

## **EMA 601 Manuscript Guidance**

Select a topic with a reasonable scope – not so small that only one or two journal articles have ever been written on the topic and not so large that there are thousands of relevant journal publications.

To help you out, two examples of a high-quality review articles have been posted on the course website. You are NOT expected to just copy the format; rather, read this articles and use them as a general guide, two examples of many good examples, of the type of writing, level of organization, and use of images that are appropriate for a review article.

The paper, including references and figures, should be 10-15 pages in length (types, single-spaced, 12 point font, 1” margins)

Remember that your paper will be reviewed and graded by TWO of your classmates and by one of us instructors, so you need to make sure your paper is understandable to a broad audience.

Therefore, it is important that you have an introduction that clearly describes the motivation behind the research. For example, if you are discussing nanotubes, you should describe why they are important, what are the key features that people are excited about, and what are the current or envisioned applications.

Your manuscript must also have a thesis statement that is clearly expressed up front. For some of you, this may be the most difficult part of the paper, but it is also the most important.

Be sure to highlight the role of mechanics in your discussion. Some description of, for example, how a material is synthesized, what its electrical properties are, etc., is acceptable, but only if it is relevant in the context of the mechanics of your topic.

You should be putting together a comprehensive set of references in your topic area, from which you need to select a few to discuss in detail. Your manuscript should not be a laundry list of other papers that have been written. Rather, you need to synthesize the information you have into a coherent and critical review that describes the progress made in the area of interest as well as the challenges that remain.

Finally, a word about originality. These days it is easy to download mounds of text from the web, and cut and paste it into a paper. In less blatant cases, a figure caption or a couple sentences might be used. Yet neither of these cases is acceptable, and in both cases it is considered plagiarism. Furthermore you are shortchanging your own learning experience by resorting to the use of others' text. Be aware that we are obligated to check for originality.