Spring 4-24-2019

Thinking outside the Toolbox: A Teaching Resource for Vocational Writing

Dustin Ledford
dledfo15@students.kennesaw.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/mapw_etd

Part of the Rhetoric and Composition Commons, Technical and Professional Writing Commons, and the Vocational Education Commons

Recommended Citation
Ledford, Dustin, "Thinking outside the Toolbox: A Teaching Resource for Vocational Writing" (2019). Master of Arts in Professional Writing Capstones. 54.
https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/mapw_etd/54

This Capstone is brought to you for free and open access by the Professional Writing at DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master of Arts in Professional Writing Capstones by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu.
Thinking outside the Toolbox: A Teaching Resource for Vocational Writing
By
Dustin Ledford

A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Professional Writing in the Department of English

In the College of Humanities and Social Sciences of Kennesaw State University

Kennesaw, Georgia

2019
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURRICULUM INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPOSITION FOR HEALTHCARE STUDENTS: COURSE DESIGN &amp; SCHEDULE</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Stakes Assignment 1</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Stakes Assignment 2</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Stakes Assignment 3</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Writing Assignment 1</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Stakes Assignment 4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Stakes Assignment 5</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Stakes Assignment 6</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Writing Assignment 2</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Stakes Assignment 7</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Stakes Assignment 8</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Stakes Assignment 9</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Writing Assignment 3</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Stakes Assignment 10</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Stakes Assignment 11</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Writing Assignment 4</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX: SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS FOR ASSIGNMENTS</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKS CITED</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

This project takes my research into teaching writing in vocational settings and uses it to create a working course design for use in technical colleges and similar institutions. I designed this curriculum to not only improve the quality of my own teaching but also give other faculty a toolkit that helps meet the unique needs of students enrolled in writing classes in technical colleges, career academies, and other institutions where the primary focus is vocational education and training.

I would like to credit this resource to a student I taught at Georgia Northwestern Technical College. While I cannot remember this student’s name clearly, one particular incident several years ago is crystal clear in my memory. I was teaching a lesson on how to write research essays, and we had spent previous class meetings covering the fundamentals of good writing: methods for constructing coherent paragraphs, ways to avoid common grammatical errors, and the fundamentals of the writing process as a means of creating and improving content. We had worked our way through more complex writing assignments during the semester, and I felt my students had become invested in being better writers. At least, this is what I thought until this student interrupted class and, full of frustration, posed a question that led me to rethink my entire approach to teaching writing to vocational students: “Why do I need to learn this? I’m never going to use it. I’m going to be a welder!”

As this student’s teacher and someone who writes for a hobby, I was devastated. I love writing, and perhaps I thought my enthusiasm was contagious. At the very least, I felt that I had the class’s rapt attention and that I was instilling the importance of good writing in them. Having a student ask such a blunt question about whether what I was teaching even mattered to him knocked the wind out of my sails. Looking back, however, there was nothing wrong with the
student’s question. He genuinely wanted to know why he needed to learn to write, and by asking so openly he showed me that I had somehow missed the mark on conveying to my students the relevance of writing in their jobs.

I stumbled for an answer, trying to explain how organizing arguments and writing persuasive, research-backed essays would help students to write in other situations. I brought in the topic of cover letters and resumes and how they also use some of the same fundamentals of persuasive writing needed to write a good essay. I tried to reiterate that the skills here were useful elsewhere and that somewhere, at some time, he would need these skills to be successful in the workplace. I was frustrated and desperate, but I hoped that maybe I had managed to ease his concerns a little.

But having a student put me on the spot like that really changed my outlook on how I taught writing at the technical college. Were essays the best way to teach students writing? Did they really get everything they needed to know about writing in the workplace from practicing the writing process through paragraphs, essays, and research papers? Previously I had taught writing almost exactly as the textbook presented it. We focused on breaking a writing task into steps where students would gradually work through prewriting, outlining, drafting, revising, and proofreading. We reviewed the traditional rhetorical modes and styles of writing like narrative, description, evaluation, process, and persuasion. We started with simple, short assignments and gradually built up to longer essay assignments as the semester continued. From what I understood, this was how writing was taught, and if students were going to learn, writing essays and research papers was the way to do it.

But when I became a graduate student, I found that this was only one composition pedagogy. There is certainly nothing wrong with process—in fact, emphasizing process over
product had been an essential shift in the history of composition theory. Even so, I wondered if the methods I had used up until this point were the best way to teach my students at the technical college how to write. Essays and research papers have earned their place in higher education; in fact, they are almost essential. Students need to learn to communicate in these genres to engage in scholarly discourse and to be fully successful in their other courses. For technical college students, however, I kept coming back to that student’s question: “Why do they need to learn this? They’re going to be welders, medical assistants, and automotive technicians.”

Essays and research papers can be great tools for helping students understand writing. I have taught with these types of assignments for many semesters, but the more I have used them, the more I have questioned whether they were the best method to teach writing in the technical college setting. After all, compared to students in four-year colleges and universities, most technical college students will take fewer English courses (most diploma programs require only one) and many will take fewer writing-heavy courses in general (due to shorter programs of study and fewer general education requirements). Even students who are enrolled in programs with writing-heavy courses (such as Document Production or Medical Office Procedures) must also learn other skills such as phone etiquette, software use, and so on. Lastly, while these courses may teach students writing, they are typically listed as business courses or healthcare courses—and thus they are most often taught by specialists who are experts in their respective fields but may lack specialized training in how to teach writing. I ran into this, in fact, when I had conversations with some of these instructors. Frequently, they were focused heavily on grammatical correctness and clarity, which is important for the business world, but does not always lend itself to helping developing writers improve.
In other words, many technical college students have fewer opportunities to develop their writing skills through guided instruction than most university students. While these students’ programs are less-academically focused than many four-year degrees, these students miss out on critical opportunities to learn and practice writing skills. While it could be argued that technical colleges are intended to train students for the workplace rather than teach them the liberal arts, industry research consistently shows that the skills are taught in liberal arts classes are in high demand. In fact, most of the skills taught in composition courses—writing, critical thinking, oral communication, and research—are consistently at the top of the list for skills desired by employers. One study conducted in 2018 for the American Association of Colleges and Universities found that 75 percent to 90 percent of respondents described skills in oral communication, critical thinking, and written communications as “very important” for recent graduates looking for work with their companies. Another survey, this one conducted by Burning Glass Technologies, found that communication, organization, and writing were the top three essential skills overall across a wide variety of fields (8). Some of these skills even outrank problem solving and customer service in terms of qualifications that were frequently requested by employers. In other words, not treating composition courses and the competencies they teach as just as essential for preparing technical college students for the workplace does these students a great disservice in terms of preparing them for their careers and making them more desirable for employers.

With these concerns in mind, I started this project not only to improve my own teaching but also to pass along my research and experience to other instructors who may work with technical college students. Technical colleges rely heavily on contingent faculty who come from a wide variety of teaching backgrounds. Some have worked in high schools. Others have taught
in colleges and universities. Still others come from different professions entirely and teach
courses as supplemental income. A few may be entirely new to the profession, like I was when I
first began teaching. In any case, all of these instructors would benefit from having a firm
understanding of technical college students, their needs, and what practices may be best for
helping them to grow as writers. To this end, this project adapts existing research on teaching in
vocational settings into a working course design intended to be used with healthcare students.
While most technical college classrooms are made up of students from a wide variety of
programs, I focused this specific course design around healthcare due to its prevalence at
Georgia Northwestern Technical College (GNTC), the amount of writing these students need to
do in their careers, and the availability of writing resources for these fields. With time, I would
like to expand this course design with similar course designs from a much wider variety of
majors such as business, management, industrial systems technology, and so forth to create a
pool of both low-stakes and major writing assignments that instructors could use to meet the
needs of students in any given technical college class, regardless of their specific program or
major.

I am certainly not alone in assembling such a resource. Since I started redesigning my
courses, GNTC as an institution has moved the diploma program English courses to more of a
model of business writing in terms of the textbook and resources used across the department. Of
course, instructors are still given a great deal of freedom to design their own courses, so I wanted
to supplement this movement toward professional writing by conducting research and placing
even more focus on writing relevant to students’ specific programs. This model course design
should show what is possible in terms of blending fundamental composition skills with
contextualized assignments based on program material. My hope with this design is that other
composition instructors can see the potential of this style of contextualized course and what it can offer students in terms of “training” students in how to write for the workplace. After all, many technical college students are practical learners who are hoping to complete a program quickly and then get into the job field. This course design should mirror the job-focused, hands-on approach of vocational education by helping students dive right into the types of writing they might have to do on the job, and, with any luck, not leaving them asking the question that helped kick-start this project in the first place.
Literature Review

Teaching writing in a vocational or technical institution can be a daunting task. While any writing course presents unique challenges, vocational and technical schools often rely on basic composition courses to provide all the fundamental writing skills students need for both academic and workplace writing. In fact, many technical college programs of study have only one dedicated writing course, so instructors must provide students with all needed fundamental communication skills in a single, three-credit course that lasts one semester. After all, writing, like the other liberal arts, has long been seen as somehow different and disconnected from “hands-on” education for trades like what is taught in the technical college setting. Even so, writing is skill in high-demand for many employers. Literacy and communication demands are constantly changing in the digital age, and today’s employees need to be more literate than ever. Digital platforms have made written communication in today’s workplace more ubiquitous than ever, especially with smartphones making email, text messaging, and other forms of digital communication a constant presence. Likewise, challenges created by misinformation on the Internet have made it more important that anyone be able to critically evaluate what they read, regardless of their chosen occupation. With these concerns in mind, how can vocational writing instructors provide their students with the core framework needed to be successful communicators in both their future careers as well as their everyday lives?

To best teach vocational students writing, we must not only scrutinize the divide between liberal arts education and vocational training, but also examine how scholarship can be used to help bring these two spheres together and improve how composition is taught to vocational students. To this end, we need examine what scholarship exists regarding how to teach writing to vocational students, and we must also review how writing programs in university settings have tried to introduce their students to writing for the workplace. One approach to bringing
workplace writing into the university classroom is through professional and business writing courses, where the curriculum focuses primarily on writing documents like memos, proposals, and letters rather than traditional academic genres like essays and research papers. A definite advantage to these courses is that they give students experience writing in these genres with feedback from an instructor, whereas students might otherwise not encounter these genres until they encounter them in the workplace. While we may not be able to teach business writing courses in technical colleges exactly as they are taught in the university, business writing pedagogy has the potential to teach many of the fundamental genres and skills needed for most workplaces, and technical writing instruction lends itself to more specialized documents such as reports.

The Academic-Vocational Divide

To appreciate the challenge of writing instruction that crosses the border between academic and vocational coursework, one must first appreciate the breadth and history of that border. In “Grease on the Keyboard,” Jessica Lourey explains the relationship between traditional liberal arts education and vocational education succinctly, but brutally. She states that the public mostly views the “role of technical colleges as more high school for those who can’t get into ‘real’ college,” an idea that she claims “goes back to the industrial revolution of the late eighteenth century” (175). Mike Rose, in “Not Your Father’s Shop Class,” attributes this divide between intellectual and physical work partly to tracking and placement in middle grades and secondary education, particularly the breakdown of college prep and vocational tracks in high schools. These tracks, he claims, reinforce our concepts of theoretical and physical work as two different “spheres” with disparate educational systems for each (13). Rose recalls this division during his high school experiences in the 1960s and even dates it back to the origins of Western
civilization where philosophers like Plato and Aristotle derided craftsmen as intellectually inferior and “incapable of culture” (qtd. in Rose 13).

Robert B. Schwartz’s “The Pursuit of Pathways: Combining Rigorous Academics with Vocational Training” illuminates the potential problems of this attitude through his discussion of the “forgotten-half” of young people who have been labelled as “not college material” by tracking methods used in many public schools (24). These students are, by and large, placed into vocational or technical tracks because of their performance in school, their economic backgrounds, or their racial or cultural identities. With this tracking, according to Rose, some students are relegated to allegedly less desirable careers in the trades instead of careers that require four-year or graduate-level education (13).

