Interviewer: All right. This is ***, and it is May 20th. I am here with ____ doing an interview for the Writing Development Study. Okay.

The first question is this, how would you describe yourself as a writer?

Interviewee: I guess I like to write more personal narrative and autobiographical stuff. I guess I would describe myself as—I guess I learn through my writing. I learn a lot about myself, my experiences and life by writing my thoughts down. Yeah, I guess that's how I would describe myself.

Interviewer: Cool, thank you. How would you describe yourself as a writer when you first began here at the University of Michigan?

Interviewee: Probably not as developed in a variety of different types of writing. Definitely—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - I definitely had different strengths and weaknesses and different types I liked and didn't like. I'd say—I would say I definitely developed in that area as far as learning to understand and appreciate and becoming better at different types of writing. Yeah.

Interviewer: When you say different types of writing, can you give me a few examples of what you mean by that?

Interviewee: I would say maybe argumentative writing was something I was—I guess I found somewhat difficult and challenging to do, and was something that applied to a lot of my other classes and majors. I would often have to do in

papers and it seemed like I would never do that well in that. I feel like maybe I improved in that area of writing a lot after taking the minor.

Interviewer: Awesome, thank you. To what extent would you say you've grown and changed since then as a writer, and to what would you attribute this growth?

Interviewee: Like what I said I've definitely grown in, different areas and learning about different types of writing such as—not just writing, but writing in different types like multi-media and stuff like that.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: I started my own website because of that. It's called, [website name]. I learned about doing—writing doesn't just have to be a book or just pencil and paper, but I could do it through interviews like we're doing right now.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Then I could translate that all and I have it on a web site right now. It's called the, "Freedom Project." That's—I've definitely developed in that area and learning that I can do so many different things with writing that I wasn't really aware of before.

Interviewer: Cool. That's awesome.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Can you tell me a little bit more about that just for my own curiosity? Do you collect oral histories yourself?

Interviewee: Yeah. I took this class, and I'm also a Women's Studies major.

Interviewer: Nice.

Interviewee: It goes across with Women's Studies and writing, it was called, "Feminists Practice of Oral Histories. After that class I was like, "Wow, this is really cool. This can connect with Women's Studies—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - and Writing." I started my own project as a part of my final project for that class.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: As—interviewing some of my older African American relatives. I started that and I decided I wanted to turn it into something bigger that I got this idea of turning it into something bigger for my Capstone Project. I turned it into this thing called the "Freedom Project" where I collect numerous stories from older African American people who were—grew up in the South, and they migrated to the North.

It's based on the Great Migration—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - from the South to the North and what it was like growing up in a time of racism, prejudice and difficulties.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Then what life was like once they moved to the North. I feel their stories should be heard, and I haven't really read much on people's specific stories.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: That's why I decided to do that.

Interviewer: Nice. That is so cool. Who taught that course?

Interviewee: That was by—who is it? [Instructor], she's a Filipino woman.

Interviewer: Okay, cool.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: I'll have to look her up. That sounds awesome.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: I majored in Women's Studies, too, actually—

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: - in college, yeah.

Interviewee: Nice.

Interviewer: Yeah. That sounds so cool.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: *[Inaudible 04:51]*.

Interviewee: She wrote a book.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: She wrote—her and another professor, Professor I think [name]?

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: They combined together and did an oral history of older Filipino generation women.

Interviewer: That's cool. Okay, awesome. Let's see. As you graduate, what are your goals for yourself as a writer, for your continued growth?

Interviewee: I never—I always knew I liked writing since I was young, but I didn't know how that—I could carry that on 'till now. This project is something that now is a goal of mine, so I'm working with [instructor].

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: She's gonna help me with this. We meet every now and then, and she's gonna help me develop my ideas and move forward into making this web site and this project and these interviews into a book. I'm also gonna consult with the professor who I took the class with, to tell me—order my stuff to go about making this into an informational book of these stories.

Interviewer: Nice.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: That's cool. Then what kind of publication do you see that be? What kind of audience do you see that for?

Interviewee: I think it would be something that's good for everyone. I specifically would say maybe we'll target the older generation of African Americans who did migrate from the South to the North. That includes a lot of the older people you see around here and around Michigan.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: A lot of them came from places like Texas and Mississippi—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - Arkansas, and so they all have a common story and that often they don't talk about because they're either embarrassed or they don't know how to deal with those scars and—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - that pain. I ask myself I don't know how they can go on with the stuff that they've went through and how they even have trust in mankind. The stories I've learned about and heard are really sad and tragic. I definitely look at my grandparents and my great-great-aunt who I interviewed, very differently to actually finally hear these stories, ‘cause they don't talk about it. It's good to put this out there and get these voices and feelings out, hopefully as a measure of healing.

