



LIZZY DONALDSON

MA in Professional Writing ('21)

Technical Writing Intern
Summer 2021

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

I had an advantage because I understood tech writing fundamentals and authoring tools after Software Documentation. I also had professional experience with cross-disciplinary collaboration.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

I developed new technical skills and strengthened my interviewing and writing abilities.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I sought the support of an MAPW alum at Google to review my resume prior to applying. After applying, I completed writing exercises, a technical interview, and a general interview before receiving the offer.

What did you do as an intern at Company Name?

I worked on the Google Cloud Marketplace team to draft an interactive tutorial that walks enterprise developers through the process of deploying a virtual machine solution to the Marketplace. I worked closely with software engineers, solutions consultants, UX designers, and other tech writers.

What was challenging about your internship?

I wrote documentation for a very technical product, so the experience was very technically challenging. Additionally, remote work has its own challenges!

What did you enjoy about your internship?

I really enjoyed that Googlers are friendly and generous with their time. I met great mentors and collaborators, and I learned so much about writing opportunities in tech.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“Be curious! Seize opportunities to talk with people from different fields and backgrounds. It may feel intimidating to start in a new field, but have confidence in your skills and embrace the unknown.”

INTERNSHIP TYPE

- paid
- unpaid

APPLIED

January 2021

ACCEPTED

April 2021

INTERNSHIP CATEGORY

- corporate communication
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- non-profit communication
- user experience strategy
- journalism & news media
- writing for multimedia
- editing & publishing
- science writing
- technical writing
- public relations & marketing



Kirsten Heuring MA in Professional Writing ('21)

Writing Intern
Summer 2021

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

I had experience interviewing subjects from Science Writing with Mark Roth, and I have written articles before about a variety of subjects, including neuroscience and English.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

I improved my interviewing abilities, and I learned how to write in new styles, including press releases.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

Instead of waiting for an application notice, I actually reached out to the head of Dietrich College Communications to ask if they had any openings. I believe my initiative helped get me the internship.

What did you do as an intern at Dietrich College Communications?

I wrote news articles on classes, professors, and students around Dietrich College. I interviewed people for almost every article, and I went through an extensive editing process with my supervisor.

What was challenging about your internship?

The most challenging part was learning how to balance the wants of the articles' subjects with my own writing preferences and the needs of my supervisor.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

I enjoyed learning more about the people I talked to, particularly the researchers. I got to catch a glimpse of their daily lives and their research interests.

INTERNSHIP TYPE

- paid
- unpaid

APPLIED

February

ACCEPTED

April

INTERNSHIP CATEGORY

- corporate communication
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- non-profit communication
- user experience strategy
- journalism & news media
- writing for multimedia
- editing & publishing
- science writing
- technical writing
- public relations & marketing

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

"When in doubt, ask questions. Whether this is a question in an interview or a question to a supervisor, asking questions will help you figure out what you should be writing and how to write it better."



Alexandra Kirsch

MA in Professional Writing ('21)

Technical Writer
Summer 2021

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

Thanks to my work in undergrad and at CMU, I became skilled at clearly communicating complicated topics. This definitely gave me an advantage and strong footing during my internship.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

Collaboration skills. I worked in several teams and with other writers throughout the summer. I also got comfortable adapting my workflow in the middle of projects when we hit roadblocks or had to make significant changes.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I attended a Salesforce info session with recruiters. And I sent them an updated resume and took helpful courses like Software Documentation.

What did you do as an intern at Salesforce?

I primarily wrote video scripts explaining features of Salesforce's product Experience Cloud. I also updated Salesforce Help content, created new Help content, and tried API & Developer documentation.

What was challenging about your internship?

Balancing feedback from other writers, SMEs, and editors. These groups didn't always agree on content or changes, so I had to take ownership of my work and accept certain suggestions and turn down others.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

My project. Writing scripts involved balancing creative writing and technical writing, and I collaborated with dozens of experienced & skilled writers.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

"Don't be afraid to take a leap into a role or internship. I didn't have a tech background, so I was nervous about Salesforce, but the internship was amazing. I also jumped into TA positions & tutoring at CMU and learned so much about writing that will help me in any field!"

