ENGL 388V Portfolio

ENGL 393H TECHINCAL WRITING

2ND SEMESTER

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ENGL 393H Honors Technical Writing

<u>**Lesson Plan #1: 4 ½ Comma Rules**</u>

Objective:
Students will learn four and a half comma rules. After the lesson is over, they should be able to apply their knowledge to use commas correctly when writing and editing their future assignments.

Preliminaries:
This lesson is a revised version of the lesson on commas I gave during my first semester as a UTA. At the beginning of the semester, my instructor and I surveyed the class on what grammar topics they would like to review. The survey results indicated that revisiting comma rules was high in demand. My instructor and I decided that I would review comma rules before the first major writing assignment rough draft was due so that the students would have time to practice proper comma usage and earn higher grades on the first assignment.

Materials:
  - Computer with Internet
  - Projector application and physical projector screen
  - PowerPoint Presentation
  - ELMs homework assignment
  - Candy

Time Estimate:
The lesson should take 20 to 25 minutes. The homework should take no more than 10 minutes for students to complete.

Outline of Lesson:
[0:00]- Explain that we will be doing a review of commas as requested. Mention that the examples in the slides are from students' work from the previous semester.

PowerPoint Presentation: If students seem to understand information, skip some examples or exercises. Ask if students understand the rules and examples and if they need further explanation.
  [0:30]-Rule 1: Commas are needed between items in a series (words or phrases). The oxford comma is optional. Make sure to use parallelism for the verbs.
  [1:00]-Rule 2: Commas go after "introductory stuff," introductory words or phrases like the ones listed on the slide because they can't stand on their own and are not complete ideas.
    -<u>Example 1:</u> Read example and explain that "Over the past decade" is an introductory phrase that cannot stand on its own. The sentence still makes sense without the introductory phrase.
    -<u>Example 2:</u> Read example and explain that "Despite the aforementioned reasons" is an introductory phrase that cannot stand on its own. The sentence still makes sense without the introductory phrase.
    -<u>Exercise 1:</u> Ask students to find the error, and then display the answer if someone gets it right. Ask the student who answered correctly why the answer is correct.

-Explanation: The phrase "for stability" is an introductory clause that cannot stand on its own so a comma is needed after it.

[4:00]-Rule 3**:** Place commas before and after a clause/phrase in the middle of a sentence. Clauses add extra information to the sentence that does not interfere with understanding the sentence as a whole. You can figure out if you need commas by reading the sentence without the part of the sentence you suspect needs commas to see if the sentence still makes sense. Clauses at the end of a sentence also add extra information to the sentence that does not interfere with understanding the sentence as a whole. You can try the removal test with them as well.

-<u>Example 1:</u> Read example and explain that the phrase "as students at a nationally recognized public university that promotes inclusion, diversity, and tolerance" needs to be surrounded by commas because it adds extra information to the sentence by describing the students. Removing the phrase gives the sentence "We should be mindful of how our actions affect others" which still makes sense. So, the phrase needs commas around it.

-<u>Example 2:</u> Read example and explain that the phrase "when not designed properly", adds information to the sentence about the electronic devices. The sentence "Electronic devices will likely sustain damage" still makes sense if the phrase is removed. So, the phrase needs commas around it.

-<u>Exercise 1:</u> Ask students to find the error, and then display the answer if someone gets it right. Ask the student who answered correctly why the answer is correct.

-Explanation: A comma is needed before the phrase "an age group that is often sick and spreading their illnesses due to close contact" because it is describing "children ages newborn to 18" and the sentence makes sense without this extra information.

-<u>Exercise 2:</u> Ask students to find the error, and then display the answer if someone gets it right. Ask the student who answered correctly why the answer is correct.

-Explanation: A comma is needed around the phrase "as you can see" because it adds detail to the sentence and the sentence still makes sense when you remove the phrase.

[8:00]-Rule 4: Use a comma before coordinating conjunctions to combine two sentences.
-Commas are only needed before these coordinating conjunctions if they are part of independent clause. In this example, a comma is not needed before the "or" because "sink marks" are another possibility that may occur and not a separate sentence.
-If the subject of the sentences you are combining is the same, you do not need necessarily to use a comma. If you keep the subject in each sentence then you need a comma and coordinating conjunction like the "and." If you mention the subject at the beginning of the sentence no comma is needed because the subject of the sentence is the same.

-<u>Example 1:</u> Read example and explain that a comma is needed before "but" because the "but" is connecting the two sentences "Such statistical computation has long been possible" and "Scientists were unable to practically exploit it."

-<u>Example 2:</u> Read example and explain a comma is needed before the "so" because it is linking together the sentences "Integrated development environments will take the user's code, compile it, and convert it into all 1's and 0's, or binary" and "The computer can interpret and eventually execute it."

-Exercise 1: Ask students to find the error, and then display the answer if someone gets it right. Ask the student who answered correctly why the answer is correct.

-Explanation: A comma is needed before the "so" as the coordinating conjunction links the sentences "Molds can deteriorate over time" and "They periodically need to be replaced."

[12:00]-Rule 4.5: In place of coordinating conjunctions, you can use semicolons and conjunctive adverbs to combine sentences. Use a semicolon before the conjunctive adverb and then place a comma after the adverb. Or, you can use a semicolon to join two sentences together.

-Example 1: Read example and explain that "however" is being used to combine the sentences "I wish I could be a professional basketball player" and "I am too short."

-Example 2: Read example and explain that "therefore" is being used to combine the sentences "I want to be a better writer" and "I must practice my comma my rules."

-Exercise 1: Ask students to find the error, and then display the answer if someone gets it right. Ask the student who answered correctly why the answer is correct.

-Explanation: A semicolon before and a comma after the "however" are needed to join the sentences "One might assume it is just coding or writing instructions for computers" and "It is much more."

-Exercise 2: Ask students to find the error, and then display the answer if someone gets it right. Ask the student who answered correctly why the answer is correct.

-Explanation: A semicolon not a comma is need before "you" because "you starts a new sentence "You can think of a chromosome as more like a train that carries packages." If you removed the first part of the sentence, it still makes sense, but you would lose the entire second sentence

[16:00]- Award students who gave correct answers to the exercises with candy. Explain that there will be a homework on commas in the form of a quiz on ELMs. The quiz asks students to fix comma errors in two sentences.

[20:00]-End of lesson

Method for Assessing the Objective:

I will review and grade the ELMs homework assignment students to see if they have mastered the topic.

Reflection:

For this lesson, I tried to include ideas from Bloom's taxonomy. I had the students work through a few exercises and worksheet in order to have them analyze the comma rules. During the presentation, I alternated between explaining the reasoning behind why a comma was missing or needed to be deleted and having the students explain why to make sure they understood the comma rules. I had students do the worksheet activity and homework assignment because I wanted students to be able to apply what they learned. I will be able to evaluate each student's progress from the worksheet and homework to see if they have improved.

For my PowerPoint, I used many of the tips from the "Making Better PowerPoint Presentations" article. I tried to avoid too many words on my slides. I also did not use any transitions; I added small chunks of information each time to the bottom of the slides until the

relevant information was complete. I tried to repeat important information on each slide about the rules so students could refer back to them during the examples and exercises. I had considered in my rough draft printing out the PowerPoint and giving it to the students, but I realized that if I were to do that, I would be giving away all of the answers to the exercises. I told my students that I wanted them to listen rather than taking notes because I had posted the presentation on ELMs because Edelman and Harring's research found that taking notes while the professor is talking decreases learning. Instead of having students read the slides, except for the exercises, I discussed the information on the slides. I also tried to use a simple color scheme of black and green. Color also was helpful to indicate where errors and commas went as well as to show were important words and clauses were in relation to the sentences.