Interviewer: I feel like the interview format is really useful for that because—

Interviewee: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: - it's accessible to a lot of people. I feel like even people outside of that population, right—

Interviewee: Yeah, they need to know—

Interviewer: - can be educated.

Interviewee: ‘cause they have no idea. Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. Cool. That is so awesome. Okay. Thinking across your writing experiences at the University of Michigan, what do you think it means to write well?

Interviewee: I think it means to write with purpose—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - emotion, feeling. Not just to write because you have to or write to just get it over with and just write without thought. I know sometimes that's a part of college just getting—trying to get some work done. I think it doesn't—I don't think writing well means you have to have had all these college courses or know how to properly use all these different types of punctuation and things like that.

I think writing well comes from the heart and enjoyment and just writing about something you care about and having a purpose. Not—I just don't think it should be limited just to people who are college educated, or even high school educated.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Cool, thank you. What upper level writing courses have you taken?

Interviewee: I can't even think. I've taken a lot. I've taken different classes in German, Women's Studies.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Then writing, I've taken a German philosophy course. I've taken maybe Feminist Practice and Feminist Thought and different classes like that. I can't really think of the names, specifically right now, but many in all of those areas—

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: - or majors.

Interviewer: What were your experiences in those courses?

Interviewee: Some were more difficult. Some of—the Women's Studies one would often include arguing a point—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - about feminism or equality and things like that.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: I feel like I got better at that, though, along the way. Then sometimes it would be just about writing about different philosophers or history in German and stuff like that mostly.

Interviewer: All right. Cool. What effect do you think that those experiences had on you as a writer?

Interviewee: I would say they definitely made me more of a well-rounded writer—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - as far as the challenge of having to write about a whole different country and things that aren't specifically maybe related or connected to you.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Having to write about stuff maybe you don't know as much about, or having to write in another language and try to get your point across the way you want, which can be really frustrating.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: That really makes you appreciate language and being able to speak it, because that—I found that very difficult.

Interviewer: Definitely. Do you still make use of what you learned in these courses in your writing now?

Interviewee: Yes. I would say I do, because writing is a tool I think that's very useful and will continue to be useful throughout your life, whether you go into a writing field or not.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: You will, I feel, always need it in some form or another. I feel I've grown as a writer and learned how to write in different styles and techniques and for different purposes, whether it's resumés and job interviews and applying for different things and all sorts of different areas of my life.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm. Cool, thank you. What other writing courses have you taken and how have these affected your writing besides the upper level courses?

Interviewee: I've written, I guess, papers in my Women's Studies classes—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - about things like breast cancer awareness and things like that. I feel those have been very meaningful as a method of just educating people. In a way I feel my writing has helped me become an educator and an advocator—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - for different things.

Interviewer: Nice.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: The next question is did you take these writing courses in your major, which some of them you said yes. You were talking about writing for Women's Studies courses a lot?

Interviewee: Yeah, I took them to get requirements—

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: - and for my major, Women's Studies and German.

Interviewer: Did you double major in those two?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: In Women's Studies and German?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay, cool. This is such an interestingly worded question. I always stumble on this. The writing classes that you've taken overall, how would you say that they have affected the writing that you do in your majors? That could be between the two majors as well. How have the writing—the classes that you've taken in German affected your Women's Studies and vice versa? Or, how have your first year writing requirement course, how did that affect your writing your major? That kind of a thing. Does that make sense?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: I feel it's a same basic answer as far as just teaching me how to be stronger—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - in those areas, and take what I learned from those writing classes and put them into every single writing piece that I do.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Definitely just made me stronger and know how to better get across whatever type of message or type of writing style I'm trying to get out there for those papers.

Interviewer: Okay, cool. Now that you're about to graduate, how confident do you feel about writing in your majors in those specific fields?

Interviewee: I think I feel a lot more confident than I did. Sometimes I still do feel maybe a little bit not so confident—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - when it comes to writing. I feel that's normal. You always wonder, "Do they get where I'm coming from?" Whoever your audience is, are they gonna get these little bits of sarcasm? Or, how do you put that into writing. Or, "I wonder if they're really seeing or feeling my emotions come through in that piece?" You always worry—

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: - that you want people to understand or take your piece as you wrote it.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: That can sometimes be challenging maybe.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you feel that way in both German and Women's Studies?

