TO: Stephanie Masson, Instructor

FROM: Edward Auttonberry, Student

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SUBJECT: Achievement of Course Objectives

Through the learning material provided for this course and the associated exercises, I have gained a much better understanding of the expectations of writing in a professional environment. This improvement was guided by the seven course objectives defined in the class syllabus as I worked to achieve their completion. Below is an explanation detailing how each goal was accomplished and how the acquired skill will benefit me in the future.

* **Recognize writing common in the workplace.**

Beginning with the very first homework assignment, I have realized that some of my prior notions about the format of memos, business email, and other common documents are false. Small yet important details about the differences between these types of messages have become like muscle memory for me, as I have been tracking and verifying these details for each assignment that I have submitted. Additionally, I have already begun applying this knowledge in electronic discourse at work, where I send email and provide progress updates multiple times daily.

* **Demonstrate proficiency by writing and designing documents and graphics that meet a variety of technical writing criteria.**

I attribute my acquisition of this skill to all major assignments, as each one challenged me to utilize another unfamiliar document format while still maintaining practical organization of the data. I believe the Letter Package was particularly educational, because it required identifying minor differences in letter formats and the best use case for each. The ability to select the optimal format for a situation will prove useful in my career as I begin to contact business partners, customers, and remote peers simultaneously.

* **Design documents applying theory that forms the standards of modern professional design in technical writing.**

The ability to deliver information concisely, as well as the ability to organize that information efficiently and in an easy-to-follow manner, is an invaluable skill for any industry. I have been using this course’s assignments as an opportunity to practice my ability to include only the most important details and format the information to be as easy to understand as possible. These abilities were exercised exhaustively to produce the summary and abstract for Major Assignment #4 as well as the information-dense memo and proposal for Major Assignment #6. Additionally, Homework #8 introduced me to principles of creating meaningful graphics. All of these have already improved the quality of my writing at work.

* **Prepare a professional cover letter and résumé for a job search.**

One of my major points in the introductory discussion for the course was that I desired to improve my résumé. Not only did the Employment Package introduce me to the concepts I required to make that improvement, but it also highlighted the importance of communication with an organization before and after an interview. I will use these in my future as I begin applying to other positions to ensure the highest chance of acquisition.

* **Discuss what will be expected from you in a professional setting.**

The discussion board assignments and this final exam both required extensive thought about the use of the skills I have learned from this course as well as how I react in certain situations. In particular, the discussion about ethical issues highlighted a type of problem that I had not previously considered. Because of that discussion, I feel much more prepared to face ethical dilemmas at work whereas I would previously have been caught off guard.

* **Evaluate professional proposals.**

Major Assignment #6 forced me to closely consider all the details of contained in proposal submissions for a grant. I learned from this assignment that being tasked with choosing the best submission out of a list is a great responsibility, especially the submission is concerning the distribution of money. The organization that these proposals are submitted to can suffer massive consequences if details are ignored or shortcuts in the proposal are tolerated. This objective has taught me to pay very close attention to what is and is not said in a proposal or any other document requiring an appraisal, which I have begun to practice when reviewing source code written by my coworkers for inclusion in product releases.

* **Create a professional proposal combining elements of technical writing criteria and design.**

Both Homework #2 and Major Assignment #6 contributed to fulfilling this course goal. Though Homework #2 was a memo rather than a professional proposal, I noticed that I selected details to include in the proposal for Major Assignment #6 with much stricter discretion. This change in how carefully I consider the inclusion or exclusion of details shows how I have learned to properly address the most important attributes of a proposal and format those attributes to be concise and convincing. Though I may not submit proposals for grants, I will utilize this skill when introducing a new model for the source architectures in a software development project, highlighting the need and benefits of these models and properly estimating the cost of the effort it would take to implement.