Reflective Essay

A reflective essay about my contribution to the final project and my personal development throughout this class.

Rubric of the Essay -

* a link to your final project and
* at least one embedded image of an element of the project you contributed.

Your task in writing this paper is not to tell me everything which you discovered in your research; that is what the assignments themselves were for! Rather, think of this as an opportunity for you to explain the various elements of your individual contributions to the final project, and to put those contributions into the broader context of your personal development as a writer, critical thinker, and student at Carleton College this term.

As I read your work, I will be looking for:

* Honest reflection on your work: what you think you did well and what could have been different.
* Specific references to your improved understanding and use of resources, methods, and tools available to students at Carleton (whether digital or print-based).
* A sense of what you learned about your own research and writing process and style while working on assignments this term.
* Strong internal organisation of your writing.
* Clear, error-free prose which reflects careful editing and thoughtful revision of the overall piece.

Outline:

Final Project - (Two Pages)

- The content and purpose of our final project

- What my contribution was to the final project

- Putting the final project in the context of my personal development

Other Assignments- (Two Pages)

-Personal Development when writing paper 1

-Personal Development when writing paper 2

Our task for the Final Project was to critically analyze the Saga of Hrafnkel and absorb as much information as we can about the mobility and transition of the different characters involved in the writing. The goal is to create an interactive digital map tracking the movements of the characters across different timelines. Each movement was arranged in relative chronology creating a timeline-based narrative. Nodes were provided with a brief description of the corresponding location. Lines representing the routes were color-coded based on the person making the journey and the specific timeline of the movement. Digital maps, such as this, provide viewers coherent and comprehensive information on mobilities and migrations embodied in historical texts such as the Saga of Hrafnkel.

My particular role during the development of our project was mapping and analyzing Hrafnkel’s Journey in the Saga. Arguably, Hrafnkel is the principal character in this particular Saga. An abundant portion of the storyline in the Saga branches off from Hrafnkel’s actions. This entails that getting an accurate interpretation of the spatial information provided for Hrafnkel was necessary. I first created a sheet that included all the locations and paths Hrafnkel took in the Saga. Additional text analysis was needed to obtain detailed information about the possible routes, distances, relative timelines, and nature of the movement. All the spatial data I gathered was added to the sheet. Some of the raw data contained in the sheet(especially Coordinates) needed parsing before embedding it in our digital map. I, of course, had to wait for one of my project partners to do the coordinate translation. I first mapped each of Hrafnkel’s locations as points by corroborating it with the Icelandic Saga Map. A link representing routes taken by Hranfnkel was then added in accordance with the storyline. I then color-coded the routes taken by Hrafnkel for identification purposes.

This was my first experience in Digital Arts research. This was actually easier than I had previously anticipated. This may be due to the fact that most of the resources needed for the completion of the project were readily available. Resources such as Neatline were wonderful to work with as it was easy to manipulate the elements of our map and navigate through it. The Icelandic Saga Map was an excellent resource as well. It provided us with crucial information that would’ve taken a considerably longer amount of time to obtain had we taken another route. This was a type of project where finding and utilizing the right resources were more important than the traditional hardcore researching method. It was illuminating for me to see how undertaking a task can be manageable once you find the right tools and resources.

Personally, the two papers prior to our final project were the challenging aspects of this course. In all honesty, I had never written a history paper before. It was a hard but necessary process to go through. The biggest puzzle for me was trying to resolve what the assignments needed. It was one of my biggest drawbacks. In some instances, I completely misinterpreted the instruction and wrote an unbalanced essay that lacked important rubrics. I definitely felt like I could’ve done better on these two papers. I hadn’t put as much effort into it as I should have. The peer review we had for the first assignment helped tremendously. Combined with the writing assistant’s advice, it gave me perspective on what I needed to do. I will surely increase my utilization of these two resources for future writings.

Overally, this course has been a good introduction to the liberal arts culture in Carleton. It gave me an outlook on what to expect for the next 4 years interms of rigor and availability of resources.