I implemented a number of changes to this lesson plan from my experience delivering the lesson last semester. First, I consolidated the PowerPoint slides. For example, I removed content from the first rule on placing commas between items in a series because I felt students understand this rule fairly well, and I wanted to move on to rules they may have not been so familiar with. I also removed the worksheet activity from the lesson. The reason I chose not to include it in the lesson was that there would not be enough time in class that day to do the worksheet activity. I changed the commas homework assignment slightly. The previous assignment asked students to find a comma error in their work and correct it as well as fix one of the two provided sentences with comma errors. If the students could not find any comma errors, I asked them to fix both sentences. As I gave the comma rules lesson earlier on this semester, the students did not have any writing for the course from which they could search for comma errors. So, I changed the homework to correcting two sentences with comma errors. I kept the sentences I used as I thought they were fairly challenging.

Last semester, I ran over the time I allotted for the presentation by half an hour! I believe that occurred because I did not understand how long the lesson would take, and I spent too much time passing out candy to students who offered correct answers to the exercises. Once again the candy helped the students stay engaged. When revising the lesson, I thought about how I could explain the concepts more clearly and concisely to more efficiently use my time. Also, I handed out the candy at the end of the class. However, the lesson took ten minutes longer than I anticipated. So, I still have room for improvement with my timing.

I remember preparing extensively for the presentation last semester. This semester, I practiced the lesson, but not as much as last semester. I think I felt more comfortable with the material and the shorter length this time around. I also felt like I was able to explain the comma rules more clearly than I did the first time. As for the commas homework, the average was a couple of percentage points higher this semester than last semester. So, I think the revision of the lesson and my experience delivering it last semester contributed to the increased homework scores.

COMMAS REVIEW

Rule 1: Commas between items/phrases in a series

- Commas go after each word or phrase
- The comma before the and (Oxford comma) = personal choice
- Remember parallelism = verbs in the same tense and phrases in the same format

Rule 2: Commas after introductory stuff

- Introductory stuff can't stand on their own
- Introductory stuff:

-First,

-Next,

-Whenever I am in Technical Writing class,

-After eating lunch,

-However,

-Since I like chocolate,

-While eating a sandwich,

Rule 2: Commas after introductory stuff

- Introductory stuff can't stand on their own
- Example 1:

Over the past decade, many government agencies and universities have been placing increasingly large amounts of money into researching sustainability.

Rule 2: Commas after introductory stuff

- Introductory stuff can't stand on their own
- Example 1:

Over the past decade, many government agencies and universities have been placing increasingly large amounts of money into researching sustainability.

- Example 2:

Despite the aforementioned reasons, some may still have qualms about taking a stand against gerrymandering.

Rule 2: Commas after introductory stuff

- Introductory stuff can't stand on their own
- Exercise 1:

For stability you can bind on to the shirt of the player that was tackled.

Rule 2: Commas after introductory stuff

- Introductory stuff can't stand on their own
- Exercise 1:

For stability you can bind on to the shirt of the player that was tackled.

- Correction:

For stability, you can bind on to the shirt of the player that was tackled.

Rule 3: Commas around clauses/phrases in the middle or before clauses/phrases at the end

- Place commas before and after a clause/phrase in the middle of a sentence
- These clauses/phrases contain extra information or descriptions that do not interfere with understanding of the sentence as a whole
- The clauses/phrases also can't stand on their own
- Use commas around a clause/phrase when if you were to remove the clause/phrase from the sentence, the sentence would still make sense
- Similarly, clauses/phrases at the end convey extra information and the removal test will help you figure out where to put the comma

Rule 3: Commas around clauses/phrases in the middle or before clauses/phrases at the end

- Place commas before and after a clause/phrase in the middle of a sentence
- Place commas before a clause/phrase at the end of a sentence
- <u>Example 1:</u>

We**,** as students at a nationally recognized public university that promotes inclusion, diversity, and tolerance**,** should be mindful of how our actions affect others.

- <u>Example 2:</u>

Electronic devices**,** when not designed properly**,** will likely sustain damage.

Rule 3: Commas around clauses/phrases in the middle or before clauses/phrases at the end

- Place commas before and after a clause/phrase in the middle of a sentence
- Place commas before a clause/phrase at the end of a sentence
- Exercise 1:

So, in order to address this misconstrued information, I have designed this paper to target and educate an audience of adults with children ages newborn to 18 an age group that is often sick and spreading their illnesses due to close contact.

Rule 3: Commas around clauses/phrases in the middle or before clauses/phrases at the end

- Place commas before and after a clause/phrase in the middle of a sentence
- Place commas before a clause/phrase at the end of a sentence
- Exercise 1:

So, in order to address this misconstrued information, I have designed this paper to target and educate an audience of adults with children ages newborn to 18 an age group that is often sick and spreading their illnesses due to close contact.

- Correction:

So, in order to address this misconstrued information, I have designed this paper to target and educate an audience of adults with children ages newborn to 18, an age group that is often sick and spreading their illnesses due to close contact.

Rule 3: Commas around clauses/phrases in the middle or before clauses/phrases at the end

- Place commas before and after a clause/phrase in the middle of a sentence
- Place commas before a clause/phrase at the end of a sentence
- Exercise 2:

The great thing about becoming a paralegal as you can see is that work can be found in any legal field a person might be interested in.

- Correction:

The great thing about becoming a paralegal**,** as you can see**,** is that work can be found in any legal field a person might be interested in.

Rule 4: Commas before coordinating conjunctions to combine sentences

- Combine two sentences or independent clauses with a comma followed by a coordinating conjunction
- <u>Coordinating Conjunctions</u> = and, nor, or, so, for, but, yet

Rule 4: Commas before coordinating conjunctions to combine sentences

- DO NOT put commas in front of coordinating conjunctions UNLESS they are part of an independent clause

- <u>Example:</u>

If a feature is too thick, the plastic will shrink and develop concave defects, or sink marks.

- <u>Correction:</u>

If a feature is too thick, the plastic will shrink and develop concave defects or sink marks.

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- Combine two sentences or independent clauses with a comma followed by a coordinating conjunction

- <u>Coordinating Conjunctions</u> = and, nor, or, so, for, but, yet

- <u>Example 1:</u>

Such statistical computation has long been possible**,** but scientists were unable to practically exploit it.

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- <u>Example 1:</u>

Such statistical computation has long been possible**,** but scientists were unable to practically exploit it.

- <u>Example 2:</u>

Integrated development environments will take the user's code, compile it, and convert it into all 1's and 0's, or binary**,** so the computer can interpret and eventually execute it.

Rule 4: Commas before coordinating conjunctions to combine sentences

- Combine two sentences or independent clauses with a comma followed by a coordinating conjunction
- <u>Coordinating Conjunctions</u> = and, nor, or, so, for, but, yet
- <u>Exercise 2:</u>

Molds deteriorate over time so they periodically need to be replaced.

- <u>Correction:</u>

Molds deteriorate over time**,** so they periodically need to be replaced.

Rule 4.5: Semicolons and commas to combine sentences

- Instead of using a coordinating conjunction to combine two sentences you can use a semicolon

- Semicolons combined with commas when using conjunctive adverbs

- Conjunctive Adverbs:

;however,

;therefore,

;moreover,

;thus,

;otherwise,

Rule 4.5: Semicolons and commas to combine sentences

- Instead of using a coordinating conjunction to combine two sentences you can use a semicolon

- Semicolons combined with commas when using conjunctive adverbs

- Example 1:

I wish I could be a professional basketball player; however, I am too short.

Rule 4.5: Semicolons and commas to combine sentences

- Instead of using a coordinating conjunction to combine two sentences you can use a semicolon

- Semicolons combined with commas when using conjunctive adverbs

- Example 1:

I wish I could be a professional basketball player; however, I am too short.

- Example 2:

I want to be a better writer; therefore, I must practice my comma rules.

Rule 4.5: Semicolons and commas to combine sentences

- Instead of using a coordinating conjunction to combine two sentences you can use a semicolon

- Semicolons combined with commas when using conjunctive adverbs

- Exercise 1:

One might assume it is just coding or writing instructions for computers however it is much more.