Interviewee: Yeah, probably all writing I would say.

Interviewer: Okay, audience awareness.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay, cool. These questions feel really redundant, but I'm going to ask this—

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: - anyway—

Interviewee: Okay. I'll just repeat. *[Laughter]*

Interviewer: - and if you feel like—if you feel like you've already said it, you could just be like, "Next."

[Laughter]

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: Okay. In reference to the writing classes in your—or sorry, the other writing courses, not the upper level. How often have you used skills or strategies learned in these classes in your other courses? Maybe outside of your major I think is what this is trying to get at.

Interviewee: I just think always still—you always—what you learn you constantly apply it and it just helps you be a better writer.

Interviewer: Cool, thank you. Okay. The next couple questions are about the Capstone Course Writing 400. What impact has the minor Capstone course had overall in your writing?

Interviewee: Well, I would say that one was probably—might've had the most impact, because that's what helped me create this project and realize the bigger picture and the bigger thing I can do because I've already started it. Now I can further it, so I think it just helped me realize how much of a bigger world is out there for writers and the different things that I can do.

Interviewer: Okay. You mean by the project, you mean the oral history web site?

Interviewee: Right, it helped inspire me to further that and create that into specifically the, "Freedom Project."

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Whereas before it was just oral—his and her oral history testimonies. It really helped me to say, "Well, I can take this and do this—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - with that."

Interviewer: Awesome. Has this course had an impact on your writing process?

Interviewee: I don't know. I'm really stubborn. A lot of people say that you should edit it so many times, your writing, and you should take out paragraphs chunk by chunk and rearrange 'em and do all that. Then they also say, "You know, you should plan before you write." I feel I've always been stubborn about that, so my writing process still hasn't changed.

I mean I would like it to but I feel like I don't think it's ‘cause I'm lazy. I just think I like the way I already do it, and I feel that's more being natural. That's how I've always done it, and sometimes it's hard to change the things that you're used to. For me, my writing process still hasn't changed. Whereas, many other people I've noticed have taken that advice to do these different things to help their writing flow or be better.

I feel like I do that too, just in a different way, my way. I don't think my process has really changed, maybe a little bit. It has helped me to—a little bit as far as to try and apply those different strategies to it, but still keep it the same as how I normally would do it. Yeah, interesting.

Interviewer: Yeah. Has this course had an impact on your sense of yourself as a writer?

Interviewee: Yeah, it definitely has because I realize that through my writing I can be an advocator, I can be an educator and I can—almost like I have this responsibility and duty to do something with this skill and enjoyment I have, yeah.

Interviewer: Yes. Cool. This, again, a little bit redundant, ‘cause you've been talking specifically about the Capstone Project, but the next question is what experience or what effect has the experience of the Capstone Project itself had on you as a writer, rather than the course overall?

Interviewee: The project had?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: Oh.

Interviewer: You feel like you've already answered it?

Interviewee: No, I could talk more about, well, I'm going back to the project again—

Interviewer: No, that's fine.

Interviewee: - but that's fine. Okay. The project has definitely changed me because I interviewed my grandma, my grandpa and my great-great-aunt. For me that was huge because that helped my relationship between all of those people. It brought us closer. It helped me to understand why they are the way they are, and it helps me be more appreciative—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - for the time that I'm living in and the privileges I have that they never had.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: To watch my grandma almost get teary-eyed about different subjects. She would talk about getting spit on as she would walk to class, and how they weren't able to go in the store and try on shoes—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - because they were black. They would have to draw, trace their feet on a piece of paper and hope the shoes fit when they got home, because that was it. Oftentimes their feet would be so sore because the shoes wouldn't fit right.

Interviewer: Mm.

Interviewee: I could go on and on about different stories, but that was really eye opening and very humbling and—for me. It definitely made me realize the power I have in using this ability, because I can help my grandparents and other people get their story out and help them feel better to tell it.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Also, I was able to learn about my great-great-great-great-grandmother, because my aunt brought over these different artifacts and pictures of her that I've never seen just because of the interview. I—we were able to look at the resemblances and—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - things like this. I put those all on my web site like, "Wow, this is crazy. This is my great-great-great grandmother," and things like that. That was amazing. If I had never done that interview writing project, I wouldn't have learned so much things about my family history and things like that. Her handwriting was all over the back of the picture, too, so that was really cool.

