DATE: May 4, 2001

TO: All Good Students
University of South Carolina

FROM: Jed S. Lyons, Associate Professor
Department of Mechanical Engineering

SUBJECT: Format for an Engineering Memo

This is an example of what an engineering memo should look like. It should begin with a very brief introductory statement, like this one. There are two parts to a memo: the heading and the body.

The heading is important. Note that there are four items to include in the heading: Date, To, From and Subject. You may see memos use the word "RE", which means "in reference to", instead of "SUBJECT". This is a just a matter of preference. The important thing is to make the subject line specific enough so that the reader knows what the memo is about in a glance. For example, "Request for Technical Elective Credit for ECON 526" is a better subject line than just "Undergraduate Petition." Also, it is standard practice to sign the memo next to your name on the “FROM” line.

The body of the memo needs to be clearly written and well organized. You should put each important point in the memo in a separate paragraph. This helps the reader follow what you're doing. The reader will appreciate reading a concise memo, but make sure that it contains the information they need. If there is another document associated with the memo, make sure you refer to it in the memo. Additional information about memo content is contained in the attached document "How to Write a Memo" by Emily Thrush.

The memo should have a concluding paragraph that includes information about how to contact you. If I may provide additional information, please contact me by phone a 777-9552 or by e-mail at lyons@sc.edu.

(click here for the attachment)