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Dr. Lesh

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Introductory Memo

As I approach graduation, I have reflected on what I have gained throughout the Professional and Public Writing major. When I started my freshman year, I did not fully understand what it meant to be a professional writer. I knew I enjoyed writing, but over time, I began to understand that writing could serve a much greater purpose. More than anything, I have come to view writing as a tool for service. It has become a way to support others and create a meaningful impact. My name is Anna Bateh, and I am a senior at Auburn University, majoring in Professional and Public Writing with minors in Business and Political Science. My experience has focused on developing clear and engaging content. Throughout my time at Auburn, I have developed my writing through projects that center on service, audience awareness, and application. While my current role with Fellowship Vacations has strengthened my ability to communicate in a fast-paced, professional environment, the foundation of my growth as a writer comes from my work within my major. Furthermore, my leadership roles on campus have required me to use writing as a tool.

Being the oldest of five girls has also played a significant role in shaping who I am as a writer and as a person. From a young age, I have been placed in a position where responsibility and communication were necessary in everyday life. This has been especially true through my involvement with my sister's journey with Rett Syndrome and our family's connection to our nonprofit, The Suki Foundation. Through this experience, I have seen firsthand the impact that

advocacy, clear communication, and service can have on individuals and communities. My involvement in this nonprofit has reinforced my belief that communication should always be rooted in purpose and care for others. It has motivated me to use my writing not just as a skill, but as a way to support, inform, and advocate for people who may not always have a voice. This foundation of service, developed long before college, continues to influence the work I create today.

After completing my PPW major, I have developed a clear understanding of my identity as a writer. I am an intentional writer motivated by service. I approach writing with a central question in mind: how can this serve others? This question has guided not only the topics I choose, but also the way I present information. Writing, for me, is not simply about expression or creativity; it is about usefulness. It is about making sure that the person on the other side of the message can understand, engage with, and benefit from what I have created. One of the most meaningful examples of this approach is a podcast I created about my sister's feeding tube. This project was deeply personal, but it also reinforced my understanding of writing as a bridge between complex information and the people who need to understand it. Medical information can be highly technical and difficult to navigate. Therefore, through this project, I worked to present that information in a clear and accessible way. This experience demonstrated to me that writing can make real differences in people's lives, particularly when it is grounded in an awareness of the audience's needs.

This same focus on service is reflected in many of my other projects, particularly those centered around Auburn students and the university itself. Much of my work has been designed with the intention of supporting students. Whether through podcasts, field narratives, or visual projects, I consistently consider how my work can contribute to a shared experience or provide

value to others. These projects are not created in isolation; they are shaped by the people they are meant to reach. This perspective has helped me better understand the importance of audience, which is one of the central principles of professional and public writing. A defining theme across all of my work is a focus on people. The projects I have created are not just assignments; they are reflections of the communities and individuals who have influenced me. My involvement on campus, including leadership roles in Pi Lambda Sigma, the College of Liberal Arts Student Council, and Alpha Delta Pi, has strengthened my ability to communicate effectively in real-world settings. In these roles, writing becomes a tool for leadership, whether I am organizing events, coordinating teams, or communicating with large groups of people. These experiences have shown me that writing is not limited to academic settings; it is a critical skill in professional and organizational environments.

Furthermore, one of my strongest skills as a writer is my ability to take complex ideas and translate them into real-world understanding. Many of the rhetorical concepts I have learned in this major can seem abstract. However, through my work, I have learned how to apply these ideas in practical ways. For example, in my podcast project, I focused on creating content that was both informative and conversational. I made intentional choices about tone, structure, and delivery in order to reach a broader audience, specifically those outside of writing-focused disciplines. This project reinforced my ability to adapt my writing to different formats while maintaining clarity and purpose.

Similarly, my field narrative project allowed me to combine research with storytelling in a way that emphasized both credibility and human connection. By focusing on real people and real experiences, I was able to present information that was not only accurate but also engaging and relatable. This reflects a key principle of professional writing, which is that effective

communication must reflect both research and audience awareness. It is not enough to simply present information; it must be presented in a way that people can understand and connect with. In addition to written projects, my work in visual communication, such as my magazine cover, expanded my understanding of rhetoric beyond text. This project required me to think critically about how design elements such as layout, color, and imagery contribute to meaning. This experience has made me an effective communicator who is capable of adapting to the demands of a digital environment.

My minors in business and political science have also shaped my approach to writing. Business has emphasized the importance of efficiency and organization, while political science has deepened my understanding of rhetoric and persuasion. Together, these disciplines have strengthened my ability to approach writing strategically, allowing me to tailor my communication to different audiences and purposes. Ultimately, my time in the Professional and Public Writing major has shaped me into a writer who is driven by purpose. I am a writer who seeks to create meaningful and useful communication, and I believe that writing is most effective when it serves others.

My portfolio represents more than a collection of my work. It reflects my growth as a writer and my commitment to using writing as a tool for service. Each piece included demonstrates not only my skills, but also my values. As I move forward, I will continue to build on these experiences, using writing to support others and contribute to the communities and organizations I am a part of. In defining my professional identity, I return to the idea that has guided my work from the beginning: writing should serve people. That belief will continue to shape not only the work I produce, but also the writer I strive to become.