Interviewer: Nice.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: This question's a little bit more about the Capstone Project, which I'm excited to hear more about. The question is why did you choose the project that you chose, for your Capstone?

Interviewee: Well, because I had—I started it in that class, the Oral History class.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: I originally did my grandmother as the first person.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: After that I had been longing for a reason to get me to do more, and I often make excuses ‘cause I'm like, "Well, I have so much other stuff to do, so much other classwork to do. I'll probably never get around to interviewing anyone else." When I came in the Capstone, it's like, "Okay, you need to pick a project," and stuff like—well, this is perfect, ‘cause now I have a reason to further this and to keep doing this. It gave me reason and ambition and push to keep those interviews going, which was great and really important and what I needed. Yeah.

Interviewer: Cool. The next few questions are about the Capstone e-portfolio, and we have it in the interview protocol that you would actually pull up the e-portfolio and talk about it. Is that okay with you?

Interviewee: Yeah. Oh, do you know how to get to it?

Interviewer: I actually don't. Do you know?

Interviewee: I haven't done it in a year.

Interviewer: Okay. Well, let's see if we can find it, and if not, it's no big deal. We can—

Interviewee: Okay. ‘Cause I know we had to e-mail them in, so maybe it's in my e-mail somewhere.

Interviewer: Okay. We all probably have to log out in your unit.

Interviewee: Yeah.

[Extraneous conversation 23:23 – 23:48]

Interviewee: Can we get to the Mich. Mail from here?

Interviewer: I always just do it through Gmail, but I don't know.

[Pause 23:57 – 24:29]

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Do you remember who e-mailed us to ask us for our links and took care of all the graduation stuff?

Interviewer: That's a really good question.

Interviewee: What's her name? I can't think. The main person who—

Interviewer: [Name]?

Interviewee: No. Is it [Name]?

Interviewer: [Name].

Interviewee: Yeah, [Name].

Interviewer: Correct.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Cool.

[Pause 24:50 – 25:12]

Interviewer: Okay, very nice. Cool. Okay. As you were looking through it, the first question is can you tell me about the most memorable aspect of your experience with the e-portfolio?

Interviewee: It'd have to be probably the project or just designing it itself was really fun and—'cause I had to go back through old pictures of—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - these are from when I was in Germany, so it's like looking back at all this stuff when I was doing final touches and designing it. That was probably a lot of fun—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - and really inspiring ‘cause it's like, "Okay, I'm done with it. I finished this minor—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - adding in these finishing touches." Yeah, also I do have something else on here.

[Pause 26:12 – 26:20]

Interviewee: This also—I used to write poetry a lot when I was in elementary, a little bit in middle school.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: I really stopped, I hadn't done it in a while until—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - I started taking these classes. In these classes I got back doing it. They inspired me to do it, so I made this one for my great grandma who, she lived with me and my other grandma. We took care of her, she had Alzheimer's. I wrote this poem for her.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: I read it at the funeral.

Interviewer: Oh, really?

Interviewee: That was really nice, and I put it on here with a picture of her and I.

Interviewer: Cool.

Interviewee: Yeah, these poems were pretty big for me, ‘cause I hadn't written in a long time. I love this one about where I'm from and—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - got a decent picture aspect along—that goes with the poem.

Interviewer: Nice. What was that experience of picking the visuals to go along with the poem and writing the poem itself?

Interviewee: It was touching a little bit, maybe a little bit sensitive, ‘cause it's where I'm from, what I see, the good and the bad. It was just really being honest. Some people don't wanna be honest. You don't wanna be judged about where you're from, things you've seen, but I feel this was really honest.

Interviewer: That's awesome, and you wrote that in the context of a course?

Interviewee: For the minor writing course, yeah.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm. You shared it with your peers?

Interviewee: I actually don't know if I ended up reading it. I know they asked people to raise hands who wants to read their poem, but at the time I hadn't perfected it the way I wanted it, so I was a little bit embarrassed to read it how it was. I'm pretty sure I didn't read it.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: My teacher has seen it.

Interviewer: Okay, cool. Thank you.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: The most memorable aspects then would be the design experience, the experience of getting to write poetry again and then also the Capstone Project itself of collecting the oral histories?

Interviewee: Yes, correct.

