

Mustafah Mohammed

English 1101—Section 352—Professor Weaver

Major Project 5: Reflecting on My College Semester

Email: mmohammed19@student.gsu.edu

1. **Reflecting on My Semester**

Many obstacles littered this semester of English 1101; the hurdles did not reside in the content— but in the mindset and work ethic I needed to develop to succeed in this class. Although there were hardships, I traversed through the murky waters of a college English course well enough to feel I deserve a B as my final grade. I will use past class projects like the Research Presentation, the Student Self-Assessment Essay, and the Patchwriting Project to highlight why. These projects facilitated my growth as a writer, reader, and—most importantly—as a learner. In creating these projects, I read many works that provided insight into my “Grows and Glows” as a scholar and taught me the ethics of being a writer and how to properly conduct tasks such as researching for papers. These projects and readings have also taught me important lessons about myself as a student and writer.

The most important thing I learned about myself as a writer is that, while I often procrastinate, I can deliver in a capacity my instructors consider satisfactory. I must put in the hard work and overcome the anxiety and overconfidence that lead to my procrastination to become a better writer and student.

Overconfidence and anxiety leading to detrimental writing habits are the most impactful things I have learned in this class. As someone who has wasted time when I could be productive for most of my life, I never knew how to tackle this problem for good and take control of my

mind so that it does not wander away from the task at hand. I now know that the issue lies within the internal and psychological part of the writing process.

Having learned and experienced this wisdom, I can humbly say that my class attendance and participation have grown. Initially, I was timid in class, but I eventually began answering questions, participating physically and verbally, and presenting to the entire class. The accumulation of this, my attended meetings, and turned-in projects– along with their satisfactory rubrics– should lead to a final grade of B.

Part 2: Past Creations Reflect Revelations (Examples of and Reflections on Old Work):

2A. 1 excerpt (1-2 pages) of a project (original or revision) that you are proud of **Research Presentation**

“According to Scott Warnock and Joseph Williams,

What Grammar is–

- Grammar regulations can be condensed into **3 rules**:

Authors emphasize contrasts between **Real**, **Social**, and **Invented** Rules.

What Grammar is NOT–

- Grammar is **NOT** the biased notion of how it should be correctly used.
- Grammar is **NOT** how writing is seen by a particular audience

Misconceptions about Grammar

- When people critique grammar, they speak of it as if it something ‘**sacred, official, absolute**’ (Warnock 303)
- Grammar can only be proper and correct in one way

Texting Ruins Students’ Grammar Skills

- Warnock **challenges the link between** digital writing behaviors and other forms of writing like scholastic papers.
- Studies that Scott W. cited showcase the **lack of influence** digital writing has on general literacy.

(Mohammed Slide 3)

Why are they bad ideas?

- Harboring these **bad ideas leads to snuffing** out the innovation of language
- Studies attempting to **correlate digital writing behaviors with grammar issues** often misunderstand language and grammar, as they focus on arbitrary elements like punctuation and spelling that are not entirely indicative of grammatical problems.

(Mohammed Slide 4)

Better Ideas

- There are multiple ways to **interpret how to** convey your ideas and thoughts in a way that is grammatically proper
- There cannot be **one, true** grammatical correctness

(Mohammed Slide 5)

Solutions to these Bad Ideas

- **Reform grammar education**
- Teach individuals to **recognize their own biases** and preferences when evaluating writing

- Integrate digital **writing into education**
- Encourage a **widespread redefinition** of grammar”

(Mohammed Slide 8)

3A. Describe the processes you used effectively in composing the final draft that you believe are worth repeating when you do another project. Consider planning, collaboration with peers, using library resources, revision techniques, editing techniques, and the timing of your drafts. (50-150 words)

I never was a visually artistic person, but when creating a presentation for classes, something unlocks within me. One project I am proud of is Major Project 4. I want to recreate the care I took with this project more often. When the project was assigned, I immediately began laying out what it would look like and brainstorming what I would read. A proverb repeated frequently in class was that you should always panic early.

Panicking beforehand makes it so that when the deadline of an assignment inevitably comes, you have already done the panicking portion of the process, so you do not need to be in a genuine panic due to you having minimal time to complete the task. Panicking early also allows you time afterward to make revisions that significantly improve your work. While producing the project, I used multiple examples from my peers to understand what to do and what NOT to do. One major thing I did that helped me develop this project was repeatedly reading the works on which my presentation was based. It helped me discern what I was trying to persuade and what I was arguing against.

2B. 1 excerpt (1-2 pages) of a revision that you did based on feedback from a peer or from Dr. Weaver **[Student Self-Assessment Essay]**

“As a budding college student, I am always excited to learn about things, especially subject matters that are either esoteric or that I take great interest in. I am what I have labeled a ‘flawed perfectionist’ which means I wish to have everything perfect, however, nothing can be genuinely perfect, and I also do not tap into my dormant potential to reach those heights that I aspire to achieve. My goals as a college student are to achieve new experiences while also rewiring the way I think and operate to maintain a behavior that will allow me to succeed in the real world. I am currently participating in the Georgia State University Dual Enrollment program while also being a student at Charles R. Drew Charter School. My grades in early college will be an addition to my initial grades in high school. Coming out of high school, I wish to go into school to study medicine and, of course, get my medical degree. This goal is a stepping stone to my overall objective which is to become an anesthesiologist. There needs to be work done in terms of my ‘studenting’ and my mentality as a student. To truly know where I need to work, I need to become self-aware by assessing my weaknesses and strengths in the learning environment.