INTERNSHIP TYPE

- paid
- unpaid

APPLIED

September 2020

ACCEPTED

October 2020

INTERNSHIP CATEGORY

- corporate communication
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- non-profit communication
- user experience strategy
- journalism & news media
- writing for multimedia
- editing & publishing
- science writing
- technical writing
- public relations & marketing



Madeline Liu MA in Professional Writing ('22)

Technical Writer/Customer Documentation Intern
Summer 2021

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

Technical writing, design, and STEM skills gave me an advantage in securing this internship. I acquired strong tech writing skills from classes like Style, design skills from my HCI studies, and STEM skills from comp sci courses. The course Software Documentation also greatly helped me by introducing me to several important software authoring tools, such as MadCap Flare.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

I strengthened my technical skills, including my expertise of software tools like MadCap Flare, GitLab, and Jira/Confluence. I also learned professional skills.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I submitted my resume to a job posting online. I was then contacted for a first round interview with the Talent Acquisition team and a second round interview with the Customer Documentation team manager before being given an offer.

What did you do as an intern at Company Name?

I edited, wrote, and published documentation for the Five9 Customer Documentation Portal. I also worked on the content/design of the website.

What was challenging about your internship?

Becoming accustomed to the fast-paced nature of technical writing in the real world was challenging. I worked in sprints and had multiple projects at once.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

The thing I enjoyed most about my internship was working with and getting to know my team members. They were all incredibly kind, hard-working, and willing to help me with anything. They were amazing and taught me so much.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

Love what you do! If you truly love writing, technology, and working in a fast environment, then technical writing is perfect for you.

INTERNSHIP TYPE

- paid
- unpaid

APPLIED

February

ACCEPTED

March

INTERNSHIP CATEGORY

- corporate communication
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- non-profit communication
- user experience strategy
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- science writing
- technical writing
- public relations & marketing



Sydney Mayer

MA Professional Writing '21

Marketing & Communications Coordinator
Summer 2021

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

My experience in and passion for social media marketing gave me an edge in securing this internship, as did my familiarity with design tools like Canva and Adobe Creative Cloud.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

I learned about brand strategy and how to create supporting documents like social media playbooks and style guides. I also strengthened my skills in social media and video production.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I had meetings with Kristin Staunton in the CPDC and Chris Neuwirth to career plan and strategize how to maximize my internship for my long-term goals. I also met with Nick, my internship advisor, to discuss how I could adapt this role to my strengths and ambitions.

What did you do as an intern at Company Name?

I managed our social media channels, created a brand strategy with style guidelines & social media playbook, and directed all aspects of the Cour e Spotlight Videos.

What was challenging about your internship?

One challenging aspect was learning how to navigate the university politics alongside our larger goals and day-to-day duties.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

I really enjoyed managing the social media channels and producing all aspects of the spotlight videos. This internship really ignited my love of marketing.

INTERNSHIP TYPE

- paid
- unpaid

APPLIED

March 2021

ACCEPTED

April 2021

INTERNSHIP CATEGORY

- corporate communication
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- non-profit communication
- user experience strategy
- journalism & news media
- writing for multimedia
- editing & publishing
- science writing
- technical writing
- public relations & marketing

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

"You need an excellent understanding of the company's brand and its goals, as well as an understanding of their target audiences. These are the two key ingredients to success in any kind of marketing endeavor."



Kelley Northam MA in Professional Writing (’21)

Communications Intern
Summer 2021

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

Being confident in my skills and articulating the importance of clear, concise, and correct communication helped me sinch my internship. My interviewers also commented on the strength of my eFolio and writing samples.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

My copywriting, copyediting, and document design skills were all strengthened at TiER1. I also learned a lot about business communication from observing and participating in client meetings.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

First, I updated my resume, LinkedIn profile, and eFolio. When I began interviewing at TiER1, I researched the company and met with the CPDC for interview prep. The CPDC, Communication Support, and MAPW faculty were all invaluable resources during the application and interview processes.

What did you do as an intern at TiER1 Performance?