Rule 4.5: Semicolons and commas to combine sentences

- Instead of using a coordinating conjunction to combine two sentences you can use a semicolon

- Semicolons combined with commas when using conjunctive adverbs

- Exercise 1:

One might assume it is just coding or writing instructions for computers however it is much more.

- Correction:

One might assume it is just coding or writing instructions for computers**;** however**,** it is much more.

Rule 4.5: Semicolons and commas to combine sentences

- Instead of using a coordinating conjunction to combine two sentences you can use a semicolon

- Semicolons combined with commas when using conjunctive adverbs

- Exercise 2:

Chromosomes carry genetic information because they are made up of DNA, you can think of a chromosome as more like a train that carries packages (genes).

Rule 4.5: Semicolons and commas to combine sentences

- Instead of using a coordinating conjunction to combine two sentences you can use a semicolon

- Semicolons combined with commas when using conjunctive adverbs

- Exercise 2:

Chromosomes carry genetic information because they are made up of DNA, you can think of a chromosome as more like a train that carries packages (genes).

- Correction:

Chromosomes carry genetic information because they are made up of DNA; you can think of a chromosome as more like a train that carries packages (genes).

Further Resource

- https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/owlprint/607/

Commas Homework

Started: May 8 at 11:26am

Quiz Instructions

Fix all comma errors in the following two sentences.

Question 1   5 pts

At the Homecoming football game I saw Testudo the UMD mascot do a backflip cartwheel and the splits however he didn't give me a high five and this made me sad.

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Answer:
At the Homecoming football game, I saw Testudo, the UMD mascot, do a backflip, cartwheel, and the splits; however, he didn't give me a high five, and this made me sad. (the oxford comma is optional)

Question 2   5 pts

Two weeks ago I found a poster in the English Undergraduate Lounge that had the My Little Pony characters on it but there was one lucky pony with Edgar Allen Poe's face on it so I guess you'd call it a POEny.

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Answer:

Two weeks ago, I found a poster in the English Undergraduate Lounge that had the My Little Pony characters on it, but there was one lucky pony with Edgar Allen Poe's face on it, so I guess you'd call it a POEny.

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ENGL 393H Honors Technical Writing

Lesson Plan #2: Passive vs. Active Voice

Objective:

Students will learn the difference between the active and passive voice and when to use each voice appropriately. After the lesson is over, students should be able to minimize their usage of passive voice in their writing when the active voice is more appropriate.

Preliminaries:

At the beginning of the semester, my instructor and I surveyed the class on what grammar topics they would like to review. Reviewing the passive and active voice was a major topic students were interested in reviewing per the survey. The lesson will be delivered after the first major writing assignment has been turned in as there was not enough time to present it before the assignment was due. Before the lesson students are expected to watch a short, priming video on the passive and active voice.

Materials:

- Computer with Internet
- Projector application and physical projector screen
- PowerPoint Presentation
- video
- ELMs homework assignment

Time Estimate:

The lesson should take about 15 minutes. The homework should take no more than 10 minutes for students to complete.

Outline of Lesson:

[0:00]- Comments on Video

Mention how the video was supposed to give an overview of the scenarios in which the active voice is more appropriate and the passive voice is more appropriate. Ask the class if they have any comments or questions about the video.

[1:00]- Active > Passive

Review that in the active voice the subject comes before the verb in the sentence and the passive voice uses the verb to be and places the subject after the verb. Mention some of the key ideas from the video: the active voice emphasizes the doer/agent doing the action, the active voice often uses fewer words to convey the same ideas, and the active voice is clearer.

-Example: Read the example and ask students whether the sentence is in the active or passive voice. Then, ask students how the sentence could be written in the active voice. Ask students how using the active voice impacts the sentence.

-Potential Student Comments: The subject of the sentence is the majority of the class and the lesson is the object, so the subject should come first if we are writing the sentence in the active voice. Ways the sentence is improved using the active voice include making the sentence clearer and more concise.

[5:00]-Passive > Active

While I seem to be praising active voice, there are situations where the passive voice is preferred or makes more sense to use.

-<u>Example:</u> The author/subject is clear from the context. Read the example and explain that it is easy to tell that the author of the sentence is the university. If you were to write "The university requires students to take a professional writing class," you would convey the same information, but it would take a few more words.

-<u>Example:</u> Another good time to use the passive voice is if you do not know the doer or agent. In the example, you do not know who the vandal is. You could say that "Someone sprayed graffiti on the wall," but adding "someone" does not give any useful information for the subject of the sentence.

-<u>Example:</u> Passive voice is appropriate when the subject is not as important as the action. In this example, the turning in of the assignment is more important than the assignment itself. Also, it is assumed that students would be turning in the assignment next week. If the part of the sentence about turning in the assignment is pushed towards the end of the sentence, it will become less noticeable. So, having it up front is preferable in this situation.

[10:00]-Explain that there will be a homework quiz on the passive and active voice on ELMs.
[12:00]-End of lesson

Method of Assessing the Objective:

I will review and grade the ELMs homework assignment students to see if they have mastered the topic.

Reflection:

I assigned the students a video on the passive and active voice before the presentation in the hopes that it would give them a good introduction to the lesson. With regards to Bloom's Taxonomy, the purpose of the video was to help consolidate the proper usage of the active and passive voice in students' memories as well as enable them to have a basic understanding of the material. I wanted the video to serve as an opening into a quick discussion on passive and active voice at the beginning of the lesson; however, no one offered any comments or questions on the video. So, either they felt comfortable with the video or did not watch it.

I created the passive voice homework so that students could apply what they had learned. One of the questions asked students to write a sentence in the passive voice and then rewrite it in the active voice. The rationale behind that question in terms of Bloom's Taxonomy was to have my students create original sentences based on what they had learned about the passive and active voice.

The day I delivered the lesson, I was being observed by a fellow UTA. Furthermore, a quiz at the beginning of the class took longer than expected. So, I was worried about smoothly getting through all the material. Thankfully, with the help of my lesson plan notes, I was able to get into the flow of presenting. This lesson was my fourth one, and I felt even more confident presenting in front of the class than the past three times. I also was able to stay within the time limit I set for the lesson. While there were no comments at the beginning of the lesson, I received a couple clarifying questions at the end of the lesson.

As for the homework assignment, the scores were lower than I expected with averages in the C range. I think the scores were lower than I expected because the multiple choice question may have been unclear. The question asked "Which of the following sentences uses the passive voice appropriately?" I think some students interpreted the question as "Which sentences make

use of the passive voice?" I noticed that about half the class got the question right (C. A&B), leading me to believe that how the students interpreted the question led them to answer in one of two ways.

From the homework results, I learned that designing questions is difficult as while some questions may seem clear to you, they may not be interpreted in the way you want them to be by all of your students. So, for designing future lessons and my writing in general, I will think more carefully about what I want to say and how to say it clearly so that I will not be misinterpreted.

ACTIVE VS. PASSIVE VOICE

INTRO VIDEO

ACTIVE > PASSIVE

- Emphasis on the subject (agent) rather than the object (recipient of action)
- Shorter way to say the same idea
- Specificity
- Clarity

EXAMPLES: ACTIVE > PASSIVE

A lesson on active vs. passive voice was requested in the survey by the majority of the class.

EXAMPLES: ACTIVE > PASSIVE

A lesson on active vs. passive voice was requested in the survey by a majority of the class.

A majority of the class requested a lesson on active vs. passive voice in the survey.

EXAMPLES: PASSIVE > ACTIVE

- Author/subject clear from context

Students are required to take a professional writing class.

EXAMPLES: PASSIVE > ACTIVE

- Doer/agent is unknown

Graffiti was sprayed on the wall.

EXAMPLES: PASSIVE > ACTIVE

- Subject is not as important as action

The assignment will be turned in next week.

Passive Voice Homework

> ⚠ This is a preview of the published version of the quiz

Started: May 8 at 11:28am

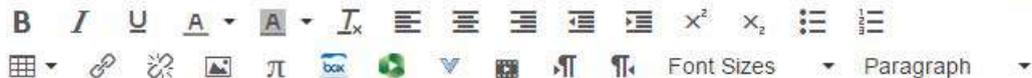## Quiz Instructions

Follow the instructions for each question.