Lourey demonstrates this divide is not a problem limited solely to the public’s perception of vocational education. In her article, she discusses how the divide has sometimes led vocational instructors to resist the integration of more academic coursework into their institutions. According to Lourey, a policy in the Minnesota State College and University System introduced in the late 1990s required new general education courses within the technical college system and caused “an uproar...that saw this [general education] requirement as an infringement on their ability to teach their students the minimum hands-on skills necessary to succeed in the workplace” (175). Significantly, Lourey shows that these concerns are not entirely unfounded: She gives credence to vocational instructors’ questions by reflecting on the “lack of clarity in defining the purpose of composition” by quoting a survey of technical college faculty and students who, for the most part, seem to hold that the purpose of a composition course is to learn how to “organize writing,” “correct grammar,” and “write essays” rather than how to communicate in the workplace (176). From these observations, Lourey claims that “if correcting
grammar and writing essays are two of the top goals of college composition, then it truly does not have a place in the two-year college” (176).

Taking the arguments of Rose and Lourey into consideration, it becomes clear why general education courses such as writing have often struggled to find their place in the technical college. At the same time, however, employer preferences have shifted. Workers need to write and think critically, which necessitates an approach that bridges the gap between the academic and vocational spheres while helping program instructors see the relevance of writing courses in their own disciplines. In other words, writing instruction for vocational education needs to adapt to meet the needs of its audience. Both students and program instructors need to see writing as a fundamental work skill that has immediate, relevant applications in most careers.

The Rise of Professional Writing

Fortunately, composition theorists began a push for integrating professional, business-minded writing as one way of meeting the need for better workplace communication skills. This push began in earnest in the late 1970s, but since then there has been a steady release of professional writing textbooks and scholarship. To better prepare their students for writing in the workplace, many universities and colleges have integrated various, discipline-specific professional writing courses, such as technical writing for science students and business writing for business and marketing students. While this level of specialization has definite advantages, some scholars, like Elizabeth Tebeaux, have expressed concern that while these course designs might help students specialize in their disciplines, their rigidity can give students unrealistic expectations about the texts they would write for their careers (421). Rather than tasking students with writing a wide, organic range of workplace documents in hopes of teaching them transferable strategies, these courses most often have students write only technical reports (in
science writing) and letters and presentations (in business writing) (422). This, potentially, can
defeat the purpose of the professional writing course by not making students any more prepared
for writing in their fields than a generalized writing course does. To avoid this, Tebeaux suggests
that professional writing courses include a wide variety of both letters and reports while zeroing
in on the underlying rhetorical strategies that help students adapt to a wide variety of genres and
audiences (423). To this end, Tebeaux suggests that students be given assignments where they
must carefully make decisions about their tone, strategies, and writing style in order to best reach
a variety of audiences with an assortment of genres (424). Some of her other suggestions, such as
focusing on word processing and oral communication also remain relevant, even if the
technology that students learn with has likely changed since her article was originally published.
Overall, several of Tebeaux’s suggestions make a strong case for the adaptation of professional
writing courses, and the guidelines put forward by Tebeaux can help shape the design of modern
writing courses focused on all kinds of professional writing.

*Business and Professional Writing: A Basic Guide for Americans* by Paul McRae serves
as one of the best contemporary examples of this type of teaching. In this textbook, McRae
outlines the fundamentals of good writing, specifically plain language, the importance of
grammar in clarity, and strategies for copyediting. McRae also provides students guidelines on
document design and a wide variety of professional genres including forms of correspondence,
job-search writing, and presentations. As a whole, McRae offers a robust introduction to
professional and business writing with approachable writing, strong fundamental writing
concepts, and a wide variety of genres to help learners adapt to most writing situations. At the
same time, however, McRae’s text approaches professional writing as an advanced course in
writing, much like how it is listed in many college course catalogs. McRae even illustrates this
clearly through the text itself by stating that “Anyone taking a course in business and professional communication should already be a grammatically correct writer” (61). In other words, even an excellent introductory text in professional writing still treats the subject matter as advanced material that should be preceded by courses in academic writing—like first year composition (FYC)—rather than material that can be used to teach students writing fundamentals.

**Contextualized Writing Instruction**

Contextualization in education refers to “a diverse family of instructional strategies designed to more seamlessly link the learning of foundational skills and academic content by focusing…on concrete applications in a specific context” (Mazzeo et al. 4). In other words, this style of teaching emphasizes taking “academic” ideas and strategies generally taught in general education and firmly grounding them in assignments that use “practical” examples that students might see in the workplace. Sarah A. Parlier conducted one of the largest and most detailed studies into vocational writing instruction as part of her doctoral dissertation, “The Impact of Contextualizing First Year Composition for Occupational Program Students at the Community College: A Study of Student Learning and Student Perceptions.” Parlier researched contextualization, collected existing data, and then designed and implemented her own contextualized course for several classes of community college students in occupational programs. Parlier’s study was, at the time of its writing, the only known well-documented study of contextualization in a composition classroom. In her experiment, Parlier found that “more than half the students in this study demonstrated all six FYC course goals,” and Parlier attributes shortcomings to her responsibilities as a teacher and instructional designer rather than a shortcoming in contextualization as a concept (150).
In her research, Parlier addressed her students’ unique needs on two levels. First, she spoke to a program instructor in Midwest Community College’s diesel power equipment technology program (DPET). Through her meetings with this instructor, Parlier began to appreciate that these applied science majors must “understand the entire problem and then need to be able to think through potential solutions and see the results of their efforts” and that they “needed to know the purpose for every activity and needed multiple opportunities to practice and receive feedback” (73). Through this understanding, Parlier went on to develop a contextualized course for a CAT mechanic program wherein the required types of writing (narrative, expository, and persuasive) were incorporated into assignments designed to imitate the types of writing projects, such as incident reports, work orders, etc., that these students might need to complete as part of their future careers (76). Her specialized course saw positive feedback from her students as well as higher overall engagement, eventually leading her to develop similar English course designs for the DPET program as well.

But while Parlier’s experience with Caterpillar’s ThinkBIG program may be the most well-known and well-documented case of contextualized composition, it is certainly not the only research drawn from teaching composition in that initiative. Jennifer Holden’s “Building a Better Technician: One Teacher’s Account” similarly documents her experiences using contextualization through a learning community. Though Parlier’s research may be more extensive, Holden pioneered many of the techniques Parlier used to develop her course, including working in conjunction with a program instructor and researching the material that her students would study in their program. Additionally, Holden’s research documents her visits to several CAT dealerships, where she interviewed technicians, salespeople, managers, and other personnel to gain a stronger grasp of the reading and writing skills needed to be successful in this
workplace (28). Much like Parlier, Holden incorporated this information in designing her own grammar exercises and writing practice, which she implemented into her course without reducing its overall difficulty or stringency.

**Integrated Academic Content**

While both Parlier’s and Holden’s approaches put most of the burden upon the English instructor, collaboration with vocational program instructors plays a major role in both studies. Holden’s example, in particular, relies upon the integration of more writing assignments within the students’ program courses, with that program instructor making an effort to grade for “spelling, word usage, and other errors on students’ homework, service reports, and exams” (27). Holden is far from the only instructor to use this sort of model, however, as the idea of integrating writing instruction across other disciplines is a common practice across several forms of CTE instruction. One of the most prevalent and well-researched models for integrating reading and writing into vocational coursework is having students write reflective journals based on their studies. Angela M. Kohnen provides one model for this practice through her survey of instructor’s opinions on embedded English credits, a CTE program that allows students to earn one English credit for two years of relevant coursework in their CTE classes.

For this study, a welding instructor and a construction management instructor, selected based on their interest in incorporating writing in their courses, were interviewed and provided with rubrics that were assembled by the school’s “literacy team” (Kohnen 662). Students in their courses were required to compose daily or weekly journal entries (at the instructor’s discretion), which were then graded based on the rubric. In the cases studied, instructors incorporated journaling in two different ways. The first instructor would have his students write one to two paragraphs based on what the students learned, what they wanted to learn, and what they didn’t
get to learn; the other instructor instead focused his journaling around what the students did by asking these students to write about their work for the day when they had time (Kohnen 665). In both cases, writing projects focused on several key goals: application in the workplace, relevance to the field, and helping students better learn the material (Kohnen 666). Most interestingly, both instructors in this study rejected initial “generic” prompts written by the literacy team leader because while these prompts were seen as relevant to every program, neither instructor found them relevant to what the students were actually learning. Both vocational program instructors were much more receptive to reflective writing that also tasked students with thinking about their daily work, however. When time permitted, one of the instructors preferred a pattern where students were engaged in their daily work and then proceeded to write about what they did (Kohnen 666). In this way, students were able to “keep their minds limber” through writing, in the words of one instructor, but also reflect on the challenges of the physical work that they were doing (665).

**Developing Cross-Curriculum Course Content through Collaboration**

Kohnen concludes her study with the proclamation that content-area literacy initiatives should be left primarily to vocational program instructors (668). At the same time, however, the research conducted by Holden, Lourey, and Parlier all demonstrate the ability of writing instructors to incorporate this content effectively with the assistance of instructors in the disciplines. In fact, all three of these researchers illustrate more uniform progress among students when compared to the “top down” model studied by Kohnen. Parlier and Holden, in particular, demonstrate the potential of English courses that take advantage of specialized composition knowledge to design assignments that meet course standards while also integrating vocational content in an engaging, applicable way. Likewise, as Kohnen demonstrates with the example of
the welding instructor, the challenges of intense vocational class workloads can sometimes leave little room for reflective writing (665). In short, the idea that writing in vocational programs should be left to the teachers of those vocational classes may seem efficient, but it does not give credit to the specialized knowledge and training of writing instructors, particularly in rhetorical theory, and how that theory can help students become better readers and writers when it is combined with concrete examples and practical assignments.

**Implementing Rhetorical Theory with “Real World” Writing**

Additionally, relying on program instructors to develop cross-curricular writing risks simplifying many aspects of writing by focusing exclusively on product and neglecting the underlying process and theory of writing that can help students adapt to a wide variety of situations. One potential solution to this problem comes from Cox et al., who suggest a “rhetorically-based model” that has teachers “call students’ attention to texts as sites of negotiation between writers, readers, and contexts” (74). To this end, Cox et al. implemented a “Case Study Project” where instructors made contact with organizations outside of the school and collaborated with them on designing learning experiences for students. These projects asked organizations to provide sample documents and an “order” for a document that students would have to fill collaboratively as an assignment, thereby giving students an audience and context for their writing task. In this project, students are given a firm background in rhetoric on which they can draw to do their “real world” writing. They are asked to analyze examples and consider elements like genre, purpose, and audience, especially in how these elements play a role in documents’ ability to convey meaning (Cox et al. 76).

Additionally, Cox et al. implement process pedagogy as a key element in their rhetorically-based model. The authors break down the steps of the project into concrete phases
where students work through studying various elements of writing in the classroom, meeting their “client” for the project, planning out a document together, doing prewriting to develop their ideas, then drafting, revising, and editing. Besides teaching writing as a gradual, multistep process, Cox et al. even use stages of their process as teaching moments for genres. Specifically, students are asked to brainstorm and collaborate aloud while they draft, and their notetaking becomes a means of teaching meeting minutes as a genre (Cox et al. 78). As a whole, Cox et al. demonstrate the potential impact composition pedagogy can have on improving how business writing can be taught, and though other teachers of writing may not want to replicate their model exactly, it demonstrates the viability of a rhetorically-based, process-driven model of workplace writing instruction and demonstrates that Kohnen’s model of leaving writing instruction almost entirely to vocational program instructors may not be the most ideal method to use in the technical college setting.

**Writing in Vocational Program Curricula**

Although teaching writing is primarily the domain of English teachers within the technical college, one must also zero in on how writing is taught in occupational courses to gain a full understanding of student’s needs in these settings. Alexandra P. Young’s *Kinn’s The Administrative Medical Assistant: An Applied Learning Approach* offers some insight into a potentially writing-heavy career through the resources it provides for medical assistants in training. In this course, students are introduced to the responsibilities of medical assistants through “an easy-to-read, highly interactive writing style,” “an emphasis on skill development with procedural steps outlining each skill,” and scenarios that contextualize core skills in real-world situations (viii). Even so, writing in this course can only be allotted a limited time frame, with only one of twenty-six total chapters being specifically dedicated to written
communications. In this lone chapter, writing is introduced through a short writing process including annotating questions and verifying, drafting, proofreading, and rewriting for clarity. This is subsequently followed by a short grammar review and, within a total of three pages, the chapter moves on to questions of stationery and letter formats (Young 225-228). In short, while the text does emphasize writing as an important skill for medical assistants, the density of the course content leaves limited time for an in-depth exploration of writing, its practices, and how students can improve.

