# Writing Handout Assignment CMSC 304 – Prof. Marie desJardins Handed out: March 28, 2013 First Version Due: April 18 (or earlier) Intermediate Versions: Submit any time for constructive feedback within one week! Final Version Due: May 14 (or earlier)

*(Note: This assignment replaces the third ethical analysis assignment listed in the syllabus; it is to be completed as a group/team assignment, and is worth 5% of your grade, determined as discussed below.)*

**Assignment.** Your assignment is to produce a handout for next semester’s CMSC 304 students that explains how to develop and organize an ethical analysis for the class. The focus should not be on sentence-level writing tips (since those are already covered pretty well in *Dr. dJ’s Handy Writing Guide*...) but on style, clarity, organization, and content. It’s OK to duplicate some of the information in the *Handy Writing Guide* (but obviously in your own words).

The goal is to synthesize what you have learned (or already knew...) about writing a clear, persuasive analysis, in such a way that other students can benefit from your experience. Because this is a team assignment, you will also have the opportunity to discuss writing and organization with the other students and incorporate multiple perspectives, to help students with different backgrounds and styles.

The length of this handout is entirely up to you, but I would expect it would be somewhere between 1-3 pages. How you organize it is entirely up to you. For example, you might use an essay structure, a “topic by topic” structure similar to this assignment, or a “bullet point” structure like that of the *Handy Writing Guide*.

**Deadlines and Submittions.** All versions of this assignment should be submitted by email or Google doc sharing to Dr. desJardins. Please submit as a Word or OpenOffice document by email (mariedj@cs.umbc.edu) or as a Google document (shared to mariedj@gmail.com). The first draft of the assignment will be due on April 18 (in two weeks). However, you may turn it in earlier if you want to. As long as it is turned in on or before April 18, and is a reasonable attempt at the assignment, you will receive full credit for the draft (see *Grading*, below). After that, you may turn in as many (ungraded) revisions as you’d like, and I will give feedback and an overall assessment within a week. (Note that you must explicitly let me know that a given revision is an ungraded revision that you would like feedback on!) The final version must be submitted on or before 10:00 a.m. on May 14 (the last day of class), and you must explicitly let me know that it is the final version for a grade.

**Expectations.** The grade will be based on how well the handout is written and organized, and how thorough and useful I believe it will be for the students in the class next fall.

**Individual Report.** Each of you will need to send me an email by May 14 (the last day of class) with your honest assessment of how you think the work was distributed for this assignment (a percentage for each student on the team) and a short explanation of who contributed what (e.g., first draft, rewrite, comments, editing...). You must also include an overall teamwork grade (on a scale from 0-100) for each student on the team and how much they contributed to the team as a whole over the course of the semester. Again, you should include a short commentary on the ways in which each person did (or did not) contribute. Please use the subject line “CMSC 304 individual report.” These reports will be entirely confidential; I will not share any specifics with any other student or even with the TA.

**Grading.** The first version is worth 10% of the overall grade for this assignment, and everyone in the team will receive the same grade (which will be a 100/100 if you turn in something reasonable). The final version is worth 90% of the overall grade.

I will assign a team grade based on the expectations outlined above. If the students on a team *consistently* report that one student contributed significantly more or significantly less than the others to this assignment, then I may differentiate the grades by up to 10 points in either direction. If I determine that a student made a negligible or nonexistent contribution to the assignment, then that student may receive an additional penalty, down to a zero on the assignment if I have evidence that that is warranted. I will notify any student who receives bonus points or a penalty, and will let them know why they are receiving a different grade from the team grade.