

Interviewer: This is \*\*\*. It's Monday, April 1st, and I'm interviewing \*\*\*at the English Department writing program. \*\*\*, thanks for coming by.

Interviewee: You're welcome.

Interviewer: As I mentioned, the questions kind of address issues like your sense of yourself as a writer, how your writing has developed while you've been at Michigan. The first question is just very broad. How would you describe yourself as a writer?

Interviewee: I guess as a writer I would say I at first was very hesitant, hard to get things done, hard to express what I'm trying to say. I guess now, stepping back and being able to see where I come from and the experiences I had, like that very much frees me as a writer. I think that describing myself as a writer kind of hones in on the fact that for me it's very freeing and it's very expressive. My major and what other things that I'm doing are very data heavy and numbers heavy and very analytical. I kind of gravitate towards writing to be more expressive and be more creative, I guess, in that respect too.

Interviewer: That's interesting, and we'll talk a little bit about your major and writing you've done in that field. What would you describe the roles of writing in your life right now, when you think about expressive or other kinds of roles?

Interviewee: The roles of writing, I guess, for me are I feel like I'm a better writer than I am speaker or I can write—I feel like when I'm writing I can express what I'm trying to say and the meaning that I'm trying to bring out better than I can in a normal conversation or with data or with any other description. For me, it's saying what I need to say in a way I want to say it and how I best what to say it, what meaning I want people to bring from that writing. I think I can do that better than another mode, I guess, [inaudible 01:57].

Interviewer: No, that makes perfect sense. Thinking back to—did you say you're a junior?

Interviewee: I'm a junior, yeah.

Interviewer: Junior. Thinking back a couple of years to when you first came to the University of Michigan, how would you describe yourself as a writer in that first semester, first year?

Interviewee: I took [English course] – whatever they have you take. I came in with a lot of confidence because coming out of high school, I wrote for a newspaper and I did kind of a sports journalism thing. I was also told, "\*\*\*, you're a good writer. Keep pursuing writing," or "keep working hard." My mom's a teacher so I just kind of grew up around words and I really liked words. I came into Michigan thinking, "Oh, I got this. I just need to do what I've been doing and be able to grow with whatever help I can get." But I had no idea what I was doing.

I came in and my class was—my first English class, I guess, was focused around literature of New York. We read a lot and we did a lot of reflective writing, which was new to me, which I really liked at the time. But I needed to break down writing into simpler parts when I first came in. I needed to kind of go back to the nuts and bolts, I guess, because I think I got to a point before I came to Michigan where I was told I was good at writing or, "\*\*\*\*, you need to keep writing." I got real fluffy and I got real—it just wasn't as effective.

It wasn't saying what I wanted to say, but I was guided. I was told in high school that this is good, but it wasn't good. I don't think it was good. Looking back, I don't think it was good at all. I think that first year, there was lots of road bumps, and I didn't—my confidence was knocked a little bit, but in a good way. I needed to go back to the core of what writing was going to be for me.

Interviewer: That's interesting. What would you attribute—what factors would you attribute, I guess, for your growth as a writer, development in the couple of years that have passed?

Interviewee: I think that I would say I think the faculty at Michigan call you out on things, and they say, "What are you trying to say?" or "What does this mean? This doesn't mean anything to me. You have to make this mean something to me. You know what you're talking about but ..." I think the faculty and the classes I've taken, whether it be in the English Department—I took a couple of English classes my freshman year or I took a bunch of Sweetland classes or my Comm [Communication] class. I think they push you to be more definitive in what you're writing. I think that was a big thing.

I also think that just listening to people smarter than you is a big thing. I think I learned to take a step back and listen to what other people are writing and read what they are writing and realize that that was good writing in its own way. I could learn from that, I guess. I think that, depending on where you come from, you—yeah, I came from a really small school. There wasn't a lot of cultural things around me to learn from and to listen to and to be able to grow from. I think that was a huge factor for me.

Interviewer: Those are really interesting ideas. At this point in your college career, what goals would you describe that you have as a writer?

Interviewee: Goals. I think that I want to be able to write with more efficiency, I guess. I know that people always say that it takes you to get going or they have all of these writing tools. Like just free write for a long time and then kind of collect all of that. Certain things work for me and I have to be in a certain environment to write. I have to be wearing certain things. All of that has come with experience. I just want to be able to sit in a crowded room with a lot of people or sit in a silent room and be able to write the same. Just be able to get my thoughts out and get what I'm trying to say out, no matter the situation. Because I feel like I am less efficient in certain situations, rather I think everybody's like that, but I need to be adaptable. I want to see myself be more adaptable.