Question 1	1 pts

Rewrite the following sentence using the active voice.

While a failing grade on his lab report was given to Grammar Badger, an A+ was earned by Grammar Squirrel on her lab report.

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Answer:
While Grammar Badger received a failing grade on his lab report, Grammar Squirrel earned an A+ on her lab report.

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Question 2   2 pts

Which of the following sentences uses the passive voice appropriately?

☺ A. UMD was founded in 1856 as an agricultural college.

◉ B. Sushi is usually prepared with raw fish.

☺ C. The ice cream sundae was consumed by Conrad.

x D. Both A and B

◯ E. A. B, and C

Question 3   2 pts

Write a sentence in the passive voice and then change it into a sentence in the active voice.

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Answers will vary.

Example:

Passive = The lesson was designed by Alexa.

Active = Alexa designed the lesson.

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ENGL 393H Honors Technical Writing

Learning Artifact: Visuals and Document Design

Objective:
      Students will review the principles of effective document design and graphics. They will also practice using the principles by analyzing the design of three documents. Students will demonstrate what they learned by making a cover page for their final projects using Canva. After the lesson is over, they should be able to produce graphics, using Canva if they so choose, and implement some document design into their final projects.

Preliminaries:
      During the fifth week of class students, learned about designing documents and creating graphics from chapters 7 and 8 in Markel's *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*, a quiz, and an in-class discussion. The purpose of the lesson was to prepare students for the Process, Procedure, or Instructions assignment, in which students are required to have at least one visual in their papers. The assignment is also supposed to be written for a website. Students are encouraged, though not required, to create a website or use document design to format their assignment like a website.
      This lesson plan comes five weeks later, and is designed to review the concepts from chapters 7 and 8 in Markel's book as well as prepare students for more extensive design and use of graphics in their final projects. Students selected their topics two weeks ago and met with the instructor and me to discuss their topics. The week after this lesson, students will work on an annotated bibliography and outline of their final projects. The following week, they should begin working on the content and design of their final projects.

Materials:
        -Computer with Internet
        -Projector application and physical projector screen
        -Prezi
        -Canva
        -Online discussion

Time Estimate:
      The lesson should take 20-25 minutes.

Outline of Lesson:
[0:00]-Prezi
      [0:10]-Introduce the presentation and explain that students need to do some document design for the final project. Mention that I will review the goals of document design and what constitutes effective design and graphics.
      [0:30]-Goals of document design:
            -help readers understand structure
            -help readers find what looking for
            -make it easier for readers to understand the text
      [1:00]-Effective of design:

-titles and headings can be used to organize content and create a hierarchy

-negative space is important to have else the page will be too cluttered, but you don't want too much space

-not all font types are appropriate for your document, and the size matters for not only readability but also creating organization and a hierarchy

-it is a good idea to place images and other relevant content near the text that it goes with

-having a table of contents at the beginning can help direct readers quickly to what they are looking for

-use contrast to make images and text easier to see

-use captions to help explain graphics, but don't make them too long

[2:00]-Effective graphics: It is important to make sure that you create or use graphics and place them in such a way in the document with your audience in mind. Graphics should contain a suitable amount of information for the audience. It is helpful to connect the graphic to the text by mentioning the graphic in the text or including a caption that relates the image to the text. Also, placing graphics near the text they are referring to can help with the audience's understanding.

[2:30]-Comparison 1: Ask students which of the two designs they prefer. Ask them to explain why they prefer one design over the other using the principles of effective design and graphics. Ask which document is designed more effectively for communicating with the intended audience and why. Students should identify some of the following points:

Design 1: The black title contrasts from the red and white design. The red and white contrast with one another and represent the colors of UMD. The quarter circles look like they are approximately the same distance away from each other. The design makes good use of negative space. The numbers stand out from the white due to contrast, but the title stands out the most because it is the darkest.

Design 2: The red and white contrast with one another and represent the colors of UMD. The font size of the title, "Fall 2015," and "UMD Math Department" progressively get smaller to indicate the order of importance. The cover has a lot going on, which may be distracting to the audience or enhance the audience's viewing experience. The circle going around the shell looks like it contains text, but it is difficult to read. The equations in each sector of the shell make good use of the negative space; however, the equations are sized differently. Not all of the equations are positioned the same way, which suggest that the positioning was intentional to fit the equations in the sectors or random. The components of the design are in close proximity to one another.

[5:30]-Comparison 2: Ask students which of the two designs they prefer. Ask them to explain why they prefer one design over the other using the principles of effective design and graphics. Ask which document is designed more effectively for communicating with the intended audience and why. Students should identify some of the following points:

Design 1: It is difficult to read the slide's title and subtitle because of the font and lack of contrast. The picture of the cereal and the cartoon of a

person eating cereal seem related to the topic of the slide; however, the placement and size of the images looks random. The images are close together seemingly for no reason. The slide's negative space is not used well.

Design 2: The title and subtitle in white contrast from the blue background, making them easier to read. The title and subtitle are also sized appropriately. The cartoon of a person eating cereal serves a purpose; it is meant to be an example of achievement to motivate others to learn how make cereal. The red arrow contrasts with the blue background. Also, the cartoon is centered, breaking up the negative space. The image of the cereal is used as a border, giving more visual interest to the slide. The text and the images are not too close to one another.

[8:30]-Comparison 3: Ask students which of the two designs they prefer. Ask them to explain why they prefer one design over the other using the principles of effective design and graphics. Ask which document is designed more effectively for communicating with the intended audience and why. Students should identify some of the following points:

Design 1: The design is effective because it is simple. There is use of contrast to make the design easier to see and read. The images make it easy to quickly identify what to throw in the recycling. The red no symbol on the plastic bag further illustrates the message not to recycle plastic bags, something we usually think to recycle. The recycle blue color and symbol also influence the message of recycling. There captions in close proximity to the items they describe, and there isn't any clutter. The image has clear titles. The design makes good use of negative space.

Design 2: The recycle blue color and image of the recycling bin influence the message of recycling. The design has a list of what can be recycled in close proximity of images of what can be recycled. However, not all the items in the list are illustrated and the images seem to be replaced randomly. The font contrasts from the white background, yet many of the recyclable items are lightly colored and do not stand out as well. The red no symbol on the plastic bag further illustrates the message not to recycle plastic bags, but to use them again at the grocery store. The orange arrows contrast from the white background and the blue font and box. The arrows help break up the negative space between the box and the images on the right hand side, but they do not seem to be all that helpful to the reader. The primary function of the arrows looks like it is to take up space. The blue box itself also breaks up the negative space.

[11:30]-Math Major Survival Guide example: I wrote the Math Major Survival Guide for my final project. So, I did the manual option. The guide has information about classes and advice on studying, doing homework, and resources for math majors. I ended up revising the document for the Math Department over the summer, and the document is on their site now. I have a link below if you want to look at more of how the document was designed. I just want to focus on these two pages I took out of the guide. Ask the class if they find the design effective for the audience and why.

Effective Design: Headings and font sizes help differentiate sections and make it easy for the audience to find the information they are looking for. The red and green provide contrast making the page more interesting to look at. The colored boxes also break up the content making it easier to read. The red font in the green box highlights important information using contrast to have it stand out to the reader. The font size is appropriate to read. Page numbers and justified text make the document look like a book or booklet.

[14:30]-Open the online discussion on ELMs and explain the discussion assignment. Navigate to the Canva website and show students how to make accounts.
[15:30]-Allow students to make accounts and give a quick tutorial of how to use Canva's features.
[20:00]-If any time remains, let students get started designing.

Method of Assessing the Objective:
Students' understanding of the lesson will be evaluated based on their discussion posts. I will examine the students' designs to see if they have a good understanding of document design and how to use graphics in documents. Furthermore, I will determine how well the students understood the lesson from the explanations they provide for their designs and the designs of two of their peers.