**Conclusion**

A review of the existing research into integrating writing and information literacy into vocational programs yields several conclusions. First, students generally seem to respond positively to applicable writing assignments that utilize material that they are studying in their vocational programs. At the same time, overspecialization can leave students underprepared for the wide variety of writing tasks they may face in the workplace. Second, professional writing texts potentially offer excellent resources to vocational students, but few are aimed at serving as an introductory-level course on writing. Instead, many textbooks treat professional writing as an “advanced genre” for which students need prior writing instruction. Third, collaboration between program instructors and writing teachers seems to be the most reliable means of developing contextualized content. Fourth, journaling offers a relatively easy means for program instructors to integrate writing into their own courses while also reinforcing the material they are teaching, provided these program instructors have a voice in how the writing is integrated.

While it could be argued that vocational students could further develop their writing skills within their major-specific courses, these courses are often heavily burdened with program-specific material already. If anything, students may need some prior experience with those types of
writing prior to taking those major-specific courses to help bolster their understanding and provide program instructors with a stronger “starting point” for teaching students the nuance of writing in their fields.
Curriculum Introduction

Having defined some of the needs of students taking composition in the technical college classroom and reviewed the existing research into teaching writing in vocational settings, integrating vocational content into writing courses, and professional writing instruction I created the following curriculum as a demonstration of how contextualized course design can benefit technical college English courses. To ensure that this design is grounded in the reality of course requirements, I assembled this curriculum to directly address the course competencies of a representative writing course. I specifically choose the required English course for diploma programs, English 1010, as this class is only for technical college students instead of being a transferable credit for dual-enrollment students or those who intend to go on to a four-year college or university. The representative course fulfills one of the “Basic Skills” or general core curriculum requirements for accredited diploma programs in the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), and it is the only required English course for most diploma programs. The four learning objectives (competencies) for this course that appear on the English 1010 syllabus are as follows:

1. Analysis of Writing
   a. Read and analyze writing to identify subject, focus, and support.

2. Applied Grammar and Writing Skills
   a. Compose a variety of writing assignments to prepare students for writing in the workplace
   b. Produce logically organized, grammatically acceptable writing.

3. Editing and Proofreading Skills
   a. Revise to improve ideas, style, organization, and format with word processing.
b. Edit to improve grammar, mechanics, and spelling.

4. Research Skills
   a. Access, use, and document appropriate resources to support writing.

5. Oral Communication Skills
   a. Apply oral communication skills in discussions and/or presentations.

   Taking these course competencies into consideration, this course is constructed around a combination of genre and process pedagogies. The goal of any technical college course is to better prepare students for the workplace, so students taking this course need to be able to adapt to a wide variety of writing situations. To this end, this course design is based around Carol Miller’s idea of genres as “typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations” (159). In other words, students should understand genres and conventions not as arbitrary hurdles to writing but rather as combinations of diction, structure, and formatting that help convey a specific message to a specific audience.

   While I have simplified many traditional rhetorical terms into what I would consider “plain English” (based in part on some of Karin Russell’s textbook Write Now), students should be exposed to fundamental concepts of rhetoric even from the beginning of the course. This helps students to appreciate that written and oral communication should be thoughtful acts or “trade skills” that take knowledge and practiced expertise rather than “manual labor” that is done simply to complete a requirement or receive a grade. To facilitate this, each set of assignment guidelines is framed by a “Situation” section that is intended to help students think about that writing task as a problem to be solved (exigence) with a specific audience to address. To further encourage this level of understanding, students in this course engage in reading and writing
about an assortment of sample texts, which simultaneously helps to fulfill the course’s first core competency (analysis of writing).

Likewise, to help students employ their rhetorical knowledge in writing, this course implements process pedagogy in several key ways. First of all, students complete major writing assignments over several drafts and, ideally, have the opportunity for revision based on peer and instructor feedback. Modules are also constructed around low-stakes assignments intended to guide students through their major writing assignments gradually, encouraging them to research, brainstorm, and outline before moving onto polished drafts. In particular, many of these low-stakes assignments incorporate elements of rhetorical questioning such as those introduced by Richard Larson in the early days of process pedagogy. These assignments are intended to “force students to become as familiar as possible with the facts, and possible relationships among the facts, about experiences on which they might write and…examine the facts underlying concepts they consider important and the content of propositions on which they may want to write” (128). As students engage in both low-stakes assignments and major writing assignments, they will practice the second and third course competencies (applied grammar/writing skills and proofreading/editing). Workshopping and collaborative assignments are particularly important for the third competency, as they give students organized practice with editing and revising while engaging in process-based writing.

While these types of teaching methods are hardly unique to this particular course, what makes this design different from some traditional curricula is that it is grounded in concepts of contextualization and professional writing. Taking a note from Parlier and Holden’s collaboration with occupational program instructors, this curriculum was developed with input from one of GNTC’s instructors, Gina Stephens, who teaches both healthcare and business
courses as part of the medical assisting program. Using documents she provided and supplemental documents found through research, I developed assignments that give students the opportunity to practice fundamental writing concepts like audience awareness, research, and persuasion through assignments themed around medical content.

As discussed in the literature review, grounding writing in students’ vocational programs shows considerable improvements in student engagement as well as in the number of students who attain the course competencies (see Pallier and Holden). While ideally a general composition course could provide a variety of contextualized assignments for different majors (and possibly assignments for undeclared majors), the following curriculum models this type of design through a single program area: healthcare (especially medical office careers). I selected healthcare for this design due to both the number of students enrolled in healthcare programs as well as the availability of materials (writing resources, documents, and so on).

This narrow focus on a single program area helps to create a more cohesive, sequential course design that can act as a proof of concept for how a course can be constructed to meet TCSG’s general composition requirement while also engaging students in their programs of study. While not every assignment here is a perfect representation of work in the medical office, the goal of these assignments is to expose students to some of the genres they may encounter in healthcare and give them a sense of the style of writing in those fields while also helping them build general writing skills in accordance with the TCSG-defined course competencies.

The curriculum here would be best used with a class comprised entirely of students majoring in healthcare or considering a healthcare major. While an English course of only healthcare majors might not be logistically feasible for every institution, administrators, program faculty, and advisors can likely make that decision based on enrollment and careful scheduling
around major-specific courses. In any case, advisors should be made aware of any “major-focused” writing courses so that they can inform students before they enroll in these sections.

Additionally, the theoretical framework used here could be used equally well in any number of programs of study, provided that instructors have the time and support to develop curricula for those majors. If such course designs were developed, they might be presented to students as alternative assignments for each module, with the same core skills taught to every student and then practiced through assignments unique to their program (or general program area, if a major is particularly uncommon). This could require more work on the part of the instructor, however, as students will likely have a wider range of questions due to the variety of assignment guidelines. Likewise, the instructor may want to consider how to address assignment-specific questions so that students who are working on an alternate assignment do not feel excluded from the class discussion or neglected by the instructor.

With that said, this curriculum demonstrates the specifics of a model healthcare course while also providing a rough framework on which courses might be designed for other programs of study. The course schedule is divided into sequential modules that guide students through the writing process while also specifically addressing each course competency for the representative course (English 1010). Since this curriculum is designed for a fifteen-week semester, students are tasked with either a low-stakes assignment or a major writing assignment due each week, with three low-stakes assignments and one major writing assignment for each module.

Each low-stakes assignment is designed to have students critically assess writing, brainstorm for a larger document, or practice concepts covered in the module. At the end of each module students should bring together all the skills they have developed to complete the major writing assignment. Major writing assignments present students with workplace scenarios that
must be addressed using some genre of workplace writing, such as an email, formal letter, or professional presentation. Ideally, time should be set aside either in class (or through online collaboration) for students to engage in a peer review workshop prior to turning in a major writing assignment. By doing so, students not only gain the benefits of improving their own writing but also the experience proofreading, editing, and collaborating to create better texts (and fulfill the editing and proofreading course competency).

Since the modules are sequential, the skills developed in each module carry over to the next one. The first module introduces students to critical reading, rhetorical concepts like audience and situation, and the writing process. The second module adds another layer of complexity by discussing audience in more detail through the theme of medical terminology and jargon. It also touches upon different modalities and visual rhetoric and the role they play in reaching specific audiences in specific genres. The third module introduces concepts of argumentation and research, particularly the use of sources for fact-checking and supporting claims with factual evidence. Lastly, the final module moves the theme of communication from exclusively written communication to oral communication and presentations, finally culminating in a comprehensive final project where students compose and deliver a researched presentation with the help of PowerPoint or another platform of their choosing.

By the time students complete this course, they should not only have a strong grasp of the skills emphasized by the course competencies, but they should also be more familiar and more comfortable with several workplace genres. For many technical college students, the majority of their writing will be in these genres, and so this course should better prepare them to write at work. Those students who do decide to go on to pursue further schooling will have been exposed to the fundamentals of good writing and a wide variety of different tasks and genres, even if they
do less academic writing with this particular course design. Many of them may have to take more writing courses to complete those programs, but with the fundamentals they get with this course design, most should have the foundation they need to succeed in those courses as well.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module/Week</th>
<th>Course Content</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td><strong>Effective Communication</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Writing Situation</td>
<td>Low-Stakes Assignment (LSA) 1: Understanding the Writing Situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Analyzing Writing</td>
<td>LSA 2: Analyzing Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Writing Process</td>
<td>LSA 3: Prewriting and Drafting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Revising and Editing Strategies</td>
<td>Peer Review Workshop 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Major Writing Assignment 1: Response Letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td><strong>Audience, Genre, and Context</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Adapting to Audience</td>
<td>LSA 4: Writing for Different Contexts and Audiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Diction, Jargon, and Slang</td>
<td>LSA 5: Diction, Jargon, and Terminology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sentence Structure and Phrasing</td>
<td>LSA 6: Revising and Adapting for Audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Genres, Conventions and</td>
<td>Peer Review Workshop 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adapting Writing for Different</td>
<td>Major Writing Assignment 2: Translation Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contexts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td><strong>Research &amp; Persuasion</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Persuasive Writing</td>
<td>LSA 7: The Three Appeals Writers Use to Persuade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Choosing and Using Sources</td>
<td>LSA 8: Evaluating Medical Sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Citations and References</td>
<td>LSA 9: Professionally Crediting Sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Research and Persuasion Review</td>
<td>Peer Review Workshop 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Major Writing Assignment 3: Patient Diet Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 4</td>
<td><strong>Speaking and Presenting</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Public Speaking</td>
<td>LSA 10: Preparing for Oral Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Multimedia Composition</td>
<td>LSA 11: Analyzing Visual Rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module/Week</td>
<td>Course Content</td>
<td>Assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Presenting</td>
<td>Peer Review Workshop 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Major Writing Assignment 4: Presentation and Visual Text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Low-Stakes Assignment 1
Understanding the Writing Situation

Background
One of the key strategies to effective communication is a strong understanding of the writing situation. The writing situation refers to fundamentals of a given writing task including subject, audience, purpose, strategy and design. One way to consider each of these elements is to ask yourself the following questions:

- What needs to be written about? (Subject)
- Who you are writing to? (Audience)
- Why you are writing? (Purpose)
- How will make your message clear? (Strategy)
- What should your document look like? (Design)

While no two writing situations are exactly alike, training your ability to recognize these elements can help you write more clearly and purposefully. By having these attributes in mind, you can plan your writing around the needs of your audience and situation.

Task
For this assignment, you will work with a small group to review and analyze a text as a team. As you look at the text, you will answer the following questions about it.

1. Look at the general design and appearance of the text. How would you describe the genre of this piece of writing? Is it a business letter? An academic paper? A medical form? Something else? What features (conventions) do you notice that give you clues to what it is?

2. What is the text about, in general terms? How would you describe its subject and intended message?

3. Who seems to be the intended audience for this text? What clues do you have to determine that? How does the writer (or how do the writers) attempt to reach that audience?

4. Why is the text trying to do? Is it informing someone about a topic? Attempting to persuade them to make a change or take an action? Is it just intended to entertain? Could the text be serving multiple purposes at once?

5. What strategies does the text use to get its message across? Does it include descriptions? Use examples? Tell stories? Are there places where emotionally charged language emphasizes certain ideas? Are any ideas repeated for emphasis?
Background
Communication is a fundamental skill both in the workplace and in our personal lives. Every day we engage in some form of communication when we speak to a colleague, write an email, send a text message, or even mentally talk ourselves through a difficult problem.

To communicate effectively, we have to be intentional communicators. We have to think about our message and our audience, and how to best adapt our message to make it as clear as possible to the person (or people) to whom we are writing. Likewise, written communication can make a strong impression on an audience; writing poorly may make a poor impression on the reader in addition to distorting the message or providing inaccurate or confusing information.

