

All The Stops of Spring
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Final portfolio / Chap book
Eng 1141 Creative writing



Final reflection

Before this class, the last English type class I took was an English composition II last spring. I think academic writing is different from personal / creative writing. Academic writing is geared more towards research and development as where creative writing is more about creativity and exploration. In academic writing I would have to write about the material I learned throughout the semester. This class is however different, I am creating stories and characters based on anything my imagination can dream of.

With this class I am more freely able to explore ideas and topics that I would personally like to write about. I have the creative freedom to write about meeting cats in the woods, a poem about life experience, and a dialogue of an argument about badly playing a first person shooter game all in one class. I will admit that sometimes it was hard to think of ideas or topics I wanted to pursue. Another struggle I faced was actually being happy and confident in the work I produced. Sometimes when I was writing and editing I found myself thinking about if people would enjoy my work. Having creative freedom I think gives us more vulnerability with our works. Even with a limited audience it can leave any writer nervous.

The assignments were overall varied with a bit of everything, I think we spent a lot of time on stories which I liked. In comparison the others felt a bit short but I think stories and works like that are the most popular medium to work with. We use stories on a daily basis, from when we talk about our day to when we read and watch shows and movies. I think they do deserve the time they were given because of how common they actually are.

I think my favorite assignment this semester was a mini one. The one where we looked at a picture and just wrote what we thought was happening in the photo. The saying goes that every picture is worth 1,000 words. It also was interesting because everyone has a different point of view. When two students get the same picture their stories can be completely different from one another. I enjoyed writing about the picture I received, I also thought the art style was really cool.

As a reader I think I have also grown. It's important to always have questions about something. Being able to help give my classmates confidence and constructive comments and questions was nice. It's always a positive to hear that some people enjoy the work that you put so much effort into, but it's also important to give ideas, make suggestions, or just have general questions so they are able to produce something even better than it was before. It is also interesting to read the before and after to see what they ended up changing and how it added to the overall work.

Being the writer getting the feedback was a cool experience. It was interesting to see how others viewed the work that I created. Since everyone has a different point of view there were thoughts, questions, and ideas that I never even crossed my mind when writing. Even though sometimes my nerves would get a hold of me it was nice that I would get feedback on work that I was submitting. There were positive things as well as questions about the work or how it was created. The questions helped me improve my assignment a bit because it showed if something was unclear or confusing.

When first starting this semester I will admit I felt a bit rusty when writing something that was personal that had to have some sort of depth to it. Take for example at the start the first story we were writing. Honestly I didn't like how it came out, I didn't know what to write about. I was trying to use an event from personal experience like the prompt directed but I just think it didn't work very well for me. As we moved on to the second story I found that writing something purely fictional was something I enjoyed a lot more. I took the experience of writing the first story and learned from it. I am much happier with the product that is story two. I think I found my footing after the second try, I started to really think and get inspired about what I wanted to write about for my future works.

During the poem assignment I thought I would go back to something that I wrote a while ago. I decided to change and edit it to fit what we had to do. I was going back to the way I felt really getting into those thoughts, ideas and feelings. I was happy with the results it created and maybe will try it again in the future. I did have a bit of trouble with the dialogue because nothing very interesting has been going on recently. After a bit of searching I was able to find a few conversations that were suitable for the dialogue assignment that had a range of different emotions showing through.

I think this final portfolio assignment is a good chance to take a look at the best of each assignment and make it better. I am going to take the opportunity to use what I have learned in class and from my cohort's feedback to improve the work that I have submitted throughout this semester. It's good to wait a bit then go back so now I can look at my work with a clear head and a fresh set of eyes. This semester has made me really think about the types of topics I like to write about and how I have improved my writing skills from the beginning of February to the end of May.

Memoir

One of my most significant friendships up to date has stemmed from a connection from another person. The story begins with a girl in my math class my freshman year of high school. Her name was Anna, Anna and I lived near each other and would often walk to school together. We had the same lunch period as well so I would see her 3 different times during the school day. Soon after we met she introduced me to her friend Jade. Recently Jade confessed that she didn't like me at first but once she got to know me she warmed up a bit. The classic "I didn't think I would like you" is the base of any great long standing friendship. It's hard to believe that one encounter with someone could really change the course of your life.

Over the past 6 years we have done it all together. Our time has been filled with studying, games, movies, artwork, holidays, and just walking around with no real destination in mind. She is still one of my closest friends today. It's hard to believe how far we have come from just those freshman in high school to being in our sophomore year of college. I think my experience in school would have been very different if I had not become friends with Jade. It would not have been filled with bright moments, terrible puns, weird jokes, pizza times, or after school adventures. Our friendship is very important to me and I would not change it for the world.

Short story

As I walked out of my first class, I knew that I didn't have it in me to go to my next one. I didn't even bother debating or trying to guilt myself into going. I walked off campus and into the parking lot. I opened my car door and got in, Turning the key in the ignition to bring the truck to life. I was driving until I couldn't anymore. All I could think about was today's events. The car felt so suffocating I had to stop to get some fresh air. I decided to pull over on the side of the road, taking my bag and the quilt I kept in the back of my truck. I walked into the trees of the forest. Before I knew it, not too far in there was a clearing that was right off the cliff side with the most amazing view. Setting down my quilt and bag I laid down, my eyes facing the sky. Even looking at the clouds couldn't get me out of my own head. It felt like I was my own worst enemy. The warm sunlight peeked through the tops of the trees. I slowly exhaled the deep breath I took.

