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Professor Harrison

English 210: Writing for the Social Sciences

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Pulling the Broken Blood Feather

“I do not enjoy writing” is one of several topic sentences in my introductory letter. This statement remains true, however, my attitude towards the writing process began to shift upon entering this class. Writing is hard and takes time and effort. While learning how to be timely I also learned about myself, others and was given many opportunities to exchange ideas in class. Yet, one of the most important things I’ve learned in this class was having a voice.

I developed as a writer in terms of writing more from my heart instead of what I think my professors want from me. One of my main struggles in writing was sounding “smart”. While there is nothing wrong with taking writing seriously, I found I was also hiding my voice. This course showed me how to write what I think and state it proudly. For instance, in my research paper I wrote about the NYCHA and its residents. When reading academic journals I felt a pressure to sound smart. In addition, the essay requirements made me feel as though I could not say what I really feel about the topic. Then, I remembered our class discussion about writing tips from Vonnegut and Gay. When discussing ways in which NYCHA can be more effective, I stated “Understanding that poor infrastructure is detrimental to public health should also be recognized by New York City officials” (Osondu 6). Learning about how public health is handled in the world, especially in the United States, is a topic I am already interested in. Using what I learned from a sociology class to add onto my point that NYCHA residents facing COVID-19 helped me

to analyze inequalities in urban spaces. This did not feel forced as inequality and health are two topics that I can resonate with. I finally became one with my writing.

I also developed in terms of making my writing fluid. “The longest word is three letters long” (Vonnegut 66). If I state something in one sentence, the following sentence should add onto that. It is okay to write long sentences as long as there is a balance and it makes sense. In the past I found myself abusing this. In my literacy narrative I wrote for FIQWS titled “The Bad Reading Level”, I frequently wrote long sentences with little variance in structure:

Although I may have been too young to fully grasp the meaning of “Q” I understood its place in the alphabet. While all of my peers had scored with “T’s” and “U’s”, there were a few who shared similar scores as me. I had also understood that those levels were farther down the alphabet which meant something good. The categorization of people according to their reading level made me feel as though I was in a lower class. From this point on and throughout middle school and high school, I began to grow a deep resentment for my English classes. (Osondu 2)

Although I elaborated on my points, the longer sentences made my writing tiresome to read. Fast forward to my field research study project titled “Far Beyond the Park”, I improved the way my sentences were structured:

It may also be useful to break down how the house, home and outdoors impacts our behaviors. A house is a building or structure that has many parts. Usually they have one or many floors depending on the design. The basic function of a house is to protect someone from the outside world. Whether it may be crime or harsh weather, people feel safe knowing they can retreat inside their house at any time. A home is personalized. When someone calls a place their “home”, it means a space where they can fully express themselves. A home provides an opportunity for vulnerability, as it is considered to be a private place. A house can be a home, however, not all homes are found within a house. (Osondu 7)

By making my sentences vary in length I was able to get my point across while being concise.

One of the texts we read titled “My Life’s Sentences” by Jhumpa Lahiri also opened my eyes to how important the mechanics of sentences are. Before entering this class I used to treat sentences as words fulfilling a certain word count. Now I understand that every word counts as I am too

communicating with myself. Using this strategy helped me stay focused in laying out my thoughts on the page.

Expanding on the idea of “voice”, I found myself participating more in my classes this term as opposed to last term. Entering the online world of college was nerve wracking to me. While some say online learning made them feel comfortable, I felt the opposite. When my professors asked questions I rarely took initiative to answer them. Seconds of silence over hour-long Zoom calls became suffocating. If no one answered the question I tried my best to think of an answer, although I was wrong most of the time. Completely being online was out of our control, however, I felt disconnected from my professors. I also did not have the confidence to ask questions if I did not understand what was being said during the lectures. As of Spring 2022 I began participating more in my classes which had positive outcomes not only on myself, but my relationships. For instance, in my Soc 266: Family Relationships class I received a 20/20 for participation (Figure 1). In my other class called Speech 111 , I received an A- for sitting in front of the classroom and participating when asked to (Figure 2). For English 210, I remember being one of the first, (sometimes the only person) to respond to questions. Instead of worrying what others thought about me, I trusted myself to input my ideas where I best see fit. I saw myself slowly becoming comfortable with talking to people on campus. Writing made me able to verbally express my ideas with less shame. I now realize language is what keeps people together.