Interviewer: Interesting idea, yeah.

Interviewee: I want to be able to—this is a very long term—but I want to write something. I don't know if I want to write a book or I want to write—I want to publish something, more of a long term. That's in the future. That's always been a thing that I've wanted to do. I think the start is just to be more efficient and to be more concentrated on what's going on in those sessions.

Interviewer: It makes sense to recognize the goal in order to work toward it, right, than just sort of be named somehow. That's great. The next few questions deal with transfer or how your experiences in one class or one writing situation might influence you later on. Thinking about your writing experiences across University of Michigan, first, what do you think it means to write well?

Interviewee: I think to write well—what does that mean to me? I think it means to, I guess goes back to being definitive and being expressive in the least amount of words. I think that in my experience, we get really wordy and really fluffy and really—I don't think that's writing well at all. I think should have a cadence and should be very—when I'm reading something that I think is written well, I'm not like moving. But I feel like I'm moving because it sounds right and it feels right. I think that it's a big deal, as kumbaya as that sounds. I really do think that that's important. I think good writers can do that with such ease. That's something that I think's important.

Interviewer: Other factors in good writing?

Interviewee: I think that a good writer can start a conversation and debate things and have an argument for both sides and talk about it in all their academic argumentation classes. But I think that no matter the situation, no matter the argument, a good writer can present—it doesn't even have to be facts. It's just like the storyline itself should be for one side or for the other side. To be able to start that dialogue, I think, is important.

Interviewer: That's a nice way to think about it, yeah. A couple questions about the first-year writing requirement. Do you know if it was [English course] or [English course] that you took?

Interviewee: Almost positive it was [English course].

Interviewer: You mentioned it was a literature-based class—

Interviewee: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: - so that makes sense. Just generally, what were your experiences with writing in that course?

Interviewee: In that course. We started off with, we read a lot of books, which was New York based, but we started off doing reflective writing. We had like these—it wasn't journals, but it was kinda responses to weekly readings.

Interviewer: I think that makes sense.

Interviewee: He cut those off like the second week in the class. He thought it was gonna be too much or we wanted to focus more on the papers so that was kinda cut off. I didn't have a lot of experience with that weekly writing. Then we had four major papers. Those were all surrounded around the literature basically, prompts around what we were talking about. I remember one of the books was Franny and Zooey and there was a lot of in-class revision on all those papers. He would basically present a prompt. There was no kind of open—I'll give you an argument from this book. It was pretty definitive on what he wanted from us.

Interviewer: In thinking about your experiences in that class, how did it sort of shift your thinking about writing or how did it change you as a writer at all, if it did?

Interviewee: I think that if you were to ask me that when I first got out of it, I would have been very disgruntled because it was a class that, I think I struggled through it. I did well academically, but I struggled through concepts and all of that. I think I was stuck in, well, in what I was doing prior. I didn't think that—I mean it's hard with any of those classes, but a GSI [Graduate Student Instructor] or someone is teaching it. It's a small class, but initially I don't think that I appreciated what he was telling me, appreciated the things he was trying to get me to do. I always felt it was the way he was wanting me to write or this was his style. That's why I was writing that way, but I think in the end he was suggesting all universal things.

I think that it got me to be more open, I guess, to revision and suggestion. This isn't grammatical revision. This is big structure, the way we were setting up things, even setting up arguments and setting up counterarguments. I was like, "It's logical to me to write it in this way," and he wanted me write it in the other way. There was some conflict there. For me, there was some conflict, but I think that just came with not being a mature writer at that time. I think it opened my eyes to be able to kind of weigh that and say maybe this way is right, maybe this way would sound better at the end.

Interviewer: Interesting. Do you feel like there are aspects of that class that you're still incorporating in your writing now or did you see it as more kind of closed ended?

Interviewee: Yeah, no, I think there is. I think more conceptually from that class. There was lots of theme work. I think that helped me a lot. I think I think of those things now. It was just four papers and our grade was just based on those four papers. I think it was hard for me. Now, it's hard for me to be able to pull bigger things from that just because of the way it was set up there. Obviously, there was class discussion about the readings and the books, but maybe because I had the attitude coming in, but maybe it was because that I

wasn't that open to it. Now I don't see that as being—I don't see bigger themes coming from that besides kind of conceptual stuff.