I covered my eyes for a minute to block out the blinding light of the sun. I tried to calm my racing heart and mind but I couldn't. I wanted to try to focus on the world around me in hopes it could be a distraction. The birds chirp as they sing their songs flying through the air, the squirrels

russling when they jump from tree to tree, the firm soil beneath the quilt, the warm breeze that engulfs my entire body.

I heard a small bell that was out of place. I sat up to see a fluffy orange house cat walk towards me, his piercing gaze was staring into my soul. The cat plopped down next me while purring. The collar on the cat was light blue with a tag that said “Mr. Mittens” on one side and on the other said “not lost, just traveling”. I decided to pet the overly friendly cat who rolled over. He was enjoying the sunlight and the attention he was receiving.

Looking at Mr. Mittens “Do you mind if I tell you about my problems, but promise it will be a secret between us”. In response I got a “meow” from the fluffy little creature beside me. “Alright here I go” taking a deep breath as I smelled the scent of pine coming from the trees. “Every time I take one step forward I end up taking two steps back” I let out a sigh “I’m not trying to be perfect but just trying to find some solid ground to stand on here”. I look up at a cloud blocking out the once bright light.

I continued “today everything has been going wrong. Aren’t Fridays supposed to be good days?” As I said all of my grievances of the day the sun started to shine from behind the clouds once more. Mr. Mittens gave another small “meow”. “Thank you for just listening and keeping me company. I think talking about it has helped me a little” I gave him some scratches behind the ears which he looked to be enjoying. The cat let out a small yawn, and decided to take a nap. I laid back down and shut my eyes for a second. When I opened them I looked around and Mr. Mittens was gone. “I guess you had to be on your way, good luck on your travels, Hopefully we will one day meet again”. As I look up at the slow moving clouds I think to myself “Maybe tomorrow will hold better things”.

Poem

My words draw blankly
to this page for I know
Now the words to convey
With a heavy heart I speak the truth
Praying it doesn't forever hurt you

It's a sad sorrow I must say goodbye
Our life is proof that our love did not die
but will live on till the end of all time

I'm so sorry for the trouble I caused
These words are hard
cause with every word
my heart breaks a little more
till the last string falls

Though this may hurt now
I hope you move on
be happy and free
this is the last gift from you to me
this is my will so let it be,
be strong my love and don't come for me
I'm eternally grateful for the love we shared
but in the end it hurt both paired.

Don't be pained your perfect in every way
but in the end I can not stay.
As my heart ache grows
I must leave but know one thing.
I will love you with every breath I take
till the last curtain falls.

Dialogue

(Aurora was in the middle of her online class when she heard the shouting. She could hear her brother from the other room yelling because he's playing an online first person shooter game with his friends. By the sounds he was making she could tell he was losing the game and getting frustrated)

Aurora

Stop the yelling and button mashing, I'm in the middle of class right now

Nathan

No, I'm losing make me good at COD then

Aurora

I'm in class until 8:30 can you please lower your voice or wait to until I'm done to be that loud

Nathan

I don't know what that has to do with me getting good at COD and winning the games

Aurora

Be considerate

Nathan

Be considerate

Journal #5

A significant moment that changed my life was in my junior year of high school. This was a time when I finally accepted the fact that sometimes it's ok to fail and make mistakes. I know no one is perfect and trying to achieve it sounds childish and overrated. There is a difference between what we know and what we believe to be true. I had to finally face the music that if I wanted to improve I had to embrace all my imperfections and mistakes.

Looking back I should have realized sooner there are some failures that are just out of our control. These moments don't define who we are, it's the moments that come after that show who we want to be. I notice that without failure and mistakes we would never grow and change. Most people's mentality is "why fix something that is not broken", so if we only succeeded would that be enough? There would be no true progress made. Just because I have accepted failure as a possibility, doesn't mean I won't put my best into the tasks that I try to accomplish. This moment of my life made me truly see that trying and failing is better than not trying at all.

Journal #10

Dear future student, my name is Christina. I took this creative writing class during the Spring Semester of 2021 when classes were still fully remote due to the Covid-19 pandemic. During this class we had an array of readings and assignments but my favorite by far was a smaller exercise we did. We were given a picture and we had to write the context, background, and the character of what we saw. We just sat down and wrote with no limits or constraints on what we were allowed to write about. In my case it was the opportunity to let my imagination run wild and just write without any restrictions or formats that could hold me back or second guess myself.

Being fully remote can be just as challenging as in person learning. There is a different set of challenges that comes with the territory. I think one of the ways that I was able to manage my

assignments was to write down all the things I had to do for the week and what day they were due on. It really helped because I could manage what had to take priority.

I think this class can be useful in learning to give feedback to others. In this class we were put into small groups of about 4 people and we reviewed the major assignments. We had to write what we liked and any questions we had about their work. Communicating feedback in a positive way is such an important skill to have in real world situations. Overall I enjoyed the class and I think you will too.