Final Reflection

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FOUN1014 – Critical Reading and Writing in Science and Technology and Medical Sciences

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The great philosopher Fedrick Nietzsche once said, “What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger”. UWI, Mona did not kill me so I’m here stronger, but I can’t give UWI all the credit, I should give FOUN-1014 some credit too. So, I am here even stronger. Being a second-year computing student, the trek was not easy. This is a stage wherein the wilderness, UWI’s best is thrown at you. Comp 2190 was thrown at me; Comp 2201 was thrown at me and FOUN-1014 was thrown at me. However, I wasn’t alone on this trek; I had to team up with others to march and fight FOUN-1014 with me, but that didn’t make it any easier. We not only fought FOUN-1014, but we also fought amongst ourselves. However, regardless of how daunting this trek was, I had learned lessons. Two of the main things I have learned fighting FOUN-1014 is the importance of the writer in academic research, as well as the importance of referencing academic papers in research.

Whether we are reading a fictional book, watching a movie, or listening to the news, the person presenting the information or content is as important as the content itself and, likewise, the same goes for academic writing. This is the ethos in academic research, it is the authority and the credibility that the writer has, which will make it easier for them to drive their point or content into their audience. The stronger the ethos a writer has, the more confidence there will be in the author as well as the content. How I came to hone this lesson when looking for the sources to add to the discussion of my topic “How does exercise reduce the negative effects of stress”. I need to know the qualifications, experience & previous work of the authors are of quality, so I can also produce a quality research paper. This is a lesson that the beast FOUN-1014 has taught me. This lesson is important in my career field which is software engineering. Software engineering (SWEN) is an everchanging practice where new technology and research is always done to make processes and tools efficient, and there will be SWEN practitioners who produce quality research, and tools, and those who don’t. Therefore, ‘ethos’ will allow me to know the difference.

Another important lesson, that I’ve learned when battling the deadly hooves of FOUN-1014, is the importance of the audience. In my opinion, this is the most important aspect of writing or research. Who will I be presenting to is important to ask as one can establish the context and know-how to the appropriate language? When the audience is considered, the way the information is presented, as well as the language used is important. For instance, it is okay to use specific technical jargon when researching for professionals in the same field of study. Meanwhile while presenting to the general public, a softer tone must be used. This is important to my career because I will be one of the practitioners in SWEN where I have to document any work or tool, I create so anyone who wished to continue working on it or use it, will understand clearly as I would understand my audience. Whether they are users or other software engineers.

The short 13 weeks of the battle against FOUN-1014 were long and treacherous. The scars earned and adversities faced were short-lived, but the lessons learned are forever; knowing the audience and knowing the writer is important to be effective at producing critical and informative materials.