

*Interviewer:* All right. Hello. This is xxx here withxxx. It's Friday, April 25th, at 11:05 a.m. The year is 2014, and the semester is winter 2014. xxx, thanks for coming today.

*Interviewee:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewer:* The first question that I'm asking is how would you describe yourself as a writer?

*Interviewee:* I think I use writing to connect with people.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* My favorite type of writing and the writing that I'm best at is things like personal narratives and speech, things like that, things where you're emotionally connecting with people.

*Interviewer:* Mmm.

*Interviewee:* I wouldn't say I'm the best academic writer, but, yeah, I think I am a person that writes to connect with other people, whether it be conveying my own experiences or trying to understand theirs, either way. Usually when I'm writing about personal things, that's when I feel confident, and I think to call myself a writer I guess.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm. How long have you had that kind of an attitude towards writing that it was more personal?

*Interviewee:* I never really thought of myself as a writer until high school when I was on a school paper, and then I started to write articles and I was good, but then when I would write columns or editorials or human interest pieces in high school, those were my favorite to write. Those were the ones that people would come up to me and congratulate me about, and that was how that all started. I think coming into Michigan, I definitely had that identity.

*Interviewer:* Okay. How do you think Michigan has changed that identity at all?

*Interviewee:* That's funny. I just wrote a paper about this.

*Interviewer:* [Laughter].

*Interviewee:* I think that for the "Writer's Evolution" essay.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* I think that in high school I was very good at connecting with people who already knew me if that makes sense. It was a close community. They knew [high school] where I was from. They knew my family. They knew me. I didn't have to work as hard as a writer. I could say a lot of things that weren't that specific, but people would understand them because they knew my background.

Coming to Michigan, it started in academic papers. A lot of the times my GSIs and professors would say, "You can explain more here," or "This could be its own paper," or I would just add in things that I wasn't taking the time to explain. Then, I found that in my personal writing as well, people didn't understand my background, so I was skipping over a lot of things when I was trying to write things like that. I think that Michigan taught me how to continue to write the way that I like for an audience that doesn't know me, which was something I had to learn. I would say that would be the biggest change.

*Interviewer:* Yeah. What are some genres that you wrote in? You were talking about editorials and columns in high school. What was the genres that you wrote in Michigan that allowed you to train with those personal connections?

*Interviewee:* Mostly in [upper division English class], that's a class where you write three personal essays, so—

*Interviewer:* Interesting.

*Interviewee:*— that was a very—I learned a lot in that class. Then, this semester [upper division writing class], that was also a lot of personal writing, [lower division writing class], so mostly through my classes for the minor. It didn't happen right away when I came to school, but junior and senior year I was put in these classes. I was excited because I got to do the type of writing that I loved and that I was good at, but I wasn't getting the same feedback right away that I was used to. It was because I needed to learn how to be more specific.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* My family owns a business in [nearby city], but I was raised in [town], which is a suburb, an affluent suburb, so I have a very—my background has shaped the way that I see a lot of things, but I assume that everyone from home, like I said, understands that. People from here don't know anything about my background and why I see things the way that I do. Things like that. Learning how to get a reader up to speed in a succinct amount of space. Yeah, those essay classes I would say first where I was learning that.

*Interviewer:* Awesome. Is there any other way that you might say that you've grown and changed as a writer here at Michigan?

*Interviewee:* I think it boils down to being specific, and I know I talked about that, but in my academic writing too, learning—I've learned a lot about thinking about an idea and looking at it and then knowing how many pages you can sustain that idea if that makes sense. I've learned not to put a huge statement and then not fully explain. I guess I never realized how much you can write about a simple idea. Before I came into Michigan, I probably thought this type of idea would mean a paragraph, where my professors taught me you can write a whole paper.

I think thoroughly explaining or defending an idea, whether you're writing argumentative or persuasive and giving yourself enough time to fully explore the idea without being longwinded. In my case it wasn't being longwinded; it was the opposite. I wouldn't explain enough. I think learning how to be specific and learning what type of ideas consisting X amount of pages, learning that, struggling—that was hard in the beginning I remember. Yeah, I would say that is the main thing that I think of.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm, great. What are your goals for yourself as a writer at this point?