Interviewer: That makes sense. It sounds like you did not take [Writing course], which is kind of a precursor some students take.

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: A couple questions about your concentration or major, what area have you declared?

Interviewee: I'm a sport management major. Also, I have that Sweetland minor in writing.

Interviewer: Within that concentration, have you had an opportunity to do writing in any of the courses related to that?

Interviewee: Yeah, yeah, I mean we have papers and all of our classes and group presentations in the executive reports. There's one specific class, I think it's just called Business Communications or something. It's very writing heavy in terms of, yeah, sport business, I guess is what they want to call each other.

Interviewer: What kinds of writing is that?

Interviewee: A lot of that is, so it's long reports and short reports. They start out with your resume and how to write an effective cover letter. It gets all into how to present persuasive arguments to a client. You can do all those kind of mock things. Sport management-wise, that's really beneficial. I think even, I think it's important to be able to speak persuasively and to do all those things. All of that is incorporated in that class. A lot of sport management work is—they want to see the numbers and they want to see the impact of A, B, and C and how that's affecting stadiums and this and this and this.

Interviewer: I would think structurally and both in terms of how you frame the argument, I mean there's still an argument there, but quite a different kind of writing from what you may have done in your courses.

Interviewee: Yes, and it's hard for me to switch gears often times, or it was hard for me to switch gears because I want to be kind of weird and creative at the beginning and do something with it, where they want you to kind of lay it out point by point.

Interviewer: That makes sense. Do you think the experience of writing in a course like the Business Comm course shifted kind of you as a writer more generally or are you kind of balancing one to the other?

Interviewee: I don't think it's changed what I value in writing and the way I want to be able to write. I think I've had to balance it, yeah, I've had to put some cards down and

play a game. It's like I've had to pick up some other things that I wouldn't normally do in writing if I could choose what I was doing, a writing that comes with the structure. Like you were saying, the structure of the report, all these executive reports that we have to submit. Even in these presentations and these arguments, I'm always like, "Hey, we should do," I'll say this and we'll have this creative element. I think all of that comes from taking other courses in writing and thinking freely. I think sports management professors are like, "Oh, well, this group was very creative and this group was ..."  
I think it balances and I think it complements well, but I think writing-wise I do have to play the game a little bit to be able to satisfy, I guess, both modes.

Interviewer: Interesting analogy, the card playing. When you're thinking about writing in your concentration area, those kinds of reports, making those moves to that different way of writing, do you feel confident? How confident do you feel in doing that?

Interviewee: Yeah, I don't think I was confident at the beginning at all. I was a cross-campus transfer into sport management. I was in LS&A, and so I guess beginning of this year I'm officially in. I've been taking my classes. I think initially, no, I wasn't confident at all because I came from free writing and let's talk about abstract things. I think making that switch was difficult and I still think that I have to triple, quadruple edit those executive reports because I need to be more direct. I need to take out this phrase because, really, it would be said better with just a one word. That's what they want, but it sounds better to me and it reads better in a different way.

Interviewer: That's interesting. Our next group of questions talk about your experience in the writing minor. You have just completed the Gateway course,[...]?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: In the fall, right?

Interviewee: In the fall.

Interviewer: Can you talk a little bit about the impact that that course had overall on your writing?

Interviewee: I think the Gateway made me—this is gonna be a little weird—but made more, like blended me more. I think you get a lot of experience in different mediums with new media and all those things that we stress in the blog and making sure you are being direct and are not painting language and doing all that, but making sure you're using the right thing. I think it definitely shaped me in that it gave me more variety, I guess. Yes, gave me more—I keep doing it—gave me more weapons in my writing thing. I think that it's diverse but even the group of people that I had in my class was really great. We had medical people and we had psychology majors so I think it was a good blend of that made me realize where other people come from and what they're writing and how they're doing this better than I am and how I can learn from that. I think the group of people was really important, I guess, for my gain in that class, I felt.

Interviewer: Kind of an interesting thing to note. I haven't heard that from other students. I think that's valuable. Did that class have an impact on your writing process in any way, did how you approach writing change from it?

Interviewee: Yeah, really. We were encouraged to prewrite in any way that you wanted to. We were encouraged any brainstorming, think tank. Well, we'd all use weird phrases for things that we were doing. I was like, "Yeah, I'll do that," 'cause you would do it and you would get points for it. The whole structure was very—if you're willing and if this sounds appealing to you, then you can go ahead and do it, but it's not a requirement. That setup was good for my writing just because if I needed it then I would go the four more steps to get what I needed. There was no pressure. I think that—

Interviewer: It [cross talk 19:10].

