**My Writing Progress**

Despite my best efforts to convince myself otherwise, I can’t deny that I absolutely love to write. Long have I tried to empathize with the typical attitude of my fellow students – which is that writing is a boring and arduous process; a loathsome task thrust unfairly upon us by our indifferent teachers to punish us. For a period of time, I had somewhat believed in this illusion. I complained about essays and reports with my friends and discussed various ways to pass the set parameters with minimal effort. We could triple – no, quadruple – space our paragraphs. Or we could use forty-eight point font. Maybe we could insert a lot of pictures with captions.

However, upon attending this class in my first semester at college and away from home, I have been forced to seriously reconsider my stance on writing. At the outset of the class, we were assigned five different writing projects, including this one. When I first heard this, I groaned internally. *Five* essays? I would *never* be able to reach the page requirements, especially on that fourth one. I rolled my eyes when my professor said that we would be hard-pressed to fit our essays into the page limit if we wrote about something we were passionate about. How could writing being enjoyable? Imagine my surprise, then, when I discovered that she was completely right. I chose to write about cartoons for my essays, and found myself having so much to say. The words flowed easily from my mind to the page, and I ran out of room on every paper. Yes, even the fourth one. Because of these essays and the encouragement of my professor, I have realized that writing is an extremely engaging and fulfilling experience, especially if we care deeply about our topic.

The four essays we wrote all helped me vastly improve my writing skills, as well better my understanding and respect of the medium. Each assignment required me to tweak my thinking and attitude. I had to make adjustments in my writing style to fulfill the requirements for each essay. The proposal made me think about how I would propose something in real life. How would I convince someone to even consider my topic, let alone read a length essay on it? Employing strategies such as personal narratives and compare-contrast assisted me in constructing a more eye-catching proposal. The next one, the annotated bibliography, really required turning my method of writing on its head. I was not used to researching a variety of sources and analyzing them so that I could establish their credibility in later essays. It taught me to write more critically, and to not dance around the topic at hand. It also helped learn how to properly format and cite sources. The rhetorical think piece and argumentative essays were both similar in that they were my favorite to write. By that point, I had learned to improve my writing through thorough examination and implementation of various writing strategies, like description, cause and effect, synthesis, and many more. The rhetoric think piece helped remind me that it was important to look at an issue critically, or to examine an argument from all sides so that you could effectively and fairly push your side in the argument. The fourth one was really useful in that in was the culmination of all our writing. It especially taught me how to synthesize, as I took points and methods from my previous papers, information from my sources, and my own personal outlook, and weaved them into a detailed eight-page report.

Looking back, I’d have to regretfully admit that the annotated bibliography was, in my eyes, my weakest effort. I’m sure this was a common response, as I felt it was the most foreign method of writing I had ever encountered. I tried my best, but I was irrefutably confused on how to go about writing an acceptable bibliography. I never was one for annotating; I barely even wrote down notes while taking AP tests in high school, preferring to reason things out in my head. I was also somewhat uncomfortable writing about somebody else’s writing. As I previously implied, I’ve never really had the most critical of eyes. Analyzing sources, deciphering their substance, and deciding whether they were valuable in my argument was something of a head-scratcher when it came to me. I ended up writing a mediocre paper with, in my opinion, some subpar sources and analyzation. I wish I could go back and choose better sources, so that I could be more successfully analyze and interpret them and firmly establish their credibility.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, my best paper ended up being the fourth paper. The biggest page limit allowed me to indulge in crafting longer and more complex sentences and arguments. In other words, I was given the opportunity to ramble about animation and cartoons. I had so much fun utilizing all my newfound abilities and strategies to compose a through paper that I could be proud of. I was able to take the best parts of all my previous papers and stitch them together into a composition that I think showcased my strengths and abilities, as well as effectively established my argument and passion for cartoons.

I am, of course, grateful to my peers and teachers. For my worst and my best papers, and everything in between, would have been significantly lower in quality if not for their input. The peer reviews helped me to spot mistakes and redundancies in my initial drafts. Thanks to my tendency to write long and elaborate sentences, I often made grammatical mistakes, or repeated myself because I forgot what I was writing as I finished writing it. This helped me especially on the rhetorical think piece and my proposal, because my problem was most prominent while I was trying to convince people to side with me when it came to cartoons. My deepest gratitude goes out to those who were willing to compliment me, but were not afraid to confront me about my mistakes, bias, and flaws.

I am not perfect, and though I did make an effort to realize my criticisms and fixed them, I can’t help but gravitate towards writing that ebbs and flows, trickling down the mountainside, picking up new meanings and words that increase the strength of the sentence as it runs down the earth into an unstoppable, roaring river. This is why I liked the fourth essay the most; it allowed me to indulge myself. I was able to employ my favorite strategies, like description and problem-solution. I dislike writing that isn’t passionate, which is why WP2 was my least favorite. I was forced to be overtly critical, distancing myself from my writing as I used analysis and classification to study my sources.

Despite my likes and dislikes, I am determined to improve myself in all aspects of writing. I want to be able to write a convincing argument, or an enticing proposal, or even a critical bibliography. I want to continue to write for as long as I have the will to. Writing these essays has blossomed a desire to try my hand at other forms of writing. I find myself writing poems and short stories in my free time. I am now motivated, of my own volition, to create many more literary works. I also hope that I will be able to take what I learned here with me throughout my college experience and beyond, as I will undoubtedly be writing much more in the future.

I am glad for all this class has given me. It has taught me that it is important to utilize all types of writing methods when I want to compose a noteworthy piece. When participating in an argumentative essay, I must look at the issue from many differing perspectives so that I can successfully acknowledge and address the topic. This will also help me create a more convincing argument. I have learned that it is important to step outside your comfort zone. That means writing different types of essays, and forsaking your pride so that others may help you better your paper and your writing abilities. Most of all, I am grateful that this class has helped me realize that writing is fun when you put your passion on the paper. That is something I will remember forever.