Lanxiao Bai

Instructor: Diane R. Fuselier-Thompson

LAS 199

13 October 2015

LAS 199 Final Reflection Essay

It is incredible that nearly half semester has passed, and the course of LAS 199 is about to reach its end. When trying recalling the memory since the first day I stepped on the plane and leave my home for University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, various kinds of feelings come up to the mind at once. Joyfulness, pain, heart-broken and relieve, all of these emotions I had experienced in the time of my first two months on campus, which is not a very long time, but is critical to my assimilation and adjustment to the university that I’m going to spend time and life in for three or four years.

Though I have to say, mainly because of some my own mistakes that are made by accident when my mind is out of control, the progress was not that easy, and there’s a moment of emotional crash that I even thought that I may need to find a psychologist for mental clinic service. But I successfully managed to survive through these days and nights and gradually become one of the real undergraduate students who started to feel themselves part of the campus.

However, I always regard myself as a fortunate student during my experience in the college adjustment and transition. Unlike some of my friends, I met a pretty nice roommate, which really made my life in dorm much easier than I ever imagined. Our temperament matches each other pretty well. Since both of us are quiet, it’s very comfortable to study or have a rest in dorm without getting too much bother by noises of parties. We have a proper agreement on trivial things in dorm rooms, so that most arguments that may do harm to the friendliness and harmony (Wallace, This Is Water: Some Thoughts, Delivered on a Significant Occasion, about Living a Compassionate Life) between us can be avoided.

Since I tried to learn all my core courses in summer vacation beforehand, academic problems seem to cause no barriers and obstructions in my life. All my courses, though some are open for sophomores, are not so hard under my elaborate preparation. The course of CS225 has a very high workload that I sometimes even have to spend more than 20 hours per week on dealing with all the contents in class, labs and machine problems that are released week by week. Indeed, the endless tasks and projects are exhausting, but they did help me a lot to understand all what I have learned in class.

There was an accident that I didn’t perform well in some exams of CS173, but it’s not really the problem with my ability in studying, but more about the attitude I need to hold when dealing with coursework. Luckily, the course of LAS 199 really introduced lots of resources on campus and academic techniques like group working and asking instructors for help that can help me dealing with the difficulties. (LAS 199 Faculty) However, it still really alerted me that though I’ve understood most of the contents, I still need to be more seriously about this course and spend enough time for preparation or I may still fail it. Because of that, I’ve already started deploying some of my time to get it ready before every of my exams, so that I could get a GPA at an acceptable level at the end of the semester, which is crucial, since I plan to transfer to the College of Engineering and pursue my bachelor degree of computer science there.

Just as I mentioned in the previous paragraph, I’m about to transfer to the College of Engineer. Not just the major provided more proper courses and resources that can assist me developing skills and technics for my career in the future, but also has genes of engineers that are a lot different from liberal arts. But before that, I really appreciate my education at Liberal Arts and Science College as well and feel that my view to the world and life has been fulfilled and improved, especially by the course that emphasized the concepts of diversity and inclusivity that are hard to be accessed in my country, which has been a single-race and atheism for a long time.

LAS education provided me with chances to work with people from different culture so that I could understand and learn from them, book about how an international student can survive and succeed in college to read so that I can perform well and videos of inspiring speeches that provoked my thought of what the world is like and how the world should be. During the course, I did not just learnt what to think but rather “how to think” (Wallace, This Is Water: Some Thoughts, Delivered on a Significant Occasion, about Living a Compassionate Life), which allows me jump out of the natural cage that limited my mind and thought. (Wallace, This Is Water: Some Thoughts, Delivered on a Significant Occasion, about Living a Compassionate Life) Being able to think without limitation is not just benefit when one need to understand other people’s situation and treat them properly to follow the philosophy of diversity and inclusivity. Just like what Stella Young said in her TED Talk, sometimes our kindness can be another kind of cruel. (Young) But also, the freedom of thinking without been subliminally blocked by oneself also benefits the work in engineering and industrial area. Liberty in thinking allow people to think differently, even more creatively than his could do before, which, is exactly what is needed to make surprising breakthrough.

In the upcoming four or three years of my undergraduate student life, every day must be perfectly utilized so that my ability as a software engineer can be solidly constructed and my career can be fully prepared. But besides that, I reckon it is also crucial to live a life during all these years as a human, not just an engineer. For that, I plan to spend enough time to and learn to get along with my friends and, if I’m fortunate enough, even find the one who is perfect enough to support each other with me for the rest of my life.

# Bibliography

1. I’m not your inspiration, thank you very much. By Stella Young. Perf. Stella Young. TEDxSydney, Sydney. April 2014.
2. LAS 199 Faculty. "LAS 199: Success in LAS for International Students ." Academic and Social Integrity and Interview Techniques. Urbana-Champaign, 2015.
3. Nathan, Rebekah. My freshman year: what a professor learned by becoming a student. London: Penguin Books, 2006.
4. Wallace, David Foster. "This Is Water: Some Thoughts, Delivered on a Significant Occasion, about Living a Compassionate Life." Speech. 2009.