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FIQWS 10108- CP6

Prof. Von Uhl

Final Self Reflection

### Final Self-Assessment

At the start of this semester, I came into school thinking I was a great writer. In high school, I would get good grades on all my papers, and teachers would complement my writing. Unfortunately, in high school my teachers had low standards. After writing my first college paper which is the literacy narrative, I noticed how flawed my writing really is. In high school, I was never taught how to write in MLA format, where to add commas correctly, how to cite sources, or how to state a clear argument or counterclaim. Everything I know about writing, I learned in the FIQWS 10108 section, because the most I learned about essay writing in high school is that an essay has an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion. I feel more confident in my writing right now, but I know I still have a lot to learn. I have my strengths and my weaknesses, and I figured out what each are during this semester.

I never realized how important revising was in the whole writing process. In high school, all that was expected of us was to write something and hand it in without looking over it a single time. I notice that while writing my papers this semester, I spent more time revising them than writing them. As professor Von Uhl says, “your first draft is the ticket to the party. The party is the revision”. I found that to be true, because I spent so many hours revising my essays and going to the writing center. Peer reviews were also somewhat helpful, but it is hard to trust someone else’s revisions to your essay without knowing how good of a writer they are.

Regardless, peer reviews were helpful because they gave me an idea of what is expected from me when I was confused about what to write.

One thing I found helpful throughout my writing process is to just brain dump all my ideas when they come to me and organize my thoughts later. This way, my writing has more structure and I have all my information there. I found that it is better to start off with a lot of information and remove the excessive things later, than to write with a format because then a lot of stuff gets left out. This also relates back to the importance of revising. Revising turns my big mess of thoughts into a well-structured essay that sounds like I have all my ideas together in the right places.

This semester, most of my papers were supposed to be based off a reading assigned to the class and then I had to relate those readings to some other source that I found. It is hard to relate two sources to each other in a way that can be solidified by evidence, but I found a way that makes it easier. Whenever I was assigned a reading, I would read it and annotate each paragraph. Next to each paragraph, I would write a short summary of what I had read so that the I have everything organized. I would then reread the story a few days later and try to see what else I could find. My first time around reading the short stories, I did not find any connections, but the second time around, I always found my two sources relating in some way.

On the syllabus, there are 8 course learning outcomes, and I feel more confident now than before in 7 of them.

- 1) Explore analyze, in writing and reading, a variety of genres and rhetorical situations.

-I learned how to analyze a variety of different genres because of the short stories I was required to read in order to write my papers. I have gotten used to marking up each paragraph of a short story so that it makes more sense when I go back to it.

2) Develop strategies for reading, drafting, collaborating, revising, and editing.

-A strategy I found helpful to me is to brain dump my ideas while writing and organize them while revising. I did this in both my critical analysis and my expository essay because for each of the papers, my first draft was 3 or 4 pages longer than required. With all my information, I developed a strategy of cutting the information down while revising.

3) Recognize and practice key rhetorical terms and strategies when engaged in writing situations.

-I learned this skill while writing my critical analysis because I was required to explain how the author of the short story used rhetorical terms to develop schizophrenia in his short story. Analyzing rhetorical terms helped me figure out how to use them throughout my own writing.

4) Engage in the collaborative and social aspects of the writing process.

-This skill was achieved in the multiple peer reviews I had during class. Also, when I went to the writing center, I noticed how the impact of a good writer helps me to become a better writer myself.

5) Understand and use print and digital technologies to address a range of audiences.

-I do not think I fully achieved this skill because for each assignment, I had the same audience: my peer reviewer and professor Von Uhl. Regardless, this skill is being worked on now as I am building my CUNY commons portfolio, because I can reach a wider range of audiences using technology.

6) Locate research sources (including academic journal articles, magazine, and newspaper articles) in the library's databases or archives and on the internet and evaluate them for credibility, accuracy, timelines, and bias.

-I learned how to do this in this class's tech-center session, and in the other FIQWS sections tech-center session. Finding resources for the critical analysis was easy and quick. Not only did I have a wide range of sources related to my topic, but I also learned to narrow my searches down in order to find exactly what I was looking for.

7) Compose texts that integrate your stance with appropriate sources using strategies such as summary, critical analysis, interpretation, synthesis, and argumentation.

-Stance is necessary in every piece of writing, so it is always present. I think I do not always have a strong stance because of my lack of use of counterclaims. If I learned to use counterclaims more, they would help me perfect my stance. Although counterclaims were never present in my writing this semester, I learned how to use them while analyzing the B.E.A.M. method and the Toulmin Method. I will apply those methods in my writing in my future papers.

8) Practice systematic application of citation conventions.

-I Practiced citations so much in class that I have acquired the knowledge on how to do so correctly by now. In high school, I was never required to cite, but I learned how to do it since it was necessary for this class. Professor Von Uhl also assigned the class a few quizzes and reading on citations so this skill was targeted as an important aspect that is necessary for writing.

Although I do not have this skill fully mastered, I have learned that it is better to overcite than to under cite so that I am not plagiarizing anyone else's idea.

This semester, I learned so much about writing that I was never taught before. After just the first assignment which was the literacy narrative, I grew so much in my writing. Now, my efforts will go towards growing more in my writing with my future papers. I want to be more concise with my ideas, analyze more and summarize less, hook my readers in, and become better with my grammar skills. This class has taught me a lot about all these aspects. Although my writing has improved, it still needs improvement and I am striving to become a better writer in the future.