Author's Guide

This guide is taken straight from the ASCE Conference Proceedings Author’s Guide, which is available at http://pubs.asce.org/authors/book/proceedingsub/ConfProcAuthorGuideCamReady.htm. Several portions not relevant to your project report have been removed to prevent confusion and a few items have been changed and/or added to accommodate the differences between your report and a published conference paper. Other than that, these are the ASCE requirements for published conference proceedings.

Format

Your report will consist of a title page, table of contents, body, and at least two appendices as shown in the “Draft Project Report” webpage on the course website. The title page and the table of contents page are unnumbered. Tables of figures and tables are not necessary.

Begin each chapter on a new page. The chapter number and chapter title should appear in bold type and be centered at the top of the first page of the chapter. Do not use separator pages between chapters.

Point size and font

Use 12 point type for text and captions. For type within figures or tables, the 12 point size is preferred. We recommend selecting a serif text font such as Times New Roman. Italic, bold, and bold italic may be used; we recommend sticking to one “family” of typefaces.

Headers and footers

The header for each chapter should contain the chapter number and title left-justified within the header “box” and the name of the chapter’s author right-justified within the header “box.” Use 9 point type for all headers.

The only acceptable content in the footer is a single page number. Pages will be numbered consecutively beginning with the first page of Chapter 1. The page number will have the same font and size as the rest of the text.

Layout

- All text must be spaced at 1.5 lines and left-justified.
- The first line of each paragraph must not be indented. Instead, each paragraph should be followed by one blank line to separate it from the next paragraph.
- **Page design should be consistent throughout the paper.** A reader should not be able to tell that different authors wrote different chapters.
- Use 1 in. margins on all four sides of the page.
- Imagine a “box” whose width does not exceed 6.5 in. and depth does not exceed 9 in. All elements of the paper that will be reproduced (text, figures, tables, captions) should fit within that box.
Figures and tables

All graphics (photos, line art, and tables, but not shop or erection drawings) must be embedded within the document and fit within the margin settings.

- **Numbering.** Figures and tables should be numbered consecutively with the chapter number and an Arabic numeral (e.g., Figure 5-1, Figure 5-2 …; Table 5-1, Table 5-2 …). If a figure or table has multiple parts, a parenthetical lowercase letter is used to identify the parts: Fig. 5-1(a), etc. Try to avoid the use of multipart figures and tables if at all possible because it can confuse the reader.

- **Order.** Tables and figures must be numbered in the order in which they are discussed in text so that call-outs also appear in numerical order. In other words, Table 5-1 must be called out in text before Table 5-2.

- **Captions and legends.** For figures, a descriptive caption, including the figure number, should be placed directly below the illustration and centered on the figure (see Figure 1 below). For tables, a descriptive legend, including the table number, should be placed immediately above the table and centered on the table.

- **Placement.** Figures should be placed in the text rather than at the end of each chapter. More than one figure may appear on a page. Do not wrap text around a figure, even to save space. Landscape orientation is acceptable for full-page figures.

![Figure 1. Sample line art illustration.](image)

Mathematics

All mathematics must be embedded in the text. Equations need to be numbered only if they are referred to more than once. Stack numerators over denominators and leave one blank line between equations and text, and between two successive equations.

Equations should be indented ½” from the left margin and equation numbers (if used) should be indented ½” from the right margin. For example:
\[
\frac{q_r(C)}{\sigma_w} = \left[ K_0 + (1+K_0)A_f \right] \sin \phi / \left[ 1 + (2A_f -1) \sin \phi \right]
\]  

(3)

Refer to equations in the text by (3) or Eq. 3. For equations within the text, use single-level expressions, e.g., \(mv = \Delta e / \Delta s \Delta v\), where \(\Delta e = \Delta e / (1+e_0)\).

**Writing Style**

The report must be written in the best possible technical and grammatical English. Poor grammar, punctuation and spelling will be counted off.

**Style Guides**

The following publications can provide useful guidance in preparing your manuscript.

- For guidance on the mechanics of written communication, consult the current edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* (University of Chicago Press).
- For spelling and word usage, ASCE follows the current editions of *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* and *Webster’s International Dictionary, Unabridged*.
- For rules of grammar and usage, refer to *Words into Type* (Prentice-Hall) or *New York Public Library Writer’s Guide to Style and Usage* (HarperCollins).
- For assistance in the presentation of mathematics, refer to *Mathematics into Type* (American Mathematical Society).

**Active versus Passive Voice**

Wherever possible, use active verbs that demonstrate what is being done and who is doing it.

*Instead of:* The bridge was built by James Eads.  
*Use:* James Eads built the bridge.

*Instead of:* Six possible causes of failure were identified in the forensic investigation.  
*Use:* The forensic investigation identified six possible causes of failure.
Direct versus Indirect Statements

Direct statements are clear, concise, and do not wear on your reader. Indirect statements are those that begin with phrases such as “it should be noted that…” or “it is common that….” Other types of indirect statements may begin with “to be” statements such as “there are” or “it was”.