Instructional Materials:
http://prezi.com/fa4ack6rm_o5/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share

Reflection:

For this lesson, I tried to incorporate some ideas from Donaldson's article "The Maker Movement and the Rebirth of Constructionism." By having my students design a cover or title page for their final projects, I am asking them to create for an "authentic audience" like Donaldson. In technical writing, one of the major goals for students is to learn how to produce documents for a particular audience rather than the instructor. So, it is good to give students extra practice catering to a particular audience but in a different setting with visuals and document design. Finally, I tried to be creative with design in my presentation as well by using graphics and making the presentation look like a document itself.

Narrated Reflection Prezi:
http://prezi.com/fcw3w8zns5ji/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share

ENGL 393 Observation

For the week of February 13-17, I observed Kelsey Spitalnic, a UTA for online ENGL393 Technical Writing with Professor Michelle Von Euw. During the week, students were responsible for completing a number of tasks in two modules including: finishing the Instructions Assignment group project, writing a cover letter, peer editing cover letters, and selecting a topic for the final project, which is either a report or manual that proposes a solution to some sort of problem. Since the course I UTA for is blended learning, I was interested in seeing how a completely online class utilizes its ELMs space, what kind of lessons work online, and how students interact online with one another and with the UTA. I was looking for ways to enhance the ELMs page for my class as well as new ways to use the ELMs page to communicate with students, design lesson plans, and allow students to collaborate with one another online. From observing Kelsey, I learned about her class' ELMs space organization, student interaction and collaboration, and weekly modules. Additionally, I gained an understanding of the relationship the UTAs and instructor have with the students and Kelsey's role in the weekly modules and class in general.

I began my observation by perusing the class' ELMs page to see how it is organized. I felt overwhelmed by the number of pages on the site; if I were a UTA for or a student in the class, I might be confused about where to find assignments or information. The homepage has some links to useful information about the class like the syllabus and how the class works, but other important information such as Kelsey's contact information and class policies are located in the first module. I think that this information should be included on the homepage to make it easier for students to find. The syllabus provided gives a brief overview of the topics that will be covered for the week. The syllabus is contrasted with the course summary, which lists a plethora of class assignments. As for the modules, they are also quite overwhelming because they contain a lot of content. The

modules were organized by topic, which I think is helpful, but it might be more useful if they were arranged by week so that students can better keep track of what they have to do.

I also learned about how the students interact and collaborate with one another on ELMs. The students in ENGL393H are organized into pods or groups of six to eight students; there are nine total pods in the class. Kelsey works with the students in three of the pods by facilitating their peer reviews, reviewing student comments, and providing feedback on assignments. My class breaks students into groups for online discussions; however, in an online class, I think that creating small groups in which students complete a number of activities together like the Instructions Assignment, pre-writing activities, peer reviews, and discussion posts enable students to build a sense of community. As my class only does discussion posts online in groups, I don't think they experience this sense of community. I think it might be nice for my students to do different online assignments together in their groups.

I thought the week's modules had some great content and resources for students. Two of these resources I would like to highlight are the cover letter intervention worksheet and Kelsey's PowerPoint video on how to select a final project topic. The cover letter intervention worksheet was designed to provide students with feedback from their peers and the opportunity to reflect on ways to improve their own work. I think the intervention worksheet in addition to doing a peer review is more effective that only doing a peer review because it forces students to apply what they have learned from reviewing another student's work to make their writing better. The assignment emphasizes revising and how writing is a process rather than a product. Also, worksheets help students focus on what to look for and lead to better feedback. The process enables students to submit better rough drafts for peer review. It is better to have a good draft peer

reviewed than a poor one, so the extra revision allows students to give and receive the best feedback they can.

Kelsey created a PowerPoint video, a narrated PowerPoint, to help students select a topic for their final projects. I think it is nice that the students get to hear her voice, it makes the presentation more engaging and reminds students that Kelsey is a real person out there available to help them. Kelsey did a great job providing clear, useful advice on how to select a topic from her experience. I was impressed by how she also explains why her topic selection process was successful. It is important to explain why certain topics work not just what topics work. She also gave great examples of potential topics and how to narrow them down for the final project. I think it is cool and helpful how UTAs make an advice video or PowerPoint to help students with their assignments. I show my students in class the documents I created when I took the class. One suggestion I have for Kelsey is to display her work as an example so students get an idea of what is expected of them for the final project.

From my observations, I learned some new ways to spice up the online portion of my class. First, creating assignments different than discussion posts that ask students to work together in their groups, such as a pre-peer review intervention worksheet, could foster a sense of community. Additionally, making a lesson for students with a narrated PowerPoint would allow more time to be devoted to discussion in class. My instructor and I have been considering using the online portion of the class for something other than discussion posts, and I plan on sharing the intervention worksheet and narrated PowerPoint ideas with him.

	Observations	Reflections
1. ELMs/Canvas Page Organization	Home Page: -a welcome page -has some quick links and important information Discussions: -used for brainstorming ideas and helping other students solidify their ideas -some are group exercises or just ideas to discuss Modules: -7 modules -each module looks like it is related to a major writing assignment -individual modules have: introductory material, assignments, links to resources, examples, and many other things Assignments: -personal assessments -usability testing? -discussions -pre-writing -readings -drafts -major and minor written work -surveys Syllabus: -organized by week -lists what students must do each day -course summary of assignments and discussion posts	-I feel like there are so many pages to keep track of -can get confusing -first module, Course Introduction, and Administration has sections that could maybe be better suited for the home page -have to go into the module to find necessary important information -convoluted way to find contact information and other important resources -good that syllabus is on there -syllabus gives a good overview -there are so many things on this ELMs page -I feel a bit overwhelmed and intimidated -it looks difficult to manage as an instructor/UTA -maybe not as difficult to follow if a student -course summary, which lists all the assignments, makes me think there is a lot of work for the students to do -I'm wondering if all the work is useful to the students or if any of it is busy work -pod idea good for classroom interaction as well as feedback -it is interesting that there are pre-writing activities -the modules look they have a lot of content, which overwhelms me as well -however, I think it is better to organize each module this way than making a little entry for

		People: -9 groups/pods of 6-8 students -3 UTAs (each gets 3 pods) -1 instructor Quizzes: -called surveys -look like they are kind of like reading quizzes or designed to make sure that students watch the videos and do the readings in each module	all of the things listed as that would be even messier -the modules are a bit confusing as not organized by week -I think organizing them by week would be more helpful rather than topic because there is so much for the students to keep track of
2. Student Interaction and Collaboration	-students are arranged into pods of 6-8 students -in these pods students do discussion posts and peer reviews -students work on a group project, the Instructions assignment, which is due end of the week -this week students are doing peer reviews in Croc-a-Doc for the cover letter draft assignment -there is also a draft worksheet due for the assignment before the peer review -no discussions this week	-I think it is a good idea to keep the pods/discussion groups small that way it seems like there is an online community -students get to know the members of their groups -my class does the same thing for online discussions -I think it is a good idea to have small discussion groups so students will read the fewer number of posts in their group and are more invested in the group and its members -peer reviews are a good way for the students to collaborate, they are also teaching/learning tools -an entire page is dedicated to how to properly do peer reviews, and it looks like the resources there make peer reviewing a fruitful learning experience -I think something like this would be useful for my class -I try to show them what good peer reviews look like in class, but providing them with more examples looks more useful -I like the idea of the draft worksheet to give students some initial feedback and then having a revised rough draft evaluated by peer review -it is better to have a good draft peer reviewed than a poor one, an extra revision makes sure

