2021 SURS Final Writing Assignment

Rationale

Writing about your skills, experiences, and accomplishments is a big part of the next stage of your career, no matter what that stage looks like. For your final SURS project, we want you to consider what next step you are likely to take, whether it be industry, graduate school, national lab, etc, and how you can write about this research experience in a way that will be most helpful as you pursue that next step. Essentially, these documents are ones you will almost certainly have to write at some point, and we want to give you help and support and a head start! This is intended both as an opportunity to reflect on and summarize your summer experience, but also to leave you with a practical, useful document that you can use in the future.

Final writing assignment options

Note: We will go over these in more detail and provide resources during one of our meetings during the summer

Choose one:

Mock NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) proposal

The [NSF GRFP](#) is a prestigious 5-year fellowship for students intending to pursue a masters or doctoral degree in STEM. You can apply in your senior year of undergrad or during the first year of your graduate degree. Two of the main application requirements are a personal statement and a research proposal. As an undergraduate, this research proposal does not have to be what you intend to actually study as a graduate student. If you receive this fellowship as an undergraduate, it will move your application for graduate programs to the top of the pile. Even if you choose to wait until your first year of graduate school to apply for the GRFP, it will help you to have practiced writing this type of proposal.

Unlike research or personal statements you may have written in the past, this is not a summary of what you have done over the summer, but a proposal about future work. However, past research and other experiences are critical to writing a good proposal.

Research Statement for graduate school application/mock job application

Whether for graduate school application or for a job in industry, national lab, science policy, etc, you will have to write about how your skills, experiences, and accomplishments are relevant to said application. This comes in many different forms. For graduate school, you

will have to write a research or personal statement describing your research experience to date. For a job application, you will need to write a statement showing how your experiences, including this research experience, make you an excellent candidate for the job to which you are applying. These types of statements are difficult to write for a generic job, as the whole point is to tailor it for the job or opportunity you are seeking. Therefore, for this assignment, pick one:

- Graduate school application
- Applying to a job at a pharmaceutical company
- Applying for a job at a large defense contractor (ie: Lockheed, …)
- Applying for a job at a National Lab
- Applying for a job in the tech industry
- Pick a job not listed, but be specific

Once you've selected a job, write either a mock research statement (graduate school application) or a mock cover letter for the job application.

Research Highlight for STROBE website

Not sure what you want to do yet? Totally fine! This option is to write a short (~1 page) summary of your research this summer that will be published on the STROBE website and/or social media. Summarizing your work for a general/public audience is a critical skill that will be applicable no matter what your future career. This highlight can be used as a means to show off your writing skills and experience for whatever future career you choose. Once you have this highlight, you can also share it on your own social media, and many departments like to highlight student work on their webpages and media.

Due dates

Your final writing assignment will be due on the last day of your program.

Fort Lewis College: July 27
CU Boulder: August 6
Berkeley: August 6
UCLA: August 6
Florida International: August 13
UC Irvine: August 13

You will have meetings with SURS program coordinators prior to starting your assignment. Take advantage of these to help you choose a topic and get any additional information or resources you need to help you with your assignment.