

## **The End: A new start**

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In January, I started my second semester, almost fully online, at the American University in Cairo. I was very eager to earn new experience in my courses, especially RHET and CORE. While I was not happy that I would take my courses online, some professors made it a lot easier using their outstanding presentation skills mixed with getting the advantage of online education by using platforms that facilitate the process. I was hoping to learn as much as possible throughout the semester. I even wrote myself some scheduled emails to have them received at the end of the semester as a checkup for my hopes versus harvest.

By the time midterms came, I was very stressed since I had enrolled in full-time 18 credits this semester. Having three midterms in one day consumed my mentality and made me suffer from continuous stress and anxiety. While I did not perform well in my first midterms, I tried to encourage myself to study for the second wave of midterms. It was hard. However, I could manage to overcome my issues and perform well in the second wave. On the other hand, while the STEM courses consumed me constantly, RHET and CORE courses were the refreshing ones. Most of the CORE assignments included interactive learning rather than stacked information for the exam. Even later in the course, the CORE's "midterm" was one of the most exciting assignments in the semester that allowed me to have fun and learn a lot. I watched a TV show, analyzed it, made an infographic about something I like, and watched interested TED talks. Besides, the RHET course's assignments were fruitful, and the professor's comments were always helpful and allowed me to improve a lot in writing. I was already interested in writing informal blog posts. Learning formal writing made me gain valuable and practical skills that will improve my career.

By the end of the semester, I guess the thing that changed is my perspective regarding academic courses. I decided to seek to learn more than easy grades. Being interested in the learning process is both exciting and beneficial. The courses where I liked the learning process were the ones with the most compelling assignments and the least stress. Now, I am willing to use my newly earned skills in writing to write more formal articles in my blog and carry on the journey of learning.