

V.0.2 Documentation Guide

WR227: Tech Comm

Introductory Technical, Scientific & Professional Communication

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[Slides](#) and [D2L video](#) (or [Zoom](#))

Version History

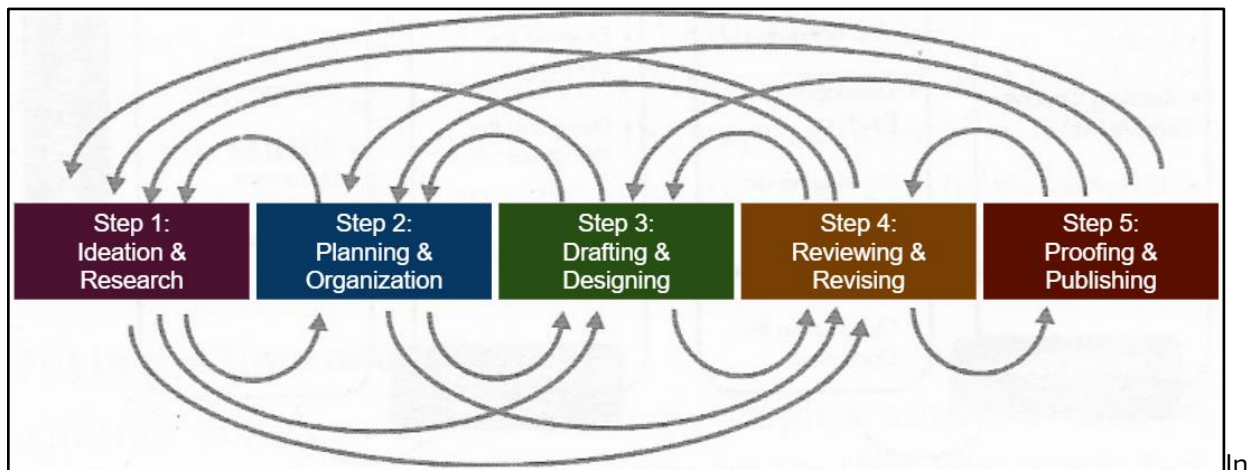
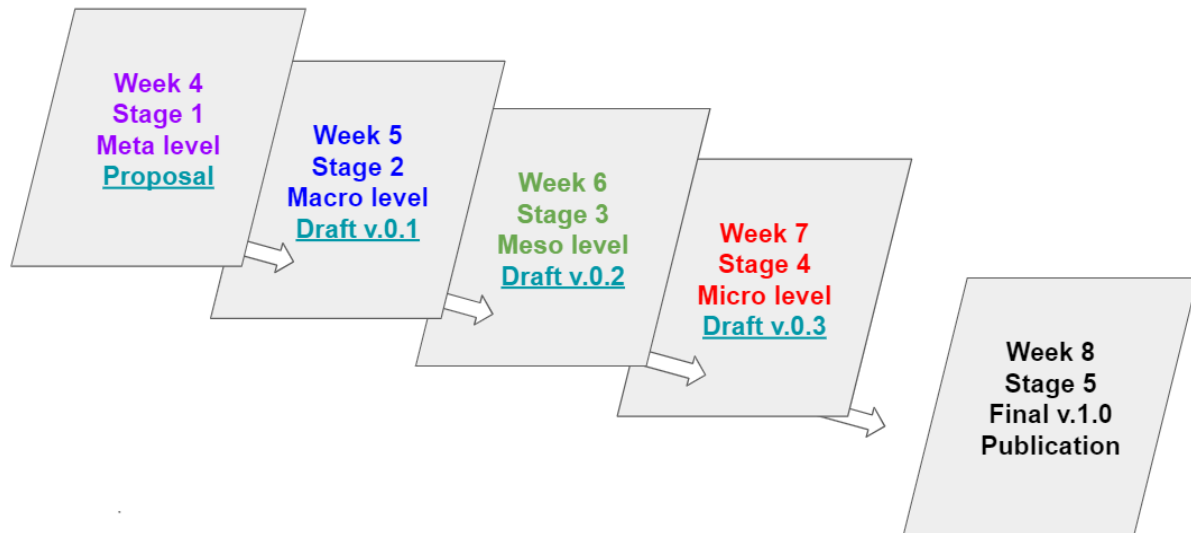
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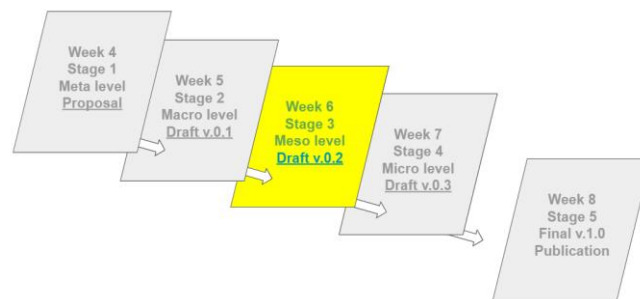
Introduction

