

## **ENGL 341**

### **SAMPLE MEMO TASK**

To: Steven Simpson, Professor  
From: Steven Paustian, Student  
Subject: Analysis Comparing Two Technical Documents  
Date: 22 January 2014

The purpose of this memo is to provide a short analysis comparing two technical documents by audience and format. The two documents are titled: Hurricane Katrina ASCE Statement (HKASCES) and Climate Change Summary for Policymakers (CCSP).

#### **Analysis**

##### *Audience*

CCSP is labeled as a 'Summary for Policymakers;' one can conclude from this that the primary audience is politicians and bureaucrats for governments across the world. As this is a report from the WMO and UNEP, the secondary audience is quite large and would include scientists and citizens looking for technical information regarding Climate Change. The tertiary audience would also be large, and could include laymen interested in general the climate change information, translators for this document, etc.

HKASCES appears to be intended primarily for the public consumption. There are almost no technical terms, numbers, or statistics. The secondary audience includes politicians who may be able to implement some of the suggested governmental programs and engineers interested in the ASCE's official stance on the disaster. The tertiary audience is rather small, as it is intended as a public statement.

##### *Format*

CCSP is a technical document and its format reflects this. It uses graphs, figures and bullet points to convey large amounts of scientific data. Boxed text with a yellow background at the beginning of each section is used for section summaries after each heading, and bolded sentences convey important information.

HASCES has a much 'softer' format. It is a long-form document which also uses bolded sections to highlight important statements. Page margins are large to make sentences shorter and easier to read. Bullet points are used to convey items of note. The Call-To-Action sections have large lettering and top and bottom borders for extra emphasis, making them easy to distinguish from the rest of the document.

#### **Summary**

These are two very different types of documents. The contrasting formats are guided by the different audiences. CCSP is intended for policymakers and hence has a format which communicates a sizable amount of technical information. HASCES is intended for the public and uses different font sizes, weights and alignments to communicate its conclusions and suggestions.