Additionally, part of being a professional communicator is being a prepared communicator. While you may not always know everything that there is to know about a particular subject, making an effort to do your research and learn what you can before asking a supervisor or boss demonstrates both a strong work ethic and a willingness to take initiative rather than asking others to do something you could reasonably do on your own.

Task
For this assignment, you have been provided with a sample job posting and an email message in response to that job posting. This email message has been written from the perspective of a job applicant seeking more information about an online job posting for a medical assistant at a small clinic.

Take a moment to review the posting, then the email sent to the employer. Based on the information provided, what problems can you identify with the email? What does the writer do well? What could the writer have done better?

If you were the employer who received this email, how would it impact your decision on whether or not to hire this person?

Write a brief analysis of the email that uses specific examples from the email to identify problem areas with Wendy’s response to the job posting, why it might make a bad impression on the employer, and how she might improve her writing in future emails.
Certified Medical Assistant (Full-Time)

Certified medical assistant needed for small but dedicated team of professionals. Desired candidate must demonstrate exceptional interpersonal skills and dedication to patient health and well-being. Experience preferred, but recent graduates welcome to apply.

Qualifications

- High school diploma or equivalent required.
- Medical assistant or nursing degree or certificate required.
- Strong written and oral communication skills.
- Excellent customer service skills.
- Patient-centered attitude.
- Familiarity with Microsoft Office Suite.
- Ability to work independently and with doctors and nurses as needed.

Responsibilities

- Greet patients and provide excellent customer service.
- Answer telephone and email.
- Record and input patient data including insurance information.
- Draw blood and properly label and store samples.
- Take and record vital signs (blood pressure, pulse).
- Authorize prescriptions and refills.
- Show patients to exam rooms.
- Prepare and clean exam rooms to maintain a sterile clinic environment.

Applicants must submit their applications with a cover letter, resume, and three professional references. Before being hired, prospective employees must submit to a background check and provide proof of certification.
February 28, 2019

Eileen Employer
2200 Workplace Lane
Somewhere, GA XXXXX

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing you in regards to the job posting. I have recently graduated from Vocational Tech with my associates degree and am excited to start a good paying job in medical assistantship.

I believe that I am a great candidate for the job because I worked an internship in the field as part of my program. I love working with people and am a great communicator who pays great attention to details.

Quick question however. What do I need to submit to apply for this job? Do you need a resume and cover letter? Do I need to send you a transcript to? Do I need a background check? Please let me know ASAP so that I can apply.

Your future employee,

Wendy
Low-Stakes Assignment 3
Prewriting & Drafting

Background
Thinking about writing as a process can be a way to take otherwise daunting writing tasks and make them much more manageable and organized. Rather than tackling a task without direction, you can instead break down the process of completing almost any writing task into the following steps:

1. Prewriting (Brainstorming or Generating Ideas)
2. Outlining
3. Drafting
4. Revising
5. Editing

Task
For this assignment, take some time to review the assignment guidelines for Writing Assignment 1 (WA1). After reading through the guidelines in their entirety, review those guidelines and answer the following questions. Consider making a list of details or completing some freewriting to help you develop your ideas.

1. Who is your audience?
2. What is the recipient asking for? What should you provide him or her with?
3. What other components should your letter include?
4. Are there any major concerns you need to address?

After doing some prewriting, create an outline for WA1. Think about paragraph breaks and what you will need to include. This outline can be as detailed or as simple as you want, but make sure it provides you with a firm plan of action for writing your response to the prompt in WA1.
Major Writing Assignment 1
Response Letter

Background
While email and various electronic messaging has become the go-to for many communication tasks in the workplace, sometimes traditional letters are still used in cases where information must be clearly documented and official records must be maintained.

Much like with email, there are certain standards that should be maintained when writing professional letters. Of course, some workplaces may have specific standards unique to their professional culture, industry, and code of ethics; there are also general rules that apply to almost any professional setting:

- Remember the person you are communicating with. Think about their needs when you write your message.
- Keep in mind that every interaction reflects on both you and your employer.
- Be straightforward and direct, but polite.
- Thoroughly plan your messages to make sure all the necessary information is included.
- Proofread and edit carefully.

Task
For this assignment, you will be taking the critical reading skills we’ve developed thus far and applying them in a mock workplace situation. For this situation, imagine that you work in the front office of a small clinic, where you answer phone calls, respond to emails and letters, and handle patient check-in and processing.

While working in the front office, you receive the letter on the following page. Read this letter carefully and critically, taking into consideration the nature of the message, what is being asked for, how you should respond, and what you should provide in your response.

After carefully reading the email, draft your letter as if you were replying to the original sender. Use a simplified letter format and compose your message using Microsoft Word (or a similar word processor). There are several templates available online and through Word.
March 5, 20--

Susan Oswald, M.D.
1000 Medical Place
Rome, GA 30165

MEDICAL RECORDS REQUEST (REGINA DEWITT)

Dear Dr. Oswald:

We are writing your office to request a transferal of medical records for Mrs. Regina Dewitt, who has recently made our office her primary care provider. Mrs. Dewitt called on Friday (March 1) to schedule an appointment with us for this coming Friday (March 8).

Mrs. Dewitt has informed our office that she was provided with exceptional care by Dr. Oswald, and that Dr. Oswald has extensive information on all of Mrs. Dewitt’s healthcare needs. As you certainly know, initial visits can be a bit difficult as everything is entered into the system and the staff learns all of a patient’s needs.

In anticipation of her visit, we would like to request her medical records so that we might provide her with the most informed care possible.

Our fax number is (111) 555-9032. If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office at (706) 249-1100 or email us at frontoffice@friendlymedicalgriffin.com

Sincerely,

Amanda Hess
Front Office Assistant
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content (25%)</th>
<th>Unacceptable (0-5)</th>
<th>Developing (5-10)</th>
<th>Acceptable (10-15)</th>
<th>Accomplished (15-20)</th>
<th>Exemplary (20-25)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The letter does not provide the audience with the information she needs. Please review the guidelines carefully.</td>
<td>The letter provides the audience with the basic information she needs but lacks several parts of a professional letter. Please review the guidelines carefully.</td>
<td>The letter provides the audience with the information she needs in a formal letter, but at least one major part of that letter is missing, such as the introduction or closing.</td>
<td>The letter addresses all of the audience’s needs thoroughly. Every question is answered adequately and all parts of the professional letter are included.</td>
<td>The letter not only provides the audience with the information she needs, but also addresses future questions through follow-up information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizatio n (25%)</th>
<th>Unacceptable (0-5)</th>
<th>Developing (5-10)</th>
<th>Acceptable (10-15)</th>
<th>Accomplished (15-20)</th>
<th>Exemplary (20-25)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The letter is highly disorganized. Please review the instructor’s feedback for more information.</td>
<td>The letter is disorganized. Information may be out of order, and paragraphs may be divided in ways that are confusing to read and understand.</td>
<td>The letter is reasonably organized, but would benefit from small changes to how its ideas are sorted. Some paragraphs may be a bit too long, or some details could be better emphasized by arranging them differently.</td>
<td>The submission demonstrates good organization that leads the reader through the content in an easy-to-understand way with reasonable paragraph breaks.</td>
<td>The submission demonstrates exceptional organization with how paragraphs are divided to emphasize the content.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clarity (25%)</th>
<th>Unacceptable (0-5)</th>
<th>Developing (5-10)</th>
<th>Acceptable (10-15)</th>
<th>Accomplished (15-20)</th>
<th>Exemplary (20-25)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The letter has many errors in grammar, phrasing, and/or mechanics that make it extremely difficult to read and understand. Please review the instructor’s feedback for more information.</td>
<td>The letter has multiple major errors in grammar, phrasing, and/or mechanics that make it difficult to read and understand.</td>
<td>The letter uses language that is mostly easy to understand, but has some noticeable issues with clarity due to sentence structure, punctuation, or other grammatical concerns.</td>
<td>The submission uses clear, concise wording that is mostly free of punctuation and grammatical issues that could confuse the reader or change the writer’s intended meaning.</td>
<td>The submission uses clear, concise phrasing and effective punctuation to express the ideas clearly and concisely.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style/Tone (25%)</strong></td>
<td>The letter has major issues with phrasing and wording that reflect very poorly on the organization. Please review the instructor’s feedback for more information.</td>
<td>The letter has significant issues with phrasing and wording that seems unprofessional. Perhaps the letter is written too informally, does not show proper respect for the reader and patient, or reflects poorly on the writer and the writer’s employer.</td>
<td>The letter has several issues in phrasing and wording that could make a bad impression of the writer or the writer’s employer, but as a whole the letter portrays both positively.</td>
<td>The letter mostly uses a polite, formal tone that portrays the writer and the writer’s employer positively, but there may be some issues in phrasing or wording.</td>
<td>The letter uses a professional, polite tone that portrays the writer and writer’s employer as welcoming, helpful and patient-centered.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Low-Stakes Assignment 4
Writing for Different Contexts and Audiences

Situation
Audience awareness is crucial to making writing clear to its readers. To make your message as clear as possible, you must make an effort to understand who you are writing to, what they need to know, and even what they already know. What sort of vocabulary will be easy for your audience to understand? What level of formality and complexity do they expect?

While you want to be thorough and detailed, you must be careful not to write with such complexity that your reader is lost in details and advanced concepts. Likewise, while you want to be clear and concise, an educated reader might feel as though a piece of writing is “dumbed down” to the point of insulting his or her intelligence.

It is often best to assess your audience as well as you can in terms of education, prior knowledge, and even time available. Audience awareness should shape how you write a particular document including the information you include, how you structure your sentences, and even the words that you use.

Task
For this assignment, you have been provided with two documents about vaccinations that were published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). One of these documents is written for healthcare professionals while the other is written for patients. Look over both of these documents carefully and compare them. As you do, answer the following questions in short, 2-4 sentence responses.

1. Who seems to be the intended audience for “Make a Strong Flu Vaccine Recommendation”? What about “No More Excuses: You Need a Flu Vaccine”? What are some of the clues that help you identify the audience of each poster? How does the intended audience seem to impact word choice and how sentences are written, if at all?

2. How does the subject matter differ between these two flyers? Why would the authors need to address this topic slightly differently for each audience? What is at least one specific example of how the subject is handled differently between flyers?

3. What is the purpose (or goal) of each flyer? What do these purposes have in common? What is different about each flyer’s purpose?

4. What are some specific strategies used to make and support the claim of each flyer? What do you notice is different about the strategies used in each one?

5. What are three noticeable differences in formatting between the two documents (color, use of bold, headings, placement of information, and so on)? Why do you think the authors of each document made these choices? How might they appeal to their intended audiences or draw their audiences’ attention to specific pieces of information?
Low-Stakes Assignment 5
Diction, Jargon, and Terminology

Situation
As you may already know, the medical field makes extensive use of technical terminology. These specialized words and terms, sometimes called jargon, ease the process of communication for specialists who are familiar with this terminology. Rather than having to explain, at length, the specifics of a patient’s condition or symptoms, medical terminology allows healthcare professionals to use only a few specific terms to provide highly detailed information for reports and other documents.

While jargon can be useful to writers and readers who know it well, these same words and phrases can confuse readers who are unfamiliar with a particular type of jargon. In fact, you may have encountered this problem when reading a text where the writer uses vocabulary that you find unusual (or at least unfamiliar). While it can be tempting, at times, to ignore these words and keep reading (or to stop reading the text), part of being an effective writer (and an effective reader) is developing a habit of expanding your vocabulary whenever you encounter unfamiliar words. While you may not remember every new word, developing a habit of looking up words will help you to better understand what you read.

Task
Carefully read the writing sample on the following page. If you encounter a word that you do not recognize, copy that term onto a list for your reference. Do this as you read the entire document, and be careful not to skip any unfamiliar words without copying them down.

Once you have assembled your list of terms, go back through them and separate the terms into two separate lists: One for words that seem like specialized medical terms/terminology and one for any unfamiliar words that do not seem to be medical terms.

Having categorized your terms, go back to the document and reread. Looking at the context, what do you think the word means? Choose five of the words you listed and write down what you think they mean. (If you don’t have five words, try to identify words that others might find unfamiliar instead.)

After writing your interpretations of what you think each word means, use a dictionary to look up each one. Rather than copying down the dictionary definitions word for word, write new definitions based on what you learned. Putting these definitions in your own words will often help you to remember their meaning.

Lastly, try to write a sentence using each of the definitions that you learned. After all, learning new vocabulary requires not only recognizing new words when you read but also practicing how to correctly use those words in your own writing.

