Reflection on Research Project

Brianna Hunter

Northern Marianas College

Reflection on Research Project

This research paper was not only interesting to write, but also very educational as I had learned how to write academically and learned how to research for sources that were relevant to my topic. My topic, the 2016 US Presidential Elections and the chances of Donald Trump winning was very interesting and I truly enjoyed collecting different forms of information on the subject. I feel I am happy with this topic, and would not change it had I the chance to.

By writing different essays throughout the semester that focused on different aspects of the final paper, it had made the process all the better. The method in which we wrote the research paper was very helpful, as the different components had all fit together perfectly in the end. It was not only easier to organize the paper through this method; it was beneficial as the method promoted time management and provided practice on how to write academically, both skills that I was not strong at previously. I did not know about the use of the words “student researcher” until much later in the semester, as I had refrained from referring to myself altogether and plainly analyzed sources in the different essays.

Although I wished I had realized the use of “student researcher” sooner, it was alright as I had focused more on analyzing what I was searching. This is a skill that I had definitely sharpened with every essay I wrote, and I know for sure that I will be able to use this skill for the future, in English and Literature classes to come. I believe that my strongest writing skill gained after this class would be how to write in APA style. Classes that I have had in high school all use MLA, so the journey into APA was much smoother than I had imagined it would be with the assignments given in this class. I may not know everything there is to know about writing in APA style, but I am confident enough to write more research papers now that I have had ample practice.

While I am satisfied with my research paper results, I feel there is always more information to collect, especially with the topic I have chosen. Although I would like to collect more information, I feel the paper would drag on instead of being succinct an informative. Some of the most important sources to the research paper included the congressional records, as they were straight-to-the-point opinions from voters, and stood in place of formal interviews that I decided not to have.

Additionally, one of the problems I have encountered was the plagiarism reports. After receiving multiple reports of over 20%, I had realized that I was using too many quotations instead of summarizing and paraphrasing. I then switched over to paraphrasing and summarizing for the research paper. In the future, I will definitely take note to watch out when I use direct quotations too much.

Of the materials provided to strengthen knowledge on the different types of essays, the documents and sites were the most helpful. The examples of papers and powerpoints of previous students were also excellent in pointing me in the right direction. All materials provided were in their own different ways helpful, as they provided guidance and explanations.

This research paper was much easier than I thought it would have been. At the beginning of the semester, I was intimidated by the whole “it has to be 5-7 pages,” and now I find myself laughing that my paper is much longer. I appreciate the work methods directly and indirectly presented in this course, as the essays did help in putting the final paper together in the end. I truly have learned many skills that I am sure will be used in my future career and as I go on to major in English.