English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI)
Module 6: Task 2 – Complete 2 Readings
Article 6.1: *Assessment Options for EMI Courses*

Assessment in any course can be quite challenging. Students can feel frustrated that they worked hard to earn a high grade, yet fail in spite of their work. Instructors can feel that they put in so much time to help students, and that students are ungrateful and do not work sufficiently. In an EMI course, assessment can be particularly tricky given that students are learning in a second language. Given the focus of student-centered learning in EMI courses, these assessment options are intended to help students be an active part of their learning and to be engaged in class. Many options below allow for assessments that are authentic to the field students will be entering. This article begins with principles to keep in mind when we build assessments, and moves to some specific options. Keep in mind that we often use the word "assignments" and "assessments" interchangeably in education. For this article, assessment means any time the instructor is evaluating student work. Therefore, quizzes and tests are included in assessments, but so are assignments or in-class activities.

Key Principles in EMI Assessment

When we think of options for assessment in EMI courses, it's helpful to remember four key principles:

1. Assessment should be ongoing. Be sure that you plan to have some type of formative assessment every week or so, and a summative assessment at the end of each unit. Many students need practice for how each instructor does assessment, so having many opportunities to do well is important and helps students build their confidence.

2. Think about feedback and grading when you build your assessments. Consider how much each assessment will be worth toward the final grade, consider if you'll give students a rubric outlining the criteria and how well they did on each criteria, and how you'll give students feedback (for example, digital, print-based, or in-person). It is also useful to consider how students might be able to apply your feedback to future work. Other options for feedback include having conferences with students; this can be with students individually or groups of students. Conferences provide the benefit of explaining your feedback in more detail and answering students' questions. However, they also can be time-consuming in larger classes. Feedback can be given via an audio or video recording to students; these recordings can be sent to students in the course learning management system (e.g., such as Canvas or Blackboard) or in Google Drive. Feedback can also be given on ungraded formative assessments, for example by collecting a random sampling of student work and only giving feedback on the work collected. This is particularly useful for large classes, where not all student work can be graded every time.

3. Students shouldn't be surprised by the graded assessment you give them. Students should already have seen practice assessments or similar questions or activities, so that they understand how instructors will be grading. You can have in-class review sessions or provide samples of correct (and incorrect) answers. You can also give students a long list of potential test questions. Students who put in the time to study all questions will be more prepared and score better than students who don't take the study guide seriously.

4. Don't over-assess your students. You do need to include ongoing assessment in your classes, using both formative and summative types. But don't assess students so much that they feel constantly under pressure to perform and unable to keep up with course content. Instructors need a balance so that they don't feel overwhelmed by grading and students don't feel overwhelmed by taking tests or making grades.

Assessments can be separated into types that allow students to demonstrate how well (or how poorly) they can do something, or types that offer perceptions about how well (or how poorly) students can do something. The first type is called Direct Assessment, and it means there is evidence that the instructor and student can see for how well students do. Examples are tests or quizzes, presentations, portfolios, or reports or papers—these are things that can be graded if we want to grade them. The second type is called Indirect Assessment. Examples are if an instructor walks around the class and observes in general how the students are doing or even interviews students after the course is over about the course and their learning. While indirect assessment can provide us some information and can be useful, it also is not as specific or accurate as direct assessment. Therefore, it is best to focus on direct assessment, which allows students to demonstrate their learning or produce work (College of Business Administration, 2016).