For looking up your definitions, consider one of the following resources:
https://www.medilexicon.com/ (for medical terms)
https://www.merriam-webster.com/ (for general definitions)
Mr. S was in his usual state of health until last week (~ Saturday, November 18), when he began to experience recurrent episodes of chest pain, exactly like his past angina, after walking only one block. This represented a significant change in his anginal pattern, which is normally characterized as mild discomfort which occurs after walking vigorously for 8 or 9 blocks. In addition, 1 day prior to admission, the pain occurred while he was reading a book and resolved after taking a nitroglycerin tablet. It lasted perhaps 1 minute. He has also noted swelling in his legs over this same time period and has awakened several times in the middle of the night, gasping for breath. In order to breathe comfortably at night, Mr. S now requires the use of 3 pillows to prop himself up, whereas in the past he was always able to lie flat on his back and sleep without difficulty. Mr. S is known to have poorly controlled diabetes and hypertension. He currently smokes 2 packs of cigarettes/day. He denies fevers, chills, cough, wheezing, nausea vomiting, recent travel, or sick contacts.
Low-Stakes Assignment 6
Revising and Adapting for Audience

Background
In previous assignments, we reviewed the concept of medical terminology and the use of specialized language in job-specific writing. While recognizing, understanding, and using these common medical terms are part of a medical professional’s job responsibilities, sometimes medical professionals may find themselves writing to outside audiences.

One instance of this occurs when a medical professional needs to write documentation or advice for a patient. Though technical terms are reasonable and even expected in documents between doctors, nurses, assistants, and other personnel, these technical terms can be confusing for patients and sometimes can obscure the meaning of critical information.

For this assignment, you will be taking a small sample of specialized medical writing and adapting that material for a more general audience. Your revised message should use a medical dictionary or similar resource to “translate” the core message and key details to be easier for a general audience to read.

Task
Carefully read the attached writing sample. If you encounter a word that you do not recognize, look up that term and copy down the definition for your own reference. Take the document sentence by sentence to make certain you fully understand what is being said.

Once you have a firm grasp of what the document is saying, work on translating its meaning into simple, phrasings that are straightforward and easy to read. Think about what would make the document more readable without losing its meaning. What are some long and complicated phrases that could be reworded or split into separate sentences? Are there simpler ways to phrase some ideas by either removing technical terminology or defining it for the reader?

As you revise the document, keep some of the following considerations in mind:

- Simple sentences are typically easier to read than complex or compound sentences.
- Passive voice is wordier and often more difficult to understand than active voice.
- Tools like Grammarly and Hemingway Editor may help you to pinpoint troublesome sentences.
- Breaking the piece down into small sections (or even individual sentences) may make the revision process much more manageable for you.
- Reformatting the text using bullet points can help to emphasize key information.
Dear Mr. Jones:

This letter is to communicate the results of the recent titer performed by FRIENDLY CLINIC on Wednesday, 9 February 2019. The test results indicate that the concentration of tetanus antitoxoid IgG antibodies is 0.5 IU/mL. This concentration reflects a protective level of tetanus antitoxoid antibodies.

The test results also indicate that the concentration of VZV IgG antibodies is 1.10 IU. This concentration reflects a protective level of varicella-zoster virus antibodies.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at (XXX) XXX-XXXX.
Major Writing Assignment 2
Medical Text “Translation”

Background
Our main focus in this module has been the use of specialized language (like medical terminology) and how different audiences may require different considerations in terms of word choice and phrasing. Before completing this activity, you will have critically read several assignments (some of which make extensive use of technical terms) and practiced writing and rewriting documents to meet the needs of different types of readers.

In previous assignments we discussed how important it is for a professional communicator to be able to adapt to a wide range of audiences. What is written for one type of reader may be completely incomprehensible for another—and sometimes misunderstandings can even put patients’ lives at risk, such as when someone needs instructions on how much and how often they should take a medication. It is important to be as clear, thorough, and concise as possible. Plain, straightforward writing is often best when trying to convey ideas to patients because patients can come from a wide variety of backgrounds and educational levels.

Task
For this assignment, imagine that you are working in a small clinic or doctor’s office. One day, while going through some documents on the doctor’s behalf, you find the instructions on the following page. In the past, this printout was distributed to patients who need to take insulin injections for diabetes. The document is intended to help patients or patient caregivers administer insulin shots at home.

Unfortunately, when you read through the instructions, you find that they are not as clear and easily understood as they should be. After all, documents written for patients need to be clear and easily read by most adults. This means that these documents should strive for a sixth to eighth grade reading level that uses “plain English” (i.e., avoiding overly technical terms, especially without providing definitions in the text).

In the interest of making this document more accessible for every patient, you decide to rewrite it to make the instructions clear, thorough, and easy-to-read. All the information you need should be provided with the original document, so do not copy instructions from an online source. You should instead focus on how to take what is provided and rewrite it. Look up unfamiliar terms as needed.

Read the entire document before you begin writing your own version. Since this is an example of process writing, consider the following suggestions as you write:

- Bullet points or a numbered list are preferable for this type of document, so long as they are logically written, well organized, and concise.
- Special formatting may be needed to draw attention to safety tips and health warnings, as these can cause serious problems if the patient does not read them.
- Warnings should almost always come before they are needed. Not every reader will review an entire document before following the process.
• Second person point-of-view is completely acceptable for this document.
• Bold and other specialized formatting may be helpful, but overuse of emphasis hurts its effectiveness.
Patient Instructions for Administering Insulin via Subcutaneous Injection

These instructions are intended for patients who have been prescribed insulin injections by their physician. Be sure to follow all the prescribed dosing instructions outlined on your prescription. Do not utilize any prescribed medications intended for individuals other than yourself and do not share your prescription with others.

First, review your prescription for appropriate dosage levels, frequency of injections, and other critical information. Please consult your pharmacist or healthcare provider with any questions or concerns you may have regarding dosage. Your health care provider or a certified diabetes educator (CDE) should review how to administer your insulin with you when you initially receive a prescription. The following steps are intended for review/reminder purposes ONLY.

To begin, you need to first gather the following the items: an insulin pen, a hypodermic needle intended for an insulin pen, an appropriate insulin dosage (see your prescription), and a biohazardous waste sharps disposal container. Do not reuse hypodermic needles and discard them into the appropriate receptacle when done. The process for administering an insulin dosage with an insulin pen is as follows:

First, sanitize your hands. Review the insulin label and evaluate whether its information aligns with the prescription information that you were provided. If it does not, contact your physician before administering any dosage. Remove the cap of the pen, then sanitize the pen for the purpose of attaching the needle. An alcohol swap is suitable for the sanitation process.

Load a new hypodermic needle onto the injector, but only after removing any caps or tabs remaining on the needle. Be careful when handling the needle to avoid injury. With the needle in place, calibrate pen to 2 units, then perform an air shot. This is to clear any air bubbles from the injector and is extremely important to avoid serious complications.

Once the plunger is suppressed and the injector is free of bubbles, locate an area to inject. This area should be rich in adipose tissue, such as the belly, thigh, or glutes. Insert the needle and slowly compress the plunger once the needle is inserted. After the plunger is completely depressed, wait for at least 10 seconds before extracting the injector from the subcutaneous tissue.

Finally, remove the needle from the pen and discard it in the biohazardous waste sharps disposal container.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content (25%)</strong></td>
<td>The document does not provide its audience with adequate instructions. This could be due to leaving out essential information, such as safety warnings. Please review the instructor’s feedback for more information.</td>
<td>The document barely meets the needs of the reader by providing them with only the bare essentials. Work on identifying what information is necessary and what is extra or unneeded information.</td>
<td>The document provides mostly clear and easy-to-read instructions, but there are some noticeable problems. Perhaps some details are left a bit too vague or undeveloped, which could leave readers confused.</td>
<td>The document provides clear, mostly easy-to-read instructions that explain the process thoroughly, though there may be some minor issues with the amount of detail (too much or too little).</td>
<td>The document provides clear, easy-to-read instructions that thoroughly explain the process for almost any audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization (25%)</strong></td>
<td>The document is highly disorganized. Please review the instructor’s feedback for more information.</td>
<td>The document needs significant reorganization. Perhaps information is out of order, or the steps are divided in hard-to-understand ways.</td>
<td>The document is well-organized for the most part, but some sections may need to be divided differently. Alternatively, the steps may need to be rearranged slightly to make them easier to follow.</td>
<td>The document demonstrates good organization that leads the reader through the steps in an intuitive, easy-to-follow way.</td>
<td>The document demonstrates exceptional organization through the order of ideas and the use of formatting (paragraph breaks, lists, headers, boldface, and so on).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clarity (25%)</strong></td>
<td>The document has many errors in grammar.</td>
<td>The document has multiple major errors in</td>
<td>The document uses language that is mostly easy to understand.</td>
<td>The document uses clear, appropriate phrasing</td>
<td>The document uses clear, concise phrasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phrasing, and/or mechanics to the degree that it is extremely difficult to read and understand. Please review the instructor’s feedback for more information.</td>
<td>grammar, phrasing, and/or mechanics that make it difficult to read and understand.</td>
<td>understand, but has some noticeable issues with clarity due to sentence structure, punctuation, or other grammar concerns.</td>
<td>writing that is mostly free of punctuation and grammatical issues that could confuse the reader or change the writer’s intended meaning.</td>
<td>and effective punctuation to express the ideas clearly and concisely.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style/Tone (25%)</strong></td>
<td>The document has major issues with phrasing and wording that reflect very poorly on the organization. Please review the instructor’s feedback for more information.</td>
<td>The document has significant issues with phrasing and wording that could make a poor impression on the reader. Perhaps it is written too informally, does not treat the subject matter appropriately, or uses an inappropriate format for the needs of the situation.</td>
<td>The document has several issues in phrasing and wording that hurt the document’s ability to convey its message. These may be related to how the information is presented, the format, or other concerns related to wording. Some of the wording or phrasing may portray the writer or the clinic as unprofessional.</td>
<td>The document mostly uses a polite, formal tone that makes the message clear and gives the reader firm instructions.</td>
<td>The document uses a professional, polite tone that delivers the instructions firmly but with a clear investment in the reader’s well-being.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Low-Stakes Assignment 7
The Three Appeals Writers Use to Persuade

Situation
Writing persuasively is arguably one of the most essential skills in the professional world. Consider some of the following examples:

- You find a job posting for an extremely lucrative position in a local hospital with a great reputation. You meet all the requirements for the job but need to draft a resume and cover letter to apply. Because this position has great benefits and opportunities for advancement, you know there will be fierce competition for the job.

- A patient with prediabetes needs to make several dietary changes to avoid developing diabetes, but he is reluctant to give up his favorite beverages—even though doing so will be good for his health and likely prevent him from facing an expensive and potentially debilitating health issue.

- A new policy has been implemented in the clinic where you work, but not everyone is following the new policy correctly. You and your supervisors know that adhering to this policy will save the company time and money, and there has been discussion of how these savings may translate into pay raises for the staff and opportunities to purchase newer, more up-to-date equipment for the clinic.

You may notice that in each of these scenarios you have a goal, but to meet that goal there is an audience who needs to be persuaded to help you, either for your sake, their own sake, or a mutual benefit. The act of persuasive communication—oral or written—is called rhetoric.

Classical rhetoric teaches that there are three main appeals (tools of argument) that can be used to persuade someone to believe a claim (the main argument of your writing). While each of these appeals can be effective on its own, the most powerful persuasive arguments often use a combination of all three appeals to reach their audiences. While we will review these in class, the three rhetorical appeals are summarized below:

- **Ethos (ethical appeal/character appeal)** – Persuading an audience through establishing your trustworthiness, credibility, or expertise. Alternatively, ethos can refer to appeals to shared values or beliefs.

- **Pathos (emotional appeal)** – Persuading an audience through appealing to their emotions through strong language, personal examples, or stories.

- **Logos (logical appeal)** – Persuading an audience through reasoning or by providing concrete evidence or examples to argue a point.
Task
For this assignment, you will be provided with a flyer for analysis. Taking a look at this flyer, consider the following questions and answer them with short, one to three sentence answers.

1. What is the “claim” being made by this flyer? (In other words, what point is the flyer trying to make or what is it trying to persuade its audience to do?)

2. Who seems to be the target audience of the flyer? (Who do you think it is written toward?)

3. How does the flyer use ethos? What makes it seem professional or credible? Are there any particular language choices or images that give it authority? Who is the author? What kind of credibility is included there?

