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Self-Assessment Portfolio

Writing for Engineering

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<u>Introduction</u>

Before taking Writing for Engineering I was well educated on writing grammatically correct, and the proper formatting structure of a paper, but throughout the course of the semester I have learned a new multiple new forms of writing. I had never been introduced to APA writing style until Taking this class, after utilizing MLA format for years, APA seemed relatively easy as they are somewhat related. In this course I also learned about the Rhetorical Situation. What intrigued me most about the Rhetorical Situation was how I would write using all of the elements, but without knowing it was the Rhetorical Situation. The Rhetorical Situation consist of 6 elements: audience, purpose, exigence, genre, stance, and media. Exigence was the only element I didn't fully comprehend, until I took this class. Exigence is how your writing develops and what prompts a person to write. More on exigence and the writing styles in the paper, but overall, this course was very beneficial to my writing and will help me down the line as I seek out my major in biomedical engineering.

<u>Audience</u>

The writers audience is who in particular the writing is directed at. It could be directed at a certain group of people such as 1 person, or a small group, multiple groups such as companies or people varying in different jobs, or the general population. As a writer, especially in writing for Engineering, you must take into consideration that you are writing to sell your product to your audience most of the time. The technical description was meant to reverse engineer your product and explain to the audience what's good about your object of choice. The lab report was meant to explain to your audience what it is your group is researching, and why more funds

should go to research and development in that particular project. And the proposal was meant to get your audience to back up and support your idea, in this case the class was meant to identify the purpose of the presenting groups projects, which was fairly easy, given all the groups presented diligently and concisely to where people knew their purpose halfway into the presentation.

Purpose

The purpose of a paper is why you are writing it. We were taught how to implement purpose into our writing without directly telling the audience what the purpose of your writing is. This can often be difficult as sometimes when you try to make a point across it doesn't come out as intended. Though the author may feel fine when writing it, the audience will not understand, which is why it's good to have your peers re read your papers so you can understand where you went wrong trying to explain a subject.

Exigence

Before taking this class, I was unaware that exigence was even an element in the rhetorical situation. I presumed that exigence really didn't have any effect on writing whatsoever, but after thorough explanation exigence became clearer. The audience should always know a writers exigence, because as a result, it could lead to them recreating the authors works but better, and possibly through the same thought process.

<u>Genre</u>

Genre is simply the style of writing provided in the authors paper. The 4 basic genres of writing are narrative, descriptive, argumentative, and expository. For this course however, we were introduced to new genres, my engineering based genres. These were the technical description, lab report, and proposal.

<u>Stance</u>

Stance is the position the author has on the subject at hand. The author is either supporting, or arguing against a topic. Stance is often the easiest element to portray in writing because it really is the bulk of what you write. It directs the authors on a path and offers more to write about while supporting your stance on the given subject.

<u>Media</u>

Media is how you display your information. Media is an effective way of both presenting your information more organized, and often breaking the language barrier. The language barrier can be a difficult task to break as its hard to relay information to someone who doesn't speak your native language, but through different platforms and providing sufficient media, it is easier for audience members who cannot understand another language, understand the point the author is trying to get across.
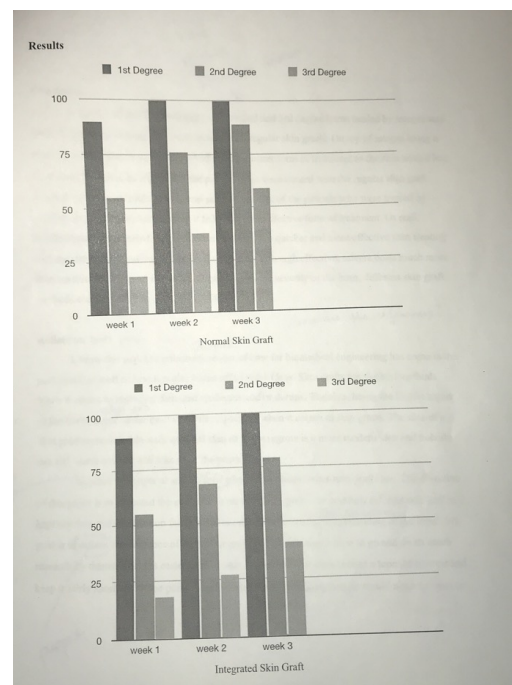
Course Learning Outcome 1

Acknowledge your and other's range of linguistic differences as resources, and draw on those resources to develop rhetorical sensibility

This learning outcome was best seen in my lab report paper on skin grafts. The language barrier is a difficult problem to deal with as it can often be hard to relay information to people who speak a completely foreign language, but we provided enough evidence with charts and graphs for this paper that we felt people who could not speak English would understand.

