



FEMA

R0107

Dear National Fire Academy Student:

Congratulations on your acceptance into the U.S. Fire Administration's National Fire Academy's *Communications for Emergency Services Success* course. This is a 2-week course designed to enhance your communication skills. During the course, two subject areas are covered in depth: written and oral communication.

Week 1, Written Communication, provides the requisite knowledge and skills for effective written communication. Writing workshops are designed to study common writing problems, drawing on fire department materials as illustrations. Group and individual evaluation of selected assignment papers submitted by participants is an important feature of the class study.

Week 2, Oral Communication, provides practical and theoretical concepts of effective oral communication, emphasizing public speaking skills. Oral presentations by participants are evaluated by the individual, other participants, and the instructor.

This course includes an on-line computer-based instructional methodology that must be completed **prior to attending class at the National Fire Academy**. The software is called Skills Tutor (language and writing), which is a self-directed tutorial that will enhance your competency. Please refer to the document listed at <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/training/nfa/pre-course/> for instruction on completion of this pre-course requirement.

End-of-class graduation ceremonies are an important part of the course and you are expected to attend. Please do not make any travel arrangements to leave campus until after you and your classmates graduate.

Increasing numbers of students and instructors are bringing laptop computers to campus. You alone are responsible for the security and maintenance of your equipment. The Academy cannot provide you with computer software, hardware, or technical support to include disks, printers, scanners, etc. There is a limited number of 120 Volt AC outlets in the classrooms. A Student Computer Lab is located in Building D and is available for all students to use. It is open daily with technical support provided in the evenings. This lab uses Windows XP and Office 2007 as the software standard.

Should you need additional information related to the course content, feel free to contact Dr. Burton A. Clark, Management Science Curriculum Training Specialist, at (301) 447-1069 or email at burt.clark@fema.dhs.gov

Sincerely,

Dr. Denis Onieal, Superintendent
National Fire Academy
U.S. Fire Administration



Dear *Communications for Emergency Services Success* Course Student:

The United States Fire Administration’s National Fire Academy (USFA/NFA) is making the web-based Skills Tutor Writing and Language tutorial available on-line for students to complete before attending the *Communications for Emergency Services Success* Course. We would appreciate your help in assisting us work through this system by taking the course before you attend the class. We encourage you to use the system so we can address any problems that may occur. However, if you do not complete the requirement before arriving at the NFA, you may continue to work on the materials while you are on campus.

The requirement is that you achieve an **85** percent passing score on each of 8 final exams (one final exam for each of the four modules in Language and the four modules in Writing). We suggest that you complete the Language portion of the requirement first, then the Writing portion. You can go directly to the exams or you can take the lessons or any combination of both. You can keep taking the final exams until you achieve passing scores. The average time of completion for the entire assignment is 20 hours or more.

Requirements for Skills Tutor

The following table lists the requirements for the successful operation of *SkillsTutor*. All of these requirements have been fully tested for proper execution and acceptable performance.

- Important:** Individual system performance can be significantly impacted by conditions outside of the requirements listed in the table. The following conditions may affect performance:
- Local network traffic
 - Bandwidth of the connection to your Internet Service Provider (ISP)
 - Contention with other network users

Your hardware configuration and operating system **MUST** meet the following requirements specified for the browser you are using:

	Windows (98, 2000, NT, ME, XP)	Macintosh (OS 8.x or 9.x)	Macintosh (OS X)
Internet Browsers Supported	<i>Internet Explorer</i> Versions 5.5 SP2 or higher <i>Netscape Navigator</i> Versions 4.76, 6.x or 7.x <i>America Online</i> Version 6 or higher	<i>Internet Explorer</i> Versions 5.1.5 <i>Netscape Navigator</i> Versions 4.76, 6.x or 7.x <i>America Online</i> Version 5 or higher	<i>Internet Explorer</i> Versions 5.1.4 or 5.2.1 <i>Netscape Navigator</i> Versions 4.76, 6.x or 7.x <i>America Online</i> Version 5 or higher
Macromedia Flash Player	Version 5 or higher	Version 5 or higher	Version 5 or higher
Adobe Acrobat Reader	Version 5 or higher	Version 5 or higher	Version 5 or higher
Browser Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Javascript enabled • SSL 1 and 2 enabled • Access to secure pages • Access to Temporary Internet Files 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Javascript enabled • SSL 1 and 2 enabled • Access to secure pages • Access to Temporary Internet Files 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Javascript enabled • SSL 1 and 2 enabled • Access to secure pages • Access to Temporary Internet Files
NO POP-UP WINDOW MANAGERS			
Connection Speed	Minimum 56Kbps	Minimum 56Kbps	Minimum 56Kbps
Display Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 800 x 600 (1024 x 768 recommended) • 256 Colors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 800 x 600 (1024 x 768 recommended) • 256 Colors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 800 x 600 (1024 x 768 recommended) • 256 Colors

Please use this link if you need to download the Adobe Reader or Flash player. These are free downloads – <http://www.adobe.com>.

Directions for Skills Tutor Online

Log on at: <http://myskillstutor.com>



User name will be your first initial and last name. The example used below would be for the name John Smith.

User Name: **jsmith**

Password: **student321** (the password is the same for all students)

Site: **National02 (national zero two)**.

<Now click Log In>

Next you should see the below page. You can now select either Language or Writing assignments.



Please note you may need to disable POP ups from this site as sometimes they can prevent the page from loading. Any technical problems or questions accessing SkillsTutor online please call (301) 447-1660, NFA’s classroom support ‘Technology Coordinator’ will provide assistance as needed.

Questions regarding student rosters, application information, etc., please contact the Office of Admissions at (800) 238-3358, extension 1035 or (301) 447-1035.

Thank you for participating in this new and exciting learning opportunity the USFA is bringing to the American fire service. This is another step toward achieving our mission to "...increase the professionalism of the nation's fire service..."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Burton A. Clark". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'B' and 'C'.

Dr. Burton A. Clark, EFO, CFO
Training Specialist
United States Fire Administration
(301) 447-1069
burt.clark@fema.dhs.gov