

Composition I Course & Portfolio Self-Evaluation: Reflective Cover Letter

1. Before this course, what were my initial attitudes, feelings/or ideas about my writing, and why?: I've anticipated that this course would prepare me to develop an argument when writing Argumentative Essays, since I am expected to focus on a narrow topic for my paper. This course surprised me due to the fact that I expected to be required to choose to write an analysis of a particular character from a specific novel—rather than be asked to write self-portrait essays about ourselves. In addition, I expected that in this class, it would be necessary to support your arguments with evidence and examples from scholarly articles, using in-text citations and parentheticals. What I also correctly anticipated for this course was that students would be given opportunities for paper revisions. I thought that this would be a common thing in college, and that in the process of revising our papers, not only will we see improvements in our writing skills, but our reading and analytical skills as well. One of the feelings I have about my writing this semester is that I successfully learned to evaluate my arguments, and I was comfortable in knowing how to identify whether the evidence appropriately supported my claims. Furthermore, I feel like I have achieved understanding whether the paper's I've written, answered all the questions and points the audience might have about my topics.
2. How have I changed my process, from brainstorming, outlining, drafting, to revising, and editing, because of this course?: To begin, due to this course, the way I've composed research essays has changed. As a freshman, thanks to this English 160-10 composition course, I've gained more skills and knowledge through learning the appropriate ways to revise my papers. For example, by closely dissecting and interpreting specific information from online articles, I've learned the significance of correctly citing certain examples. Since citing specific examples lends support to most of the statements and points I've made in my Argumentative Essays, doing it correctly is something that this English course has taught me well. For instance, when I want to point out sections of an article that directly contribute to the claims I've made in my essay, the guidelines I must follow have been clearly expressed in this class and during tutoring sessions. I've learned that when making reference to the works of others in my papers, using parenthetical citations is very crucial to the success of my piece of written work. Not only that, but this course also clearly stated how one should go about with in-text citations. I've been taught that the author's last name and page number(s) must be included in the section one is writing in, while also having a clear reference to the works cited page, at the end of the essay. Overall, with all the skills I've learned about how to properly cite, my method of

revising has become more easier and concise, because now I have a more to the point understanding of what needs to be fixed and left out of an essay.

3. What aspects of my main course assignments do I feel were most successful? Consider *at least 2* of the following areas: Throughout this class, of the many course assignments that we've had, one of my strengths involved being able to successfully utilize MLA formatting along with the proper usage of grammar while writing. This semester I've learned that whatever message, word or phrase I intend to provide in my writing, has to first and foremost be included on the left hand margin—and be comparable to the entry on the works cited page. Aside from being able to successfully utilize the MLA format, I've also seen improvements on my application of ethical citations, and of knowing what's appropriate to research for, in regards to the sources I'll use. Thanks to English 160-10 composition I, not only have I learned of the importance of giving credit to those whose work I have used, but I am also comfortable in being able to use direct quotes and paraphrase. I feel like without taking this English course, my knowledge of proper research and utilizing sources to get my information would've been very limited.

-Meaning/clarity in reaching my audience and achieving my purpose

-Organization or structure of an entire essay or within a paragraph

-Development/description/detailed evidence and explanation of examples

-Rhetorical appeals or strategies (repetition, questioning, parallel structure)

-Language use, tone, and audience

-Conventions (specific to genre, MLA format, spelling and grammar)

-Research process and ethical citation

4. What revision would I still like to make in these essays? (Refer to the list above and provide *at least 2 specific examples from this semester*): For starters, I acknowledge that while the essays I've completed in this course had effective, proper organization, and a substantial amount of evidence to support my claims, they were lacking in the department of rhetorical appeals, and in adequately providing explanations of my examples. I feel like in Writing Assignment 1, my usage of analysis and reflection wasn't thorough enough. For instance, not only would this specific essay have been more expository, but I didn't have a strong enough thesis to tie in with the points I have made. Additionally, what I think separates Writing Assignment 1 from Writing Assignment 2, is that I didn't have much in-depth analysis in Writing Assignment 1, therefore resulting in my struggles of explaining and proving my thesis statement.
1. This semester, I had to learn how to create a digital portfolio, and consider my work as public, or shared with a larger audience (beyond just my instructor). I would describe this process as: I would describe this process as mentally arduous, but not difficult either. For me personally, customizing and personalizing my ePortfolio was time consuming; however I also have this notion that it could've been easier for me if I spent more time reading the directions on the blackboard of how to build the ePortfolio. In addition, despite my initial incomprehension of how to go about adding material to my ePortfolio, I was relieved to find out that when submitting my assignments there, it was not necessary to correct any formatting because students were allowed to just upload files of their assignments instead. To sum it up, I feel like this saved a lot of time and energy, making my experience in crafting an ePortfolio a whole lot better.

The online medium changed my writing process or consideration of my work in the following ways:

6. Do I now feel prepared to go onto ENG170/Writing & Rhetoric and write clear, academic argument and analysis-based research essays? Why?: At this point in my academic career, my ability to construct an organized and thoughtful thesis by-way-of closely related points, is much more refined and developed, when compared to the first week of classes when I was just getting started. If I am able to successfully support the points in my essay through reasoning and evidence, then I am confident I have a strong foundation to start on when I move into English 170/Writing & Rhetoric. Furthermore, as a writer, I am much more self-assured that I can formulate an academic essay, even if it has to exceed five paragraphs. In addition, my reliance on using in-text citations and parentheticals has increased, and that is a good thing when considering how far I've come. In my essays for English 160-10 Composition I, the vocabulary I've used was more sophisticated and advanced. Additionally, most of my wording and sentence structure did a great job in supporting my thesis, arguments, and points. In conclusion, I think that if I am able to utilize a coherent set of ideas into my essays and other writing assignments, then I am ready enough for the next level.
1. After completing this course, how has my attitude toward writing changed? Do I feel prepared for college-level or professional writing? Explain: My attitude toward writing has changed in that I've understood more about structuring my essays. Before, I didn't really understand the importance of developing a thesis, but now after completing this course, I feel like I know why this is so significant. For starters, before I thought that an effective thesis can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no", however I know now that it isn't the case. Furthermore, while I did write and compose thesis statements in highschool, I am more inclined to feel that at the college level the purpose of a thesis is made more clearer. As a student now, I am of the knowledge that a strong thesis has two parts. This includes what I plan to argue, and where the particular support for my claim is going. Overall, now that I have a clearer sense of what a thesis should be in academic writing, I have more confidence about being prepared for professional writing.
2. How have I taken writing strategies, concepts, and practices from this course and applied them to other classes or writing situations? How will I continue to do this in the future?: To begin with, I've applied more consistent and correct usage of in-text citations and parentheticals, then before the semester began. In addition, I intend to take the tools I've learned such as using examples from scholarly articles and books, making use of ethical citations, and being able to end essays using strong conclusions. While my grammar and word usage was already strong before taking this course, I feel like due to the fact that we as students have been more exposed to academic related essay assignments, my implementation of refined language has accelerated to new heights. Additionally,

concepts such as knowing how to implement a works cited page, and including proper citations, have taken me further as a writer than I honestly expected. This course for me, will really prepare me for more sophisticated writing down the road, and I am grateful I have been shown a higher standard of academia.