This week, we continue to work through the [5 stages to publishing a document](#) (below). This week is [drafting week](#) (adding meso elements to your documentation)!



In week 6, we move from week 5 and from version 0.1 draft to version 0.2, creating a rough draft.

- Proposal (week 4)
- v.0.1 (week 5)
- **v.0.2 (week 6)**
- v.0.3 (week 7)
- v.1.0 (week 8, final)



Being aware of the meso layer in technical composition and rhetoric

Between the macro and micro level in a document, there is an intermediate level (meso) at which units of text are grouped into larger units (see micro-meso-macro flowchart diagram below). These are not given headings or marked for navigation like subsections but instead depend on a reader's reading comprehension and scanning strategies.

- **Structured paragraphs:** The most textually dense grouping unit at the intermediate level is the paragraph: a block of text that functions to group statements that have some logical relationship so that they can be understood together. The organization of paragraphs sequenced according to **methods of idea development**).
- Other intermediate elements: Less textually dense elements and alternatives to paragraphs at this level include:
 - **Transitional language** (metadiscourse, signposting language)
 - **Lists:** Numbered (fixed) and/or bulleted (unfixed)
 - **Insets:** Figures and tables
 - **Cross-references**
 - **In-text citations/references**

Figure: Meso-level elements inserted between the macro and micro (see also the [meso slides for week 6](#))

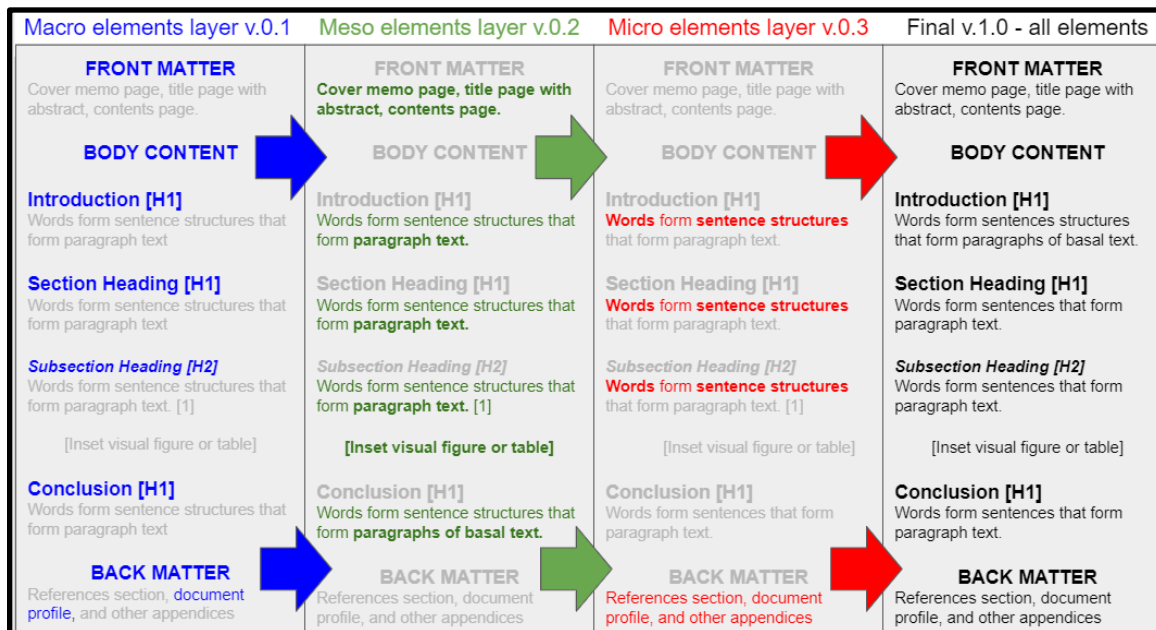


Figure: Below are the meso-level elements. Use these building blocks in your technical communication to help your document serve and accomplish its purpose. Create vibrant, engaging, intelligent text that not just references the past literature that has been documented on your topic, but also the current information sources and informants, and, perhaps most importantly, your reader(ship)/audience.

