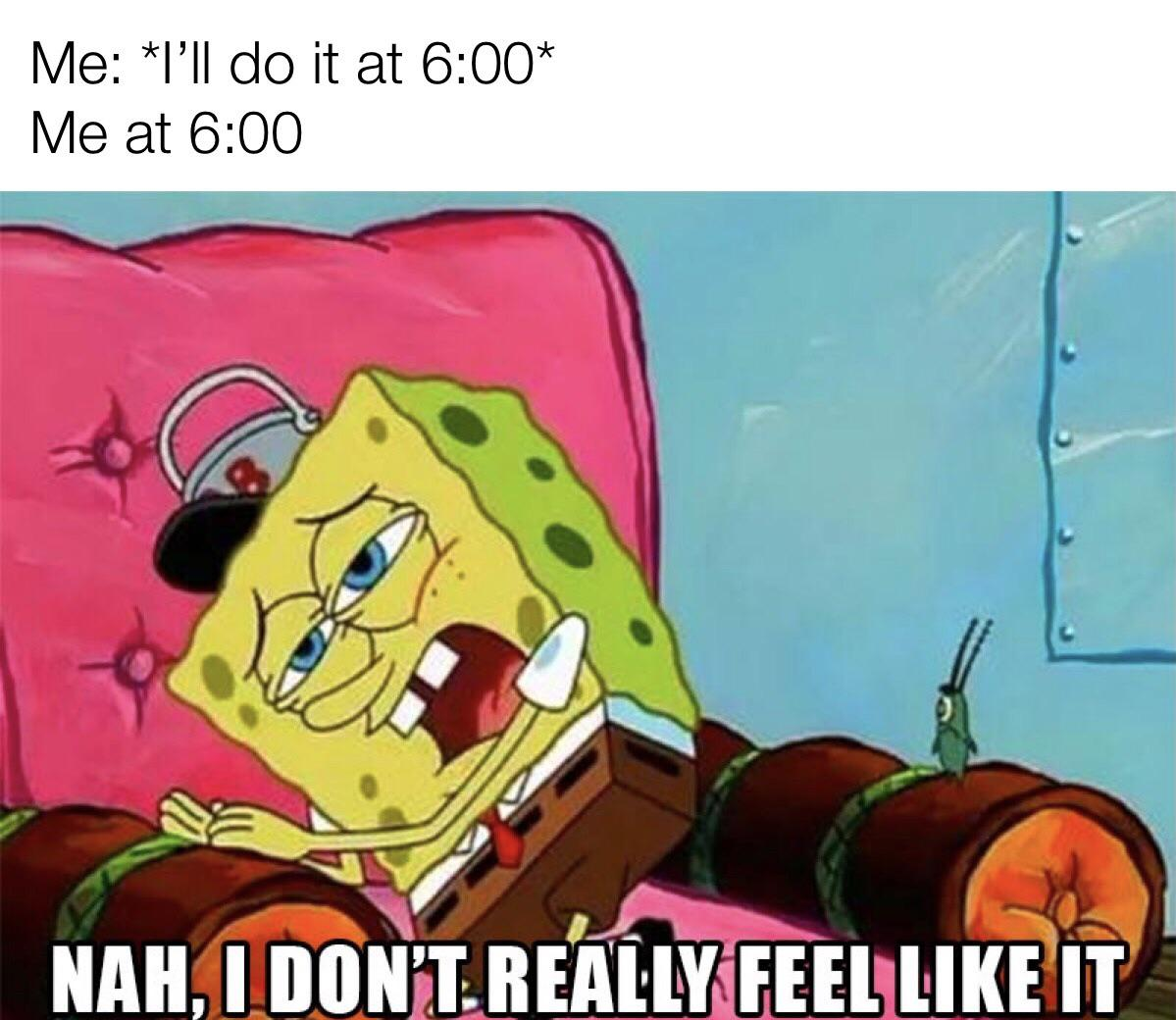
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Multimodal Reflection

This past semester was certainly… something. As I write this, I have just taken two back to back exams starting at 8am and ending at 1pm with less than a full hour of sleep. Needless to say, this semester hit me like a truck. My schedule is abnormally large this semester compared to the course load I’m used to, totaling 19 credits across 6 courses and 1 lab, as I changed my major a year in and have to catch up with my peers, not to mention being a TA. With time conflicts, I never had the chance to take ENGL110 until junior fall, but as they say, better late than never! Unfortunately, due to being asynchronous, as well as having a packed schedule, this course has been on the back burner more often than not throughout this semester. Below are some of my thoughts as yet another semester has come and gone, especially in an asynchronous course, and the habits that may be developed when learning through this style of instruction.

Generally, people act differently online compared to in person. Some people become more confident, others more vile as they can hide behind anonymity, but as one of the other topics of research paper 2 focuses upon, people become more detached. Such is how asynchronous courses feel as well. Without a doubt, asynchronous courses are helpful to some people, be it that the student cannot make it in person, or the format of the course lends itself to remote learning and self pacing, or other attributes that make it desirable to students. However, the work-at-your-own-pace style of many asynchronous courses combined with the online format of learning, without moderation will result in procrastination, a lowered motivation to work, as well as lower quality of work. I would argue in my case that I also had time constraints from my unusually packed schedule, but it is equally valid to say that my lack of personal investment in this course was a result of the asynchronous nature of this specific section of ENGL110. Without a physical lecture, I certainly felt less of an investment in the course, as it doesn’t quite feel like the traditional in-class instruction that I had been familiar with for most of my life so far. The events that transpired between last night and this morning may mark a turning point in my life, as procrastination has finally caught up to me. In the face of an even more daunting semester(8am lecture 5 days a week), I must make changes. That is not to say that all I learned this semester was that I needed to force myself to stay engaged. In Chinese we have the saying of 先苦后甜, which means the bitter comes before the sweet, which is usually a statement saying that you have to first experience the bitterness before you can enjoy the sweet things. And in the interest of never having to take two back to back exams with roughly forty minutes of sleep, I dare say changes are in order. 

Why drop procrastination if I still get the work done in a smaller amount of time? It would be the same as comparing a handcrafted product to a conveyor belt product. Both end up with the same item, but the quality turns out to be much different, as more care will likely be taken to make the handcrafted product, as well as better materials. In short, procrastination sacrifices quality for quantity, but the evaluation of the work will be different between a well thought out piece of writing, and a half-baked one. In terms of dropping the habit of procrastination, I believe a more natural transition will be much more effective, as if it’s too drastic, I may not be able to force myself to be more productive, and may even fall back into complacency. However, if I ease into it, I may develop habits, habits that will allow me to improve my work ethic. Maybe I can set aside a workspace specifically for working, with no distractions in view? Maybe utilize techniques like active recall and Pomodoro? All great things begin with an idea, but it’s up to you where you take it.