Senior Project Final Journal

May 11th, 2023

Whew! Senior Project is almost finished. Time to look back and reflect on the whole thing. In creating this project, I have learned a lot about college life, but also about myself. This has been a rollercoaster of a process. I had good days, bad days, and days that were just so-so. I had to learn myself (the hard way) everything that I'm going to try to teach others through my paper and especially my product. I learned, through the whole process, that it is VITAL to communicate with your professors and other college faculty. If you are having trouble with an assignment, reach out to your instructor promptly and explain the issue. If you must be absent for a day, for any reason, tell your professor immediately. To be truly successful as a college student, communication is key.

I didn't work with my mentor very much. While I did receive some help from Heidi Shwartz and Jen Doyle on various parts of my project, like my paper, product, and this final journal, for the most part I tried to be as independent as possible, as part of the learning process and to prepare myself for college, where I will be expected to be more independent, especially concerning my work. This was difficult, as I haven't had much experience being independent in doing my work. I think that having these regular supports there is the hardest thing I will ever have to let go of.

The paper was possibly the most difficult piece of written work I have ever done. Figuring out what I wanted to write about was the easiest part. Finding sources, and then finding information, was the most difficult. I wasn't even able to put in everything I had wanted to. One of the interviews I had intended to do for the paper didn't record. So, I didn't have all the information I had intended on using. Still, I believe I churned out a good, quality paper.

Creating my product was also incredibly hard, even when I planned the whole thing out beforehand. Like with my paper, finding the right information for my "first-year college student's survival guide & handbook" was anything but easy. And while I knew what sections I wanted it to have, I had more than a little difficulty figuring out exactly what words I wanted to use and what information to put where. For example, I had a little trouble selecting information on accommodations, specifically finding examples of accommodations. Even when I had the information I wanted in my guide, I still wasn't finished. I had multiple edits and additions to make.

One of the things I learned about myself was that I have a huge procrastination problem, and difficulty self-motivating. Taking the Perspectives in Learning course from Landmark College has taught me many strategies to overcome these challenges. For example, chunking, or dividing a big, complicated assignment into smaller, more manageable pieces can help with self-motivation and avoiding procrastination. Part of the reason I sometimes have trouble motivating myself is because an assignment seems too big and complicated. Breaking it up makes it more manageable, and gets me out of the "It's too complicated, so I don't feel like doing it" mindset. This process has been an emotional rollercoaster as well as an academic one. I've had times when I've been frustrated with stubborn technology, angry with myself because I repeated a mistake I should have learned from already, and even times when I honestly just felt like giving up. I have had a few days when I have felt like I've been blindfolded, spun around five times, and released into the Sahara Desert without a map, compass, or any other viable means of navigation. That is to say, days when I felt completely and utterly lost. The hardest (or rather, most stressful) part of this whole project, I think, was taking three college-level courses as a part of it. Having to keep up on Senior Project, college coursework, and high school classwork

felt like an overabundance of weight on my shoulders. I will admit that it has been very

overwhelming. But, somehow or other, I have almost made it through. I feel I am finally

approaching the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel. So, FULL SPEED AHEAD!