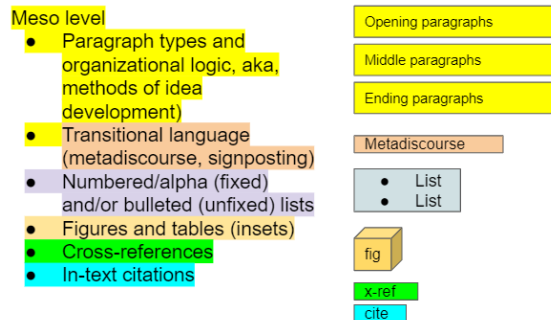
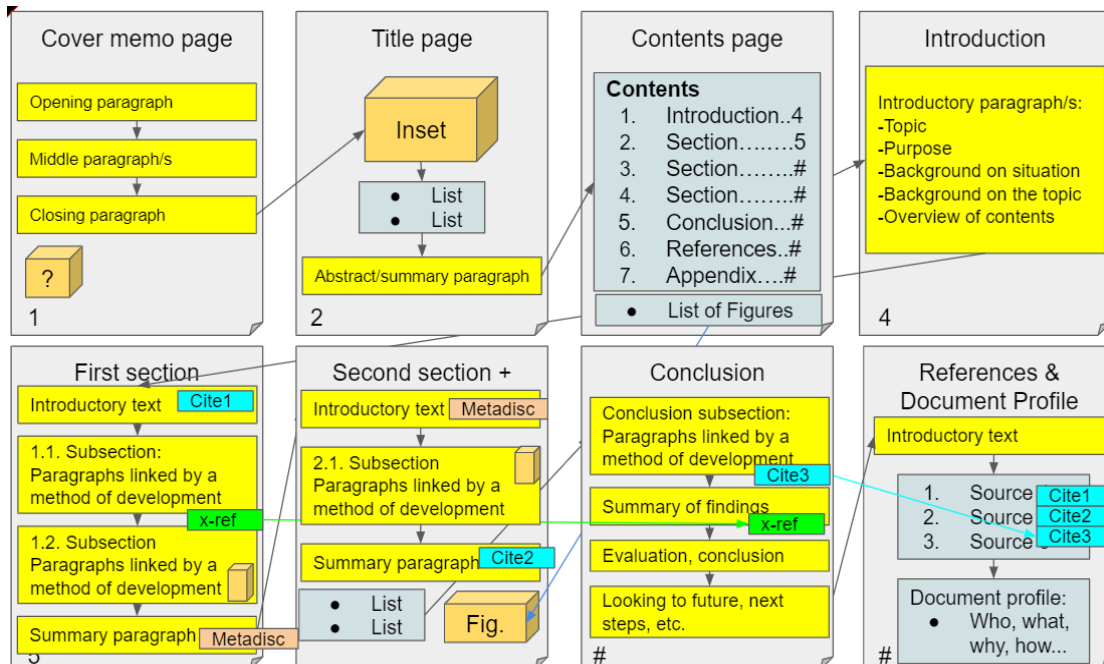


Figure: Below is a high-level model of how the meso-level elements can play out in a standard formal technical document (and could in your portfolio). This includes figures, lists, paragraphs, cross-references, metadiscourse, and in-text citations/references. Each meo element is connected by a linear reading thread (each element “listens/talks” to the meso element behind and in front of it in the linear reading flow). Meso elements also help/allow for navigation via nonlinear reading (like reading just the abstract and skimming topic sentences, or skipping to a section, or looking at just figures, checking the references, and other nonlinear reading activities).