		that students give and receive the best feedback that they can
3. Module for 2/13-2/17	-this week is the first peer review workshop -peer reviews are on the cover letter draft -students submit drafts online and complete peer reviews -topic selection for the final project is coming up (final project is either a technical report or a manual that is a proposed solution to a problem) -it looks like pods are finishing the Instructions assignment -the work for that is pretty much done Audience-Based Application Documents: <u>Audience-Based Cover Letter</u> -assignment sheet -video -readings -pre-writing links and worksheets -format examples -draft submission and worksheet <u>Audience-Based Resume</u> -assignment sheet -video -readings -examples -exercise? -draft worksheet Topic Selection & Research: <u>Topic Selection</u> -Kelsey narrated one of the PowerPoints/videos on how to select an appropriate topic -videos -readings and examples -exercises (Voice Thread)	Audience-Based Application Documents: <u>Audience-Based Cover Letter</u> -nice intro -assignment sheet is to the point -really good clear information -the cover letter invention worksheet provides students feedback from their peers and enables students to reflect on how to improve their work -I think this is more effective than just doing a peer review to help the other person because it forces you to apply what you have learned from reviewing another student's work to your own work -emphasizes revising and writing as a process, which is good -the exercise 3 ways to improve your cover letter, enforces the learning from peer reviewing -I think it is good to have a focused worksheet that asks students to think about particular things, may lead to better feedback -but for students it is kind of annoying to fill out sheets <u>Audience-Based Resume</u> -like how everything is clearly outlined -quick readings -important to have bad examples, many ways to go wrong with resumes, something to consider for when my class does this assignment Topic Selection & Research: <u>Topic Selection</u> -who is the narrator? it's a guy -good clear, explanations

		-nice examples helpful to understand how to go about finding a focused problem for a particular audience to solve
		*Kelsey's PowerPoint: -very clear, useful advice -experiences of topic selection helpful -I think it is nice that the students get to hear her voice, it makes the presentation more engaging and reminds students there are real UTAs out there that are there to help -she does a good job explaining why her topic selection was successful -I think it is important that she explains why certain topics work not just what topics work -I like the examples -I think it is cool and helpful how UTAs make an advice video or PowerPoint to help students with their assignments -I show my students my documents in class -might be helpful if they displayed their documents as examples
		-voice thread didn't work not sure how it goes but interesting idea -topic exercise good for helping students focus their ideas -the module was not as intimidating as thought would be -it was pretty straightforward and didn't take as long as I thought it would -addressed various learning styles: auditory, visual, hands-on, students who like to speak, and students who prefer to write and read

4. Role of UTA	-assign the peer reviews for the peer review workshops, Kelsey assigned for her 3 pods -evaluate student feedback to make sure that they are providing helpful advice -Kelsey narrated a PowerPoints on how to select a topic	-provide feedback (for those that request it) and mainly behind the scenes -Kelsey has to evaluate peer reviews for her 3 pods, and that looks like a lot of work, -her presentation on advice for selecting a final project topic was well done
5. Role of Instructor	-creates most of the content/modules -gives feedback in terms of comments and a grade -answers questions -makes announcements	-the instructor's role seems appropriate -though it seems like a lot of work to manage -I assume the UTAs help with the grading and answering student questions, but organizing and running the course is a lot of work -UTAs in an online course this large are invaluable to the instructor and the students
6. Administrative Communication	-Michelle sends announcements at the beginning of the week (Mondays) to inform students what they are responsible for working on during the week -use of the ELMs messaging system? -asks students to email instructor, Kelsey, and the other UTAs	-the announcements are a good reminder of what to expect during the week -the schedule is outlined in the syllabus, but the announcements seem to provide additional details and instructions that are helpful -syllabus gives general overview announcement specific and clear, focused -seems like there is a lot going on in this class -my class schedule seems simpler -I send announcements but also can remind students in class -I received an ELMs message from one of Kelsey's students (accidentally), not sure if use of ELMs messages is normal I don't see anything outlining not to use messages, email addresses of UTAs and instructors are provided
7. UTA, Instructor, and Student Relationship	Feedback: -doesn't look like Kelsey or instructor are involved in the discussions -UTAs provide informal feedback on drafts -instructor provides feedback through comments in the document, global comments and a letter grade	-from what I am able to see/access online it doesn't seem like the UTAs (Kelsey) are involved unless students reach out to them, they are grading, or are providing some kind of feedback for peer reviews -I don't see Michelle interacting other than announcements

	-Kelsey is a resource for answering questions and assistance with drafts -instructor sends out announcements -Kelsey and Michelle try to include voices in the lectures -assign the peer reviews for the peer review workshops, Kelsey assigned for her 3 pods -evaluate student feedback to make sure that they are providing helpful advice -Voice threads so instructors can hear voices and kind of get to know students	-using voices in the lectures makes more them personable and engaging and like UTAs and instructor are there presenting -Kelsey had a limited role this week (from what I can see, I'm sure she has been busy with students contacting her and organizing peer reviews), her presentation gave a good example of how she connects with her students and builds a relationship with them -Kelsey mentioned "each semester UTAs will create 1-2 activities each for students to do throughout the semester. These are things such as discussion posts, voice thread assignments, or any other creative activity to help students practice skills that may be useful for large assignment - basically the lesson plans or related ideas from 388v"
8. UTA and Instructor Relationship	-Here's what Kelsey told me "In terms of the general relationship, since this is an online class, we make it a point to meet in person about once a month to have a chance to discuss upcoming activities, any concerns, and new ideas for the course. This is my 3rd semester with her as a UTA and our classic spot is to meet at Board and Brew on Route 1 to have lunch and discuss with the other UTAs! Most communication is done by email and sometimes text. We also have a Google Drive that contains our spreadsheets to keep track of our UTA tasks, grades, and student assignments/topics."	-I think it is a good thing that Michelle makes it a priority to meet in person with Kelsey and the other UTAs to talk about the class -it looks like Kelsey finds that various methods of communication to be effective -I think starting a Google Drive may be helpful for me and my instructor to keep track of what we have going on

ENGL 101 Observation

On February 21, I observed Joe DeWitt, the UTA for blended learning ENGL 101 with Lyra. During the class, students learned about stasis theory, Toulmin theory, the types of evidence, and criteria of good evidence. Also, Lyra discussed the previous summary assignment and the upcoming analysis assignment. Since the course I UTA for is blended learning, and I previously observed an entirely online class, I was interested in seeing how a blended learning class utilizes its in-class time and how the UTA contributes to the in-class portion. I was looking for ways to organize my class' limited face-to-face time so my instructor and I can teach all the material we plan on covering and how to maintain a balance between teaching new material and explaining what is happening online during the week. From observing Joe, I learned about his in-class role, personal qualities, presentation skills, and interaction with the students and Lyra. Additionally, I gained some insight on the use of PowerPoint for facilitating the day's lesson plan.

When I arrived at Joe's class, he was sitting with Lyra in the front of the room and talking to her about the plan for the class. As the time for class got closer, Joe starting organizing students into groups and moving desks together. Then, class began with a short quiz. During the quiz, I noticed that Joe was using his computer. After time was up, Joe collected the quizzes and resumed his position at the computer as Lyra started the lesson. I was curious as to what he was doing on the computer. When I learned that students would be working in their groups using on a google doc, and Joe mentioned that he added a chart to their documents, I thought that he might have been working on preparing the google docs the whole time.

Joes' main role, at least what I could see, as he could have been doing a lot more on the computer that I wasn't aware of, was presenting on types of evidence and the characteristics of good evidence. Joe's personality and presentation skills shone through this part of the lesson. Joe

mirrored Lyra's personality and energy level. He demonstrated enthusiasm for the material and used humor to make it more fun and memorable for the students. Joe had an encouraging and inviting manner in the way he presented and asked questions to the class. At the beginning of the class, many students didn't volunteer to speak, but when Joe presented, students who had not spoken previously contributed. He also used tone well to emphasize key points, and he spoke clearly and loudly.

While I feel that Joe was an effective presenter, I have some suggestions for his slides. The text on the slides about the types of evidence was hard to see. There was also a lot of information on those slides. Joe did a good job summarizing what each slide said, but he went kind of fast. I noticed that a lot of students were trying to write down all the information on each slide, so some of them may not have been able to absorb what Joe was saying. While I was not taking notes on the slides, I tried to read the text while he spoke, which made it harder for me to concentrate on his explanations. So, I think it would be a good idea to include less text on each slide. Despite the amount of text on some of the slides, Joe was strong speaker making good use of humor and transitions.

