Dr. Jana M. Giles

Associate Professor

English Program, Department of Humanities

University of Louisiana at Monroe

700 University Ave.

Walker 3-125

Monroe, LA 71209

08 December 2017

Dear Dr. Giles:

I am writing to complete my final portfolio for ENGL 1010, Honors Composition, as requested by the course requirements. What follows is a self-analysis of my performance this semester, as well as the attached revisions of my essays on rhetorical analysis and on *The US of Excess* and e-waste problem in China.

Personally, the course materials discussed in class were very interesting to me. They were mainly focused on the issue of global warming and climate change and how it affects our planet. However, I didn’t care much about global warming before I joined this class. I thought that it was the government’s or any other environmental organizations’ responsibility to deal with such problems. It was also brought to my attention that I wasn’t the only one who had such ignorant attitude towards a problem as serious as the global warming. Lots of people, especially the climate change deniers do not believe in it. This ignorant attitude has the potential to wipe out the entire human race or any living organisms on Earth. Therefore, it is extremely important to address the problem of global warming and educate as many people as possible about it in a professional and a persuasive manner. However, writing like that requires a lot of skills and practice, which I was able to get in your class. In the class, I have written two main essays. The first essay was about analyzing two articles and finding the rhetorical strategies, appeals and fallacies used by the authors to persuade their readers, and second essay was a research paper on effects of e-waste on China and possible solutions to get rid of those problems. Working on those papers helped me improve my writing skills and made me a better writer than I was before taking your class.

One of the skills that I learned from the class was to avoid fallacies and use certain rhetorical appeals to strengthen my paper. I didn’t know anything about such rhetorical devices and fallacies before. As a result, my writing would contain many errors which degraded the quality of my paper. It wasn’t only me who had that problem, many of my classmates were also struggling with it. So, to help us write a quality essay, our class was given an assignment to analyze two articles in which one article supported the reality of climate change and the other denied it, and point out the rhetorical appeals and logical fallacies used by the authors in their articles. After the analysis of both articles I found that the article by James Delingpole titled “Climate Change: The Greatest-Ever Conspiracy Against the Taxpayer” which refused climate change had lots of fallacies in it. The writer of that paper didn’t have much knowledge on what he was talking about. He quoted a lot of big people like Warren Buffet and Bjorn Lomborg to sound more authoritative and persuasive, however, those people had no expertise or knowledge on climate change. Therefore, it became clear that the author used the fallacy of appeal to authority in that case. Similarly, the paper had other fallacies like hasty generalization, fallacy of accent, fallacy of presumption and so on which made me doubt the validity of the arguments made by the author. On the other hand, the article by Wayne Drash titled “Yes, Climate Change Made Harvey and Irma Worse” which supported the existence of climate change didn’t have any fallacies in it. The author of that article had all the scientific evidences back up his arguments. For instance, he said that the climate change is real, and the recent hurricanes, Harvey and Irma, were made worse by the warming of the planet. Then, he presented different climate scientists’ and meteorologists’ findings on the subject to support his statement, making it clear that the climate change is real. He didn’t just put his opinions in the paper but stated a lot of facts as well which made his writing much more powerful and convincing than the writing by Delingpole. Analyzing both articles exposed me to the rules of writing a professional essay which was important in developing my writing skills.

After learning the correct way of writing a paper from my first assignment, I had to write my own professional essay in my second assignment. The essay was about the problems of e-waste in China and possible solutions to those problems. In that paper, I had to do a lot of research to find the materials for my writing. In the process, I realized that researching was not an easy task. It took me more than a week to finish reading all the related articles that I would use in my paper. However, spending hours on the internet trying to find the materials developed my reading habit. Furthermore, I was able to implement the skills that I learned from my first assignment in this paper. I tried to avoid any fallacies in my essay and back up all my arguments with the data that I got from a credible source. I did not just implement my skills in this paper but also learned new writing techniques. For instance, I learned the importance and the proper way of writing and citing my sources in an MLA format. Before I took this class I never cited any sources in my papers. It never came to me that I would be plagiarizing if I did not give credit to the sources that I took materials from for my essays. However, I am very careful to providing citations and avoid plagiarism now.

In addition to learning the correct way of citing my sources, I also learned how to improve the flow of my essay in the class, specifically, during the peer critique review. Reading each other’s paper to help improve our writings was very fruitful to me. My critic helped me not only on the flow of my essay but also on the paragraph separation, structure and grammar. As a result, my essay became much better than before. However, my essay was not the only thing that experienced change because of the class activities. I found change in me too. I mentioned in the diagnostic essay which I wrote during the start of the semester that I did not like to write. But, constant motivation and help from you and my classmates to write a better essay each time has changed my view on writing. Writing a paper does not seem boring to me anymore. In fact, I find it interesting now to brainstorm about a topic and write few paragraphs on it. In addition, the improvement in my writing style and technique makes it more fun.

Since I find writing more exciting now, I will undoubtedly write more papers in the future which will increase my knowledge on the topic that I choose to write on. The topics of my essays in class were related to climate change and environment because of which I learned that climate change is a real threat to our world that can wipe out the entire living existence on Earth. I also learned about the individual responsibility to protect the environment we live in. This class has increased my writing skills and made me able to write a strong and persuasive paper which I can use to aware people about climate change and its disastrous effects on the planet. I am leaving this class with many information that will benefit the environment and bring positive change in the future. I would like to sincerely thank you for that. I am now a part of something bigger than me, and I’ll keep working towards it to make the world a better place to live in.

Thank you for your time and attention to my work.

Sincerely,

Rohan Maharjan

English Honors Composition Student

700 University Avenue, Monroe, LA, 71209

318-538-9201

Rohan9841@gmail.com

Enclosures