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English 101-015

Dr. Cooke

Reflection Letter

Dear Portfolio Assessment Committee:

Through this semester’s study in English101: The Personal is Public, my writing has improved gradually with the accomplishment of each composition and reading assignment. The featured accomplished of my improvement includes the application of Known-New-Chain through idea development from different genres of contexts and the connection with audience by summarizing the information from primary and secondary sources.

Starting from the very beginning of this semester, we’ve been practicing writing in multiple styles and genres. On August 29th, we created a step-by-step instruction to access blackboard as in-class writing. And later on, we handed in a proposal including introduction, statement of purpose, objective, plan of action, and annotated bibliography, followed by a curated exhibit using primary resources and a first-person narrative essay to review our own exhibit. After spent fair amount of time on each one of the assignment to meet the requirements and contents in the rubrics, I achieved the ability to compose texts in all these multiple genres, using multiple modes with attention to rhetorical situations.

Lillian Hellman’s *The Little Foxes* is the literature work I had most of my assignments focused on. One of the most memorable failures I’ve had during this term was the proposal, which I spent a lot of time on but only got a D on. I sat down with professor Cooke to discuss how I could improve from there. Realizing my analysis was lack of strong logic, and did not connect to my audience well that I jumped back and forth between non-related topics in paragraphs, made my writing hard to follow in proposal, I pay extra attention to editing my curated exhibit. The first thing I did was clarify my theme. And by sending my work to Professor Cooke before turning it in along the process of creating exhibit to get feedbacks, as well as participating in several peer review sessions to exchange comments with my classmates, I developed multiple editions of drafts. Also by doing tons of research on the primary resources, including pictures and video clips about the play, that best represent my perspectives and theme of reflecting gender inequality in society from the personalities of the characters in the play, I achieved the learning outcome of practicing writing as a process, recursively implementing strategies of research, drafting, revision, editing, and reflection.

As I put into so much work in my curated exhibit, I received not only return on the grade, but also on the application of writing techniques. Like I presented in my portfolio, I applied both the connection with audience and Known-New-Chain in depth in my curated exhibit. And that’s why I chose it to be the featured artifact of my digital portfolio. After reading large amounts of articles and comments related to The Little Foxes and the major theme it presents, I understand the play from different individual’s perspectives and eventually generate my own. The whole process of creating my theme for the curated exhibit naturally meets the learning outcome of summarizing, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating the ideas of others as I undertook scholarly inquiry in order produce my own arguments. For instance, since the play was created right after the time of the Great Depression, I researched on the historical background of the period. And then analyzed the unfair situation of women in job market and their situation of having to share the role of “bread-winner” as well as taking care of the whole family, which I believed, eventually led to the reason why the characters in the play would have such avaricious personalities. Idea development is put into good use through my entire curated exhibit project, just like the example shown above. And I also sparked the audience’ s interest by starting off to talk about a period in history which everyone knows and the reflects the play to a social problem which a lot of people care about.

The research and use of precious first-hand information and materials of The Little Foxes in my curated exhibit also allows me to achieve locating and integrating archival material into writing and multimodal projects.

For each piece of my writing, I depended a lot on the feedback I got from Professor Cooke and my classmates for modification. Different insights into the problems of my writing, although sometimes might be harsh and frustrating, offered the opportunities for me to be enlightened in how I could have my essays flow better.

In the digital portfolio, I incorporated two excerpts from my narrative essay---another piece of assignment I completed with high quality, in which I generated new ideas from a general theme and information already known to interpret my own thoughts and insights into the exhibit.

Overall, my digital portfolio fully covers the progress I made in English writing in this class and how I have achieved all the learning outcomes. I am proud to be in Professor Cooke’s class to have learned so many useful writing techniques which I can benefit from all my life.