Interviewer: Thanks. Overall, really memorable?

Interviewee: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: What were your aims for the portfolio in terms of what kind of story you wanted to tell, your overall theme or argument?

Interviewee: The freeness of writing. This was my theme right here.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Freedom writing, so the freeness of it, the fact that everyone should be able to do it and can do it. You don't have to be educated or feel like writing is only for educators or people who are privileged, ‘cause it shouldn't be that way.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Basically, my thing is everyone has a story—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - so everyone can tell their story. Writing is free and that's how it should be. That was the purpose of this project, and that's why I'm able to tell the stories of these older generation of African Americans, share their story.

Interviewer: Freedom Project. Okay. Did you design the e-portfolio, the overall visual design of it to create a particular reader experience?

Interviewee: Yes, it was freeness as well.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Like the water, the outdoors, that's also free to everyone.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Then for me I picked pictures that—where I felt free. I was in Germany in a strange country pretty much all alone.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: That was a real freeing experience, so this picture I was way up high on top of this old abandoned castle. You could look over at all of Germany, and this was by this gigantic—I'm not sure what you would call it, a water fountain.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: It was just a time I felt free and I felt those pictures were very fitting as well as this picture of an eagle.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: This one of these chains—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - like you're—but the chains are broken so you're free. I just wanted to create that whole feeling and hope my audience felt that feeling by just looking at the pictures and the titles and things.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm. Thank you. Did you notice—actually, this is the question that I wanted to ask specifically about some of your artifacts, but did you notice any relationships among your artifacts as you created your e-portfolio?

Interviewee: I feel I was trying to make it all—

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: - connect more than I should've. Not everything connected, but some things were connected. Let's see. A lot of it was, I would say, informational. I mean, I guess it connected that way, but here is more like academic writing—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - for my Women's Studies major about breast cancer and critical analysis things. Here is my more actual free writing. This is a narrative personal story I wrote, ‘cause I like to write those.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Here's poetry, so I think the things that connect it I put them together—

Interviewer: Oh.

Interviewee: - under certain tabs really.

Interviewer: Categorized by the context in which it was written?

Interviewee: Yeah. Like academic—

Interviewer: Women's Studies.

Interviewee: - and just narrative—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - free flow.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Cool. Then in terms of how your Capstone Project relates to the other artifacts in your e-portfolio, did you see any connections there?

Interviewee: Mostly telling a story.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Telling a story and trying to educate and also advocate for something. That's what mostly all of these did, so—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - yes, they would all carry a theme, ‘cause, yeah, some of these were poetry trying to tell a story and advocate.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: This one was about an accident I was in.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: These ones are about advocating for breast cancer and different Women's Studies topics. This one is advocating for equality and things like that.

Interviewer: Mm. Cool, thank you. Let's see. Do you think that creating the e-portfolio has had an effect on your writing?

Interviewee: A little bit. Sometimes I'll write knowing that, "Okay, well this is important." Or, this is something I might write with the thought like, "Oh, this can go on my portfolio—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - so I need to write this well or write it in a way that it might be beneficial to others."

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: For when they see.

Interviewer: Can you—would you mind giving me some specific examples of that, of moments when you had that realization?

Interviewee: Yeah, so let me think back. I wrote this essay for my Capstone Women's Studies course about—before I became a feminist—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - and why I became a feminist and then after.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: A lot of that really, I felt, would be perfect for this because I'm talking about my experiences as a woman—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - my experiences being Black—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - my experiences being middle class, my experiences going to a university that's only about 4% Black. I'm talking about all these different things that's educating and advocating for something and also telling my story and being completely honest. Some of it is really touchy subjects or sensitive, may offend some people who aren't educated in those areas.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: That ties really well into the freedom writing. Sounds like that would be perfect. I've gotta get that on here. As I was writing that, I knew that that was something that needed to go on here.

Interviewer: Yes. What about the reflective writing, the evidence based essay you wrote and the contextual reflections? What did you learn from that writing reflective pieces?

Interviewee: Which ones were those?

Interviewer: I believe there were some required, like reflective components for the—

Interviewee: Was that at the beginning?

Interviewer: It might've been.