Assessment Options for EMI

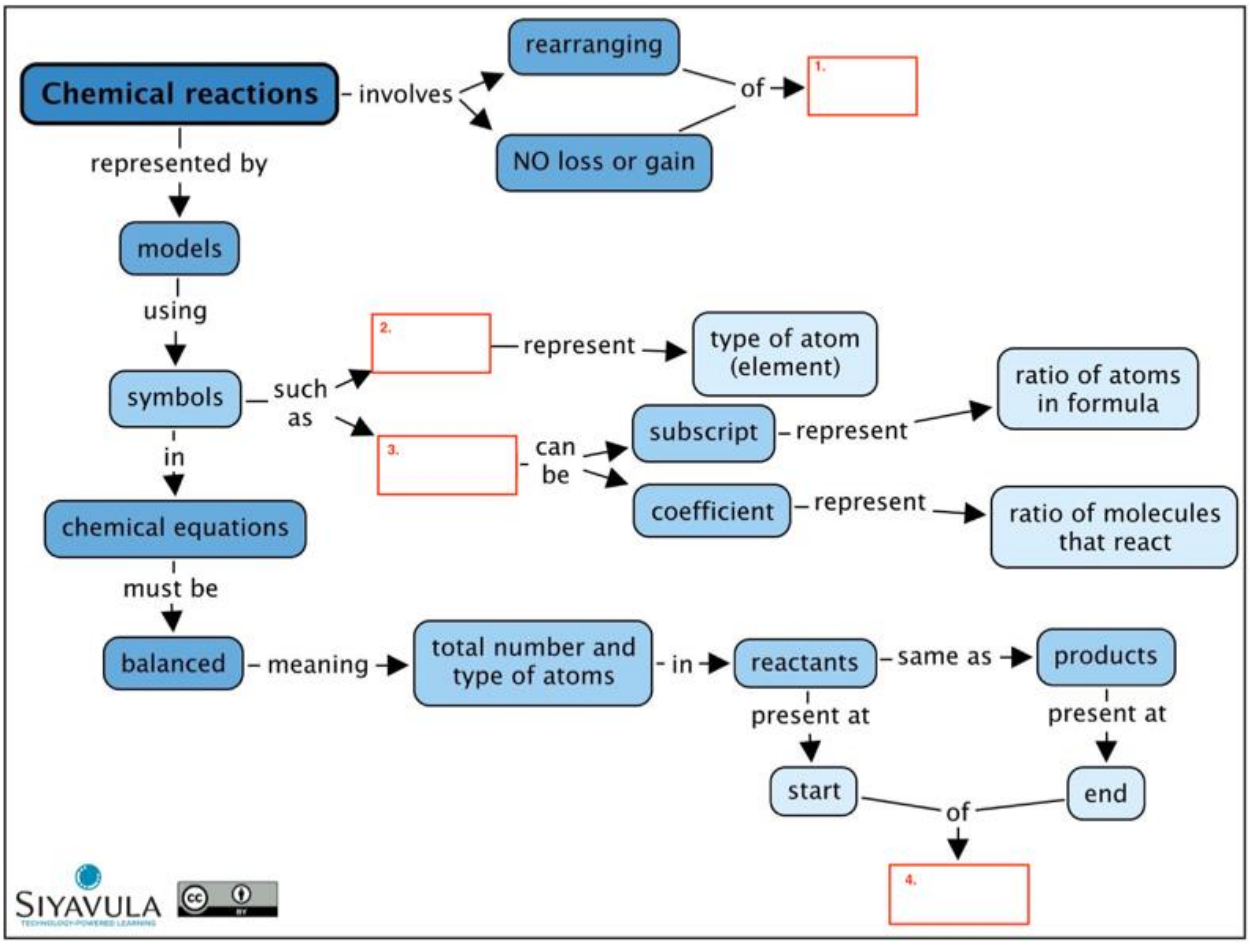
Following are some options for assessing student learning and performance. Both formative and summative assessments are included. Given the many options available for assessment, this list focuses on options that are most appropriate and effective for EMI courses, but other options certainly exist. The following options are described below: Classroom Assessment Techniques, Capstone Projects, Portfolios, Presentations, and Papers or Reports.

1. Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs)

CATs (Angelo & Cross, 1993) are intended to provide immediate feedback about the whole classes' understanding of course content, not what individual students understand. They are therefore a type of formative assessment. It is usually best to try the CAT yourself or give it to a colleague before you try it with your class, to ensure that your directions are clear. You can also tell students what the results of the CAT were (without any student names)—this helps them see how you plan class and also shows them how their learning compares with others in the class.