*Interviewee:* I think to just continue writing things that I care about. I am graduating in a week, and I'm going into—I'm trying to go into human resources type job. I'm not going to be a writer, but like I said, those personal pieces that I liked to write were great, but they were always assigned to me.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* A professor was always asking me to do this. I had to do it for a grade and a reason, and I ended up really liking it, but I don't know if these great pages of writing would've come about had anyone not been asking me to do it for a grade. I think my goal is to—whatever, one, whatever job I'm in, find obviously—it's a talent, so I want to be able to utilize it. I think that I decided not to go into writing because I think that I can do other things with my other skills, and you can always incorporate writing into whatever you're doing. I do think that that's easier said and thought about than done. I think I'm going to try and find ways to incorporate writing into whatever job I'm doing. Then, more importantly, like I

said, that personal writing that isn't necessarily going to be assigned by anyone to try and keep that up in one way or another and continue to write those things because they're things that I care about.

*Interviewer:*Great. You touched on this a little bit, but thinking across your writing experiences, what do you think it means to write well?

*Interviewee:*I think to write well is to have your reader or your audience, whoever it may be, leave your piece of writing without questions or without—I mean, I guess questions isn't the right—hopefully your stuff is thought-provoking—

*Interviewer:*Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:-* but I guess leaving them without confusion or wanting specific questions answered that you didn't give enough time to. I think that goes back to what I was talking about earlier. Yeah, they may not agree with you, but if they can walk away from something and have a full understanding of what you were trying to say, I think that that's writing well. Yeah, I think that when people get good grades on papers and when people—so in academic writing, it's because they fully expressed the idea and hit all points of it. I think in personal writing that's really good writing when you emotionally connect and people understand what you're trying to say. I think it's good writing depends on the experience that the reader has.

*Interviewer:*Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:*I would say.

*Interviewer:*Let's see. You mentioned a couple of upper-level writing courses. Can you go more in depth about the [upper division English] class and any other of the writing classes that you've taken and your experiences in those courses?

*Interviewee:* Sure. I took [upper division writing course] with [instructor]. I'm in [sociology course] with [instructor]. It's a sports class, but it's upper-level writing class, the gateway and capstone for the writing minor.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* I think one of my org studies classes was upper-level writing. I think the [upper division writing course] one is the one that has had the most impact on me.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* I'm sorry; what was the question? Just talk—

*Interviewer:* What were your experiences in those classes?

*Interviewee:* Okay. Yeah, so the class was structured that you wrote three eight to ten page personal essays throughout the semester, and you got workshopped once for one of those three essays. It was a lot of personal writing, but it was also a lot of reading, peer editing, and coming in and workshopping. I really enjoyed that class for that reason. People—the first week, no one was really sure. “Oh, what are we gonna write about,” but people started to write about really real things.

It was a very, very interesting class to be in, and it made me respect a lot of people that I didn't know to hear about what they were going through and what they were writing about. I think [instructor] did a really good job of creating a space where we could all talk about things like that. I think he did a good job structuring the peer editing sessions where they were constructive and they weren't everyone was saying, “Oh, great job.” You got honest feedback, but it

was a safe space where people were also telling you what they liked, and you felt okay bringing big ideas to the table.

I wrote about struggling with depression, which I was just—that's something that I don't talk about with anyone, but I was impressed that [instructor] was able to make a space that I felt comfortable doing that with 20 strangers. I think I learned a lot, like I said, from having to write those there essays and realizing that people didn't know me as well as people from home did, so I had to be more specific about my background for my personal pieces to make sense. Then, also, I learned a lot from reading other people's pieces and the styles and the choices that they made, so it was a great class. I really liked it. Probably one of my favorites at U of M.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm. Do you still make use of what you learned in that class now?

*Interviewee:* Yeah, I think so. I feel bad I keep talking about it, but that was the class that the learning to write for a specific audience I learned in that class, and I carry that with me. I think it's one of the biggest growth things that I've had, and I definitely carry that with me still. I think giving constructive feedback too; that was something that—framing something where you're not offending someone, and you are praising them for the things that you liked while also giving suggestions without coming off as rude or like you know best.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* We had to do a lot of that too, so I think that those are the two main things I took away from that class that I still use.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm, great. Let's see. What other writing courses have you taken, and how have those affected your writing?