Subsequently, I took a self-assessment to pinpoint the fundamental areas in which I need to better myself while also strengthening the skills that I already excel in. I took the self-assessment from Southern Utah University (www.suu.edu) while answering the survey to the best of my ability- which I’d say is pretty good since the assessment was on myself. The assessment revealed to me that I am adept at taking notes, reading a textbook, and memorizing content. What the assessment also revealed to me is that I need to improve upon my time management strategies, studying habits, and the way I prepare for tests. I always say, ‘By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail,’ an adage originally said by Ben Franklin, yet it seems that,

ironically, I am the one that fails to prepare. Studying is the category I got the lowest score in (15) and my highest score was in taking notes (45) (SUU 1-30). I feel that this has accurately assessed my strengths and problem areas because- although I am great at memorizing content- I am also a habitual procrastinator, I do not study well, and I typically wait until the last second to prepare for a test. While I am intelligent, I let overconfidence affect the achievement of my full potential.”

3B. Compare the ways in which the final version is more effective (or, perhaps, less effective) than your earlier draft. Make sure to consider purpose, audience, argument, evidence, and language conventions, and the specific changes reviewers asked you to make. (50-150 words)

There were many times when I submitted my projects to my peers for them to review and give me feedback. I feel that for some of those reviews– even though they meant no harm– my peers decided to preserve my feelings rather than my writing quality. However, I have received some great feedback from them. My peers have provided me with a third-person view of my paper that I cannot achieve because I am thinking with my own brain.

With this project, I received positive feedback and constructive criticism. Reviewers said they loved to know more about me as a student, which helped me realize what I was doing right in the essay. Constructive criticism instructed me on how to organize and transition between my thoughts so that they made sense to readers who were not me. Following submission, Dr. Weaver told me I should be more specific with my main argument, which I then attempted to apply to my other papers.

2C. 1 excerpt (1-2 pages) of a project you wished you had revised |**Patchwriting Essay**|

“The passage ‘Some People Are Just Born Good Writers,’ by Jill Parrot, from *Bad Ideas About Writing*, discusses the idea of the ‘genius author.’ The passage talks about how the viewpoint of traditional authors has had a detrimental effect on our perception of writing and how it has led to the belief that writing ability is innate and unchangeable. This perspective is especially damaging to writers that are struggling. For example, the text says, ‘...the best authors were believed to have been chosen and directly inspired by God Himself,’ (Parrot 71). In other words, great authors throughout history were believed to have been blessed by the Lord with talents rather than them honing their abilities and training their skills themselves. This belief promotes a fixed mindset.

Once again, people saw writing talent as something innate and unchangeable. If an individual were to struggle with writing- instead of trying again and harder- they would give up and arrive at the conclusion that they simply were not born with the gift of writing...

...writing is not something that is granted to a person intrinsically once they are born, although it may seem as such. Writing is a skill that can be trained and improved with enough challenging work if you are willing to do it.”

3C. Describe the process of composing this process and how you would have changed it, knowing what you now know about writing and your own process. What would you have done differently? Why? Moving forward, what lesson will you take from it? (50-150 words)

Looking back on the patchwriting assignment, I would have restarted and used my old work as an example of what to keep and what not to keep. I would add more evidence, citations, and commentary, as the rubric stated that I lacked in those categories. I wish I had started

revising the assignment earlier because I amended it late and was unable to get it finished before the revision deadline.

This situation is reminiscent of what I did for my first submission. I waited until the last second. Rushing to finish is why I got a subpar rubric. Moving forward, I will use panicking early, revising a lot, and paying attention to instructions to prevent a regret like this from occurring again.

Part 3: Reflecting Glass on the Class (Reflections on the Class):

3D. What class content (such as readings, videos, assessments, presentations links) was most impactful for your learning in this class? Or, which did you enjoy most? Why? (50-100 words)

Class content that was most impactful for my learning in this class was the student examples. I enjoyed it because it showed me how others in my situation handled the work their professor gave them. Sometimes, when I am learning, I feel like the instructor does not understand your difficulties because they obviously are already good at what they are asking you to do. Looking at what other students in my position accomplished helps me better understand the instruction. It motivates me because if they can do the work, I can do the work.

3E. Describe your biggest growth area as a student this semester AND/OR how your relationship to your academic self has developed. (50-100 words)

My biggest growth area as a student must be my confidence. I started the semester in a classroom full of people I did not know, so of course, I was reluctant to answer questions aloud, or do certain things or be in group-oriented activities. Now, I can speak out, present, and many

more things. This newfound confidence is not isolated to my English 1101 class, but all new environments I may encounter in the future.

3F. What studenting or writing area would you like to develop in future semesters? Why?

(50-100 words)

A studenting area I would like to build in future semesters is how often I am on task. I wish to make it so that I procrastinate minimally. I want to see a drastic change in my work ethic and completion in the future. This improvement will lead to less stress in life, better learning, and better grades and achievements.

3G. Describe your writing process before this class and then discuss how it has changed over the semester. (50-100 words)

Before this class, my writing process was attempting to outline the ideas I had not yet developed before I even started writing. I would then try to write an introduction paragraph before I had any body paragraphs to introduce. Now I know that you should collect your ideas and start writing and use your drafts as segways to outlines for your final draft. You must repeatedly revise so you can get your work to the best quality possible and write your introductory paragraph at the end to tie in all your ideas.