4. How does the flyer use pathos? Is there any emotionally-charged words or phrase? What sort of emotions does the poster try to evoke to support its ideas?

5. How does the flyer use logos? Are facts, statistics, or other data used? How does it employ reasoning to support its case?
Low-Stakes Assignment 8
Evaluating Online Medical Sources

Background
Looking for medical information online can be challenging. Unlike a medical textbook or manual with a reputable author and publisher who ensures the information’s accuracy, online sources can be published by anyone at any time—even if the information is inaccurate or dangerous.

Like with any other source, however, sources of medical information can be evaluated to determine their general credibility, reliability, and relevance. While an online source may not be a substitute for advice from a trained professional, sometimes you may need to look up a quick answer to a question, and you may not always have the option to ask someone else in the workplace.

While no two resources may be exactly alike, having a set process for evaluating websites for credibility can greatly help you, as a reader, to separate credible sources from misleading information and sales pitches.

Process
Keep in mind that you should always use Johns Hopkins’ “ABCs” of evaluating websites:

- **Accuracy** — Are there references to credible, scientific publications?
- **Authority** — Who are the author(s) and publisher? Are affiliated doctors, hospitals, or agencies involved?
- **Bias** — Are any ads or sponsors clearly labelled and listed? Might any of them influence the judgment of the site? (Bias toward particular medications or supplements, for example)
- **Currency** — Is the information clearly dated? (And is it less than 5 years old?)
- **Comprehension** — Is the information easily to comprehend and is the website easy to navigate?

Task
Carefully read each of the following questions. For each one, you should find an answer for the question online using a carefully evaluated source. Once you have an answer, provide all of the following details:

- A thorough answer to the question.
- A link to the website where you found that information.
- A short (2-3 sentence) explanation of why you trust the website in question.
1. What is the most effective treatment for a second-degree burn?

2. Should a patient with an aspirin allergy take Goody’s Extra Strength as an over-the-counter pain medication?

3. What are the symptoms of food poisoning, and how do they differ from stomach flu?

4. After how many days of persistent fever should you take a four-year-old child to the doctor? Are there any exceptions when you should take them sooner?

5. What are three specific foods that diabetics should avoid?
Low-Stakes Assignment 9
Professionally Crediting Sources

Background
Whenever you pull information from outside source like a website, book, or magazine, it is important to credit that source. Documenting sources is important from an ethical standpoint simply for the sake of giving credit where credit is due rather than “stealing” someone else’s writing or research by using it and claiming it as your own. In some cases, using information without permission (and without giving credit) can have serious consequences—like failing a course for plagiarism or being faced with legal action for copyright infringement.

In many contexts, however, there are specific ways that you can give credit to a source and potentially avoid these ethical concerns. In academic writing, like papers for classes or published journals or books, this method of giving credit is called citation. Many disciplines, like English and psychology, use specific style guides to put together citations that credit sources used in a piece of writing or a presentation. In healthcare, one of the most commonly used citation styles is the American Psychological Association (APA) style.

Task
Imagine that you are working for a small clinic that has volunteered to help one of the local elementary schools host a health fair by putting together a small booth that will provide information on health tips (healthy eating, brushing teeth, exercise, and so on).

To help put the booth together, your task is to track down some flyers on healthy habits that would be appropriate for children. Think about what might catch their eye, but also what will provide them with relevant information that will be easy for kids and parents to understand. As you look for potential sources, keep in mind the research strategies you practiced in previous assignments. Evaluate each potential source carefully, taking time to decide whether or not the information comes from a credible expert or reputable organization.

In the interest of practicing ethical research habits (and modeling those for the students), you will need to do two things:

1. Provide links to the sources that you have chosen so that someone else could save or print them.

2. Properly cite those resources using American Psychological Association (APA) style. For this exercise, create References page with all the sources properly documented so that someone in the office can print that page or copy the citations over to a PowerPoint that will run at the booth.
Major Writing Assignment 3  
Researched Letter to Patient  
(Patient Dietary Recommendations)

Situation
Imagine that you are working in a small healthcare facility like a doctor’s office or clinic. One day, you are speaking to a patient, Mr. Arthur Miller, a 66-year-old male, who has just finished seeing his physician and reviewing his treatment plan and the doctor’s recommendations.

As you speak to Mr. Miller and ask him if the doctor’s instruction are clear, he seems concerned. Apparently he is suffering from an iron deficiency, and his doctor prescribed that he eat more steak and other red meat. This bothers Mr. Miller because he lives on a fixed income, and he is afraid that he can’t afford the doctor’s recommended intake of red meat. He wanted to ask the doctor for other suggestions, but the doctor slipped away before he worked up the courage to discuss his financial problems.

While you do not get the chance to give immediate advice to Mr. Miller, afterward you speak to the doctor and tell him the situation. Due to the number of patients he is presently seeing, the physician asks you to write a short letter to the patient with some suggested alternatives. While he does not have much time to spare, he will be sure to double-check the letter and give it his signed approval so that you may send it to Mr. Miller.

Task
For this assignment, compose a short, concise letter to Mr. Miller giving him correct dietary advice. Since this is a letter, it should follow all the proper conventions including correct letterhead, a heading, opening, body, and closing. Likewise, you should aim to use correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling so that you make a professional impression on Mr. Miller. After all, you are representing yourself, the doctor, and his office!

Your letter should represent the doctor’s office professionally while providing Mr. Miller with the information he needs in a polite, considerate way. Aim to be thorough and ease Mr. Miller’s concerns about costs as you explain some possible options to him. Think about how you can persuade him to follow the recommended diet with your message. Research and consider the potential health problems brought on by iron deficiency, and why Mr. Miller should take these suggestions seriously.

To make sure you are providing accurate information, you will need to research some affordable dietary options to suggest. While you do not need to provide citations in the letter itself, for this assignment you will need to provide three credible sources on a separate page that show where your information came from.

Grading Criteria
This assignment will be graded based on the following requirements:

- The proper letterhead for the office (see attached page), including the correct heading
• An appropriate opening, body, and closing.
• A thorough explanation of at least three substitutes for red meat that can help Mr. Miller with his iron deficiency.
• A persuasive case for why it is important to follow the doctor’s dietary suggestions, possibly including some of the problems brought on by iron deficiency.
• A separate references page (APA format) that lists the sources that you used for your research (you should have at least two sources).
SUSAN OSWALD, M.D.
1000 Medical Place
Rome, GA 30165

Month Day, 20--

Arthur Miller
876 Winding Road
Rome, GA 30165
# Rubric for Writing Assignment 3: Researched Letter to Patient

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Unacceptable (0-2)</th>
<th>Developing (2-5)</th>
<th>Acceptable (5-10)</th>
<th>Accomplished (10-15)</th>
<th>Exemplary (15-20)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content (20%)</strong></td>
<td>The letter fails to provide an adequate information to the patient. This may be for a variety of reasons, so please read the feedback on the submission as well.</td>
<td>The letter meets the fundamental needs of the patient, but could use significant improvement. Some questions may be left unanswered or necessary content is excluded.</td>
<td>The letter meets the patient’s basic information needs, but may not fully address the patient’s concerns (or possibly does not provide him with adequate alternatives).</td>
<td>The letter addresses all of the patient’s needs thoroughly. The dietary concerns are presented clearly and convincingly, with consideration paid to the patient’s needs.</td>
<td>The letter exceeds all the expectations of the writing situation by clearly providing accurate information to the patient, making a compelling case for the suggested diet, and easing the reader’s concerns about cost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizatio n (20%)</strong></td>
<td>The letter is highly disorganized. Please review the instructor’s feedback for more information.</td>
<td>The letter needs significant reorganization. Perhaps information is out of order, or the paragraph breaks are confusing or difficult to read.</td>
<td>The letter is reasonably organized, but could be revised for ease of reading. Perhaps paragraphs are overly long or not always divided in ways that make the information easy to understand.</td>
<td>The letter demonstrates strong organization that leads the reader through the content in an easy-to-understand way with reasonable paragraph breaks.</td>
<td>The letter demonstrates exceptional organization with how paragraphs are divided to emphasize the content and make the ideas easy to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clarity (20%)</strong></td>
<td>The letter has many errors in grammar, phrasing, and/or mechanics to the degree that it is extremely difficult to read and understand.</td>
<td>The letter has multiple major errors in grammar, phrasing, and/or mechanics that make it difficult to read or that</td>
<td>The letter uses language that is mostly easy to understand, but it has some noticeable issues with clarity brought on by sentence</td>
<td>The letter uses clear, audience-appropriate writing that is mostly free of punctuation and grammatical issues that</td>
<td>The letter uses clear, concise phrasing and effective punctuation to express the ideas clearly and concisely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style/Tone (20%)</strong></td>
<td>The letter has major issues with phrasing and wording that reflect very poorly on the writer or the organization. Please review the instructor’s feedback for more information.</td>
<td>The letter has significant issues with phrasing and wording that could make a poor impression on the reader. Perhaps it is written too informally, lacks a tone of authority, or does not treat the patient politely and considerately.</td>
<td>The letter has several issues in phrasing and wording that hurt the impression made by the letter, but as a whole the letter makes the writer’s intent to help the patient clear.</td>
<td>The letter mostly uses a polite, formal tone that aims to ease the patient’s concerns and provide him with essential dietary information.</td>
<td>The letter uses a professional, polite tone that strives to ease the patient’s concerns and provide him with information clearly and confidently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research (20%)</strong></td>
<td>The letter has major citation issues, such as a missing references page or no indication what sources are being used in the letter.</td>
<td>The letter uses at least two sources, but the sources may be need to be evaluated much more carefully. This grade may also be the result of a references page that only provides hyperlinks or does not make an earnest effort to follow APA citation format.</td>
<td>The letter uses at least two sources that are cited on an APA style references page. The citations may need a bit of work, or the sources may need to be reevaluated. Review the exercise on choosing credible sources.</td>
<td>The letter uses at least two acceptable sources that are cited on an APA style references page that is mostly free of formatting issues.</td>
<td>The letter uses at least two excellent sources that are correctly cited with a properly formatted APA style references page.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Low-Stakes Assignment 10
Preparing for Oral Communication

Background
Oral communication differs from written communication in some ways, but many of the same strategies apply to both. You should still be aware of your audience, think about your purpose, and use strategies accordingly. While some spoken communication may be spontaneous, in other situations you may have plenty of time to prepare notes, references, or even scripts to help ensure that your message is conveyed clearly and accurately.

When preparing for a presentation, meeting, or even a phone conversation, it is important to keep your preparation realistic. Though thorough notes may be useful, one must be careful not to adhere too tightly to a script when engaging in oral communication. Oral communication that sounds too “scripted” can be off-putting to some audiences, who may feel the conversation is not genuine. Likewise, some situations may make a script less useful, such as unexpected response from the audience or difficult questions.

Additionally, writing something intended to be recited aloud can sometimes be a bit different than writing something to be read silently. When “writing for the ear,” one has to consider how long it takes to say something, how hard it may be to read it clearly, and whether the listener will be able to understand what is being said the first time. After all, in reading we have the advantage of being able to reread for clarity—in speeches and phone conversations, it can be much harder to go back over something a second time. Few presenters want to be asked to repeat something two, three, or even four times!

Task
For this assignment, you will be working with a partner to write and revise a phone script to use when patients call to reschedule or cancel their appointments. Keep in mind that this script will be intended to be read aloud, so it should be written to be understood well by a listener on the first hearing. Good phone scripts should use conversational phrasing that is easy to read aloud, but they should also thoroughly cover any necessary information. Have one partner play the role of the patient while the other acts as the medical professional. Switch roles afterward to further polish your script, as each partner may contribute a different perspective.

Start by reading the scenario provided. Decide among your group who will play the role of the patient and who will play the role of the office assistant. Once you have decided who is playing each role, read and complete all the following steps:

1. Write a script that a medical professional might use when answering a call about the provided scenario.

2. Once you have your script written, have your partner play the role of the patient making a call based on the scenario. Feel free to improvise in a way that feels appropriate for the situation.
3. Using your script, carry on the conversation with your partner as though you were answering the phone on behalf of a doctor’s office or clinic. Try to answer their questions and provide the relevant information from the scenario using professional courtesy.

4. Trade roles with your partner and help him or her complete steps 1-3 as their patient who is calling in to the office.

**Scenario**
On Wednesday, a patient calls to cancel an appointment on the following Friday. Office policy states that cancellations must be made in a week in advance or there is a $25 charge. If this is the first abrupt cancellation, the fee can be waived at the assistant’s discretion.