Interviewee: - yeah, and that's very freeing. When you're in the right process because they tell you over and over again you have to—I mean growing up, they tell you you have to—these are the steps. You brainstorm, then you prewrite and then you draft. Then you draft again. They have those posters on the front of elementary schoolrooms. I always hated that, like I didn't like that. I think that my process definitely changed 'cause I was free to move. It was really fluid to move back from any effort that I wanted to. I was encouraged and I like that I was encouraged.

Interviewer: Right, that makes sense. Still thinking about the Gateway course, what impact has it had on your sense of yourself as a writer?

Interviewee: I think that it gave me a lot more confidence as a writer. I think my sense of self had—I know what I can do and I know what I'm capable of because of that open environment. There was, like I already said, there was no pressure, and it was how far you're willing to stretch yourself and how far you're willing to go. I think it gave me a lot of confidence. I think it showed me different mediums that I can use to give an argument and that just goes back to all my other sport management classes. I've used so many things that we've done in the Gateway class or I've picked up little pieces of something that our professor shared. I'm like, "That's very applicable to whatever else I'm doing." A lot of confidence. More confidence and I think that it has shown me—I used to always say this and then I kind of got away from it because I thought it sounded very naive, but writing has a lot of power.

I think that we don't, especially in my major and people that I'm competing with for internships and jobs and all of that, we don't value that enough. I think the Gateway class showed me that. It showed me that other people in this group saw that and saw the power of words and how we put together language and how that's important. 'Cause it's about the simple stories we tell and the conversations we have that are shaping books that are written and ideas that are out there and people that are elected. I don't know. I think it's all very intertwined. That was a good perspective moment, I guess, when we get so drawn

into day-to-day stuff and turning in the paper and checking off the list. I think that was a good perspective from the Gateway.

Interviewer: That sounds really useful. I wondered if you might talk a bit about your experiences working with other writers in that course, how that was structured, what you took from it?

Interviewee: We had a couple—I think we switched groups two or three times. It was really beneficial because you got new perspective, you got new people to look at your work. A lot of it, all of the in-class stuff, it wasn't even us looking at each other's, it was just us talking about it, like, "Hey, I'm thinking about doing this. Is this a good idea? What way could I use this in a better means?" That was really helpful. My first group—I think there was three or four of us in each group each time. For my first group, we would send drafts so we if we had a video that we needed someone to—we would do that ahead of time or after class because in class we wanted to just kind of like pick each other's brains.

We wanted to see if someone had a better idea than we would in how we could use that, which I think—I've never done it in a class before. In-class has always been, "Okay, this is your time to revise," and "this is your time to sit down and get that revision done." I don't know. Something about that class, it was like a workshop 24/7, which was a good development thing. I know it helped all of us.

Interviewer: Did the peer collaboration include actually responding to each other's papers—

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: - or was it more for idea generation?

Interviewee: I think we used it in class with idea generation and kind of saying like, "I don't think this doesn't follow this logic," or "I don't think this is a good argument." But, oh yeah, when we would send each other our drafts or we would look at drafts of media projects or videos or précis or whatever, yeah, we would respond. We would come back the next class and respond orally and we would send them a written response. I remember we had some artifact of that critique. Again, like that was up to you. You didn't have to—I kind of pushed that.

My group chose to do that, but a lot of that was—at the beginning we were told to give everybody a written response, but towards the end of the semester you got points or you got points somehow for meeting in class or doing this. But you could just orally respond. You had to have some interaction, but I think some things work better for other people, but it was up to you. It was your choice.

Interviewer: That's great. The Gateway course emphasizes reflective writing in various forms. It sounds like that actually also came up in your [English course].

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: How would you describe your experience with reflective writing? What was it? What use was it to you?

Interviewee: I think at the beginning, I was like "I don't why I'm doing this," because it was you're talking about yourself to yourself and you're trying to explain yourself to yourself. It makes you a little uncomfortable because then you second guess why you're doing what you're doing, which is the whole point. I think it's a little—it's hard to do that first, I think. Once you get used to it or once you kind of dig into like we did in that Gateway class, for me, almost every assignment or every prompt or every project, I had to reflectively write in order to get myself moving forward or to push myself to do the next step of it just because I could see the reason why I was doing it. If I couldn't see that, then it was hard to motivate myself to do the next step.

Interviewer: How interesting.

