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**English 2010 – My Reflection**

My Intermediate Writing class at Salt Lake Community College has been a great experience in my college career. Learning and gaining experience with different genres of writing, working with my peers to improve my writing, and receiving constructive feedback from my professor has really boosted my confidence not only in my writing, but in my critical thinking as well. My final portfolio will consist of two of my best pieces of work, along with a reflection of the aspects in this class that contributed to my improved knowledge of the intended course objectives.

One of the things that I liked most about this class was that we were required to write about the same topic throughout the whole semester, however each paper was to be written in a different genre. Each genre required a several step process. First I had to research and find out exactly what the genre entailed. I had to consider the main purpose of the paper, my audience, what type of techniques to incorporate (dialogue, statistical facts, narrative, etc.), and how to execute the particular style of writing. After collecting my thoughts, data, and organization of ideas, I wrote my papers keeping the genre in mind. Our discussions earlier in the semester were extremely beneficial since we had the opportunity to throw around ideas about writing a successful paper before we got started with our papers. We discussed the best way of finding credible information, how to motivate our audience, and why it’s important to understand purpose, context, and our readers in order to write a successful paper.

After writing, the next step was to submit my paper to give and receive feedback from my peers. This was also another extremely beneficial step – it’s helpful to have a second or third “set of eyes” to give me suggestions to better my writing. For example, Devin stated:

“I would like to see some of the numerical statistics illustrated [with] one of these visuals. I feel that interest levels would be a great place to include one of these visuals.”

I liked and appreciated his suggestion, so I searched online to find a statistical visual that would complement my writing. Luckily, I found a pie chart illustrating high schools graduates’ opinion regarding post-high school experiences – which was perfect for my paper’s purpose! After I used that specific pie chart visual in my pamphlet, Jessica was kind enough to comment:

“I really liked the chart that asked people what they felt about their high school experience. It is very straight forward. I also liked how everything is broken down into sections.”

This was a helpful comment as well, since it reassured me that I was using visuals correctly, my paper was well organized for others, and provided clear and concise information.

Providing feedback for my peers was just as helpful as receiving it. I feel that everyone in my group was very talented in their writing, and it inspired me to incorporate some of their ideas into my writing. One of the comments I made for my peer was for her profile writing assignment:

“If I had to make a suggestion about your paper overall, I felt like there were a few instances where there were run-on sentences. When I write as if I were talking, I like to add commas or dashes where I would pause my sentence in real dialogue.”

Of course I complimented her on the strong parts of her paper, however I felt it would be easier for her readers and provide a better overall flow for her paper if she added more punctuation as I mentioned. I hope she found my advice useful! Another peer review comment I made was for another of my peer’s profiles. We were asked to point out techniques that the writer had incorporated in his or her paper:

“I think the paper had a very well rounded amount of techniques. You used quotes directly from your mother, personal experiences & stories, and facts to back these up. I think this adds up to a very strong paper to use these different techniques”

I felt that it would be helpful to him to mention that I noticed the techniques he used and that they are well balanced and used correctly. I hope this comment helped him as well.

After constructive criticism from my peers and my professor, I chose two pieces of my work for my final portfolio. First, I chose to use my Profile since I feel that it has some of my strongest writing. I worked hard to incorporate quotes, credible facts, and personal experience and I think the paper has a nice flow considering all of the different techniques I used. My second piece of writing that I selected is my Pamphlet. I feel that it summarizes the entirety of my writing in this class and it shows that I can incorporate visuals, headings, and concise information within a confined space. My Pamphlet also happens to be the last piece of writing I did for this class, so it was also the paper that I had the opportunity to infuse all of my knowledge from this class into. I took my peers’ and my professor’s comments into consideration and really perfected these papers to my best ability.

I have taken away so much from this class – it has done an incredible job of boosting my confidence and preparing me for more challenges ahead in my college career and perhaps even further beyond that. The most significant thing that I learned in this class was how to create different styles (or genres) of writing suited to my audience, purpose, and situation. Critical thinking played a large part of this course and I feel that I have made huge strides in the direction of strong critical thinking skills. I also had the opportunity to gain more experience in working collaboratively with my peers. Although our papers were independently written, we chose a topic as a team and I felt that it was extremely beneficial for me to share and receive constructive criticism from others. This class was a short one since it is Summer semester, but I learned more in this class than I have in many of the other college classes I have taken, and I believe the knowledge and experience that I gained will take me far in life!