*Interviewee:* The capstone course that I just finished up, we had to create a portfolio of past writing and also this capstone project where we were told to use what we've learned in the writing minor to explore something that has to do with our major. My major is organizational studies, so I did a small business case study, and a lot of writing was involved in that. That was a good class.

I learned from the writing minor, both the gateway and the capstone, how to think about writing and writing through different mediums and if you do a video with a voiceover, that's still writing. You have to write that script, so thinking about presenting writing an idea's not just in a five page essay or something, whether it be a blog or a website or a video, like I said, or a podcast or something. There are different ways to convey ideas where writing is still the main thing that you're doing there. I learned a lot about that, making portfolios for both the [Gateway course] and the [Capstone course]. Those I think were the main things that I got out of those classes.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm. Did you take writing courses in your concentration?

*Interviewee:* Yeah. It was Work Studies 310 I think was the upper-level writing requirement, which I took two years ago. I'm trying to—yeah, that was it, and that was a lot of reading like Marks and Vaber 16:23 and reading a lot of theories and then writing about them. I didn't like the course that much.

*Interviewer:* What was the concentration?

*Interviewee:* Organizational studies.

*Interviewer:* Okay.

*Interviewee:* It's psych and sociology and economics all rolled together. It's a small major in [College of Literature, Science, and the Arts]. Yeah, that was writing a lot about organizational theory. I didn't enjoy the class that much, and I



just remember we had to write I think three papers. I think I did well, but I didn't feel like I truly understood the material, but I was still writing these papers and getting good grades. It was just—I don't know. I don't think of it as a very influential class looking back. Yeah, that was the main one in my concentration.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* I don't think there were any other ones.

*Interviewer:* Okay. Now that you're about to graduate, how confident do you feel about writing in your concentration?

*Interviewee:* I do feel more confident. I had a lot of—I have written a lot for organizational studies classes, but they haven't necessarily been upper-level writing requirement classes. Last semester in the fall, we had a group project where we had to study an organization all semester, and we wrote I think a 20 page report at the end of it. Yeah, I do think I've learned a lot in the sense of finding data and things out about organizations after studying them and then using—I've learned a lot about writing in the sense of data analysis and collecting all this data and then using it to tell the story that you wanna tell.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* I don't think I fully understood before these classes with [instructor]. I've had two with her, and she's helped me learn that you can college all this data on this company and find all these things, but you don't have to incorporate every single thing that you've found.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* It's about looking for a lotta things, compiling all these different sets of data and stuff, and then finding the connections and finding the story there. Never really thought about writing in the org studies set in that way as telling a story, but it very much is. Research is about—and it's always the thing you're going in you think you're gonna find.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* Sometimes you find a whole different story but that's the more compelling thing, so you need to tell that. That made me enjoy that project more thinking of it as a, okay, I'm going in and I'm finding a story and then I need to tell it cuz I don't—like I said, I don't really like academic writing as much, but framing it in that way helped me feel more confident about it. I think that helped me think about it in a more appealing way I guess.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm. Great. Let's see. How often have you used skills or strategies learned in one of the writing classes you just mentioned in other courses?

*Interviewee:* I think for projects in other classes, like I taught myself how to use iMovie I think to do something in a gateway course, and now I love that. I'm definitely an amateur at it, but it's definitely a different approach to the same projects that we get that we have to do. I think getting assignments and thinking of unique ways to convey the information instead of just a PowerPoint or an essay or a—they really push that in the gateway and the capstone, and it has helped me for other classes to get these assignments that seem bland in the beginning because these professors aren't thinking about that but finding ways to make them unique and interesting and whether I said that be through a podcast or a voiceover video or even just—this sounds so dumb, but just like setting up a website but putting pictures in with your—to break up a lot of text.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* Things like that. Just making writing and conveying information more interactive for the reader and more visually appealing I guess than black words on a white page.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* I think that's the biggest thing I've gotten out of the courses.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm. The next questions are specifically about the minor capstone course.

*Interviewee:* Okay.

*Interviewer:* What effect—you mentioned an overall effect, but can you talk any more about this course has had an impact on your writing process?