Interviewee: Yeah, it was so long to remember.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: I wonder if that was before you had to turn it into the multi-media. You had to—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Well, okay, I could kind of remember. That was two years ago.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: I guess it showed me that even for what the project I'm doing now—I can take something and it doesn't have to just be what it is. I can turn it into something else, which is what I'm doing now. Yeah, I definitely learned that, ‘cause that's what's helping me do this, the project that I'm doing now. I leave it in one form and you never know who that my reach. Or, it may reach a different

audience. That could turn into another form, so now it's maybe reaching double that amount or different people who whatever the other form didn't reach, so yeah.

Interviewer: Okay, so you're saying that just to clarify, the multi-modal nature or the digital nature of the portfolio helps you in your other—in expanding this other project you're working on and reaching a wider audience with it?

Interviewee: Yeah, because I would often have to take something maybe I wrote and then turn it into a different type of way to express that. Maybe in a media type and then take that again and turn it into something else. I think that was when I wrote an essay.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Then I turned it into—I used iMovie and I turned it into a little scripted movie thing—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - where I had pictures and I had someone else reads lines for me. Yeah. That was—I didn't really know about doing that or that you could do that. I never thought—crossed my mind about doing something like that until I had to do that for a class.

Interviewer: Cool. What could people interested in writing development, including program administrators like those at Sweetland, learn about writing director—sorry, learn about writing development from your Capstone e-portfolio?

Interviewee: Can you read that one more time? Sorry.

Interviewer: That's a pretty intense question. What could people interested in writing development, like administrators but also researchers learn about writing development from looking at your Capstone e-portfolio, in particular?

Interviewee: Well, they may be able to, if they wanna know about journeys and how you grow, you can learn about the writing journey and how one may grow through a course like what I took, the writing minor. You may see the things I wrote in the beginning freshman year—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - versus what I have now and how I've progressed and how I've turned different things into multi-medias and stuff like that. That's a big growth and transition. I think that they'd be able to, probably through the transformation of writing into different multi-media, would probably be a big way to see things.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm. Cool, thank you. Okay, so the next set of questions is about the Gateway course, which feels a little bit backwards. I thought we would start with the Capstone and go to the Gateway I recognize. It's just how the interview's written. We're going even further back in time now. How did your experience in the Capstone course compare to your experience in the Gateway course?

Interviewee: Well, I would think in the Gateway I definitely didn't see the point or the purpose of some of the assignments. I definitely thought, I mean I'm not gonna lie, I really thought some of it was blow-off, easy—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - maybe busy work. Now looking back just talking about it I see how all that was beneficial. Originally I didn't see how turning something into something else was that big of a deal. I remember when I was doing it I was like, "This is something—I wonder if this is—what I did was good enough." I felt it was a little bit silly and—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - quickly done, but I mean, everyone liked it. Now I see that it was just to show how and learn how you can turn something into something else. Now I see the importance and the learning factor of it all.

Interviewer: That's awesome.

Interviewee: Now I grew.

Interviewer: Cool. What have your experiences been of working with other writers throughout the minor?

Interviewee: One thing that I do not like to do, I guess that goes along with being stubborn, is I hate critiquing other people's work.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: I hate people—I hate critiquing other people's work more than I like them—I'm more open and easy to want someone to look at mine and critique it. I still don't like that.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: That goes along with the same thing about, "Has my writing process changed," and that peer review is one of those things.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: We often had to do that, and I don't like that. I feel, I don't wanna lie but I feel I'm not qualified or I'm not that person, so who am I to tell them, "You should fix this or change this or not do this or do this," because I'm not in their head. I don't know what they were thinking when they wrote it. I don't know what experiences they have had.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: For me to come in and read something for 30 seconds and say—and that I haven't studied. I haven't asked a lot of questions, I'm not that person and then come in and say, "Well, I don't like this."

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Or, "I think you should add this and do this," and I don't like that because you never know what you're taking away from their paper or whatever feelings they had when they wrote that. I know lots of times I've written stuff and stuff for a purpose or something I felt or something I was hoping to get across and someone's peer reviewed me, and one peer said, "I don't think you need that."

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Or, "Take that out or scratch that." I feel that's a big part.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: I wanted that there, and so I'm really stubborn when it comes to stuff like that.

Interviewer: In terms of the two different e-portfolios that you wrote for the Gateway and the Capstone, what are the main differences that you see between those two e-portfolios?