Instructions

Below are steps on how to start inserting draft content in your v.0.2 draft that includes meso-layer elements and organizational structures:

1. Make a copy of your v.0.1 draft and leave it archived in the [v.0.1 folder](#).
2. Move your v.0.1 file to the [v.0.2 folder](#) and rename “v.0.1” to “v.0.2” in your file name.
 - The formula is [Last name, First name_Title_Genre_v.0.2]
3. Start drafting the [designing and drafting](#) phase of your writing by inserting the following [meso \(intermediate\) elements](#) in your v.0.2 draft:
 - Structured paragraphs and methods of idea development
 - Transitional language (metadiscourse, signposting)
 - Numbered (fixed) and/or bulleted (unfixed) lists
 - Figures and tables (insets)
 - Cross-references
 - In-text citations

While you’re filling out draft material, use these documents to to create content:

- Draft content to copy and paste from [your proposal](#)
- Your notes from your research and brainstorming phase to fill in sections
- Your reference sources and their sources and their sources to reference and quote
- Your old version 0.1 draft for reference/outlines
- Use the study examples to help you also create draft paragraph content:
 - [EXAMPLE Aaron, Hank Disaster Documentation Experience Report_v.0.1](#)
 - [EXAMPLE Aaron, Hank Disaster Documentation Experience Report_v.0.2](#)
- Use the study guides to help guide some of the writing decisions you’ll have to make:
 - Are you asking yourself, “What document organizations should I choose for the purpose that I am trying to achieve with my document?” Go to: [Example types of informative, enabling, and persuasive portfolio documents](#).
 - For a high-level step-by-step process, go to the [5 stages of the writing process](#).
 - Are you looking to understand how to string together paragraphs in ways that help describe the situation to readers? Go to [Methods of idea development](#).
 - The needed elements for this week are meso, but perhaps you’re wondering generally about the document, in which case go to [Portfolio document specifications](#), which has all the documentation requirements in one spot.

Final draft content is not needed. This is a rough draft version. However, work should have begun on all of the above to some capacity.

Meso body elements to include in your document

As always, elements are listed in the “Portfolio Documentation Specifications” requirements document; however, the elements that we’re working on this week and in this document are expanded below.

- Structured paragraphs and methods of idea development
- Transitional language (metadiscourse, signposting)
- Numbered (fixed) and/or bulleted (unfixed) lists
- Figures and tables (insets)
- Cross-references
- In-text citations

See the [example v.02 draft](#) for examples of the above elements in a document.

FYI on the below: The sections below spell out the corresponding sections in the Portfolio Documentation Specifications “[Meso body elements](#)” section.

Structured paragraphs and methods of idea development

The most textually dense grouping unit at the intermediate level is the paragraph—a block of text that functions to group statements that have some logical relationship so that they can be understood together.

A logical method of idea development satisfies readers’ need for shape and structure in a document, whether it is an email, a report, or a web page. It helps you as a writer move smoothly and logically from the introduction to the conclusion. Below are common methods:

- Cause and effect: logic/ideas arranged from root causes of events to effects
- Generic to specific, or vice versa: logic/ideas arranged from general to detailed
- Comparison and/or contrast: logic/ideas arranged by differences and similarities
- Time-based: chronological (first to last) or reverse chronological (last to first)
- Process-based: logic/ideas arranged based on steps in a process
- Topic-based: logic arranged by relevant-but-distinct topics
- Goal-based, action-based, or task-based arrangements (arranged by output)
- Summaries/closings: Concluding and bringing the argument to a close/closure, but also looking at pre-existing problems and gaps and looking at next steps.
- Sometimes, the arrangement is particular to the section. Like in the “Introduction” of a document, which is focused specifically on relating to the reader the topic, purpose, any needed context, and in some cases a hook of some type (see the “[Introduction](#)” section methods of idea development in the v.0.2 example).

- The arrangement and logic can also be a combination of two or more of the common methods, which are like simple machines: can be used together to leverage reading energy and retention and obtain certain outputs based on the purpose of the documentation.

To choose your logical arrangement of ideas based on your outline, consider the reader, purpose, and writing subject, then choose the method or combination of methods that best suits your subject, audience, and purpose.

- See also the [methods of idea development](#) document for a detailed expansion on the above list.
- See also the [common genre headings](#) in the Portfolio Document Specifications for aid in getting more organizational ideas from common genre structures.