As for class materials, I thought that the central PowerPoint was an effective way to keep the information organized and Joe and Lyra on task; I was impressed by how Lyra and Joe got through everything they wanted to cover. The PowerPoint encouraged me to reflect on my class' organization. My instructor and I always discuss the plan for each class well in advance of class, but we do not create any formal documentation of our plan. Come class time, I remember the plan; however, many times I have to remind my instructor what we are doing that day. Also, the lesson usually involves looking at many things on the computer and discussions on the readings. In other words, we bounce around a lot and there is no obvious logical narrative for each class period.

Furthermore, we often run out of time. Creating a PowerPoint might help us pace and organize ourselves. I made PowerPoints for some of my lessons, and I found them helpful. However, I'm not sure if a PowerPoint matches my instructor's teaching style.

From my observations, I learned some new ways to make my class' in-person time more efficient and improve my presentation skills. I really liked the PowerPoint with the entire lesson on it. If my instructor and I created a PowerPoint for our class, it would be more time outside of class spent planning for class, but it might help us and the students in the long run. As I mentioned earlier, I'm not sure if my instructor would like to do this, but there is no harm in mentioning it to him. Also, as most of the time when I present the same few people contribute, I want to try to emulate Joe's energy to get my entire class interested and involved in my lessons.

388V Observation Notes: Joe (2/21/17)

	Observations	Reflections
1. Initial Classroom Impressions	- students still coming in - forming into groups - some talking about English/Math - music - Lyra + Joe talking (sitting in front together) - projector use - during quiz UTA/instructor writing	- music is a nice way to start the morning - sitting in groups (same for class and online) in addition to facilitating group work is nice way to get students to interact with one another - I think it was good to give students some time to get settled in before class/wake up
2. Role of UTA - answering student questions after class	- collected quizzes - sitting in front w/ computer out - organizing the students into groups - slide gestures - organizing student google docs - observing group work + asked questions + talking to students - presenting about Evidence	- Joe had a lot of behind the scenes responsibilities, more than expected - not sure what was doing with computer if looking at slides, making in the collaborative google doc/paragraph - I thought it was good for him to present in the middle to change things up
3. Personal Qualities of UTA	- friendly - quiet (in beginning) - funny - enthusiastic - approachable	- Joe is outgoing and friendly, energy similar to Lyra - I was surprised by how so many students went to speak to him after class - the students looked engaged in his presentation, students who didn't speak much participated when analyzing his example. I think from his encouraging tone - makes class more fun
4. Role of Instructor	- started the class and gave a quiz - said good morning - ppt (enthymeme: enough argument) - organizing/facilitating group activity - Toulmin presentation - asking and calling on people	- Lyra did most of the lesson today - Joe did do part of the presentation

#	Category	Observations	Comments
5.	Presentation Skills	- speak loud enough -energetic - good tone - look at slide older - uses transitions - looked at students - Knowledgeable - looked at Lyra sometimes - funny - goal example - mention previous conversation -encouraging - goes maybe too fast for taking notes	- maybe reason looked often at slides and Lyra is because didn't have notes, notes may have helped - the examples for evaluating evidence were really good and engaged the class - strong speaker, good use of humor and transitions - going over STAR criteria and types of evidence was too fast, I understood the concepts but didn't sink in, hard if trying to take notes
6.	Use of Materials	- group work w/ computer collaboration - Popplet - pencil + paper for rest of class - evidence ppt - powerpoint on various topics during class - shared online citing tool	- I liked how various topics and need of materials were presented in one central powerpoint - not sure how effective the in class group work was not much communication in person needed - for parts of the powerpoint initially had a lot of small text, had to read better if bigger
7.	UTA Interaction with Students	- organizing students into group - talking w/ students in group asking question about their hmwrk - answered student questions during evidence presentation (not sure if answered) - calling on students during presentations and commenting on their responses - answering questions after class	- didn't interact with much at the beginning of class and group work - I think it might have been a good idea to talk to the students group are at a time to see how doing and if they had any questions - I liked how encouraging and engaging he was during the presentation (something I need to work on) [margin:] not sure if answered the ? have similar difficult one, handled well
8.	UTA-Instructor Interaction/Relationship	- have a rapore before class - planning during group work - Lyra does slides for Joe - Joe helped with behind the scenes stuff for Lyra during group work	- interaction seemed similar to how I interact with my instructor during class - behind the scenes work useful - nice that Lyra did slides for him, made presentation go smoothly and enabled Joe to focus on the students

9. Student Interaction and Behaviors	- before class pretty quiet, some talking - formed into groups - many late - some raise hand others need encouragement - everyone seem focused on group work (8 min) (fairly quiet)	- it was a fairly quiet group but I think Jose did a good job of trying to get them involved in his presentation - group was very quiet which I thought was weird, maybe because just on computer
10. Lesson Plan and Objective	1. 3 question short quiz (~5 min) 2. Group work on Stasis Theory 3. Toulmin Theory presentation 4. Evidence 5. Summary Examples 6. Plan for active class	- good example of short reading quiz we could use - impressed how got through everything needed to do and how student involvement contributed to the lesson - Lyrand Jose did a good job explaining the concepts w/ examples as well as mentioning how important for future assignment
11. Other	Week to do list annotating online	- I think a week to do list would be helpful for my class - syllabus is nice but there is a lot for them keep track of still - annotations online are cool! looks like a useful tool to show my students

Handwritten margin note (right side):
looking good! writing is helpful for students to get an understanding of where to aim for

Experience Being Observed

I was fairly nervous before being observed as I had a lot of material to share with the class. I was responsible for discussing peer review comments, active vs. passive voice, and an example of my work to prepare students for the next writing assignment. The day of my observation, I made sure to get to my classroom as early as possible so that I could set up the computer and projector. A few minutes later Elysa arrived, and I went to shake her hand, reminded her what we would be doing that day, and invited her to take a seat. My instructor was running a couple minutes late, so I decided to start class so that we would not fall behind. Shortly after I introduced Elysa to the class, he walked in. So, I introduced Elysa to him.

The first thing on the agenda for the class was an open book quiz on the reading for the day. We had never had an in-class quiz before, so I was not sure what to expect. It turned out the quiz was taking a long time to complete, around twenty minutes, so my instructor made it a take home quiz. I was concerned that the length of the quiz would interfere with the amount of time I could spend presenting. However, once I got into the flow of presenting, I felt confident that I was staying within time, not rushing, and speaking clearly and effectively. Reminding myself that the purpose of being observed was not to be judged but to serve as an example of the many kinds of UTA teaching methods and roles in the classroom also helped ease my nervousness.

At the end of class, I was proud that I was able to get through all the material I planned on sharing. As the students were leaving, I thanked Elysa for coming. I believe the experience of being observed benefitted me because if I ever will be observed or evaluated during a future job, I know that I can successfully perform under pressure.

Experience Reviewing Lesson Plans

This semester, I was fortunate enough to review two first semester UTAs' lesson plans. I was looking forward to the assignment because I was interested in seeing what the first semester UTAs were working on. I enjoyed coming to one of the in-class 388V sections at the beginning of the semester and meeting the first semester UTAs, so I was excited to work with them again. Having created two lesson plans last semester and revised them both this semester, I felt prepared to give constructive feedback to the first semester UTAs.

It was interesting to note that some of the weak areas of the first semester UTAs' lesson plans were the same areas in which I struggled: timing and level of detail. One UTA had a lot of good ideas but was worried about fitting everything in the allotted time. He decided to make some sections optional; however, many of the sections sounded valuable. While, he had a good level of detail for most of his lesson plan, there were a few instances where the lesson was unclear to the reader, such as his explanation of what the index card resume activity entailed. Specifically, I could not tell from his lesson plan how much or what students were supposed to write on their index card resumes. I remember struggling like this UTA with the level of detail to include, as while my ideas made sense to me, they may have not made sense to someone reading my lesson. The other UTA had a very sparse lesson plan that listed solely the topics he wanted to discuss. Another issue the UTAs had was defining the objective of the lesson and the method of assessing whether the students learned the objectives of the lesson; their objectives and methods of assessing them were either vague or nonexistent.

