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Mrs. Emerson
5115 Hampton Blvd
Norfolk, VA, 23529

Dear Mrs. Emerson,

I assume that everything is great and that you are doing well. This letter is to reflect on this past semester and how it helped me become the writer that I am now. This portfolio is a great representation to display all of my works digitally for my peers and professors to view. This portfolio not only allow others to view me through my writing, but it also allows me to see in the future how far I have come as a writer. Additionally, this portfolio and the writings inside of it is was based on the readings that I have done in the Everyone's an Author book and other educational sites. Moreover, this letter is to summarize the skills that I have learned while being in this class and how they will be useful to me in my other upcoming courses.

For me, this semester has been based on writing and grammar improvement. In about four months so far, I had written papers and challenged myself in a way that I have never done in a whole year of High school. One of the essays that I have never experienced writing was the rhetorical analysis of a documentary that my classmates and I have watched called 13TH. I have never heard of a rhetorical analysis before but after learning that it, in a way, imitates a persuasive essay, which I have learned in High School, with choosing a position on an argument and implementing the three rhetorical elements, ethos, pathos, and logos, I have realized how familiar it would be to me. This assignment, however, requires numerous citations to be credible. As a student majoring in Nursing, one of my lower division general requirements classes is Music 264A. English and Music may be two different subjects, but both classes involve an abundance amount of writing; one of those is called Concert Papers. Those concert papers were very similar to the rhetorical analysis in the sense that they both require factual information from what you have viewed, evidence, and citations to those facts. Fortunately, I have completed my rhetorical analysis before starting my first concert paper, so that experience helped me to correctly write in-text citations as well as my work cited pages. Another experience that relates to what I have learned this semester is choosing my major. I always knew that I wanted to be in the medical field, but I still did not know what major. I was told that Nursing is one of the most challenging programs to get accepted into because of how competitive it is. Despite learning that,

I still chose to major in Nursing because I know that I can achieve it. Likewise, the documentary for my rhetorical analysis, 13TH, was also a challenging topic to write on. Before starting the assignment, my classmates and I had different documentaries to choose from, just like my choice with the college major. After briefly viewing a trailer of each option, knowing that 13TH would be the hardest one to write about, the majority of the class, including me chose it because of the excessive amount of interest we had in it. I also decided to major in Nursing because of my interest and dedication to be in the medical field.

My first writing assignment in English class was a memoir, which I have also never written before. I struggled most with not making it sound like a descriptive story. To be accepted into the nursing program, one of the classes that are required is Sociology 201S, and that class as well, entail writing essays. Assignments such as weekly discussions and reaction responses did not need any citations because of how personal and opinionated they are. Memoirs are very detailed and descriptive, so that assignment opened up rooms for the application of imagery, and adjectives; the practice of writing those weekly discussions and reaction responses aided me in writing my memoir because the criteria of those assignments was to write what I saw, thought, and learned without using online or other sources. I believe that discipline is an essential factor in writing because most people can write, but the difference is knowing and applying the correct format and criteria based on the type of writing that you are doing. A memoir and a rhetorical analysis both include writing, but the difference is what format and diction you are using to successfully write them, and it's the same way with any other type of writing.

At first, I thought that English courses were just a way to get students to write for no reason. I did not clearly understand how they would be beneficial to my other courses or life situations at all. On the contrary, English courses are probably the most useful and practical skill that anyone will learn in their years of being in College. No matter what major you are in, the common denominator for all of them is writing. Almost, if not, all courses in college will involve some type of writing. Other writings that are not assignments, such as emails or applying for a job also require writing, and I believe that this class has helped change my negative perspective on writing into a positive one. One example of how skills from this class can help me in the future is the food review that I have written. One of my goals in life is to start a blog that will incorporate all of my interests. Now that I know the necessary components of a food review, I will be able to write one successfully in my future blog. Other things that were new to me this year that I can use in the future are properly citing words and writing a memoir. Those will not be new to me anymore because of my already acquired skill in them.

There are many things in life that this portfolio and English classes, in general, will be an excellent benefit for. Like I have said before, this digital portfolio is a way for me to look back and show my growth over time. Four years from now, when I am hopefully a senior and already

working in my major, I can review this and see how my writing skills have improved in the span of those 4 years; when I enter the working field as well, I can come back to this as a registered nurse to see how writing has helped me begin the career that I am today. Viewing and understanding how I have upgraded in my skills of writing can help me in fixing my errors and editing my papers in the future because I will be able to compare them to the writings in this digital archive. Not only will the writings help me in the future, but my experience learning how to make a portfolio will benefit me as well. I have made a blog/e-Portfolio in the past, but it was not to the level of professionalism as this. This e-Portfolio is an ideal example of how a portfolio should look like and making another one later will be easier. Making this portfolio help me learn how to edit, customize, and neatly assemble all of my writings in an organized way.

My first semester as a freshman at ODU was easier than I thought because of the determined mindset that I have. Before entering college, I have always heard pessimistic comments on college, and although it definitely has its intricate parts, the overall experience was rewarding and mind-changing on how college actually is. Most people worry about how academically challenging college; however, mine was more on the social aspect of it. Studying and being attentive in class has always been a skill that I possessed, but being social and getting out of my comfort zone has not. Throughout middle school and high school, socializing has always been difficult for me, but in college, it's been ironically harder because of how many people there are. Usually, in a place with more people, there is a high chance of making friends, it has not been the case for me. I have been fortunate enough not to have any financial issues, so that took loads of stress off of me. To solve my social skills issue, I have decided to join the ODU Intercultural relations organization to diversify my surroundings and meet people from diverse backgrounds.

To conclude, I have been exposed to numerous skills that will be exceedingly useful to me in the future. Some people, including me, always dread having to write an essay because of their lack of understanding and practice; however, writing skillfully is done in the same way as any other skill such as riding a bike or driving; it is done through continuous practice and constant editing to improve your writing. Repeating what I have stated before, I have written more this semester than I have in a whole year of high school, and I can show tremendous growth because of how persistently I have done it in such a short period. I am sure that more writings are in the near future, and I am finally ready and will be able to tackle them without any worry. Lastly, I would like to reiterate my gratitude towards everything you have contributed in helping me improve and be confident in my writing.

Sincerely,

Josephine Padaro

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