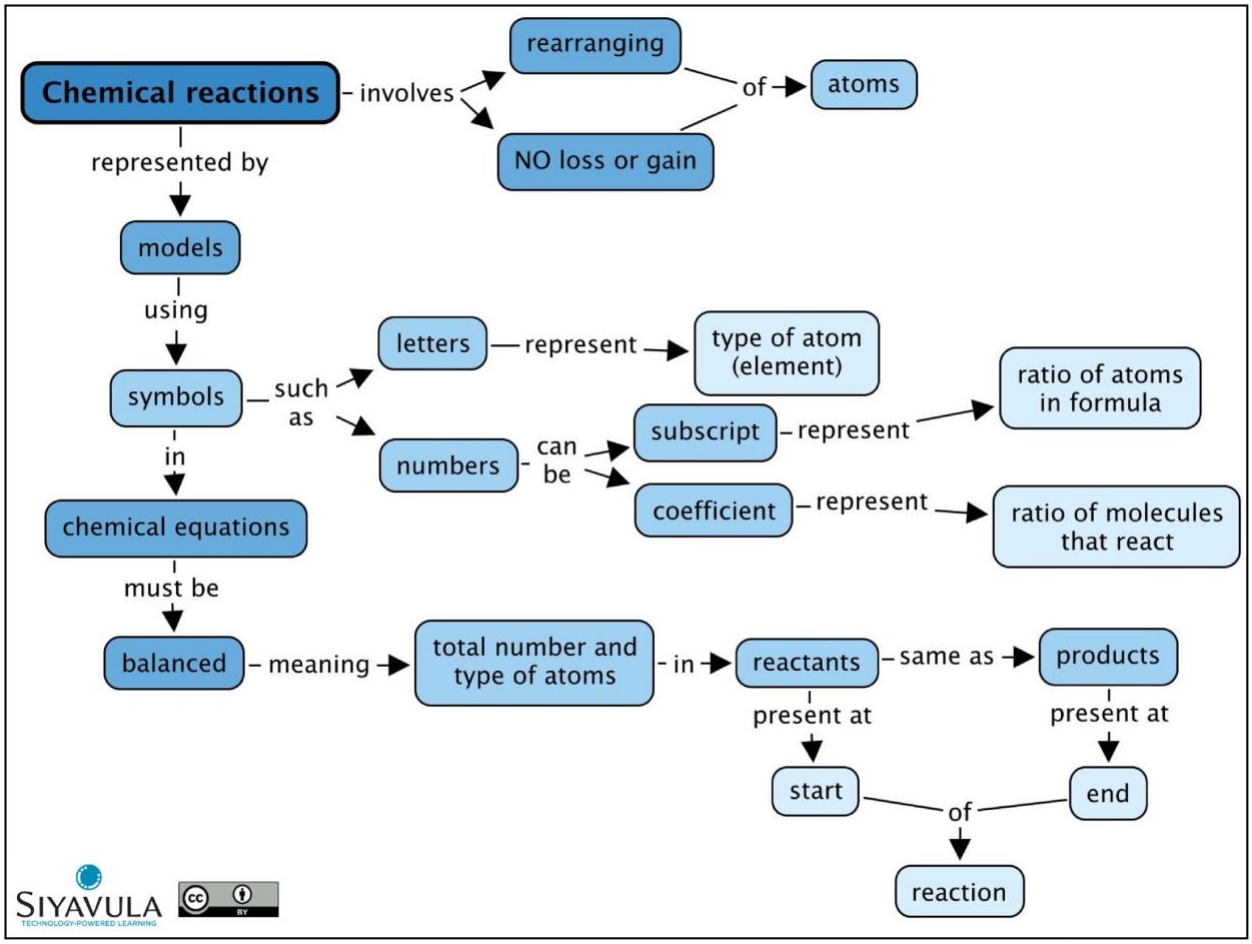
- **Minute Paper:** Give the students a couple of minutes to write one or two of the most important things they learned after a lecture, discussion, or activity. Collect their papers and read them after class. If students write down things that you also think are important, great! If not, you can choose to change some of your activities or lectures in upcoming classes.
- **Muddiest Point:** Give the students a couple of minutes to write one or two of the most confusing things from a lecture, discussion, or activity. Collect their papers and read them after class. You can use this information to explain points in a follow-up class session.
- **Lecture Reaction:** Divide the class into four groups after you give a lecture: questioners, example givers, divergent thinkers, and agreers. The questioners will have to ask two questions related to the course content; example givers will need to provide examples of the course content; divergent thinkers will need to disagree with at least one point in the lecture; and agreers will need to explain which points they found most helpful or agreed with the most. Give the student groups time (maybe 10 minutes) to make a plan for what they will share with the class. Then after each group shares, you can lead a whole-class discussion to further clarify points or extend the discussion.
- **Concept Maps**: Ask students to draw a picture of how different concepts are related to each other, using lines, arrows, or color to show relationships. Collect them to quickly see if students understand the concept and if any future instruction is needed. See Figure 1 below, which could be used for a chemistry course. You can ask students to work independently or in groups to fill in the boxes for numbers 1-4 (in red).