Reviewing first semester UTA lesson plans taught me more about different lesson plan styles. Furthermore, I learned about the varying amount of freedom UTAs have to design their lesson plans. One of the first semester UTAs had to do a lesson presenting the instructions of a

class project, so that lesson was heavily determined by the assignment created by his instructor. I, however, have been given the freedom to design my lessons in any way I would like. Even though the purpose of reviewing the lesson plans was to help the first semester UTAs, I feel that looking at their lesson plans gave me some ideas for my own lessons as well.

Reflective Essay

My favorite part of last semester was the opportunities I had to meet with my students and discuss their writing. So, my main goal for the semester was to work one-on-one with my students more than last semester. To accomplish this goal, I held weekly office hours. I scheduled my office hours close to the due date of the assignments so that I would be available to help my students put the finishing touches on their papers. However, I met with a total of three students in office hours. I met with one particular student before each major writing assignment was due and with the other two students once each before the third major writing assignment was due. The amount of students who came and the frequency at which the one student came was definitely an improvement over last semester; however, I was hoping to meet with more of my students. Perhaps the time of my office hours conflicted with the majority of my students' schedules, or many of my students felt fairly confident with their writing. Even though I did not meet with many students one-on-one, I was able to meet with them alongside my instructor during two sets of conferences and after class. I enjoyed all the chances I had this semester to discuss student writing in person.

While I may not have been able to interact with my students in person as much as I would have liked, I believe that I was able to connect with them a great deal online. Unlike last semester, I made a point to provide my students with written feedback on their weekly discussion posts. Commenting enabled me to think more about my students' writing, especially their strengths and weaknesses. I noticed over time that the quality of writing in my students' discussion posts improved. I believe the comments I made about including more details and elaborating on their ideas pushed my students to become better writers.

I also utilized email a great deal this semester to communicate with my students. I received far more emails this semester than last semester, which I greatly appreciated. Through email, I

discussed refining paper topics and ideas, clarifying paper instructions, and other general queries about the class. I had an extensive email conversation with one student on narrowing down the topic for the experts vs. media writing assignment. It was rewarding to talk to him about the various ideas he had and suggest directions he could take for the assignment.

This semester, I continued to use ELMs announcements to communicate with my class. At least once a week, I used the announcements feature to give students reminders, notify them of changes, and keep them informed about the plan for the week. I found the announcements were effective in communicating to the class, as when I sent out reminders for students to sign up for conferences or turn in an assignment, I noticed that soon after sending out the announcement, the students had done what I asked.

A secondary goal I had was to improve my lesson plans from last semester. I was able to revise both my lesson on commas and visuals and document design. I believe that the lessons went more smoothly this time as I utilized my previous experiences to improve the content for my students and present more effectively.

As I have been fortunate enough to have more opportunities to provide my with students feedback this semester, I have been reflecting on last semester's discussions on responding to student writing. One such discussion that stood out to me and was able to revisit when I came to a class of first semester UTAs was the difference between editing and revising student work. I remember talking about how while editing is an important skill, revision is a major part of the writing process and helps students think more deeply about what they are trying to communicate. With this philosophy in mind, I have tried to discuss ideas with my students rather than editing their work. When working with my students on their papers this semester, I have, as suggested by the "Speaking of Teaching" article from Stanford University, provided my students with feedback

from the point of view of the reader rather than editor. Giving students feedback in this manner is especially important for technical writing because the goal of technical writing is writing for a specific audience rather than the teacher, as is the case for many school writing assignments. When reading my students' work, I pretend I am the intended audience and ask my students questions about assumptions they make of their audience so that I can determine what might be unclear for their audience. Additionally, Shafer mentions the value of giving encouraging feedback. I agree with Schafer that it is important to be encouraging rather than focusing on the negatives when giving feedback so that students will want to improve their writing. When grading discussion posts this semester, I first commented on what each student did well and then wrote about areas needing improvement.

Additionally, two of my lesson plans were on grammar topics: comma rules and the passive and active voice. Thus, our discussions of grammar and approaches to style and error have been on my mind as well. I still agree with a statement I wrote in a discussion post on approaches to style and error from last semester, "While I do believe ideas are more important than grammar, I find this to be true up to a certain degree. The greater the number of grammar errors, the less comprehensible a paper is." Therefore, I agree with McDowell that a command of grammar is an important skill to impart on students: "Without fairly sound technical expertise, even the most brilliant students cannot express their ideas completely or effectively. If teachers do not add to students' expressive resources, they perform a disservice" (qtd. Petit 254).

In the field of technical writing, correct grammar is important if one wants his or her ideas to be taken seriously. For example, if someone is writing a proposal to receive funding or permission to begin a project, poor grammar may lead to a rejection of the proposal as it demonstrates carelessness and a lack of seriousness towards one's work. While a good part of our

discussion on grammar involved a political analysis of grammar and whether to encourage or the use of non-Standard English, I still concur with Blaauw-Hara that "Despite how we may feel politically and emotionally about valuing students' native dialects and the desirability of myriad patterns of speech and writing, the work world—and, indeed, most of the world of higher education not directly involved in language studies—that awaits our students upon graduation or transfer does not share such values" (166). As a result, I believe giving lessons on commas and the active and passive voice were important for my students to hear.

After serving as a UTA for a full year, I believe that I can say I have immersed myself in the scholarship and practice of English, specifically technical writing. As a math major, the only writing I have been asked to do is in the form of proofs, symbolically filled justifications of mathematical statements. As a philosophy minor, I have been able to practice my writing, reading and analytical skills, which I believe have served me well as a developing writer and UTA. From what I have experienced UTAing, writing is not all that different from math. In my opinion, writing is formulaic. I do not mean to say that writing in one particular way in terms of structure and style is good writing but rather that writing involves creating effective formulas for communication in terms of structure, style, content, audience, context, and purpose. I consider writing, like math, a logic game. Thinking about writing in the way I approach math problems has enabled me to improve my writing and assist my students with their writing.

UTAing over the past year has built my skills as a mentor and leader. I know I have commented on this a number of times, but public speaking was not my strong suit before becoming a UTA, and now I feel extremely comfortable talking in front of the class. I believe that my increased confidence in the classroom has enabled me to show my students that I am an authority on the class material. Furthermore, I think my confidence has encouraged more students to discuss

their writing with me this semester than last semester. After serving as a UTA for a full, year I concur with SluckettG's remarks in her blogpost entitled "Peer Mentorship or Who Am I to Tell You What to Do?" that peer mentorship not only assists mentees but enables you to improve your skills as a leader as well. I am proud of my progression as a leader over the course of the year.

While this semester is only my second semester as a UTA, it is also my last as I am graduating this spring. When reflecting on how my experiences as a UTA can inform my future endeavors, being a UTA has enabled me to consider teaching. However, I am not entirely sure if I would like to be a teacher. While I have enjoyed teaching writing, I have considered teaching mathematics or philosophy. However, I am pulled between teaching and actually writing. Since taking Dr. Crane's technical writing course and working with him for the past, year I have become interested in becoming a technical writer. So, I am currently looking into technical writing opportunities.

My experiences as a UTA are beneficial to a potential career in technical writing. First, my interpersonal skills have improved as a result of being a UTA. In order to be a technical writer, I will have to meet with various people in order to produce documents according to their desired specifications and standards. So, having worked with student will benefit in that regard. Second, my writing skills have also improved from the amount of writing we do in the 388V course and from reviewing my students' work. Regardless of whether I go into teaching, technical writing, or some other field the public speaking, interpersonal, and writing skills that I have strengthened from being a UTA will serve me well.