Patients need to be politely informed of this charge, but also encouraged to reschedule at their earliest convenience.
Low-Stakes Assignment 11
Using Images Convey Messages in Writing

Background
While writing most commonly refers to words, phrases, and sentences, many of the texts that we assemble contain other elements like images. Many medical reports, for example, combine written words with visuals, such as x-rays or medical charts. As such, part of being an effective communicator is understanding and using strategies that combine text and visuals to make messages clear to a variety of audiences.

Strategies for communicating with visuals are sometimes called visual rhetoric, and visual rhetoric can take many forms including posters, advertisements, and brochures. For example, a poster that provides information about the dangers of smoking alongside photographs of gum disease or lung damage caused by cigarettes is probably using visual rhetoric to try to convince its audience not to smoke. Similarly, a brochure intended to teach children healthy eating habits might use bright colors and cheerful characters to draw the readers’ attention and encourage them to read, remember, and practice those habits.

While many image-heavy texts may be the responsibilities of specialists like graphic designers, having an understanding of how and when to use visuals further supplements your skills as a professional communicator.

Task
In previous assignments we used skills of rhetorical analysis to carefully read, examine, interpret, and critique texts based on criteria like intended audience, rhetorical appeals used, word choice, and sentence structure. In the same way, we can use analytical techniques to evaluate visual texts for their strengths and weaknesses. Through performing an analysis of a visual text, we can learn how to use similar strategies in our own writing.

For this assignment, you will be analyzing an example of a visual rhetoric. As you review this document, answer the following questions, writing 2-4 sentences to thoroughly address each question.

1. Who created this text? How can you tell? Do any of those clues help establish credibility, and if so, how?
2. What would you say is the general message and purpose of this visual text? How is that message conveyed?
3. What do you notice about the use of colors? Why do you think these colors were chosen? Do the colors have any impact on tone?
4. What do you notice about the use of images? How are the images used? What do they express?
5. Visual texts like posters and flyers often only have a limited space to convey information. How does this text handle that issue, if at all?
Major Writing Assignment 4
Researched Presentation

Background
Throughout this semester we have discussed various features of written and verbal communication. We have practiced analyzing texts, evaluating different audiences, researching and citing information, and speaking publicly.

As a culmination of this semester’s experiences, we will be using the skills you developed during this course to conduct research on a topic in the healthcare field, assemble a presentation, and then share your findings with the class using your (5-10 minute) presentation.

Task
Imagine that the clinic where you work is holding an open house event where current and potential patients are invited to come meet the staff and learn about the clinic. As everyone is planning the open house, one of the doctors suggests that you put together a short, informative presentation to teach the attendees about a healthcare topic and promote “Friendly Clinic” as helpful and accessible. She gives you a great deal of freedom on the topic of your presentation, so long as you research the topic well and can cover it in 5-10 minutes.

Fortunately, you should already have a bit of knowledge of several topics from your earlier work this semester. You could, for example, teach diabetic patients how to safely administer insulin shots like in Major Writing Assignment 2. Alternatively, you may want to discuss an affordable, iron-rich diet like the one you researched for Writing Assignment 3. Feel free to use some of the information you have already gathered this semester, but make sure that you adapt your content to meet all the criteria for this new assignment.

If you want to research an entirely new topic, please keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Your topic must be related to healthcare.
- Your topic should be relevant to patients.
- Your topic should be simple enough to fit into a 5-10 minute presentation.
- Your topic needs to be supported by 3-5 carefully evaluated sources.

Once you have decided on a topic for your presentation, you will need to thoroughly research your topic and locate 3 to 5 relevant sources of information related to your topic. You may use sources you have found in other assignments this semester as long as they are relevant to your topic and evaluated for credibility. You should document your sources using APA style citations.

After collecting your sources, you will need to use those sources to put together your presentation. This presentation must be given before the class, and it must be accompanied by a visual presentation made in PowerPoint, Google Slides, Prezi, Adobe Spark, or an equivalent tool. The presentation must also contain the following
• A clear beginning, middle, and end that keeps the audience focused and guides them through the topic in a way that is easy to understand even if the audience is new to the topic.

• At least 3 visuals (charts, graphs, images, or similar) that have been chosen with a **specific purpose** to help explain your ideas. (This means you should not choose random pictures or clipart—think about how your visuals help make your ideas more clear to your audience or that make your cause more compelling).

• Intentional choices of fonts, colors, and backgrounds that seek to keep the audience’s attention while appearing professional.

• Text that supplements your presentation without overshadowing it (In other words, be sure to review resources we will cover in class to make sure your bullet points follow suggested guidelines for style and content).

• References to provide your audience with the sources of your information and where they might learn more about the topic. These should be included in a references slide at the end of the presentation (with citations in APA format).

• A positive impression of Friendly Clinic as a healthcare facility with helpful staff who are invested in all their patients receiving the best care possible.

As the deadline for submitting your presentation approaches, we will set a date for everyone to deliver their presentations before the class. Be sure to not only assemble your presentation but also prepare to deliver it, as your grade will not only be based on the quality of visual presentation but also how well you deliver it to your audience.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric for Writing Assignment 4: Researched Presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content (20%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unacceptable (0-2)</strong> The presentation has major issues with content or design. Please carefully review the assignment guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developing (2-5)</strong> The presentation has significant problems with the content or design. Please review the guidelines for a checklist of required content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acceptable (5-10)</strong> The presentation provides helpful information about a specific topic, but it may be noticeably under or over the allotted presentation time. Alternatively, some content may need to be added or improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accomplished (10-15)</strong> The presentation provides helpful information about a specific healthcare topic in ~5-10 minutes. Adding or revising content such as explanation, visuals, or references could improve the presentation. There may be some small problems with how well the clinic is promoted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exemplary (15-20)</strong> The presentation provides helpful information about a specific healthcare topic while promoting the clinic as welcoming and friendly. Visuals and sources are used throughout. Presenting the topic takes ~5-10 minutes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization (20%)</strong> The presentation is highly disorganized. Please review the instructor’s feedback for more information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unacceptable (0-2)</strong> The presentation needs to be significantly reorganized. Perhaps information is out of order, or there are rocky transitions between sections. The order of ideas may risk losing the audience’s attention or hurting their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developing (2-5)</strong> The submission is reasonably organized, but could stand improvement. There may be some confusing decisions on how the slides or organized, or the presentation itself may be rushed or scattered at points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acceptable (5-10)</strong> The presentation demonstrates effective organization in how the slides are arranged and presented. The speaker likewise demonstrates mindfulness about introduction the topic, moving through the main points,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accomplished (10-15)</strong> The presentation demonstrates exceptional organization with how slides are arranged and presented. Likewise, the speaker shows careful attention to an introduction and conclusion in delivering the presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity (20%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Style, Tone, and Delivery (20%) | The presentation has major issues with phrasing, wording, or delivery that reflect very poorly on the presenter and the clinic. Please review the instructor’s feedback for more information. | The presentation has significant issues with tone and style that reflect poorly on the presenter and the clinic. | The presentation has several issues with wording or phrasing that could portray the presenter or the clinic negatively. It may appear unprofessional, uncaring, or otherwise not invested in patients’ wellbeing. | The presentation is professional and engaging, with a clear commitment to patient care and well-being. As a whole, the presentation portrays both the presenter and the clinic as patient-focused, professional, |
| Research (20%) | The submission has major reference issues, such as no references slide or no indication of the sources being used in the presentation. | The presentation uses less than 3 sources, or there may be some issues with the credibility of sources. Alternatively, there may be significant issues in how sources are cited. | The presentation uses at least 3 relevant, credible sources that are cited on a final “references” slide. There may be some issues with the formatting of the citations, however. | The presentation uses 3 to 5 relevant, credible sources that are cited on a final APA references slide and clearly integrated into the presentation. |
Appendix: Supplemental Documents for Assignments

Supplementary Document A for LSA 1................................................................. 70
Supplementary Document B for LSA 1................................................................. 71
Supplementary Document A for LSA 4................................................................. 72
Supplementary Document B for LSA 4................................................................. 73
Supplementary Document A for LSA 7................................................................. 74
Supplemental Document for LSA 11........................................................................ 75
Lead – ToxFAQs™

CAS # 7439-92-1

This fact sheet answers the most frequently asked health questions (FAQs) about lead. For more information, call the CDC Information Center at 1-800-232-4636. This fact sheet is one in a series of summaries about hazardous substances and their health effects. It is important you understand this information because this substance may harm you. The effects of exposure to any hazardous substance depend on the dose, the duration, how you are exposed, personal traits and habits, and whether other chemicals are present.

HIGHLIGHTS: Exposure to lead can happen from breathing workplace air or dust, eating contaminated foods, or drinking contaminated water. Children can be exposed from eating lead-based paint chips or playing in contaminated soil. Lead can damage the nervous system, kidneys, and reproductive system. Lead has been found in at least 1,272 of the 1,684 National Priority List (NPL) sites identified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

What is lead?
Lead is a naturally occurring bluish-gray metal found in small amounts in the earth’s crust. Lead can be found in all parts of our environment. Much of it comes from human activities including burning fossil fuels, mining, and manufacturing.

Lead has many different uses. It is used in the production of batteries, ammunition, metal products (solder and pipe), and devices to shield X-rays. Because of health concerns, lead from paints and ceramic products, caulking, and pipe solder has been dramatically reduced in recent years. The use of lead as an additive to gasoline was banned in 1996 in the United States.

What happens to lead when it enters the environment?

- Lead itself does not break down, but lead compounds are changed by sunlight, air, and water.
- When lead is released to the air, it may travel long distances before settling to the ground.
- Once lead falls onto soil, it usually sticks to soil particles.
- Movement of lead from soil into groundwater will depend on the type of lead compound and the characteristics of the soil.

How might I be exposed to lead?

- Eating food or drinking water that contains lead. Water pipes in some older homes may contain lead solder. Lead can leach into the water.
- Spending time in areas where lead-based paints have been used and are deteriorating. Deteriorating lead paint can contribute to lead dust.
- Working in a job where lead is used or engaging in certain hobbies in which lead is used, such as making stained glass.

How can lead affect my health?

The effects of lead are the same whether it enters the body through breathing or swallowing. Lead can affect almost every organ and system in your body. The main target for lead toxicity is the nervous system, both in adults and children. Long-term exposure of adults can result in decreased performance in some tests that measure functions of the nervous system. It may also cause weakness in fingers, wrists, or ankles. Lead exposure also causes small increases in blood pressure, particularly in middle-aged and older people and can cause anemia. Exposure to high lead levels can severely damage the brain and kidneys in adults or children and ultimately cause death. In pregnant women, high levels of exposure to lead may cause miscarriage. High-level exposure in men can damage the organs responsible for sperm production.

How likely is lead to cause cancer?
We have no conclusive proof that lead causes cancer in humans. Kidney tumors have developed in rats and mice that had been given large doses of some kind of lead compounds. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has determined that lead and lead compounds are reasonably anticipated to be human carcinogens and the EPA has determined that lead is a probable human carcinogen. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has determined that inorganic lead is probably carcinogenic to humans and that there is insufficient information to determine whether organic lead compounds will cause cancer in humans.

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
Division of Toxicology and Human Health Sciences
Supplementary Document B for LSA 1

Georgia Department of Public Health

CERTIFICATE OF IMMUNIZATION

Child's Name (Last name first)  
[Optional] Parent/Guardian Name (Last name first)

Date of Expiration

Complete For K through 8th Grade

Child must be 4 years and have met all requirements for medical exemption.  

Complete For 7th Grade or Higher

Fulfills requirements K through 8th grade AND must have Tdap and MCV documented.

Unless specifically exempted by law, Georgia law (O.C.G.A. § 28-5-771) requires a certificate on file for each child in attendance in any school or child care facility in Georgia with penalties for failure to comply. Detailed instructions for this form and immunization requirements by age are spelled out in policy addenda 3231NHS and 3231REG distributed by the Georgia Immunization Office.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VACCINE</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>Date of Diagnosis</th>
<th>Date of Surgery</th>
<th>Date of History</th>
<th>Date of Medication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DTP,DTaP, D,T,t,d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tdap</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCV4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hib</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Under Age 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Under Age 5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mumps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubella</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Born on or after 1900)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varicella</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommended Vaccines (For Information Only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaccine</th>
<th>Date of Administration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rotavirus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPV (3 Doses)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Td Booster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Printed, Typed or Handwritten Name,  
Address and Telephone # of  
Physician or Health Dept.

