

## **Final Reflection (75 Points)**

**Due Date: Week 15**

**Assignment Submission: Save as a Word document or PDF.**

**Submitted in Blackboard.**

**The Reflection will also be posted to your e-Portfolio**

### **Reflection Instructions**

For this assignment, please reflect on the Fall 2020 semester, and your experience as a whole. For each question, please provide a paragraph-length response.

#### 1. Transition to College

##### **a. What did you expect college would be like 14 weeks ago?**

- i. 14 weeks ago I expected college to be the next step in my adult life. This step would challenge me academically and allow me to begin some higher-level networking for my future career. I planned on joining the online study groups, acing tests, and staying on track for my career. With all of these things being very important to me, it was sometimes difficult not to stress about them. Through the stress, I forged a new mental toughness that has helped me get over my fear of not being perfect academically. Coming into college I expected to earn A's through minimal studying and just completing the homework based on my previous academic abilities. For my asynchronous classes, I expected to have a lot of communication with my professors as I did in the last few months of my senior year of high school. However, I found that they allowed their students to learn on their own and I enjoyed that. The last and most important thing I expected from college was the lack of busywork that was often assigned in high school. This I am happy to say did not happen with the professors I had this semester.

##### **b. What is something you wish you knew 14 weeks ago?**

- i. I wish I knew how to study 14 weeks ago. I have been in school for over a decade before college and I still did not know the proper way to study. Before this semester the hardest thing I had to study for was the SAT. Every SOL or Critical skills assessment I took I earned great grades with minimal studying. As for college, I feel that I have to sit for hours reading, practicing, and familiarizing myself with new material. All of this is not to say that I wasn't challenged in high school but I do think that the amount of time I need to study has increased tenfold. With the need to study I needed to find what would work best for me as a student. I have found that I study best at night, during the night time I have no obligations to school, work, or family so I can really use that time to learn information that I need for class. During the nighttime, I usually watch a bit of television before bed so I have sacrificed much of that time but that is a part of the time management skills that I have developed. Overall, knowing how to study and the best time to study is something that I definitely wish that I knew before college.

**c. What is a resource or activity you have found helpful this semester?**

- i. The blackboard quiz resource has been the most helpful resource I have utilized this semester. I used it in my CHEM 105 class and it helped with studying to the point that I requested for one of my other professors to offer this tool. In both of the classes that this tool was offered my grades were higher than others as I had a direct line of studying material to use that I could reuse even after it was due. This quiz resource was originally assigned as homework that would allow multiple submissions but it stayed open even after the assignment was due. This one thing helped me study for tests and do my best on homework assignments. For the upcoming exams in these classes I know that I can go back to this same resource to help me study, I also feel the most confident in these classes due to my ability to study this material. To prepare for next semester I have begun to use the app Quizlet more to mimic this resource for my other classes. I plan on continuing this into the spring semester.

**d. What is a resource or activity you have found unhelpful this semester?**

- i. I can't say that I have had a resource that hasn't helped me but I can say that out of all the other things ODU offers Monarch Groups has benefitted me the least. The only reason why is true is the unusual situation the university, along with the country, have been affected by the pandemic in different ways. Monarch groups is a forum where a student can sign up for clubs and join different organizations but the organization festival was online and I know myself and a lot of other students missed out on it. After I missed the zoom with the information for joining the different organizations I didn't do a lot of research on monarch groups to find a club I was interested in. Before the pandemic struck I had all intentions of joining the intramural tennis club but the need for social distancing has caused tennis and other sports to postpone any gatherings until further notice. The change caused by the pandemic along with the normal workload from school has decreased my need to use the Monarch Groups resource that is provided by ODU.

**e. Name something you have learned this semester that will assist you next semester?**

- i. I have learned that studying overtime helps actually retain the information learned instead of sitting for hours at a time to piece together a bunch of information. By studying over time and not sitting for a long time cramming information, I have been able to ease my mind while keeping up with the pace of college-level learning. Studying in increments and switching to different subjects allows me to see what information I am not confident in at a faster pace. The shorter bursts of study time has enabled me to focus more on the material I am learning. Over time it gets hard to keep complete focus for three to four hours and not experience fatigue. With this method, I can study for one to two hours straight, take a break, then review the information to ensure that my study time meant something. I have also been able to be honest with myself studying this way, I am very technology-dependent and it is difficult for me to go hours without checking my text messages or scrolling through social media. Although the hour to two hours consists of very small breaks I find it easier on my mind to be very precise on what I want to do. This method will benefit

me next semester because I will continue to make great progress academically and learn the information that I need to earn my degree. I feel that I actually learn the information necessary to pass the class but more importantly I retain the same information that I will need in my career.