Figure 1. Sample Concept Map with blanks for students to complete.



The answers can then be given to students and any confusion can be explained, as in Figure 2:

Figure 2. Sample Concept Map with answers completed.



"Chemical Reactions" via Flickr by Siyavula Education is licensed under the CC BY 2.0 license.

To make concept maps the most useful for students, be sure that you are choosing concepts that have some type of inherent structure, such as a hierarchy or organizational structure. You can use existing figures and mark out boxes for students to complete, or you can create your own concept maps for students. You can also give students a Word Bank that they can use. In order to ensure that the concept map is clear, have a colleague try to complete it before you give it to students.

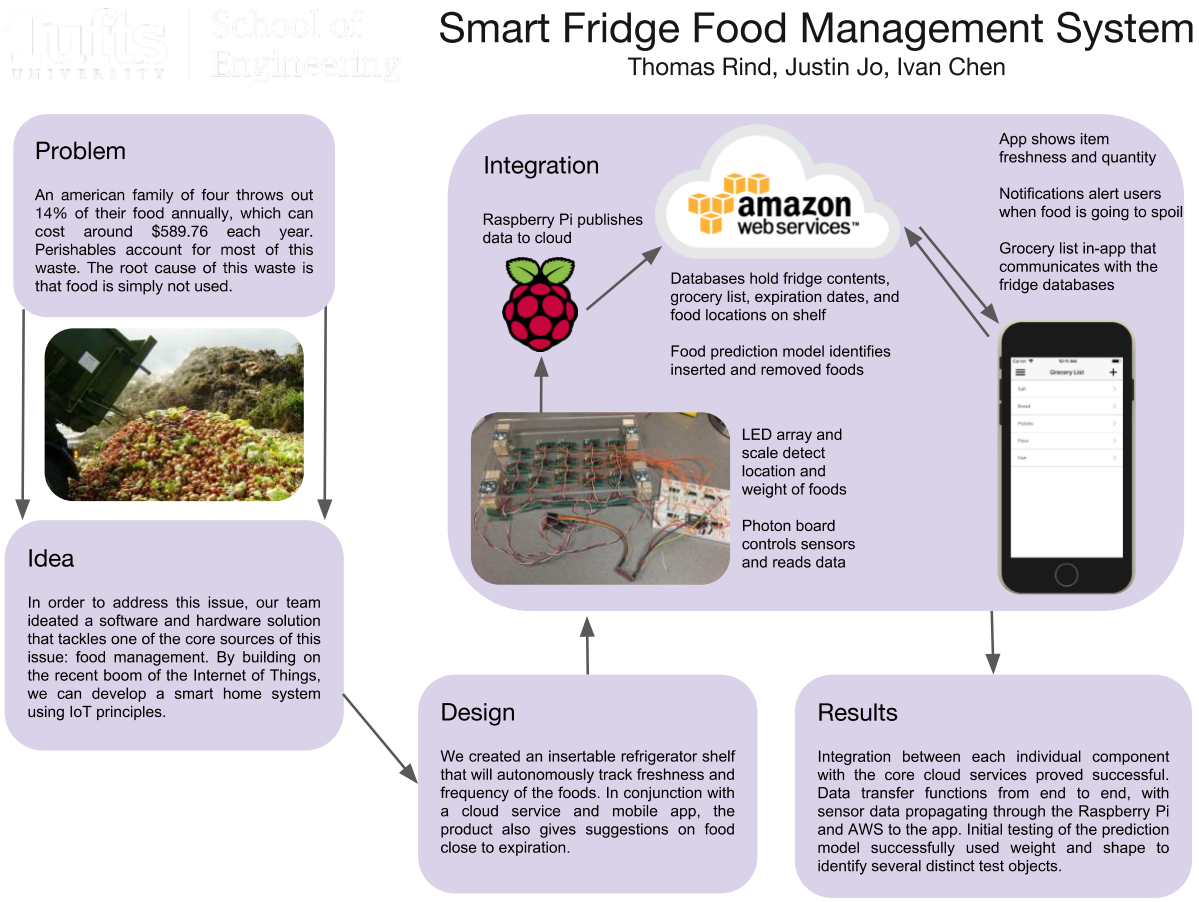
2. Capstone Projects

Capstone projects are culminating projects, meaning they take place at the end of a unit or course. They are useful to demonstrate how well students can integrate information and apply it in some way. They are particularly effective for students who are approaching graduation, since these projects can be done with experts in the field, local businesses, or other real-world groups. Capstone projects can be done in groups or individually, and many include more than one type of assessment. For example, students can

be asked to interview an industry expert, collect their findings into a group written report, and present the main findings to the class.

In this example below, students in Electrical and Computer Engineering created an online handbook about Electrical and Computer Engineering and product design. The handbook included an image of the poster a team presented as well as a brief explanation on the topic. See the poster in Figure 3, on smart house food management systems, or look at the online handbook here.

Figure 3. Sample Capstone Project final poster.



These capstone projects can often be put online so that students can share them with future employers.

3. Portfolios (print-based or online)

A portfolio is a collection of materials that have been created and assembled by the student. They can be individual or group projects. Contents of the portfolio can be text (such as papers or reports), images

(such as pictures of students interviewing an industry expert), audio files (such as a recording of an interview), or other files such as slides. They can be created in paper form, in a binder, or they can be ePortfolios and put online. Portfolios can be summative or formative; many instructors make them both. For example, students can turn in the individual parts of their portfolio throughout the course, and then revise them based on peer or instructor