*Interviewee:* Writing process. I think that—I'm trying to think about the things that we wrote for her in that class. I think with the capstone project there was so much, so many parts and so much that it really had to be planned well before—you had to have a structure and an outline really set in place before you started to—you couldn't really compile it on the fly. It was too much. I think that Julie did a good job of getting us to think about that early and not to say that we were locked into whatever we decided, but I usually write outlines for papers.

I've always outlined, but thinking of a project in that sense and outlining the whole project and knowing where you're going and making a plan for yourself. We had to do a project proposal, so that really made me—I had to be very specific about what I was going to do for a grade and turn that into a class, and then that got peer edited, and then I had to do a project plan. Okay, the proposal is good; it's a good idea. Now, specifically how are you going to tackle all of these things. I had to make a project plan. I'm gonna do this in this week, this in this week. I didn't even so much stick to the schedule that I made myself but for

me to actually write out everything that had to be done, I think that that was very helpful, and it helped me piece it together in my mind.

Then, we made our own rubrics for the how we wanted to be graded as well, so to really think about, okay, what am I gonna be focusing on; what do I want to be graded on; what do I want them to pay attention to. Yeah, I think that there was a lot of planning involved in that class, and I think that it probably made me a better outliner or planner and to do less on the fly and have a great idea of where you're going and set that out in writing or in a diagram or something before you start a project. I think I'll continue to use that.

*Interviewer:* Got it. How did that course impact your sense of yourself as a writer?

*Interviewee:* Very much so. We had to write a writer's evolution essay, so basically this conversation we're having right now. If my answers seem scripted, it's because I wrote a big paper on this a few weeks ago. Yeah, I definitely—I had that specificity epiphany in the class, so I think that since I've talked about that a lot, that really explains, I think, my journey better

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* It helped me find a lot of themes in my writing and themes that I didn't know were there before, but putting the capstone project together and additionally putting in other pieces for the portfolio, I started to see these themes that I had running through different types of papers. Yeah, I definitely think that it helped me fully understand the challenge that I have moving forward but an exciting challenge of, like I said, writing for an audience that doesn't know you. I think that that—I learned that that is my biggest challenge, but once you can put a name on, it's a lot easier to overcome.

I think that that class helped me with that a lot, and I look forward to—I don't know when it's gonna be cuz I am done with classes, but I look forward to having the opportunity to use what I learned in that class about myself and trying to

connect with other people in my writing that don't know me cuz that was a pretty big thing to—it was something I could never put a name on, and Julie helped me put a name on it and figure it out. I think that that was very helpful, and writing that essay was very helpful.

*Interviewer:*Great. How 'bout the capstone project specifically? What effect did that have on you as a writer?

*Interviewee:*I think a combination of things that I've said. I had to find unique ways to convey a lot of information cuz I was writing so much that I couldn't make a website with just all text. No one would wanna read that—

*Interviewer:*Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:*- so incorporating videos and pictures and things like that. The project was about my family business so figuring out how to give enough background without bogging it down in details of the past while making sure that people understand my connection, why it's relevant to me, why it's relevant to a bigger audience, things like that. That goes with the knowing your audience and explaining things for them.

Yeah, I think those were the two main things that I got out of that project and then the planning, like I said. There was a lot of planning that went into it, and it made me really, like I said, think about where I wanted to go—[yawn] excuse me—where I wanted to go with this before I started, which I think had [instructor] not made us do that, I probably would've compiled a lot as I was going, and it would've been much more messy. I think those three things were the main things that I got out of the project, which I've mentioned before.

*Interviewer:*How 'bout your e-portfolio. Can you tell me about the most memorable aspect of your experience with the e-portfolio?

*Interviewee:* In the capstone—

*Interviewer:* Yes.

*Interviewee:*— course?

*Interviewer:* Yes.

*Interviewee:* I wish I woulda spent more time on the portfolio. I think I was so concerned with the project that I didn't give that enough time. As for the portfolio, it was—I never thought of it as something that I could send out to future employers potentially, but it was very basic. It had a welcome page, then it had a page with my writing, a page to explain the capstone project, and then I put my resume on the end, which I remember someone suggested I do that, and I hadn't thought about it before. I think compiling that and thinking of it as something that future employers could see was what I remember most.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* We had to have seven or eight pieces of writing, so I was trying to pick different pieces that showed different things, and that was pretty interesting. Yeah, it was—I felt like I was compiling a little e-resume type thing, which was interesting, and I hadn't thought about it in that way.