For this project we were assigned a group that everyone related to each other in correlation to their majors. This made coming up with a topic much simpler as we all agreed upon writing about skin grafts quickly. Overall the project was done quick and efficiently. The reason as to why we best exemplified breaking the language barrier and making our paper easier to understand was because of our images, and graphs.
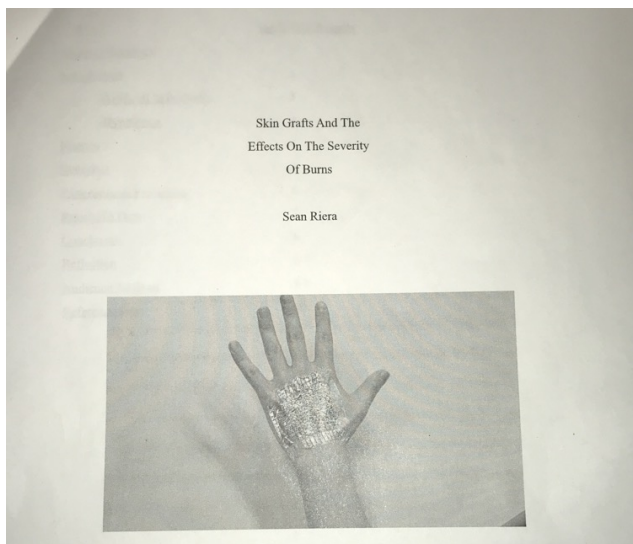
Cover page for Lab Report Paper

Graphs from Lab Report Paper

Course Learning Outcome 2

Enhance strategies for reading, drafting, revising, editing, and self-assessment

The course overall enhanced my strategies, but an assignment that I feel really helped strengthen these strategies was the technical description paper. For this assignment, we were asked to give a technical description of any item, and show we understand the 5 rhetorical situations by using the elements in our writing. I had to specify everything for this assignment, and even reverse engineer my item. Although my assignment was quite simply a pen, it was nonetheless an interesting assignment.

Course Learning Outcome 3

Negotiate your own writing goals and audience expectations regarding conventions of genre, medium, and rhetorical situation

My own writing goals throughout all of the papers that were assigned was to be ass concise and efficient with my work as possible. Even for the proposal assignment, where we had to propose our concept in front of the class. My part of the group work was to talk about our groups item and the relationship with other companies, or how they can get involved. Our proposal was to give people in need a kidney dialysis during a natural disaster. I gave a quick history of the companies and their background, and a focused more on what these companies will do to help us get these dialyzers out quickly, and how they can benefit by funding our team.

Learning Outcome 4

Develop and engage in the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes

In the lab report and proposal, we really had to engage more with our groups, and change our writing to make both assignments flow. Each member was given a part to write about, but the real social aspect of these writing processes was trying to make the paper flow. We had to really talk about ideas and how they connect to each one of our parts. Though difficult because not everyone in the group always had time to talk in person about these projects, we found it most efficient to use apps such as google docs and google slide to discuss what to write and see each other's parts.

Course Learning Outcome 5

Engage in genre analysis and multimodal composing to explore effective writing across disciplinary contexts and beyond

The class really had to engage more in genre analysis and multimodal comprising in the proposal experiment. Given that the proposal was to be written and presented to the class, this assignment best shows multimodal composing.

Course Learning Outcome 6

Formulate and articulate a stance through and in your writing

This learning outcome is one of the easiest as it's not that difficult to build a stance. It's quite simply you either support a topic, or you do not. Stance is one of the best elements of the

rhetorical question as it allows you to build on it. Stance is your starting black and you provide evidence as to whether your stance is correct, or incorrect, depending on the subject.

Course Learning Outcome 7

Practice using various library resources, online databases, and the internet to locate sources appropriate to your writing projects

For all of our projects in class, we had to do research. There wasn't a single project done in the class I didn't do research for, even on subjects I felt well informed on, such as my technical description. I wrote about a BiC pen, and researched multiple websites for a tool that is used every day.

Course Learning Outcome 8

Strengthen your source use practices (including evaluating, integrating, quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, synthesizing, analyzing, and citing sources)

This course Learning outcome was also most evident in my technical description. Quoting and paraphrasing always give good support to your stance, especially when they're words taking from a source directly. Nothing beats taking facts and applying them to your writing to support your stance. We had to cite all sources used in all of our projects, except really the lab report, as most of our support came from lab work.

Conclusion

Overall, I feel taking this course really enhanced my writing and introduced me to writing for Engineering well. I learned a new style of writing, how to support your reasoning evidently, and learned about the rhetorical situation. So long as I aim to accomplish all elements in the rhetorical situation, and put it into my writing, all of my future papers for engineering should be done to perfection.