**Checklist for Tutoring STEM Writing**

Adapted from Weissbach and Pflueger, *IEEE Transactions on Technical and Professional Communication* 2018

* Instructors generally expect lab reports will be written in the third person.
  + Some may allow for first person plural. STEM workplace documents also commonly use first and second person depending on purpose and situation.
* Every variable and acronym mentioned in the report must be defined in the report.
* All figures and tables should have a title and figure number. Axes of graphs and charts should be clearly labeled.
* All figures should be referenced within the body of the report. Cross-references should refer to the figure number, not the page number.
* When a figure is cited, the explanation surrounding it and the point it is supporting should be clearly made. Readers should not be expected to figure out what the illustration is meant to say.
  + Analog: Comp/Humanities papers when students throw in a quote that becomes a substitution for what they should have said. They assume the meaning is self-evident, and no further effort is required to explain how they made the connection.
* Although the report covers technical information, you should be able to understand it. If you do not, it is because the author has not explained it clearly.
  + Analog: Comp/Humanities papers when students must write papers for an audience that has not read the sources cited.
  + If a sentence doesn’t make sense it’s either a grammatical problem OR the writer hasn’t explained it clearly. Ask them. Often there’s information still in the writer’s head and not on the page.