## **2. Study Habits**

### **a. How much time do you spend studying for each class now vs. at the beginning of the semester?**

- i. During the beginning of the semester I spent hours studying improperly and not learning information. I would sit at my desk for almost seven hours stressed, mentally exhausted, and without any feeling of accomplishment. With my new study method, I study less than I did at the beginning of the semester but the studying that happens is more effective. My grades are a reflection of this and I am proud that even though I may not spend the length of time many professors recommend I am doing it more effectively. This is shown clearly in my sociology class, my grades have improved a full letter grade in assignments bringing my course grade up four points. My math class, which is my most challenging subject, still receives about 3 hours of study time every day because I have the most trouble understanding some concepts even though I study well. Chemistry and English receive the least amount of study time as I am constantly applying the things that I have studied through practice exams or writing prompts. My study time for history class also has decreased, as the informative discussion boards require me to read at least three works of writing that gives so much valuable information that is directly connected to the course.

### **b. How have your study habits changed?**

- i. My study habits have changed in a variety of ways and differ from class to class. For English, I tend to spend most of my study time reading the examples the textbook gives on how to write effectively. In the beginning of the semester I just completed the blogs and read the textbook which did not help me improve my writing at all. Changing my method of study has helped me strengthen my ability to be an effective writer and change my style to fit different audiences. This is something that I had trouble with at the beginning of the semester that I have noticeably improved on. My history and chemistry courses are now subjects in which I take various practice quizzes and write specific notes to help retain information. This is different from how I studied at the beginning of the semester as I used to take very long notes that would end up being a replica of the powerpoint notes and not key information that would spark a memory of the other things I have learned in the class. The only class that my study habits have changed the least in is math, all throughout my academic career math has been the most challenging subject for me. I have worked very hard to remedy this by rewatching the lectures, reworking problems that I do not fully understand, and watching videos on similar topics that I have trouble understanding. I have been doing many of these things since the beginning of the semester but the amount of time and effort put into studying has increased tremendously over the semester.

**c. What specific study techniques do you think work best for you? How do these vary from class to class?**

- i. Studying is difficult once you realize what it really means. Doing a large amount of homework in which you have to read and retain information is not studying and it took me until my senior year of highschool to realize this. When I enrolled in ODU I had a very little thought out plan to study as if I was about to take the bar exam. Once classes began I quickly burnt myself out and felt very discouraged about my academic career. Talking to my other peers in the health professions LLC I realized that many of them were doing the same thing but feeling as if nothing was accomplished. This led me to studying more effectively by studying in increments and switching subjects. This unorthodox method keeps my brain engaged in the material I am learning and allows me to memorize what I need to do well in the class. Doing this throughout the course of the semester has allowed me to really retain the information that I need for the final exam. Not only will this help me for exams but the specific time that I study helps me remember the information for longer than what I usually would. With this method I am sure I will carry the things that I have learned well into my career.

**3. Health Professions Learning Community**

**a. This semester you were enrolled in at least SOC 201S, and HLTH 101. Many of you were also enrolled in CHEM 105N and CHEM 106N, and some of you were enrolled in HIST 104H with Professor White.**

- i. **On the surface, these classes do not appear to be connected however this semester each professor was intentional about drawing connections between content, and subjects discussed. Discuss the ways in which these courses are tied together.**

1. Personally, it was very obvious that the courses were connected as soon as classes started. The same timelines discussed in history were shown through the different sociological perspectives studied with professor Lopex. In health professions our assignments always aligned with the course for other classes which sometimes made it easier to understand why we had the amount of work we did. It is well known that students often ask when they will need certain skills being taught in education for their career field and I really enjoyed that the Health Professions LLC showed all of us students how important each one of our classes was to our career field. My favorite connection I noticed this semester was the beginning of the in depth research into the sociological field. During this time period, American societies were growing and changing their opinions which made some academics wonder why. After seeing this connection I would recall that moment whenever Professor White would speak on the events happening in the country. My first thought was always why are these people

acting/thinking this way? Most of my questions were answered through the connection that I could now make to the different sociological perspectives I learned about in sociology.

**b. This semester we provided events (Health Chats) for you to hear from health professionals from ODU.**

**i. Which Health Chat was most beneficial for you as a student, and why?**

1. The most beneficial health chat that I attended was definitely the small presentation and Q&A given by a male resident. Although I can not recall his name, the words he spoke will stick with me forever. The presenter talked about how much studying goes into medical school and how important it is to do something that you believe in although it is hard. The gentleman gave many examples of ways that he boosts his morale in between the long study session and the pressure to succeed and I felt that it was a very real motivation for those in attendance. Most people will automatically tell you that you can do anything you put your mind to but he talked about how important it is to actually have a passion for the work we are planning to do in the healthcare field. Although he is a resident and I have the intention of earning my degree in Environmental health, it was very important to me to be reminded of how important every healthcare professional's mindset is on the job. He talked about how important it is to remember that our work will affect other people's lives, why we all have to work hard to do our best in our studies, and the reality of what we can do if this field is not the right one for us. At the end of the session I felt very inspired and received a much needed reality check of what I want to do in my life.