Certified by (Signature/Other Stamp)  
Date of Issue
No More Excuses: You Need a Flu Vaccine

Get the Facts

- The flu vaccine is safe, does not cause the flu, and can protect the ones you love.
- Spread the word and GET VACCINATED!

Even healthy people need a flu vaccine.

Influenza (flu) is a contagious disease which can lead to serious illness, including pneumonia. Even healthy people can get sick enough to miss work or school for a significant amount of time or even be hospitalized. An annual flu vaccine is recommended for everyone 6 months of age and older. Pregnant women, young children, older people, and people with certain chronic medical conditions like asthma, diabetes and heart disease are at increased risk of serious flu-related complications, so getting a yearly flu vaccine is especially important for them.

Is the flu vaccine safe?

Yes. The flu vaccine is safe. Hundreds of millions of Americans have safely received flu vaccines over the past 50 years, and there has been extensive research supporting the safety of seasonal flu vaccines. Each year, CDC works closely with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other partners to ensure the highest safety standards for flu vaccines.

The most common side effects of flu vaccines are mild.

The flu vaccine cannot cause flu illness; however, it can cause mild side effects that may be mistaken for flu. Common side effects from the flu shot include soreness, redness, and/or swelling from the shot; headache, fever, muscle aches, and nausea. These side effects are NOT the flu. If experienced at all, these effects are usually mild and last only 1-2 days.

Even if I get sick, won’t I recover quickly?

Not necessarily. Influenza can be serious and anyone can become sick with flu and experience serious complications, including active and healthy kids, teens and adults. Even if you bounce back quickly, however, others around you might not be so lucky. You could spread your illness to someone who is more vulnerable to flu. Some people can be infected with the flu virus, but have no symptoms. During this time, you can still spread the virus to others. Don’t be the one spreading flu to those you care about.
Make a Strong Flu Vaccine Recommendation

Information for Health Care Professionals

CDC recommends everyone 6 months of age and older get a influenza (flu) vaccine every year.

Your Vaccine Recommendation is Critical

As a health care professional, your strong recommendation is a critical factor that affects whether your patients get an influenza vaccine. Research indicates that adults are more likely to get their flu vaccine if their doctor or health care provider recommends it to them. Most adults believe vaccines are important, but they need a reminder from you to get vaccinated.

When to Vaccinate

- CDC recommends that patients receive an influenza vaccine by the end of October, if possible. However, as long as influenza viruses are circulating, vaccination should continue throughout flu season, even into January or later.
- After making a flu vaccine referral, follow up with each patient during subsequent appointments to ensure the patient received the influenza vaccine. If the patient still is unvaccinated against flu, repeat the recommendation and try to identify and address any questions or concerns.

Types of Vaccinations Available

The following flu vaccines are recommended for the 2017-18 flu season.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaccine type</th>
<th>Vaccine description</th>
<th>Recommended for</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trivalent (2-STRAIN)</td>
<td>Contains the three most common influenza strains predicted to be circulating</td>
<td>Anyone 6 months &amp; older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quadrivalent (4-STRAIN)</td>
<td>Contains the three common influenza strains predicted to be circulating, plus an additional strain</td>
<td>Anyone 6 months &amp; older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjuvanted &amp; High-Dose (immune-boosting)</td>
<td>Designed to deliver a stronger immune response</td>
<td>Adults 65 years and older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recombinant</td>
<td>Produced without the use of the influenza virus or chicken eggs</td>
<td>Adults 18 years and older</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note that the live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) is not recommended for the 2017-18 flu season.

For more information, visit: www.cdc.gov/flu or call 1-800-CDC-INFO
ARE YOU READY FOR PrEP?

PrEP Basics

PrEP stands for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis. The word “prophylaxis” means to prevent or control the spread of an infection or disease.

PrEP can help prevent you from getting HIV if you are exposed to the virus.

PrEP is an HIV prevention option that works by taking one pill every day.

How Does It Work?

In several studies of PrEP, the risk of getting HIV infection was much lower — up to 92% lower — for those who took the medicines consistently than for those who didn’t take the pill.

Some of the same medicines prescribed for the treatment of HIV can also be prescribed for its prevention.

When taken every day, PrEP can provide a high level of protection against HIV, and is even more effective when it is combined with condoms and other prevention tools.

People who use PrEP must take the medicine every day and return to their health care provider every 3 months for follow-up and prescription refills.

Some people in clinical studies of PrEP had early side effects such as an upset stomach or loss of appetite, but these were mild and usually went away in the first month. Some people also had a mild headache. No serious side effects were observed. You should tell your health care provider if these or other symptoms become severe or do not go away.

Start Talking, Stop HIV.

Follow us online at facebook.com/StartTalkingHIV and @TalkHIV
Supplemental Document for LSA 11

Stop the spread of germs that make you and others sick!

Cover your Cough

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.

Put your used tissue in the waste basket.

You may be asked to put on a surgical mask to protect others.

Clean your Hands after coughing or sneezing.

Wash with soap and water or clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner.
Conclusion

Although this course design should prove a useful tool for teaching writing to technical college students, it is also meant to act as a model for similar course designs for other programs and majors. My hope is that this project inspires more contextualized course designs and new research into how to best teach writing in the technical college. I intend to create curricula based on this model, and with time, I hope to have contextualized courses for most of the common technical college programs of study as well as general “workplace writing” assignments for students with less common programs of study.

While this particular course would work best in a specialized writing course composed only of healthcare majors, the assignments provided in this project can readily be adapted and combined with other assignments for classrooms with a wide variety of majors. Likewise, elements of this design can be readily used by instructors who wish to use a combination of contextualized assignments and more traditional academic assignments like essays. With time, I hope to disseminate this project to other instructors so that they can draw on the information here and incorporate elements of contextualization and workplace writing in their own courses.

To make contextualized courses more widely available, we need to provide resources for as many technical college majors as possible. Developing course designs for multiple programs, however, will take considerable time and effort. Many of these designs may require the expertise of instructors in occupational programs, preferably those who also possess industry experience that they can share. Likewise, these projects will require dedicated writing instructors who can combine their knowledge and experience in the classroom with occupational instructors’ contributions to create cohesive, engaging coursework that will both introduce students to the writing they may do in their future careers as well as help them to adapt to variations of those
genres and improve their writing overall. Even so, this effort will most certainly be worthwhile. Students at technical college students and other vocational programs deserve the best writing education possible, and helping these students become better communicators helps not only employers but society as a whole. Liberal arts may have historically been kept separate from vocational training, but writing classrooms are one space where these two spheres can readily collaborate. By bringing together our expertise, technical college faculty have the opportunity to improve our system as a whole and help our institutions to have a meaningful impact on both our students and our communities at large.

Unfortunately, one of the greatest struggles that future projects may face is persuading instructors to get involved. In my experience working on this project, it was often challenging to get other instructors actively discussing the project and contributing sample documents and other resources. Those instructors who did respond to my initial call were enthusiastic and engaged, however. The two biggest contributors to the project both expressed their desire to see their students improve as writers as well as their beliefs that students need strong writing skills to be successful in the workplace. Those who responded but did not contribute expressed similar sentiments to those who did participate, and the only negative response were those who did not respond at all.

While I mostly attribute the limited participation to busy workloads and the steady stream of emails many instructors receive, I would also argue that the low involvement has to do with how little attention collaborative course designs and contextualization have received. Were instructors able to see more published work demonstrating the effectiveness of these methods, both for general education courses and major-specific courses, I think participation in these projects would rise significantly. In turn, an increase in participation in these kinds of projects
could better distribute the workload, meaning that each instructor contributing to the project would have less of a burden in putting the project together. Less individual work could also reduce the (likely) fear that collaborating on contextualized courses would mean extra work with for limited compensation (or any at all, in some cases). After all, for an instructor teaching an occupational course, lending help to a composition instructor could understandably feel as if one is putting in extra preparation time to teach someone else’s class. Though hopefully many instructors would contribute to these projects out of altruism, they cannot be faulted for not doing so, either, as it places extra work upon their already busy schedules.

In this same vein, there is still some progress to be made in terms of convincing administrators and legislators that general education courses like writing need more support in the technical college setting. As an adjunct instructor, I initially worked with very little oversight or departmental collaboration. Other faculty made themselves available for questions and provided a few resources, but there was little in terms of dedicated collaboration tools like listservs or department meetings. Administrative changes in the system have more recently encouraged much more departmental interaction among English instructors as well as more collaboration on textbooks, resources, and learning management system (LMS) tools. Even so, many of these changes were brought on less by a newfound appreciation for general education and more by the rapid growth in the technical college’s dual-enrollment program. High schoolers taking courses that are transferable from technical colleges to other institutions like four-year colleges has created a need for more robust composition instruction which, in turn, has benefitted other English courses as part of that program overhaul.

Specifically, both the diploma English course (English 1010) as well as the degree English course (English 1101) have seen a clearer differentiation in terms of the standard course
content, with English 1010 shifting more toward a business and workplace writing focus somewhat similar to what is presented in this design. While the specifics of how this course is taught are left to the discretion of individual instructors, more recent textbook selections place greater emphasis on genres like memos, letters, and reports in addition to traditional essays and research papers. Even so, the resources used in these courses maintain much of the “status quo” as far as teaching many of the techniques of writing by focusing on essays and research papers as the fundamentals upon which all writing is based. As such, there is still plenty of need for course designs like this one for instructors who wish to incorporate more workplace writing in their courses.

I, for one, have already implemented contextualized assignments in my own teaching. Though the assignments I have already used in the classroom are considerably less specialized than those provided here, I have seen considerably more engagement from my students since I began teaching with more contextualized, workplace-centered assignments like letters and proposals. A number of my students have enthusiastically embraced the workplace assignments, both in classroom discussions and through the work they have submitted. Several students have eagerly drawn on their previous work experiences and translated those experiences into ideas that they could use for business proposals and presentations. These students also ask more questions in class and respond more readily to prompts during lectures, where previously many would remain quiet or, in rare cases, express frustration about whether an assignment was relevant to their job. It seems that being able to see an immediate application of writing through hypothetical workplace scenarios has, for the most part, made students more resolved to participate in class and improve on their writing. Of course, there have always been students
eager to learn, but even less involved students seem more responsive than in previous semesters where I taught exclusively with academic genres.

But enthusiasm about this teaching method has not been limited to students. Several instructors have expressed their interest in this style of course after seeing assignment sheets and lesson plans. The nursing instructor who lent her expertise to this project noted that she has seen a noticeable difference in students who had taken my class compared to students coming from a more traditional composition course. Another instructor in the English department shared that she would like to use similar assignments for her classes and even arranged a meeting between the two of us and one of our marketing instructors in hopes of creating more assignments that combined workplace scenarios with fundamental writing skills.

As a whole, the instructors in the vocational programs with whom I have met seem supportive of these types of assignments, and most were excited to share some of their ideas for what students need to learn from a writing class. With time, perhaps more instructors will support this initiative and, in doing so, create the possibility for more organized research into how these methods impact student learning. If student success were to be quantified with such research, perhaps administrators and legislators would take notice and provide further support for these kinds of initiatives in the future. With their support, more resources could be made available, and more program instructors could be incentivized to contribute their knowledge and experience to improving the quality of instruction of the assignments and their accuracy in representing writing in various industries.

In any case, we should take time to evaluate the effectiveness of course designs like this one and determine whether it makes a measurable difference in how students write, both in the classroom and in the workplace. Perhaps as technical colleges see higher enrollment through
initiatives like dual-enrollment programs and courses that are transferable between technical colleges and four-year colleges, administrators will see the need for dedicated research and additional resource centers to support scholarship in technical colleges. As more students move from technical colleges to universities, faculty and administration at these institutions may become more invested in ensuring the quality of the general education that students receive in technical colleges.

As a whole, I believe this model is a strong start for rethinking technical college composition and tailoring it to better suit students’ needs as writers, but significant work still lies ahead for writing instructors in terms of creating more designs on this model, implementing more “job training” in the writing classroom, and further encouraging not only students but also faculty and administration to treat writing as both an academic skill and as essential part of the training students need for both their careers and their everyday lives.
Works Cited


Perin, D. "Facilitating Student Learning through Contextualization: A Review of Evidence."

Rose, Mike. “Not Your Father’s Shop Class: Bridging the Academic-Vocational Divide.”


---, *Make a Strong Flu Vaccine Recommendation.* 2017, CDC.gov.  

---, *No More Excuses, You Need a Flu Vaccine.* 2016, CDC.gov.  
