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Professor Terrill

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Throughout English 250 course, I have learned few new skills that are beneficial to my other learning here at Iowa State University. Similar to English 150, the content consists of the four modes of communication which is written, oral, visual, and electronic that are shortened to WOVE. While taking this course, I learned to understand myself a little better as a communicator and there are definitely many areas which I need to continue to work on. I think the two most important modes of communication I will need to continue to improve are the written and oral modes of the WOVE.

Written and oral influenced me significantly in my everyday life. Because written and oral are the most popular forms of communication, especially during college years when having to write my research paper and communicating with my professors or group members, I need these two aspect of communication to effectively and accurately send out my ideas and thoughts so that there isn’t any miscommunication. However, I think that sometimes it can be hard for me to address my thoughts and ideas on the paper due to my assumptions of what others know or not know already about my subject matter. This issue happened to me a lot in both of my written and oral communication.

After learning about myself that I tend to assume the knowledge of my audience, I need to start considering their side when it comes to presenting my paper or depicting the meaning of a visual as one of the assignments in English 250. There are so many weaknesses to my writing that I hope to improve in the future. So many times in my paper, I would mention something and not completely explain what it is or why it may be relevant to the whole purpose of my paper. I will need to clearly explain things that are not familiar with my audience instead of assuming that they already know it. I also tend to jump around a lot with ideas throughout my paper. So one of my goal is to improve my pattern of organization and presenting a focused thesis and establishing a clear purpose for writing.

Another thing that I struggled the most in writing was formatting my citations although we have gone over it so many times both from English 150 and 250. I still have difficulty trying to accurately cite my sources. However, toward the end of the semester of English 250, I have gotten the chance to practice them even more because of the documented essay that was assigned. As a class, professor Terrill has shown us ways to cite our sources through library’s article indexes and databases. This strategy truly has helped me cite my sources correctly and more efficiently. I acknowledged that this tool provide a lot more than just help citing the articles I found on the library websites though. Unlike before, I didn’t use this to my advantage and I will definitely continue to use the library’s article indexes and databases in my future, especially for research papers.   
 As I mentioned, I also need to enhance my speaking skills which being the oral mode of WOVE. Similar to writing, I obtain the habit of jumping around on my thoughts and many time I will forget what I am going to say. This may be due the nervousness before I speak in front of a crowd. Having notes that are ordered of the things I will be talking about on my presentation does really help to diminish the distractions from other ideas on my mind. In spite of the fact that I struggle in my oral presentation, I find it useful for my future career. Having to speak in front of the class builds up the confidence and make ways for me to reconstruct my attitude and personality toward public speaking.

In confession, I stumbled throughout English 250 mostly from writing essays due to the lack of planning and drafting. These struggles will however benefit me in the future and to learn from the mistakes that I have enacted. I will also make use of the Writing and Media Center and my professor more to improve the qualities of my future essays and speeches.