Interviewee: My first one I think was a lot more, maybe, not taken as seriously. I didn't have—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - a lot of good things on there. Even the profile as a whole was just not very—just not—I don't know. There was music on it, it was just a mess. I didn't really know what I was doing.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: I didn't know what to put on there, or how to—I didn't even know how to organize it right or do different tabs. I just wasn't as educated with the program—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - at the time. Now I think I took it a lot more serious, put a lot more time in it, learned how to do different things. I also had a lot more work by then to put onto here to make it into something that connected or had a theme.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay, so both of the courses, the Gateway and the Capstone, emphasize reflective writing in various forms. How would you describe your experience with this kind of reflection?

Interviewee: Can you read that one more time?

Interviewer: Okay. The Gateway and the Capstone courses both emphasize reflective writing—

Interviewee: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: - in various forms. The question is how would you describe your experience with this kind of reflection?

Interviewee: It helps me see areas where I wanna progress and grow—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - and areas where—also it helps me realize maybe areas where I did what I did, or my thought process in doing certain things and how I can improve different things or add to it. Things like that.

Interviewer: Cool, thank you. Another question about reflection, are you still using reflection in your current writing, whether assigned or voluntary?

Interviewee: You mean self-reflect?

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Or, rewriting things?

Interviewer: Self-reflection.

Interviewee: Maybe sometimes, it depends on I guess, what it is and if I've written something similar before.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Sometimes I may reflect on something else I have written and maybe wonder how that compares or how it might fit on my portfolio. Or, if I can even connect it with something I've written before and spin off ideas and stuff like that.

Interviewer: Okay. Cool, thank you. Has the assigned reflection in the Gateway and the Capstone courses given you new ways to talk about writing such as new terms or concepts?

Interviewee: Yeah, definitely, like the multi-media—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - and turning things into multi-medias is a big one. Having a theme throughout my writing. Also it helped me to figure out what do I care about? What do I want people to know? What do I wanna write about? It helped me think about all those different things so I could be more conscious when I'm writing or wanna write or wanna do something. It definitely made me a lot more conscious about my writing and writing as a whole.

Interviewer: The writing minor is still relatively new. Are there any suggestions you would have for instructors or administrators of this program to continue to develop it?

Interviewee: In the beginning like the Gateway and stuff like that, it was really confusing. I thought it was confusing what we needed to do, the point system was not very successful. We often had to go through it. Every class they would probably go through what's required and how it works and how we're supposed to write down our points and get points to get our grades. Even the teacher was unsure and constantly had to go back and check and tell us.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Figuring out the work that we needed to do, how we were gonna keep track of it and the points that we got was really not well thought out and not really official. It was like, "Make up the rules as we go through the class."

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: That made it really confusing and stressful for us. I know lots of the students would talk and be like, "What is going on? What are we supposed to do? They don't have it together." Yeah. It could be better ‘cause it made it stressful when it shouldn't have been and didn't have to be, ‘cause it wasn't that stressful of a class.

Interviewer: Just making the grading system a little bit more transparent?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Organized?

Interviewee: More clear and—needs more organization, yes.

Interviewer: Okay. This is a big question. Zooming out to the entire university, what do you think the professors in general should know about teaching writing at the undergraduate level?

Interviewee: This goes back to why I say I'm stubborn, because a lot of people or teachers want you to write the way they want you to write.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: They want you to write like them, or it's not good. Your writing's not well, or you can't write well or you're not good enough if you don't do it how they want.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: That's not fair, that's why I don't like peer reviews. Sometimes I don't even like when teachers get specific with my essay—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - because they're just—they want—they expect everyone to write how they want you to write. Other people write differently, and I like to write creative and do different things. Some people don't like that so I think they need to start being more aware and appreciate people's different uniqueness—

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: - when it comes to writing, and not mark them down ‘cause it wasn't written how you like it to be written.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. I definitely agree, by the way.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: That was the last formal question, but before we close do you have anything that you wanna add, anything that you wanna return to that you didn't get a chance to say before? Or, anything that didn't come up explicitly based on one of these questions?

Interviewee: I don't think so. I think I really just have a lot to say about the project, but I think I said most of it. I just wanna turn that into—we can really get that going and hopefully it'll be helpful for some people one day. Yeah, and I also would like to thank [Instructor]. I don't know if she'll hear this, but she really made my experience awesome and great and really helped me with a lot of stuff and was really encouraging with this project and me going forth with this book. She was an amazing person I met through—as a teacher through this writing process and minor that has really been in my corner.

Interviewer: Awesome. All right. Well, thank you so much.

Interviewee: You're welcome.

Interviewer: Okay.

[End of Audio]