Transitional language (metadiscourse, signposting)

As you connect paragraph topics together with methods of idea development, use transitional text to connect topics for the reader. This is also called “metadiscourse” (see page 71 of the IEEE Guide textbook).

Coherence among sentences is created through stated and implied relationships. One of the primary methods for creating coherence is the use of metadiscourse, words that declare the organization of or relationship between units of text. From a syntax point of view, these words and phrases are word or clausal modifiers or conjunctions. They have a special semantic function, though, in that they address the reader about the text itself. They are called “metadiscourse” because they are discourse about discourse—the same way that metadata can be defined as data that describes other data. Discourse cues can be used to advertise connections.

Metadiscursive terms are signposts for a reader. They mark places where the argument changes direction. They tell a reader the relationship between textual unit. Like headings for sections, they mark off sub sections of smaller units of text. , their location is critical to their effectiveness. The term “however,” for example, is generally positioned between the two argumentative units it is relating. Even when being used to relate simple sentences, however, the word can be placed in at least three positions.

You will also often see metadiscourse at the beginnings and ends of paragraphs, relating one textual unit of thought in one paragraph with another (for example, as well at the end of a

paragraph to describe what is coming next). Below are more examples from page 71 of your textbook:

however	furthermore	likewise
on the contrary	therefore	similarly
in other words	Finally	and then
next	in conclusion	for example

Use these metadiscursive words and other transitional language to help readers connect to the underlying logic thread that connects the ideas that you are moving in and out of. See also [this typical metadiscursive section introductory phrase at play in the example v.02 draft](#).

Numbered (fixed) and/or bulleted (unfixed) lists

In the body of your documentation, use bulleted, numbered, and two-column lists where appropriate. Lists help by emphasizing key points, by making information easier to follow, and by breaking up solid walls of text. Include at least one numeric, alphabetic, alphanumeric (fixed), or bulleted (variable) list. It can be multilayer as well.

- Fixed order: numbered lists (tasks must be done in fixed order)
- Variable order: bulleted lists (tasks can be done in any order)
- Alternate order: bulleted lists of tasks (uses “or” for alternatives)
- Nested: multilayer lists (numeric, alphabetized, or alphanumeric)
- Stepless order: rare deviations from step-by-step or cause/effect

As you figure out what kind of list/s you want to include in your document, see the following resources for more examples and ideas:

See McMurrey’s [lists](#) for further pro-tips on lists.

- There is [a section in the example v.02 draft](#) with an example way to incorporate lists into text.
- Lists are also pragmatic Gestalt theory, check the “[biological basis of lists](#)” slides covered in the video recording walkthrough of this document.

Figures and tables (insets)

In technical documentation, you're likely to need drawings, diagrams, tables, or charts to help communicate data and information. These meso elements not only convey certain kinds of information more efficiently but also give your document an added look of professionalism and

authority. If you've never put graphics into your documentation, there are some relatively easy ways to do so—you don't need to be a professional graphic artist.

There must be a **minimum 3 graphics** in the body of the documentation (**not including the cover page**, see cover page section above). Below are the requirements, standards, and added elements of a figure or table in documentation:

- Graphics can be supplementary, complementary, or redundant with the text.
- Graphics can be figures and/or tables.
- Graphics used with the text in the body of the document must be numbered or alphabetized in a fixed list. These main inset figures or tables must be titled. These main figures and tables must be cited in the text, cued either with commas or parentheses. (Graphics can also be captioned, but this is not a requirement.).

For this assignment, figures and tables can be computer generated, hand drawn, scanned, or taken with a camera. Figures and tables should be cited in the text and not appear before they are mentioned.