*Interviewer:* Sure.

*Interviewee:* It was pretty basic, but I do think I'll use it. I think the fact that it is basic might be a strength in that sense so that recruiters, if they're looking at it, they don't get bogged down in all this flashing stuff. It's very simple, but I think that will help me in a way.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm, sure. What were your aims for the portfolio? What narrative did you hope to tell about yourself as a writer? How well do you feel your e-portfolio addressed those aims?

*[Pause 30:22 – 30:31]*

*Interviewee:* I think my goal was trying to explain why I have a unique perspective on things, so my goal with the portfolio, and more specifically the capstone project, was to explain to people that my family owns a business in Detroit, so I'm gonna go in there and do a case study and figure out a few things that they can implement—

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* - with my org studies background that will help the efficiency of the business. Why should I do this and not someone else? Well, my parents didn't have the opportunity to go to college. They don't have the access to the research and things that I have had here. If you had kids from [business school] go and do it, they would do a terrible job because it would be way too ideal and unrealistic and too—my parents are a—it's a small family business, and they're very stuck in their old ways.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* If you had these BBAs come in and say, "Oh, we need to make everything on computers now and all that," they would just—they don't understand it, so I used the phrase 'unique perspective' a lot throughout, and I was trying to convey that I have a white collar education with blue blood work experience. I've worked with my parents all my life, but I am also fortunate enough to have come here. I've learned a lot from both realms, and I think it gives me a very unique perspective and a very—I guess a—I can't think of the

word that I'm—it's an advantage that I have that I can see things in both of those ways. That goes back to people that might wanna hire me because that's a very hard—our family business is a very hard thing for me to correctly explain to people. I think that it's shaped me more than anything else, but people—I have to do a good job of explaining that to people, and that's where the audience things come in, explaining my background to people that don't know me. Yeah, that I think was the biggest thing I was trying to convey. Why my voice was unique and why—I guess why they should listen and why they should care to what I was saying.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* That was the biggest thing I was trying to get through with the portfolio and the project.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm. Did you design the portfolio—you talked about this. You designed more simply, so I think we'll just move on. Did you notice any relationships among your artifacts as you created your e-portfolio?

*Interviewee:* Yeah, I think that was one of the most enjoyable things. I think a sense of identity, a lot of what I just said, trying to explain that to other people, and I think I was pulling my favorite pieces in writing, and a lot of them had to do with that. Yeah, I was surprised that they all fit in nicely, and I wasn't necessarily thinking about that, but when I pulled the seven on the page, I was like, "Oh, these all go together in a nice way."

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* Yeah, I think I definitely saw similarities and a thread going through those pieces that I hadn't expected but was very happy to see once I stepped back and looked at it as a whole.



*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm, great. Do you think creating the e-portfolio has had an effect on your writing?

*Interviewee:* I don't know specifically on—it's definitely had an effect on me. I don't know specifically on my—I don't know if I would write a paper in a different way because of it, but I think the putting it together and thinking of how you present yourself and you only get X amount of space or in my case I had X amount of time 'til it was due. I had to figure out what I wanted to say and how I was gonna say it. I think I learned a lot about—and then, like I said, thinking about showing it to other employers. I learned a lot about presenting myself in a confined space. I don't know how much I necessarily learned about writing specifically, but I think presenting myself and then that thread that I saw through my writing were two main things that I took away from that that I'll probably think about in the future.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm, sure. Did you learn anything from the—what did you learn from the reflective writing in the e-portfolio, both the evidence-based essay and the contextual reflection?

[Pause 35:47 – 35:59]

*Interviewee:* I'm trying to think about what actual essays those would've been. Can you repeat the question?

*Interviewer:* Yeah. What did you learn from the reflective writing in the e-portfolio, the evidence-based essay, and the contextual reflections?

