

Chelsea Adler
April 28, 2011
CGS Team B

My Final Reflection

My freshman year in the College of General Studies has been, eye-opening, empowering and at times, a struggle. All the classes I have taken had helped me grasp a deeper understanding of the liberal arts as a whole. Humanities and Rhetoric had definitely contributed to making me a well-rounded individual. These courses taught me there is a lot more to a story, play, or poem than the text on the page in front of me.

Rhetoric 101 and 102 had definitely helped me become a better critical reader. Professor Pierce taught me to question what I have read and not just simply take the text for what it is. She had also taught me to take chances when writing and to experiment in different writing styles. I was originally a timid writer and had no confidence in my paper ideas, but Pierce's encouragement and her flexibility in choosing certain topics built my confidence as a writer. In Rhetoric I was also presented with the challenge on writing a research paper about an event in American History. I was pleased to find out that I can propose my own topic and outline what I wanted to write about. This empowered me and I was excited to write my paper on the "Little Rock Nine Crisis". This research project re-stimulated my interest in History that I had missed and it invited me to take advantage of Boston University's library website. I learned all the ways to find certain information through the website and also learned how it works! I also had enjoyed the other works I read or watched and wrote responses for. I especially enjoyed the documentary "Wordplay", it was a fascinating observation on how crossword puzzles can be a subculture. I am currently working on my ethnography paper on the Black Student Union at BU. I already am surprised about how much of a subculture it really is and even as minority they stand strong and share a tight bond. The Peer Review was always helpful because it gave me more feedback. I received my peers comments to compliment Professor Pierce's advice. Rhetoric has definitely shaped me to be a better writer and will continue to help me throughout the rest of college.

Humanities 101 and 102 had taken me through the literary, artistic, and philosophical movements. From the times of the Ancient Greeks up to the literary works of today, everything that I had read has enhanced my education in understanding the ideas of the culture at the time. What I have learned from Humanities is to relate what I have read with the time period it was written in and what was happening in other aspects of the world beyond the literature. An example would be one of my favorite readings, "Madame Bovary". Besides the fact that I enjoyed reading the story it related to the Realist literary movement at the time. The story was about average middle class people experiencing everyday problems. What Dr. Coffman had pointed out to me was that the realist perspective was not just in what we have read but it was a movement in art, such as the, development of photography or in cinema, such as, "The Bicycle Thief". Everything that was taught in Humanities all linked together. Coffman brought art, literature, and cinema under one overall idea or movement. I enjoyed studying and analyzing the painting "The Lodge" by Mary Cassatt. It really taught me how to look at all aspects of the painting and what it had taken to paint it. I did not just simply describe the painting I analyzed the construction of it. I studied the meaning behind it as well as the artist's attitude and perspective. I studied the time period and the setting where it was produced. In the end I grasped a full understanding of the painter, the style, and the piece itself. Dr. Coffman has definitely challenged me this year in how I analyze works and how I write. He taught me to be more thorough and organized in my writing.

Though at times very challenging these courses helped me become a better reader, writer, and overall student. There is still much more to improve in my writing and the way I read certain works, but I have definitely already seen major growth in both areas. I could not have developed or improved in the liberal arts without the help of Professor Pierce and Dr. Coffman. I will take what I have learned throughout the next three years at Boston University.