feedback, and finally collect them all into a final portfolio for a grade. Portfolios are useful for EMI courses because they allow students to work on authentic projects that relate to their futures. If students are working on a work-based final project, they can create a portfolio that showcases all they learned. Figure 4 shows an example of a model "career preparation portfolio" that could be used to help students showcase their preparedness for their career in your content area. These can be very useful for the job seeking and interviewing process and can be updated by the student even after the course is over. Keep in mind that portfolios can include any types of contents. This is just an example:

Figure 4. Sample assignment for a Portfolio.

Portfolio Assessment of a Work-Based Learning Experience

Portfolio assessment can be used not only to assess traditional academic work but also to demonstrate student mastery in work-based learning experiences. A model "career preparation portfolio," comparable to that in an academic field, might include the following elements, suggests Daniel McLaughlin at WestEd, the U. S. Department of Education's West Coast regional educational laboratory:

Personal Statement.
Students outline their career goals and evaluate their skills in relation to the Career Preparation Standards [also available from WestEd].

Resume. Students prepare a one-page resume describing their experiences and skills.

Application. Students obtain and complete an application for employment or continued education or training.

Letter of Recommendation. Students obtain a letter of recommendation from someone who knows them well, such as a supervisor, community leader, or teacher.

Work Samples. These pieces of student work demonstrating students' mastery of the Career Preparation Standards can range from a science experiment to organizing a school or community event to a statistical analysis of a schoolwide survey. One work sample must address technology literacy (such as desktop publishing, graphics, CAD, spread sheets, databases, and use of advanced equipment).

Writing Sample. The writing sample demonstrates students' ability to reach a conclusion based on supporting information and evidence. Students are evaluated on their writing ability and analytical reasoning. Writing samples can range from a comparative analysis of short stories to a business proposal.

Interpersonal Skills Evaluation. This evaluation of students' interpersonal skills (team work, leadership, etc.) is completed by a supervisor or teacher after a work experience, team project, or class. Students are strongly encouraged to obtain it from someone outside the classroom (such as an employer, community project coordinator, or coach).