- *Art*: Any of the following types of art are acceptable: computerized, hand drawn, or scanned images creatively pasted into your document; inserted CAD/AutoCAD graphics; images created in Illustrator, Photoshop, or other design software; Word Paint/Word AutoShapes, Smartart, or Clipart; open-source image editors ([GIMP](#), [Photoscape](#), and [Paint.NET](#)); or photos via smartphone camera or other device.
- *Labels/callouts/annotations*: Label your figures, if applicable. While Google Docs isn't the most ideal software for creating labels on figures, Google Slides will work for creating labels/annotations, to callout components in your image, as well as Microsoft Word and PowerPoint (see "[Labeled Figure Example](#)" example) and professional design applications, but you can also use handwritten annotating.
- *Numbered title*: Include text above or below the figure that clearly describes its content and assign it a number (e.g., "Figure 1. Side View of a Standard Bumper Jack" or "Figure 1. Whole violin with labeled main components"). Note that the caption can have headline-style or sentence-style capitalization for this project.
- *Source caption*: Identify in the caption where the image in the figure came from.
- *In-text reference*: Make sure that the figure is cited in text so that readers can connect the point in the text at which to reference the figure that has been inset in the layout (e.g., "see figure 1").
- See the [sample figure in this section of the example v.0.1 draft](#) and this [example v.02 draft for examples of an inset table](#). Note that figures in the front matter are not numbered, titled, captioned, or cited in the running text while the figures in the main body of the document are numbered, titled, and referenced in the running text of the document.

- For more great strategies on adding graphics to reports, see [graphics](#), as well as strategies for adding tables to reports, see [tables](#) on McMurrey's website.

Cross-references

As a writer, you may find yourself at some writing juncture needing to point readers to closely related information within your report, or to other books and reports that have useful information. These are called cross-references. For example, they can point readers from the discussion of a mechanism to an illustration of it. They can point readers to an appendix where background on a topic is given (background that just does not fit in the text). And they can point readers outside your report to other information—to articles, reports, and books that contain information related to yours (in which case, cross-references to any outside sources need to also be cited, see “In-text citations” below).

- For an example of how a cross-reference might look, [this section of the v.02 draft has a cross-reference hyperlink](#) toward its end after the graphic to help readers see more in an appendix.
- When you create cross-references, McMurrey also provides some excellent guidelines in [cross-references](#).

In-text citations

There are a minimum 3 in-text citations required to correspond with your 3 references. As with all documents, cite your sources in your text so that readers can understand where you're getting your information from and check those sources for more information. Use in-text citation in the middles or at the ends of your sentences to reference your sources, and then place the source documentation information in your “References” section (minimum 3 references, no Wikipedia).

As our default style guide, use IEEE style. To find IEEE style, use either page 173 of your textbook appendix style guide and/or [Purdue's OWL IEEE guidelines](#) for [in-text citation](#) and [reference sections](#). However, there will be some exceptions made for source documentation, including choosing any style guide you wish, and that it will be OK to use another common citation system known as the “notes and bibliography” (NB) style:

- Exceptions: If you want to use another style guide, that works too.
- Exceptions: If you want to use the footnote function that is provided in Google Docs and MS Word that automatically updates footnotes, that's OK (since this function automates the process of citation and makes citing text easier). If you choose to footnote, you'll still

need to cite your references in the “References” section. The easier citation style is to use Chicago Manual’s “notes and bibliography” (NB) style:

- General citation formatting:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html
- NB paper example:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/cmos_nb_sample_paper.html
- See the [example v.02 draft](#) for examples of the above elements throughout the example and at the end of the example.

Rubric

Below is the breakdown of the amount of credit awarded for each element.

Credit amount	Required meso element*
6	Structured paragraphs using methods of idea development - Most of the sections in your document should have rough-draft paragraphs at this point.
4	Transitional language (metadiscourse, signposting) - There should be some instances of metadiscourse for readers, more than one or two at the least.
2	Numbered (fixed) and/or bulleted (unfixed) lists - At least one list. It can be any type of fixed or unfixed list. Lists of figures and tables apply. Content sections are lists but do not apply to this specification (a "Contents" section is its own requirement in your document).
2	Figures and tables (insets) - Please include at least one of the three minimum figures required for your document. ● Graphics can be figures and/or tables. ● Graphics used with the text in the body of the document must be numbered or alphabetized in a fixed list. These main inset figures or tables must be titled. These main figures and tables must be cited in the text, cued either with commas or parentheses. Graphics can also be captioned, but this is not a requirement.
2	Cross-references - At least one cross-reference in your document.
4	In-text citations - Most of your sources in "References" should have corresponding in-text citations in the sentences. Remember, there are 3 minimum sources for your document.
20	Total

*Each of the rows has a corresponding specifications section above that provides details on the various required meso elements in this rubric.

