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ENGL-1302

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Final Reflection Essay

I would like to start off by saying I had a really fun time in this class. I have learned so much and can’t wait to use my new knowledge of using, finding and writing research papers. Yes I had my confused moments but with the right help, I have made some of my best writing pieces in this class. I am excited to see what the future holds in store for me and my new and improved writing skills.

A. What type of academic research and proper borrowing did I learn in this course? Well for starters I learned how to do extensive research on papers. For example, if I have a paper about a certain study, I can get 10 articles from the TAMIU Library then write the purpose of what the creator wrote about. This can help me with so much with my other courses. I am a Criminal Justice major. We have to write a bunch of papers so with my new knowledge on how to research certain topics and ideas, I will be ready. I remember for one of my criminal justice classes. I had to write a paper about a certain topic. I had to compare and contrast. I started with the research. I went to the TAMIU library and searched up my topic. I did not have the papers to write down the certain research. So what I did was I did notes on a google doc. This helped me organize my ideas and then when it came to writing the paper it was easier to write. I have this course to thank.

B. What did I learn about the writing process in this course? I have learned that it takes time to write a good essay. You can’t rush writing. I have learned to start writing my essays days before and know what I want to write about. It was tedious at first because I did not have time to write because of work and other class homework, also I was always procrastinating with writing. After understanding my timing with work and all my other courses, I had found time to write. And with that time I can tell that it made my essays much better. I have noticed that if I handle essays first and days before I can make them perfect and fix them up. This can go for any course too and I am excited to write more. I found that writing can be relaxing and therapeutic. I usually put music on and let my mind write words for me. All in all, besides the actual research, the writing was my favorite part of this course. I found later on while taking this class that the writing turned out to be super intriguing and I could not wait to write them.

C. What did I learn from the process of writing and revising one of my research assignments or essays? I learned how to fix my references. For example, if I was naming an article and an author, I would put every word in the title. That was incorrect. So what I did on my revising was change out the spelling to that specific thing. Another revising thing I did was on my last essay about the effects of video games. My peers said I had good evidence and made a good essay. All I had to change was my grammar and transitions to the next paragraphs. I felt like most of my peer reviews always said the same thing where I had to fix up my transitions and grammar. Also my professor said that I had an amazing essay, but since it was a research paper, I could not use the word “I”. So I changed that by going back to the beginning of the essay to delete all the uses of “I” and change them to another word. This made me realize that my future research essays need to not have the word “I” in it. My reflection essays can have the use of the word “I” in it because this is a paper where I have to talk about myself and the experiences I had in this course. Research papers can be very stressful and time consuming just because it has to be factual and not plagiarized so it was difficult at first coming up with my own words and sentences. In my opinion, my third essay, which is the essay about video games, was easy to write. I did not know I had to fix the “I”s. That was the best essay I have ever written. Now I know how to revise and edit my future research essays.

D. What was the most challenging aspect of revising this research genre assignment? The most challenging part or aspect of revising this research genre was probably the amount of time that it took. It was a fun assignment or activity but I was always procrastinating about doing the actual research because either I was busy or just lazy and wanted a day off. Another thing that was challenging was actually trying to come up with a topic that was interesting. I wanted to do something unique for the first essays. That is why I did social media and how it affects people positively and negatively. During the peer review I looked at some of my classmates' essays and they did the same social media topic. That is when I had to switch things up. It took me days to come up with a topic that was both interesting and not boring. I then decided to do a research topic about how video games affect people positively and negatively in different age groups. This topic was interesting because video games are something I adore and know a lot about. But going back to the challenging part of the research was looking through the articles to see which ones I can write about and look interesting. In the end, after long hours of trying to do that actual research I got it done.

E. What was the most challenging aspect of this course? I personally believe that the most challenging part of this course was at the beginning. The Annotated Bibliography was difficult to me cause I had no clue on what to do and how to start. The Annotated bibliography itself was easy because I had a reference from my professor. I think that what confused me was that I did not know I could make my own topic and idea. Also the first time I did the research I had no idea how to do it. This was my first semester here and I did not know how to locate the library. When I found out how to locate the library and do all the peer reviewed articles, plugging in all the information I found was a bit tricky. I did not want to over do it with the information that I found, also I did not want to plagiarize anything. So plugging the items and information that I found, I had to put them into my own words. Again this was the first time for me doing something like this so it took me a while to get used to. After that main part of that course I learned how to adapt and figure out what type of research I needed to do and how to find the library and look for the information I needed to write about.

Off topic about the course, but I wanted to talk about how I made my portfolio because I am very proud of what I did and how I made it. When I saw the reference from the past student, I noticed that they used a website called Wix to make their portfolio. Wix is a good website but I am not very used to it yet. I tried to add my past assignments and other things that the portfolio needed, but it would not let me add them and it said I needed to pay for a subscription. So what I did was I coded my website. Using Visual Studio Code. It was tough at first to figure out the code. But it basically does everything for you. All you have to do is type what you want in like buttons to send you to the page where it has my assignments that are organized. You can add styles and backgrounds. It is an amazing coding system that is easier to use and it looks professional. I also used another website called GitHub. It is basically a website that verifies the main website which in this case is the portfolio to make it look cleaner and have an actual code. Wix is a good website to use for a first timer. But now knowing coding I felt like I was actually doing a man made website from scratch. Wix uses newcomers and makes them buy subscriptions for them to add things which is a scam to me. The GitHub and the Visual Studio were all free and it made the website and portfolio more authentic. I am very proud of the way this portfolio looked and came out. I can not wait to use GitHub more. Again it was a fun time making this portfolio and I cannot wait to see my family’s and professors' reaction to the website because I worked really hard on it.

F. What was the least challenging aspect of this course? What are some strengths I discovered in your research and writing skill sets? The least challenging experience that I had in this course was in the very beginning where we had to read the chapters then answer the ten chapter related questions. I thought that was what the class was gonna be about. Just reading chapters and answering questions. Another part of the easiest thing was those questions about formatting in MLA style because they were unlimited tries. I always passed the first try but with one question wrong. So what I would do is that I would go back to the assignment and do it till I got a perfect score. All in all, those were the easiest and fun assignments to do. The book did help a ton in those assignments. And I actually learned a lot from them.

G. Do I feel that this course has prepared me to become a part of the academic research community? Yes, I believe that this course has helped me tons and it has prepared me to become a part of the academic research community. I learned how to do research papers, write better and all in all just improve my overall knowledge of this whole subject. This course taught me to use my new knowledge of knowing how to write and research using the library and peer reviews. As I said before, I can not wait to use this new material I have learned and use it on other future courses.

In conclusion, I am grateful that I took this class. I said before that I have learned so much from this course. I was a mediocre writer and now I can say that I can do research properly and write with confidence. At first I was very skeptical of writing and doina all the research. With the time and effort I put in I realized that it was easy, but time consuming. Getting feedback from my peers and instructor was an interesting move as well. I have never seen any comments about any papers that I wrote and this was a really refreshing way to get a better understanding of what I needed to fix up. All in all, I am super glad I took this course. It has taught me so much and I can not wait to teach other people that were like me on how to better write research papers and use the things I have learned in other courses. Thank you!