4. Presentations

Presentations can be in a group or individual and can be summative or formative. Presentations will be most effective if students have clear guidelines on what is expected, if they are directly related to course content and students' future careers or lives, and if they are carefully regulated in terms of length of presentation and visuals so that they are not too long or confusing. Presentations can be done in-person during class, or they can be recorded and watched by the instructor and peers for homework. Figure 5 is a sample assignment description for a presentation on a small business project. The project has other components but culminates in a recorded presentation that explains the project.

Figure 5. Sample project description that includes a Presentation.

Assignment

This project will require some critical thinking on your part. You have to put yourself in the shoes of a small business owner running a small eating establishment (pizza place or deli), and think about:

1. What is the business you have selected?
2. What products and services does your business offer?
3. What do you need in the way of a computer based information system to properly support the marketing and selling of those products and services?

By the end of this project, you will have prepared and delivered:

- An Excel spreadsheet of hardware and software necessary for the small business information system you propose.
- A Systems Architecture, using Microsoft Word with shapes and Smart Art.
- An Excel spreadsheet showing all the cost of purchasing and installing the hardware and software necessary for the small business information system you propose.
- A PowerPoint presentation of your system with animation and audio.

Please read the detailed directions in **the Small Business Project Workbook**. The project is broken up into four tasks.

More specifics about the presentation are given in Figure 6. Notice the specifics in terms of what types of information should be included, technology to be included, and narration. More details can be found here.

Figure 6. Presentation specifics for small business project.

Task #4 – Presentation

The Objective of this task is to:

1. Create a PowerPoint presentation in the form of a Proposal showing the background and design of the system including audio and animation that as a minimum, meets the following conditions:
    a. Contains as a minimum, the following information and follows the Presentation Outline attached:
        i. Title slide with the name of the business and your name in the footer.
        ii. Business description slide(s)
        iii. Hardware Information systems architecture diagram slide(s)
        iv. Software Information systems architecture diagram slide(s)
        v. Task #3 spreadsheet slide
        vi. Summary slide
    b. Animation on two slides that emphasize important elements of the proposal
    c. Description of how the system hardware and software work together to support the business.
    d. Explanation of why the selected design was chosen.
    e. Audio narration on a minimum of 3 slides describing the slide contents.