I worked with clients such as Delta Airlines, Google, and Boston Beer Company among others and copyedited, copywrote, and reformatted various documents. I also participated in competitive benchmarking, name brainstorming, and rebranding work.

What was challenging about your internship?

Sometimes I had to complete a large project in a short amount of time based on client feedback. This was tricky because I wanted to produce quality work, but only had a matter of hours to get it done. I quickly learned what to prioritize to meet deadlines.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

One of the best parts of consulting is that every day is different. One day I'd be reformatting instructional documents and the next I'd be thinking of names for new client initiatives. Not only did this keep things interesting, but I also got to tap into a wide variety of skills and have plenty of opportunities to learn new ones.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“Know your value as a professional writer, and communicate it to interviewers and prospective employers.”

INTERNSHIP TYPE

- paid
- unpaid

APPLIED

Early March 2021

ACCEPTED

Late March 2021

INTERNSHIP CATEGORY

- corporate communication
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- non-profit communication
- user experience strategy
- journalism & news media
- writing for multimedia
- editing & publishing
- science writing
- technical writing
- public relations & marketing



Emily Payne

MA in Professional Writing (Dec '21)

UX Content Strategy intern, Summer 2021
Hometown: Pittsburgh, PA

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

Web Design, Coding for Humanists, Style and Designing Human Centered Software helped me showcase my writing style and process, knowledge of information architecture and understanding of users and products.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

I learned how to be curious — constantly asking questions and not taking things at face value — as I explored what users were experiencing and how we could make that experience better through content, design and interaction.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I created a portfolio website of relevant projects, sought advice from a MAPW alum who works in UX writing and practiced my interviewing and presentation skills with the CPDC. I applied online, submitted a resume and portfolio and went through two rounds of interviewing.

What did you do as an intern at Autodesk?

I conducted a content audit, lead content strategy, terminology and messaging for several large projects, moderated user testing with customers and spearheaded implementing a copy management tool for Figma.

What was challenging about your internship?

Learning the limits between design, engineering and content was a challenge. I also had to adjust my writing to be more concise and precise for users.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

I enjoyed building a design and workflow sensibility, seeing how content and design can influence each other and being an advocate for content.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“UX writing is still very new. Keep an eye out for content design, UX writing and content strategy roles in your search. Build hard skills in information architecture, benchmarking, technical writing and design tools like Figma. But don't forget soft skills such as collaborating and communicating with stakeholders, understanding business and user goals and defending and presenting content decisions.”

INTERNSHIP TYPE

- paid
- unpaid

APPLIED

March 2021

ACCEPTED

April 2021

INTERNSHIP CATEGORY

- corporate communication
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- non-profit communication
- user experience strategy
- journalism & news media
- writing for multimedia
- editing & publishing
- science writing
- technical writing
- public relations & marketing



SUPTI ROY

MA in Professional Writing ('21)

Technical Writing Intern
Summer 2021

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

The software documentation course taught me the markup languages and tools that technical writers use. That knowledge gave me an advantage.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

I learned how to network and collaborate efficiently. Specifically, I learned how technical writers work with developers and product managers.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I attended Salesforce's information session in the fall and scheduled time to speak with their representatives.

What did you do as an intern at Salesforce?

I was responsible for creating and updating end-user documentation for Salesforce's Financial Services Cloud.

What was challenging about your internship?

I had a remote internship experience, so connecting with other interns was a challenge.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

I enjoyed learning more about best practices for technical writing and getting to create my own end-user documentation.

INTERNSHIP TYPE

- paid
- unpaid

APPLIED

October 2020

ACCEPTED

November 2020

INTERNSHIP CATEGORY

- corporate communication
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- non-profit communication
- user experience strategy
- journalism & news media
- writing for multimedia
- editing & publishing
- science writing
- technical writing
- public relations & marketing

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

"Get comfortable asking a lot of questions! You need to understand your product area completely in order to write about it. Asking the right questions to increase your understanding is what will make you an effective technical writer."



