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Final Paper [Liberal Arts: Social Science and Humanities]

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CUNY La Guardia Community College

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LIF 101 – The Final Paper

This assignment was created for LIF101 (First Year Seminar for Liberal Arts), which is a baseline course taken by students (typically in their first semester) in Liberal Arts: Social Science and Humanities (including the options) and Fine Arts. Students in this course have wide-ranging abilities, given that they may be in ESL or have transferred in advanced writing courses. As such, the final assignment needs to serve the goals of the course while not penalizing students based on their level of academic preparation. Similarly, the integrative learning rubric has several very different dimensions, and connecting them all in one assignment is not easy. This assignment is my first attempt at providing more structure (to support my ESL students), connecting work done throughout the semester (so not overburdening those with less college experience), and explicitly addressing each of the dimensions of the integrative learning rubric.

The topic addresses the goals of the course “to introduce students to the liberal arts, help students transition to campus culture, develop a better understanding of the learning process, and acquire essential academic skills.” They explore campus opportunities and resources, research career options, and investigate possible transfer schools during the semester, and then tie these elements together in the assignment presented here.

Students complete elements of this paper throughout the semester as individual reflection papers and/or ePortfolio pages, and then bring their research together in this final paper. It is submitted both as an essay and as an ePortfolio page, and it is the ePortfolio page which is deposited for assessment purposes. The final paper is worth 20% of their final grade, with an additional 5% available for the draft (which is peer reviewed by LIB200 students).

In developing this assignment, I participated in a mini-grant (run by Ian Alberts, Reem Jaafar, and Habiba Boumlik) connecting LIB200 to FYS, and had capstone students peer review their final paper drafts. I also workshopped this in the assignment workshops run by Chris Schmidt and Karen Miller. These allowed me to ensure I was also touching on the digital ability through integrating two or more forms of media (image and text on the ePortfolio platform) while also assessing if the student artifacts generated by this prompt did, in fact, meet the dimensions of the rubric.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The First Year Seminar is required of all new students majoring in Liberal Arts: Social Science and Humanities. Its goals are to introduce students to the liberal arts, help students transition to campus culture, develop a better understanding of the learning process, and acquire academic skills. Taught by liberal arts faculty and supported by peers, advisors, co-curricular professionals, this course addresses issues related to contemporary college life and majors within liberal arts.

Part of LaGuardia’s First Year Experience, this course is designed to assist incoming students majoring in Liberal Arts (Social Science and Humanities) to make a successful transition to their

major and college life. The course's pedagogy reflects current First Year Seminar practices, and its discipline-based content develops students' strong and persistent connections to the College and to the goal of achieving academic, personal, and professional success. This is a three-credit course. It entails three classroom hours with the instructor and one studio hour, in which the students work with a Student Success Mentor (SSM) to create and develop their e-Portfolio and apply concepts discussed during lectures. The instructor and the SSM work closely together to offer a unified learning experience for the students.

Instructional Objectives:

The following instructional objectives are the goals of the course:

1. Introduce students to the foundational knowledge, key concepts, and habits of mind of the liberal arts, including close examination of appropriate texts.
2. Familiarize students with the types of research and methods utilized in the liberal arts.
3. Familiarize students with the concepts of ethics and values related to liberal arts.
4. Provide students with fundamental writing, reading and speaking opportunities necessary to develop essential skills for college success.
5. Support new students' transition to college by orienting them to College purposes, policies and culture, and structuring engagement with faculty, staff, and other students.
6. Familiarize students with key academic support resources related to student life and engage them in using these resources to advance academic success.
7. Connect students with their advising team, which will guide them in setting goals, exploring educational and career options, and developing an individualized educational plan.
8. Provide students with sustained opportunities to cultivate academic habits of success.
9. Design opportunities for students to situate and contextualize their learning by making connections across disciplines, to prior learning, and to non-academic learning experiences, including co-curricular learning.
10. Guide students' exploration and collaboration across the contours of global diversity as manifested at LaGuardia Community College.

Final Paper

What are your plans after you graduate from LaGuardia, and how will you get there?

For the purposes of this assignment, you should pick a specific career (or field of interest). If you're not certain about what you want to do, then pick one for the purposes of this assignment so you can fully explore what this particular choice would involve. Use the ePortfolio pages and reflective essays you have completed this semester for ideas and examples. Your paper should contain the following:

- 1) An introduction in which you lay out your ultimate goal (career or field) and its importance (relate to today's society and/or your interests)
- 2) One or two paragraphs explaining what this career or field entails (use two or more sources, cited correctly). You might consider such questions as: What daily tasks will you be engaged in? What skills are required? Where you might work? How many positions are there and what is the outlook for the career? Why do you think this is a good career choice for you?
- 3) One paragraph outlining how you will obtain the qualifications you need to reach your goal (what qualifications do you need? Which 4-year schools/majors are you considering?)
- 4) One or two paragraphs outlining how courses at LaGuardia will help you reach your goal (be sure to draw upon courses taken this semester as well as future classes)
- 5) One paragraph explaining how co-curricular activities will help you reach your goal (consider events and activities you have already participated in as well as those you plan on joining)
- 6) One paragraph conclusion in which you reflect upon how your knowledge/thoughts about this field have changed this semester after completing your research, being sure to draw upon details discussed in previous paragraphs.
- 7) One of these paragraphs should utilize an image as a piece of evidence for what you describe in one of your paragraphs (e.g. photograph, chart, etc). The choice and placement of the image is up to you, but it must be directly referenced within your reflection.

Your response should:

- ✓ Be 6-7 full paragraphs in length
- ✓ Have a title
- ✓ Use specific examples and details
- ✓ Include a chart, table, or graph as a piece of evidence
- ✓ Be typed and double spaced. Double-sided printing is encouraged

Submission:

- A draft should be submitted by end-of-class Monday 21st May – printed copy in class and uploaded to BlackBoard. If you are absent, please also send it to me as an attachment to an email. This will be peer reviewed.
- An *optional* second draft can be submitted to me by end-of-class Tuesday 29th May
- A final copy should be brought to class (electronically) on Monday 4th June. If you are absent, post your paper to your ePortfolio (under "Coursework," "First Year Seminar") and email it to me as an attachment by the start of class.

The draft counts for 5% of your final grade

The final version counts for 20% of your final grade