*Interviewee:* I'm not really sure. I think things that I've already said. My class helped me, okay, we don't understand that; why are you saying this; you need to explain more of that; we don't need as much of this. They definitely helped me speak to my audience in a better way and make sure that my audience understood that's—yeah, that's the main thing that I can think of I think with those essays.

*Interviewer:* Okay. What do you think people interested in writing development, including program administrators like those in Sweetland, what could they learn about writing development from looking at your capstone e-portfolio?

*Interviewee:* I think that I really, really—one of my favorite things I’ve ever written was the “Why I Write” piece for the gateway, and then it wasn’t necessarily my favorite, but I learned a lot about myself from the “Writer’s Evolution” essay. I never thought of it until these classes, but having to define yourself as a writer and have conversations like this and that—I think that helps students learn a lot. I think that when I go—like I’ve talked this whole time basically about the things that I learned from writing those two essays.

I think that they’re obviously already doing it and they’re doing a great job with it, but I think that that is very, very influential and a really good tool to have cuz I have never stopped. I had always called myself a writer since high school, but I had never stopped and been like, “What do I like about this and why is it,”—so to have to sit down and do that was very helpful. I think that you can see that in the portfolio, and then I think that that also pushed me to identify myself in other ways not as a writer.

Some of my other essays are, like I said, about depression or our family business, and what I learned from defining myself as a writer, I was taking that into my other essays that were personal. Like I said, I think there’s a big identity piece there in trying to define myself throughout college, which is you come into your own, and you’re trying to answer these big questions. I think to have a space like the portfolio and the writing minor to do that has been great, and I think that a lot of those self-discoveries came from them first asking, “Define yourself as a writer.”

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* Then, because writing is such a big part of who I think I am, it opened up doors for other things I guess.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, awesome. Last set of questions are about the gateway course.

*Interviewee:* Okay.

*Interviewer:* How do your experience in the capstone course compare to your experience in the gateway course?

*Interviewee:* I personally enjoyed the—I enjoyed the gateway course more because I liked that professor better, and we were in a full class, and he would start every class—he would do attendance and would just ask a random question like, “What’s your favorite something,” or—

*Interviewer:* Mmm.

*Interviewee:-* “If you could,”—something random. I got to know the people in the room so well—

*Interviewer:* Mmm.

*Interviewee:-* it made me feel comfortable sharing my writing with them. We would spend maybe half the class talking about something like that, but it led into good conversations where you just learn about people and things and you hear different perspectives—

*Interviewer:* Hmm.

*Interviewee:-* and things like that. Whereas, the capstone course, there were only ten of us, nine of which were girls I think, and the professor was a woman also, so I didn't feel like I had learned a lot from my peers and with the imbalance and all of that. The class was much more quiet, and people didn't participate as much.

I think I liked—I might have liked what we did in the capstone better, but I liked the environment of the gateway course better because of the professor and the people in the class and the way that we connected more. I think it took a lot longer in the other, the capstone, so I didn't feel as connected to everyone in the room until later when we—now we're done.

Yeah, those are—but, yeah, the “Why I Write” was probably my favorite thing in the gateway. That and then the writer evolution essay and the capstone, those were probably my two favorite things, and they were both about defining yourself as a writer. That was the main throughout I saw between them. Yeah, but they were just very different classes.

The gateway, he—I can't remember what work I produced because he did a gamification point system, so I was never really too concerned about the work I was doing if that makes sense. I just had to keep turning in drafts and was much more relaxed; whereas, the capstone was this huge project that you were stressing about all the time. They were just very different classes for me partly because the professors—

*Interviewer:* Mmm, right.

*Interviewee:-* and also what we were doing.

*Interviewer:* Right, right. Interesting. Any other experiences working with other writers throughout the minor? You talked about you love the environment of the gateway class. Anything else about just how working with peer editing or other writers affected you, affected your experience as a writer?

*Interviewee:* I think that peer editing is the main thing that I think about. We would do big table peer edits where everyone was focused on your piece, and then we would also have small break-out ones where you were with three or four people, and they would talk about your piece as well. I enjoyed those a lot, and I think you learn a lot from—I think the small ones it forces people that may not speak up in a big class to tell you what they think. Usually, people that are quiet have really interesting insight; they just are too shy to say it.

