic working knowledge of your topic whether or not that is actually true. Don't waste time on the basics. For example: Topic is cardboard recycling, focus is on one type of cardboard separator that improves speed and accuracy by X percent and how it works.
- Include in **appendices** your phone, e-mail, and meeting notes, as well as your experts' affiliations, job titles, and phone #s. Phone tag can be a problem; **start early**, and use creative approaches to minimize this obstacle. There are intermediate deadlines for turning in phone notes (see above).
- In your reference list, include those papers and books that provide facts or perspective for your write-up. I will be particularly looking for **items published in the past two years.** If you are using web references, the web page must be published in the last two years and be included in your appendices. Use "Beyond the MLA Handbook" for proper referencing of web based sources. NOTE: Web references must be from reputable, unbiased sources. Absolutely no Wikipedia, Heritage Foundation, MoveOn.org, Sierra Club, or similar non-peer reviewed sources that have a clear ideological bent.

- Your personal contacts should include **at least three and preferably five from diverse sources**. These contacts should be from industry and academia, from diverse geographic locations and organizations. Your first contact may prove invaluable to identify / obtain key literature, expediting your start-up. You may consult professors at the Colorado School of Mines; however, **they will not count** towards your three to five personal contacts. The whole point is to make industry contacts.
- Your most knowledgeable source should be consulted after you have learned enough to use this expert efficiently. Do your best to include in-person and phone contacts, rather than relying on e-mail. **A key for grading is the quality and documentation of findings from your personal contacts.**
- Waiting until late April to begin making substantial progress is not a good idea. Your write-up is due on May 2nd and your PowerPoint presentations are due on April 25th. One full grade point (10 points) will be subtracted from late submissions.

Be sure to document 1) specifics on happenings that occurred during the past 12 months, 2) what is likely to happen in the future, and 3) concisely how and which personal contacts enable you to reach each conclusion. Target length is six pages, not including appendices. Your output will be graded based on:

- Technical Writing Skills (10%): Spelling, grammar, punctuation are key to getting your point across and appearing professional. It won't be possible to get an A on your final paper unless you spend time making sure the writing is top notch.
- Quality and Diversity of Contacts (20%): See the 5th bullet item above.
- Effectiveness in use of Contacts (30%): **Most of your write-up should focus on what you learned from your personal contacts on events that occurred in the past 12 months.** Nail this one down in your write-up, making it clear which findings came from which source.
- Documentation of Contacts (20%): See the 3rd bullet item above.
- The Future (10%): If you were to revisit your project in 6 to 12 months, what would you expect to find?
- Literature references (10%): See the 4th bullet item above.

NOTE: It is possible to earn up to 20 bonus points over the course of the project by doing a great job on one or more components.