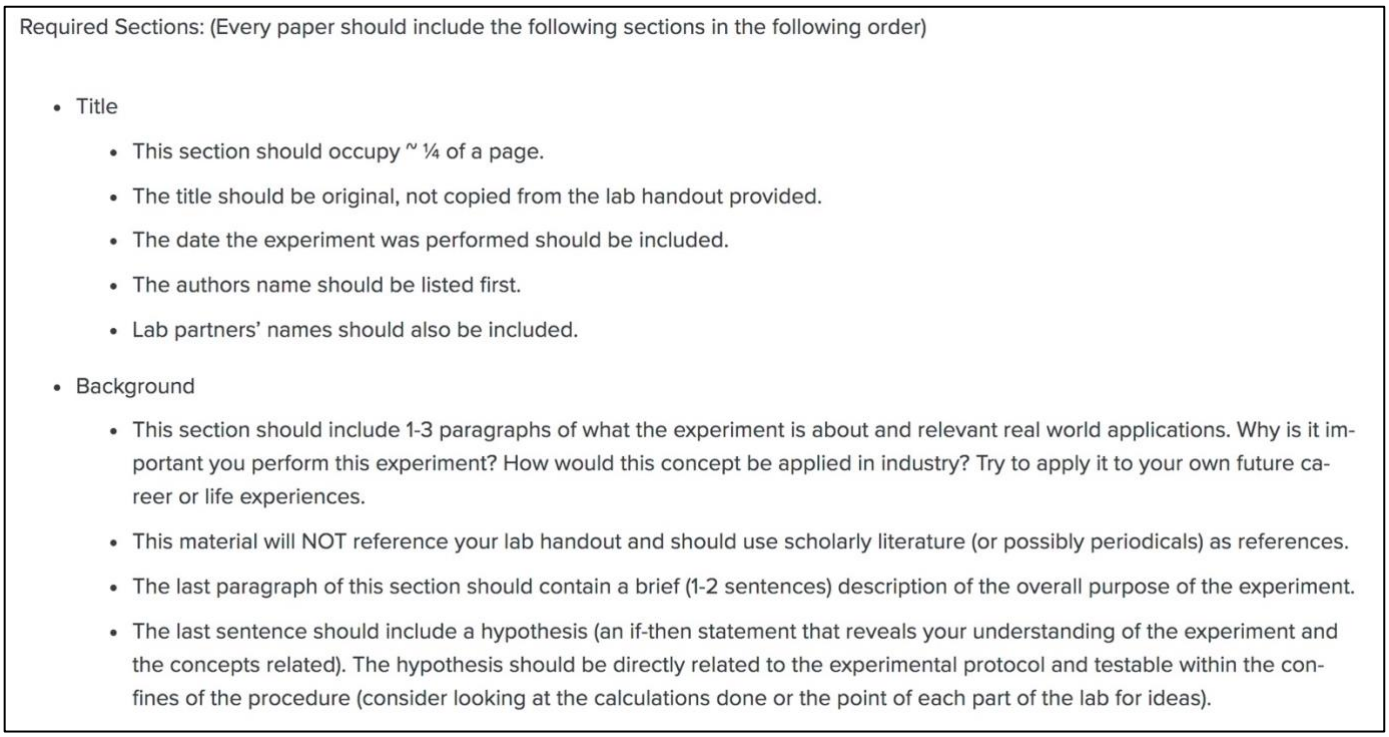
5. Papers or Reports

Papers or reports that focus on students' future career writing needs will be the most beneficial and motivating for students in EMI courses and thus easier for instructors to grade. Papers can be written for group projects or individually, they can be formative or summative, they can be long or short, and they can be formal or informal. Informal writing assignments focus on helping students learn or explore material. For example, students can write on online discussion boards or even make their own English-language blogs related to course content. They can also post via social media related to course content. With social media, extra attention needs to be paid to privacy and security, and not all students or classes will want to explore this idea for informal writing. Instructors often worry about plagiarism if they assign writing tasks. In order to minimize chances that students will just copy text from a book or online source, and not complete their own assignments, try the following: (a) choose course topics that are difficult for students to copy from other sources—the Small Business Project illustrated in Figures 5 and 6 are an example of a project that would be hard for students to copy; (b) require students to turn in drafts of their paper before the final, so that you can check that they are doing their own work; (c) watch for inconsistencies in students' papers—look for fonts that are different or wording that seems beyond your students' English proficiency level; (d) explain to students the importance of doing their

own work for their future English and career development and tell them you care about their ideas and will read their work; and (e) assign topics that are interesting to students and connected to their lives and careers (Bikowski & Phillips, 2018).

Papers can also be more formal, such as lab reports. See Figure 7 for the beginning of a sample lab report assignment for Chemistry. To see the entire assignment, click here.

Figure 7. Sample Lab Report assignment



Required Sections: (Every paper should include the following sections in the following order)

- Title
  - This section should occupy ~ ¼ of a page.
  - The title should be original, not copied from the lab handout provided.
  - The date the experiment was performed should be included.
  - The authors name should be listed first.
  - Lab partners' names should also be included.
- Background
  - This section should include 1-3 paragraphs of what the experiment is about and relevant real world applications. Why is it important you perform this experiment? How would this concept be applied in industry? Try to apply it to your own future career or life experiences.
  - This material will NOT reference your lab handout and should use scholarly literature (or possibly periodicals) as references.
  - The last paragraph of this section should contain a brief (1-2 sentences) description of the overall purpose of the experiment.
  - The last sentence should include a hypothesis (an if-then statement that reveals your understanding of the experiment and the concepts related). The hypothesis should be directly related to the experimental protocol and testable within the confines of the procedure (consider looking at the calculations done or the point of each part of the lab for ideas).

These five types of assessments are particularly useful for EMI courses given that they can be customized for different content areas, can be used in large or small courses, offer support for students whose native language is not English, and can be customized so that they are relevant to students' lives and future careers.

References[1]

Angelo, T. A., & Cross, K. P. (1993). Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bikowski, D., & Phillips, T. (2018). *Teaching with a global perspective: Practical strategies from course design to assessment.* New York, NY: Routledge.

College of Business Administration. (2016). *Assessment guide for academic programs*. Texas A&M Central Texas. Retrieved from https://www.tamuct.edu/coba/docs/coba-assessment-guide.pdf

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