

Throughout my time in this AIQ Seminar (The Art of the Graphic Memoir), I have noticed that I have substantially improved my own understanding and analysis of texts, particularly in the area of Graphic Memoirs as that was the focus of this course. Specifically, I have learned multiple ways that authors utilize color, framing, text, detail, and especially synthesis between mediums to create a deep work.

In my first close reading essay of this class, and my first close reading essay of all time, although I wish I could have done better, I believe that the process that took me to what I submitted was a substantial journey. I learned how to use a common line of reasoning as well as signposting in order to create a more clearly laid out essay. In the first sentence of my third last paragraph I say "Bui herself still has not come to a complete understanding of the situation at hand", clearly stating at which point in my reasoning I am at and offering a piece of context for the rest of the paragraph as well as a place to integrate back into the main theme of the essay. Before I made this revision I have gotten feedback that it was hard to follow what point I was trying to make throughout the essay. In the same essay, I also observed that the evolution of my thesis was significantly greater than I expected it to be. Going in to writing the essay I thought I had a solid idea I was trying to convey in my essay, but the more I wrote the essay, the more I realized I needed to clarify and both condense and elaborate in my thesis. In the end I settled on a thesis distributed across the introductory paragraph, which I believe was descriptive and informative enough to jump you into my essay.

In the second essay of this class I focused more on comparisons and parallels. In this essay I still utilized more signposting than I am used to — once again to signify changes in my essay and to offer some background information when abruptly switching topics. In this essay, I opted to attempt to tell both author's stories at the same time to draw on strong similarities

between the two as well as their stark differences. Although I don't believe I managed to achieve this very well, it was a novel experience for me and I believe that even in its weakness it does manage to offer some unique insight on the comparison of the two authors and their works. This essay has taught me to more clearly outline my thoughts and ideas before putting them into words and paragraphs. Although it does logically make sense — according to my reviewers — I would have preferred if I came to its final organization earlier in the revision cycle to ease my own development of the essay. I have learned to not only outline main ideas and points — like I have before this essay — but to also specifically plan the structure of the final product.

Lastly, in my final comic strip for this course, I created a short story of my trip to an underdeveloped town of Malaysia — Pahlawan, Perak. Initially, I had big dreams for this project, full color, fully detailed, multiple panning shots and a smooth and detailed story line, but as I slowly progressed through the creation of the topic I slowly came to the realization that what I have written for the comic would not be able to fit both the time frame and space constraints of the project. I both overestimated how much time was available for the project and underestimated the amount of time it would take me to create the comic.

As a 3D artist by job, I normally have 2 weeks to create a single group of textured assets before handing it off the the rest of the team to take further, but in this case there was roughly the same time to create the entire project. Although I did not learn much linguistically from this project, other than to once again more clearly plan out the exact structure of the comic before beginning the process of creation, I learned a lot more about the creation of art as an expressive piece and not of art as a job. Ultimately, I had to cut down the story line of the project as well as reduce the number of frames I planned to make as creating entire scenes for one frame was unrealistic for this project. When I completed what I felt satisfied with on a basic level, I once

again wish that I had planned more thoroughly in the beginning as to not end up with a rushed product in the end.

In the end, I believe my writing has strongly improved in the area of analysis. As most of what we have done this semester was analysis and not creative work — except the final project — the additional practice I got for both longer and deeper works has allowed me to strengthen my own understandings of deeper texts. These newfound skills in analysis, composition, and planning would be supremely important later in both my professional career as well as personal life. In the academic context, I have learned how to more effectively communicate the ideas I would like to get across as well as how to keep them thoroughly organized and concise — something I initially struggled with at the beginning of this course, but something I feel like I have improved since then. Personally, I have strengthened my belief that time management and allocation is essential for any time sensitive work, as I have harshly learned throughout this semester. Professionally, concise communication is key and my long hours spend revising multiple theses should help my own formulation of ideas, allowing me to communicate better in the professional world.

Back in the context of academia, stronger analysis and composition would aid me especially in reports as I am a STEM and not an arts major. Although deeper analysis of texts would not be as essential in my own academic career as would it be for an arts major, deeper understanding of comparisons and analysis of people would still be significantly useful in general. The process I have refined surrounding a detailed outline would still be applicable to other academic subjects as well — as it is mainly an organizational skill that I have neglected to notice the importance of in my other areas of academia due to their relative ease to me.

Personally, better time management could never go wrong. Especially in my final project, I learned to set realistic goals and progress markers. Additionally, learning to reassess earlier in the cycle would also be a strong benefit when incorrectly estimating the initial time allocation. I am glad I managed to realize that the project would overshoot by far, but recognizing that earlier is something I will implement in my day-to-day life moving forward.

I believe I have made significant progress towards the goals that this course has set out. In the syllabus, it states that the goals are for students to be able to "think critically and deliberate ethically about difference in values and assumptions". I find that I have progressed in this manner especially with my second essay on the comparisons of different ideas and in my final project in my own personal experience in an environment that is strictly foreign to one that I am familiar to. The syllabus elaborates on that point, expanding it to think about "the way that systems privilege some perspectives and present barriers to others", which I hope was evidently expressed in my final project as well. The syllabus also includes the incorporation of secondary sources into works, which is something I am fairly used to in my prior works. Although I don't believe I have grown much in this area, it is not the fault of the class, but more on my already matured prior experience in this area. Finding fitting scholarly sources for different types of essays was still good practice to me however.

Finally, I believe the last goal of the syllabus of effective communication is one that I have grown in the most out of the others I have listed here. Ironically, a significant portion of the time I spent writing essays was spent revising theses to the satisfaction of the professors. This cyclical revision process has taught me a lot on how to be concise, yet expressive, which is not only an important skill to have in writing, but in communication in general.