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Writing for the Sciences

### My Writing Journey in Writing for the Sciences

As a pre-med student, I embarked on this English course with a distorted perception of writing. I considered it to strictly be a tool for humanities students. I made clear distinctions between academic and personal writing where only personal writing could be amusing. I was confused about what a class titled Writing for the Sciences would even entail and how it would benefit me. However, this semester has been an enlightening journey, reshaping my understanding of academic writing, its applications, and its potential to impact my future medical career.

One of the first learning objectives was acknowledging linguistic differences as resources. Initially, this concept was challenging; however, the diversity in our class transformed this hurdle into an opportunity. It was a revelation to see how our unique linguistic backgrounds could be leveraged to create distinct rhetorical sensibilities. This was particularly evident in our group project on Mental Health where our different voices provided a rich, nuanced perspective on the various mental disorders we chose to research and had to exemplify. The enhancement of reading, drafting, revising, editing, and self-assessing strategies was a significant part of my development as a writer. The iterative nature of the writing process became clear to me, as I learned to see each draft not as a final product, but as an opportunity to word vomit and play around with the essay. For instance, my NYT Science Section Summary & Response underwent various iterations, each one improving clarity and coherence. I also outlined this essay

thoroughly which helped me structure the essay beforehand and maintain clarity and coherence when writing. Negotiating my writing goals with audience expectations was a transformative experience. I realized that effective communication necessitates balancing personal expression with audience comprehension. This was particularly crucial when writing my piece "Should Scientists Conduct Stem Cell Therapy Using Aborted Fetuses?" where I had to distill complex scientific concepts into understandable language for a broader audience. A critical aspect of this course was engaging in collaborative writing processes. The group project on "Mental Health" taught me that writing can be a social endeavor, benefiting from a variety of perspectives. This experience highlighted the value of teamwork and collaboration in creating comprehensive and engaging written work. Engaging in genre analysis and multimodal composing expanded my understanding of effective writing. Creating the "Mental Health" presentation pushed me out of my comfort zone, emphasizing that writing can be more than just words.

Articulating a stance through writing was empowering. I learned that writing can be a platform for advocacy. In my essay "Should Scientists Conduct Stem Cell Therapy Using Aborted Fetuses?" I was able to express my views on autonomy and fetal rights in the medical field, which emphasized the broader societal implications of my chosen career. The course also emphasized the importance of research and source usage. I honed my ability to locate, evaluate, and integrate sources into my writing. The Field Observation Essay titled "A Springtime Spectacle: The Kwanan Cherry Trees of Madson Square Park" was a testament to my improved research skills, showcasing my ability to synthesize and analyze various sources effectively. However, I am aware of the learning objectives that I have not fully accomplished, such as utilizing library resources more effectively. While I have attended two library sessions (last

semester and this semester), I still fall back onto what I am familiar with, Google Scholar. I do, however, use CCNY's Google Scholar so that I may have access to more full texts.

My perception of writing has undergone significant changes over the course of the semester. Initially, I viewed writing as a solitary activity confined to the classroom. However, as I engaged in collaborative writing processes, I realized the value of social interaction and the benefits of seeking feedback from others. I realized that academic writing could be an enjoyable process. Writing has become more than just a means of communication; it is a tool for expressing my thoughts, formulating a stance, and engaging with different audiences across diverse contexts.” I now see writing as a dynamic, collaborative process that involves negotiation, advocacy, and exploration. The portfolio I've curated is a testament to this journey, showcasing the diversity of my writing and my growth. It includes all the major essays, an introduction that provides a brief overview of what is in each section, and the main arguments and key points addressed in each essay. The portfolio also has some additional smaller writing pieces. The portfolio's design is simple and easy to navigate, with a static front page. I chose a color scheme that facilitates reading, and the layout is neat and reader-friendly.

My experience in Writing for the Sciences has also underscored the importance of persistence and resilience. Writing is an iterative process, demanding patience and perseverance. However, the rewards of improved clarity of thought, deeper understanding, and effective communication are well worth the effort. This semester has not only enhanced my writing skills but also changed my perspective on writing itself. I now see it as a tool that transcends disciplinary boundaries and can be used for advocacy and expression. As I progress in my academic journey, I am confident that these skills will be invaluable, not just in my English courses but also in my medical career. I've come to understand that effective communication is as

crucial in medicine as technical knowledge. Whether it's writing patient reports, publishing research findings, or advocating for health policies, the skills I've acquired in this course will significantly enhance my capacity to contribute to the medical field.