I think that those were very helpful in hearing different perspectives, and people didn't always agree. That was interesting too. Some people like certain things, some didn't. Just being able to get so much feedback I think was always very helpful from different people my age, not always just professors. I think there were a lot of—in a lot of my classes my professors took that approach on, and I enjoyed it. I think that that was helpful.

Like I said, giving feedback, I think that'll help in whatever job I have. When we're doing a project or working together, being able to express what you like and dislike in a productive and healthy way I guess. I'll take that with me in work and whatever else I do, so I think that that was very helpful and I enjoyed that.

*Interviewer:* The gateway and capstone courses emphasize reflective writing in various forms. How would you describe your experience with this kind of reflection?

*Interviewee:* Through the different mediums?

*Interviewer:* I think, yeah, through the different essays that were assigned.

*Interviewee:* Yeah, I think, like I said, we've had a lot of reflective writing, and I think, like I said earlier, learning how to present it in different ways. My capstone project is very, very reflective, but it's not an essay; it's a website that's interactive, and it has links and videos and things like that as well as the gateway I think I did a podcast for my last project. That was also very reflective, but I was

presenting them in a different way. I think it has helped me look at reflective writing differently, which makes me happy because, like I said, I'm moving forward and I'm not gonna be assigned essays anymore but thinking of reflective writing in a different way, through those different mediums maybe, blogs, things like that. Maybe I'll have a chance to do more of the writing that I like after graduation.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm. What is the new way that it's taught you to look at reflective writing?

*Interviewee:* I think it's broadened my definition I guess in the sense that it doesn't have to be on a, like I said, an essay written up—

*Interviewer:* Yeah.

*Interviewee:* - and printed out. It can be anything. If you're making a video, that script has to be written like that is writing. Things like that. I think it's broad—I made a website. Things like that. My definition of reflective writing and how you can go about presenting that to people has definitely broadened if that makes sense.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm, great. Has this reflection given you any new ways to talk about your writing, terms or concepts, and what are those terms or concepts?

*[Pause 47:07 – 47:20]*

*Interviewee:* Terms or concepts. I don't know about terms or concepts. I think, like I've said multiple times, I've talked a lot about writing for an audience that doesn't know you. That's a thing that will carry forward. Then, just the concept of new media and new mediums. Those probably are the two main things that I can think of.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm, sure. The minor program is still relatively new. Are there any suggestions you would have for instructors or administrators of this program?

*[Pause 47:54 – 48:03]*

*Interviewee:* Like I said, my class this semester, there were only ten of us because they overbooked—they always seem surprised at—we just got an e-mail yesterday being like, “Oh, due to how many people have RSVP’d for graduation, we don’t have enough room.”

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm, interesting.

*Interviewee:* It sounds weird, but, and then with my class, there were supposed to be two classes but then both overfilled, so the ten of us got shafted, and I don’t feel like we got as good of an experience because they weren’t necessarily prepared if that makes sense. I guess the main thing is for them to just consider the experiences that the three different classes that had this semester and what our classes may be like because we didn’t—we only had one guy, and there were only ten people, and things like that. I think to just try and make sure that things like that to plan forward so that things like that don’t happen again.

*Interviewer:* Right.

*Interviewee:* For the most part, I’ve enjoyed it. I’ve enjoyed it a lot. All of the faculty has been great.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Interviewee:* That's the one thing that I can think of, but it's a very good experience. I'm very happy that I did this.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm, cool.

*Interviewee:* Overall, it's been good.

*Interviewer:* Yeah. More generally, what do you think professors should know about teaching writing at the undergraduate level?

*Interviewee:* I think writers, especially—in the writing minor where people obviously are like writing enough to call themselves writers and have to take on that identity. I think, like I said, forcing them to explore that and what exactly about writing do they like, why do they write, things like that. Those have been the most helpful for me, and I think to continue to do that and maybe even find different questions or ways to make people explain that identification I think has helped me a lot as a writer and as a person. Like I said, they're doing that, so that's a great job, but I think they should continue and be sure to know how helpful that has been.

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm, cool. Any other comments?

*Interviewee:* No, I feel like I've been talking a lot. I don't think I have anything else to say.

*Interviewer:* All right, great.



*[End of Audio]*