

Having a background in the humanities I felt graciously confident in my abilities as a writer, having had to author many papers in my undergraduate experience with theatre studies. I understood how to draft a research paper, and how to go about collecting and framing outside knowledge to support my claims. Despite my background not being in the engineering world, knowing I would need help changing the tone of my writing for my new audience, I was consistently able to rise to the assignment's challenge and did exceptionally well.

In my portfolio, I decided to include all major posts and assignments that we had throughout the semester. From the beginning of the semester, I demonstrated my understanding of description and conveying a story to an audience with the *Baffling Description* assignment in which I chose macarons. Although not every guess of my mystery description was correct, most students understood that this was a baked good to different degrees of individual knowledge on the topic. In my original description I used vague language “Wait until it forms stiff peaks to stop the mixer, then fold in the eggs $\frac{1}{3}$ at a time to our flour-sugar mixer from earlier.” Using the words ‘fold’ and ‘stiff peak’ means something completely different in baking, and therefore needed to be explained better for the second time around. “When you're able to lift the bowl upside down above your head without the eggs falling out, you're ready! Mix the eggs $\frac{1}{3}$ at a time into the flour mixture from earlier by scooping from the outside of the bowl towards the middle gently until incorporated, and you have a light airy batter.” Given this, I was able to understand what I needed to be more descriptive for this audience and took that into consideration when writing for different projects throughout the class. This demonstrated my understanding of developing and engaging in the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes. Having to take into consideration what my peers were viewing in my writing that I could not see helped to give a perspective of someone who did not have the knowledge I already

had. By giving others the chance to read your writing, it allows for someone to show you what goes over your head because you have a deeper understanding of the topic.

The first large assignment for this class required me to use skills that I began developing in my Environmental Engineering class last semester during the lab portion, but now with less of an emphasis on the project and numbers, and more on the clarity, tone, and organization. By using an experiment that has already been performed for us, we are required to show how someone else went through their hypothesis and why. This gave us an understanding of how the process was done well enough so that we could say it back ourselves. By **formulating and articulating a stance through and in my writing, I was able to show the scientists' point about electricity in flames.** "The primary hypothesis that was focused on was that a candle flame contains positive and negative ions, which will be proved first, and because of this they are able to manipulate the conductivity of air." By clearly stating their intentions with my own understanding of the topic, I was able to help my audience understand as well.

When working on our second large assignment for the class I was thrilled to get to pick our own topic and begin doing research. As a barista and avid coffee drinker, I was interested in finding out more information about my beloved Moka pot that I use at home since it gives the closest taste to an espresso machine that one can get on a budget. This alone let me help to **strengthen my source use practices (including evaluating, integrating, quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, synthesizing, analyzing, and citing sources).** While researching for this technical description I used many different resources to find all the information I wanted to have, including comparing information from different websites to see what matched differently. I was able to critically think about my sources and how I would be using them, and which

to use for what when I saw differences. The most common discrepancy was in the temperature of water to use in the bottom chamber. Our last writing project for this class was the most difficult. As an asynchronous class, we had to use our communication skills to create an idea for an engineering proposal. One of the first steps was to produce the idea, and to do so requires research and planning. Because our group had four members in it, that led to many sources being available on our topic. As the writer of the project description of the proposal I had to practice using various library resources, online databases, and the Internet to locate sources appropriate to your writing projects. Although all the sources we gathered on our topic did mention our topic, not every website had the information I would need. This required an understanding of what I would need to be looking for, and key words and elements to narrow down the search. Once actually writing the proposal this was when I was able to best acknowledge my and others' range of linguistic differences as resources and draw on those resources to develop rhetorical sensibility. The role of formatting became part of my job during this project to make sure everyone stayed on topic and within the requirements of the project. I wanted to make sure that everyone's voice was represented in the proposal, and that when read as one paper, it was pleasant and formal.

My understanding of technical writing for the STEM world has become deeper in this class, and this has helped me to grow in my aspirations for the future. I will be able to take the understanding of tone, clarity, and organization that I have gained from this class into my future writing in school, and more importantly in my career.