Emily Schneider MA in Professional Writing ('22)

Professional Writing Intern
Summer 2021

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

The ability to both understand and communicate technical information, especially in areas outside my expertise, supported by my writing samples.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

Interviewing experts, writing effectively and concisely, time management, and web accessibility tools.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I applied after seeing the position come through my inbox, and followed-up after sending my application and writing samples in.

What did you do as an intern at the College of Engineering?

Interviewing for and writing new faculty profiles, news stories, social media posts, and summary mentions, and making documents web-accessible.

What was challenging about your internship?

Teaching myself about new, complex information so that I could ensure I was communicating the science within effectively and accurately.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

Getting the chance to learn and interact with so many experts! Also, getting to see my work published and shared widely around CMU was wonderful.

INTERNSHIP TYPE

- paid
- unpaid

APPLIED

April

ACCEPTED

May

INTERNSHIP CATEGORY

- corporate communication
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- non-profit communication
- user experience strategy
- journalism & news media
- writing for multimedia
- editing & publishing
- science writing
- technical writing
- public relations & marketing

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“The best way to ensure you’re communicating science effectively is to first understand it yourself. Ask questions from the experts, work hard to find accurate and entertaining analogies, and, above all, make the piece as exciting to read as it was to learn about.”



Emilee Tkacik

MA in Professional Writing ('21)

Technical Writer, March 2020 - Present
Hometown: Pittsburgh, PA

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

Concise and stylistically appropriate writing, the ability to identify and consider the needs of the end-user, and experience developing usable documentation.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

Interviewing skills! I regularly interview technical staff and have learned what questions I need to ask, and how to best ask them. It's a crucial part of the job.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I'm employed full-time in a permanent position. Before applying, I asked the CPDC to review my application materials, which was so helpful.

What did you do as a Technical Writer in Computing Services?

I work with developers, engineers, and fellow writers to shape user experience and identify communication needs. I plan and create user-centered content.

What was challenging about your internship?

Learning how to work with the technical team and how to best ask them questions, and remembering that there are no bad or dumb questions!

What did you enjoy about your internship?

I like that I get to work with both with my communication team and the technical teams outside of my group. My projects have been challenging and thought-provoking and I learn something new every day!

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

"Develop a strong writing portfolio, and continuously update it with recent work. In each interview I've had, my interviewers were impressed with my samples and eager to talk about them. I think the portfolio made a good first impression and got my foot in the door."

INTERNSHIP TYPE

- paid
- unpaid

APPLIED

December 2019

ACCEPTED

January 2021

INTERNSHIP CATEGORY

- corporate communication
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture**
- non-profit communication
- user experience strategy**
- journalism & news media
- writing for multimedia
- editing & publishing
- science writing
- technical writing**
- public relations & marketing



SARAH VOORHEES

MA in Professional Writing ('21)

Marketing & Communications Coordinator
Summer 2021

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

I had experience with both internal and external communications, and I demonstrated that I could write for a variety of genres and audiences.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

I learned to build a brand from the ground up. Along with another MAPW intern, I created a style guide and wrote and designed a print brochure.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I was already working with the department, and I explained that I was interested in a career in marketing and communications. We designed an internship that would support both the department's goals and my own.

What did you do as an intern for CMU English?

I researched and wrote news stories, created a comprehensive style guide complete with visual and verbal guidelines, and wrote and designed a brochure.

What was challenging about your internship?

I had never created a style guide or paid much attention to the branding side of marketing and communications. We had to articulate not only how the brand should look and sound but also why.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

My supervisor gave me the freedom to work independently on my projects, but he also ensured that I had support when I needed it. It was the ideal balance of independence and accountability.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

"Higher ed communications is completely unique. Many colleges and universities struggle to connect with their many audiences. If you can demonstrate that you know how to write for academics, administrators, and prospective students, you will succeed. Always write with your audience in mind."

INTERNSHIP TYPE

- paid
- unpaid

APPLIED

Did not apply; continued internship from Spring semester

ACCEPTED

May

INTERNSHIP CATEGORY

- higher ed communication
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- non-profit communication
- user experience strategy
- journalism & news media
- writing for multimedia
- editing & publishing
- science writing
- technical writing
- public relations & marketing