

Dear Friend,

This course has opened my eyes to writing with a realistic purpose. In previous English courses, research papers were the main form of writing, but as you have stated, they are not used in any other setting besides school. My commentary assignment did involve research, however the process to arrive at certain conclusions, and outcomes is what was uniquely helpful to me in furthering my writing skill.

The four individual parts came together as a whole project very nicely for me at the end. The fact that they were actually split into four assignments helped me realize what was happening as I formulated a writing project. Forcing good habits with brainstorming before drafting and such was the key to my growth as a writer. Not only was I shown the right way to tackle a project, but it was proven to me that this way works. I think I have said in class before, the annotated bibliography was the best intermediate assignment in the project. It allowed me to have something to refer to when writing my final commentary. It was perfect to assign that part mid-way through the course. This four part approach helped correctly shape my thinking as a writer, but the learning was complimented by the research process itself.

These assignments each required thought and research. The research process is actually a bit different than I originally understood it to be. The research process involves learning about the topic and learning how to narrow that topic down to a particular question that you really want answered. The next part of research involves finding out who your audience consists of. The stakeholders of your topic question are the people you want to reach, and to reach them, you must look into what genre would be most effective in doing so. Just as talking face to face with someone, you must figure out how to tell someone something in way that will be received best. I never really thought about genre before this class. Maybe I had bad writing teachers, but whatever the case I realized that before research, during the brainstorming, you must try to get some idea of who you are writing to and how to approach those people particularly. This awareness goes further than just school requirements. In any workplace setting writing project proposals and such are part of the job and being able to write more effectively towards your supervisor can possibly mean the difference between real payoff or “just another day.” Argument comes from research. The argument is the base of writing I have come to learn and it is where outcomes can be drawn from.

The outcomes of this course as listed in the syllabus are, generally speaking, to be able to convey written ideas and research findings, explain writing concepts, and analyze and respond to claims in texts. The final assignment was a fine test of exactly those things. Through research we all had to find other papers about our topics. We had to read and analyze all of those papers and find out which ones paired with our argument and which were against our point of view. Just to do the first part of this project, the research, we had to have a good understanding of argument, claims, and other writing concepts. Being able to convey our synthesized idea in the proper form catered to our stakeholders was the last part of this assignment. This step was made simpler by the previous three assignments, as I have stated before. By focusing on these key outcomes, we have become more realistic writers, compared to those who did research papers all semester.

Thank You for the Rich Experience,

B Student