Instead of: It should be noted that the flow was interrupted by a surge…
Use: A surge interrupted the flow…

Instead of: It is common that the steel rebars are weakened by oxidation…
Use: Oxidation commonly weakens steel rebars…

Instead of: There are many reasons that concrete may fail…
Use: Concrete may fail for many reasons…

Instead of: There are three kinds of bolt that can be used in these circumstances…
Use: Three kinds of bolt can be used in these circumstances.

Use of “I” and “We”

While the use of first-person pronouns (I, we, my, our) should be sparing in technical material, the use of “I” and “we” is preferable to awkward constructions such as “the authors” or “this researcher.”

• If you are the sole author, use “I” to indicate your actions or opinions.
• If you are working with coauthors, use “we” to refer to your collective actions or opinions. Use last names to refer to the actions or opinions of individual coauthors.
• If you use “we” to refer to yourself and your coauthors, avoid the use of “we” in other contexts, such as referring to other people or humankind in general.

Inclusive Language

Writing without bias may feel stiff or unnatural at first, but usually results in greater precision and consideration for your readers. Therefore, avoid language that arbitrarily assigns roles or characteristics or excludes people on the basis of gender; racial, ethnic, or religious background; physical or mental capabilities; sexual orientation; or other sorts of stereotypes.

• Avoid using man or men to refer to groups containing both sexes. Substitute words and phrases such as humankind, humanity, people, employees, workers, workforce, staff, and staff hours.
• Avoid the use of masculine pronouns to refer to both sexes. Use plural pronouns, a locution that carries no bias, imperative verb forms, or second-person pronouns.

Instead of: When an engineer begins to design an overpass, he should consider…
Try: When engineers begin to design overpasses, they should consider…
Or: When beginning to design an overpass, an engineer should consider…

Instead of: A manager should not assume that his staff will alert him to potential problems.
Try: As a manager, do not assume that staff will alert you to potential problems.

Or: As a manager, you should not assume that your staff will alert you to potential problems.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

An abbreviation is a shortening form of a word or phrase, such as “Jan.” for “January”, “U.S.” for “United States,” and “ASCE” for “American Society of Civil Engineers.” An acronym is formed when the abbreviation forms a pronounceable word, such as “NATO” for “North Atlantic Treaty Organization” or “AASHTO” for "American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.”

- Abbreviations and acronyms in text must be spelled out the first time that they appear in each chapter or paper, with the shortened form appearing immediately in parentheses. Thereafter, the shortened form should be used throughout the chapter.
- Several very common abbreviations (U.S. and U.K. as adjectives; DNA and PVC for nouns) do not need to be spelled out on first usage.
- Basic units of measure do not need to be spelled out on first usage. These include: ft, in., lb, m, mm, kg, etc.. Note that “in.” is the only unit of measure that is followed by a period (so as not to confuse it with the word “in”).

References

All factual material that is not original with the author must be accompanied by a reference to its source. Use the author–date system of referencing.

The author–date system has two parts, the text citation and the reference list.

- The text citation appears where the material to be cited is presented and refers readers to a source in the reference list by the author's last name and the year of publication. Often, the author and date appear in parentheses; a comma is not placed between them.
- The reference list appears at the end of last chapter (before the first appendix). The reference list should be single-spaced with one blank line between references. List each reference alphabetically by the last name of the first author. When two or more references by the same author are listed, year of publication is taken into account, and the earliest work is listed first. See below for examples.

All sources in the reference list must be cited in text, and all text citations must refer to a source in the reference list.

What follows is a quick guide to some common types of referenced material:

Journal References

Include year, volume, issue, and page numbers.

**Conference Proceedings and Symposiums**

Include the sponsor of the conference or publisher of the proceedings, AND that entity’s location—city and state or city and country.


**Books**

Include author, book title, publisher, the publisher’s location, and chapter title and inclusive page numbers (if applicable).


**Reports**

Same as for books, as above. For reports authored by institutions: spell out institution acronym on first use, and follow with acronym in parentheses, if applicable. If subsequent references were also authored by that same institution, use only the acronym. For reports authored by persons, include the full institution name—no acronym—and its location.

**Unpublished Material**

Unpublished material is not included in the references but may be cited in the text as follows: (John Smith, personal communication, May 16, 1983; J. Smith, unpublished internal report, February 2003).

**Web Pages**

Include author, copyright date, title of “page,” Web address, and date material downloaded.


**CD-ROM**

Include authors, copyright date, titles, medium, and producer/publisher and its location.


**Theses and dissertations**

Include authors, copyright date, title, and the name and location of the institution where the research was conducted. Note that some institutions use specific terminology; for example, "doctoral dissertation" rather than "PhD thesis".