Although I began to open my mind on writing, one big issue for me is time management. My introductory letter was the only major assignment turned in on time. My field research study and research paper were both submitted thirty to about an hour after the due date. Managing my time is an issue of mine and I never took the time to balance myself out. I do not have a valid

reason as to why these assignments were late other than laziness, procrastination and overthinking. After completing the draft for my research study essay I began to feel a deep lack of motivation. The topics I was once interested in suddenly did not interest me anymore. I figured “why should I cover this topic when so many others share the same viewpoints as me?” and “what more can I say on this issue”. These thoughts came back to haunt me during every major assignment. The field research project is my favorite assignment in the entire Spring 2022 semester. However, I felt as though my points and logic in my “Commercialization & Demoralization of Basketball” section were not strong enough. This led me to spend extra time than needed in researching and editing my talking points. This backfired as I lost points and did not edit my final research paper to its full potential (Figure 3). Yet, when it comes to shorter assignments, such as the discussion board posts, I manage to submit the majority of them on time. Once again, feelings of insecurity crept into my academic life, stopping me from simply writing. Not taking time to write correlated with my average edits on my final submissions.

I did not expect my relationship with writing to grow in the Spring 2022 semester. Being on this journey taught me many things such as using writing as a voice, sentence structure and understanding writing from a cultural perspective. There are many areas I still need to work on, including time management and overthinking. It is impossible to grow without knowing what needs to be fixed. Refusing to trust my own ideas is what hinders my growth as a student. Nonetheless, I took away many valuable lessons which will remain with me throughout my entire life. One day I hope to look back on my writing as a CCNY graduate and firmly say “that journey was worth it”.

Total		200.00
View Description	Grading Criteria	/200
Final Project	May 14, 2022 1:21 PM	80.00
DUE: MAY 12, 2022	GRADED	/80
Assignment		
View Rubric		
Participation	May 11, 2022 5:12 PM	20.00
	GRADED	/20

Fig. 1

Osondu, Chyenne. Participation Grade in my Sociology 26600: Family Relationships class, Blackboard, 2022.

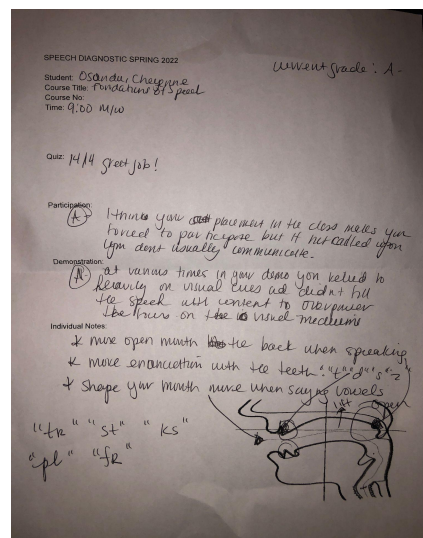


Fig. 2

Osondu, Chyenne. My Estimated Grade in Foundations of Speech, 2022.

Assignment Details	GRADE
LAST GRADED ATTEMPT	95.00 /100
ATTEMPT 2 (LATE)	95.00 /100
4/4/22 12:29 AM	
Submission	
Research Study Essay.pdf	
Assignment Details	GRADE
LAST GRADED ATTEMPT	/100
ATTEMPT 2 (LATE)	/100
5/2/22 1:09 AM	
Submission	
Field Research Study.pdf	

Fig. 3

Osondu, Chyenne. Late Attempts on my Final Essays, Blackboard, 2022.

Works Cited

Fig. 1. Osondu, Chyenne. Participation Grade in my Sociology 26600: Family Relationships class, Blackboard, 2022.

Fig. 3. Osondu, Chyenne. Late Attempts on my Final Essays, Blackboard, 2022.

Fig. 2. Osondu, Chyenne. My Estimated Grade in Foundations of Speech, 2022.

Osondu, Chyenne. "Far Beyond the Park", 2022. p. 7.

Osondu, Chyenne. "Reconstructing the Affordable Housing Plan", 2022. p. 6.

Osondu, Chyenne. "The Bad Reading Level", 2021. p. 2.

Vonnegut, Kurt. "How to write with style", *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, vol. PC-24, no. 2, n.d, <https://www.kmh-lanl.hansonhub.com/pc-24-66-vonnegut.pdf>.