Interviewee: I think the beginning to the Gateway class, I'd done reflective writing so it wasn't bad, but towards the end it became absolutely critical just for me personally because I needed to—all of it coming back to getting perspective of why I'm doing what I'm doing and what—if this isn't working or if this isn't working. When we did our electronic portfolios and we did kind of compile everything we've done all semester, and we put it all in this kind of website forum. You're constantly explaining yourself of why you're doing, why you did this project and why you did this project. You look at it when it's all done, and you're exhausted. It's the end of the semester, but you look at it and you're like, "Look at what I did." You could see every motivation of why you're doing—I mean that's a big deal for growth too. I think in academics and in my job or in whatever career I'm going to end up in I don't want to streamline anything. I don't want to do any of that so I think that's important for—it's like the writing, for me is really important for my growth.

Interviewer: Are you still using reflective writing, whether independently or are you still assigned to do that in any class?

Interviewee: This term no, because I am in strictly—I'm not assigned to do it at all because I'm strictly sport management as of this semester. But, no, I'm absolutely doing it. I think that, yeah, it's like a little crutch for me now, but I don't think it's a bad crutch. I think that I have to—we do multiple group projects and then, again, every class I'm taking five classes. I think in every class they have some type of group project or collaboration going on towards the end of the semester here.

In order for me to see the bigger picture of my group and to see what we're trying to do, I'm always reflective writing. I think that it may frustrate some of my group members that I'm so like, "This is what I wrote down and this is what we're doing." But I think that, like I said, I think it pushes me forward. I think it makes whatever we're doing, hopefully

makes whatever we're doing more insightful. It can push it to be more important or to bring some type of more value than it already has. I think it's kind of a crutch now.

Interviewer: That's great. No, part of your process, right?

Interviewee: Yeah, yeah, absolutely.

Interviewer: Good. The next couple of questions ask about the Gateway portfolio, and you just referenced that in talking about reflective writing as well. Actually, before we get to that, a quick question about new media writing, blogs or remediation project. If you can talk a bit about your experience with that and then we'll kind of move to actually call up your portfolio as well and take a look at it. Thinking first about experience with new media writings, blogs, remediation project. Did you find that—and you made some references earlier to it.

Interviewee: I think that it was—the remediation and doing all of that, being so heavy in the media at the beginning I think was a little bit of a challenge just because you're used to turning in assignment, A, B, and C and getting your papers turned in. But at the end it was—you were looking forward to doing those projects, and you were looking forward to working with media and doing the blog and adding a cool, funny link here and putting a picture there just because it gave something more life. I'm very kumbaya, but it was bigger than what it was. Like the projects that we were doing were bigger than just the assignments. No, I really enjoyed all that. I think it was hard. It was kind of clunky at the beginning just because you are finding your way with learning how to express yourself and learning how to make an argument kind of fit and not have any logical gaps within the ...

Interviewer: When you say, "fit," do you mean, right.

Interviewee: Yeah, I just think that it's hard if you don't do it, at first it's hard to have your argument flow. I think it's easier in media to not see a gap in your structure or your, yeah, the argument that you're trying to give. Like I just don't think it's—when you're writing, it's right there in front of you, but when you're using media, it's like, "Oh, I like that transition and that song is really fitting," but you're missing some big chunk. I don't know. I just think that ...

Interviewer: Sort of the logic of those choices?

Interviewee: Yeah, it's easy to let something fall, I guess.

Interviewer: That's interesting. Tell me about your remediation project.

Interviewee: My remediation was I was in [city] this past spring with sport management. We did this behind the scenes at the [sports event], and I met this guy. He was running this kids program. Throughout my trip to [city], we had to do—we were assigned through sport management actually, the first type of reflective writing I ever had to do. We had to

do a blog to document what we were doing. That's just basically how the class was documented. I remember my blog post was about this guy and the fact that what he was doing was bigger than all the bells and whistles at the [sports event]. He was like the bottom of the food chain, but at the most important part of sport in [city] and with these kids programs.

I took that and I made that blog post into kind of a human interest piece for [a United Kingdom newspaper] and changed kind of the mode in who I was talking to and tried to promote him and celebrate him in [city]. Then I took that into the media forum and did a, kind of like a minute-and-a-half spot on a television program or in a shopping mall, basically advertising the article or advertising him as a hero of [city] and all those kinds of things. I used images and some phrases that I used in that article. That was very cool 'cause you could take anything you wanted and something that you were excited about and take it from one step to the other.

[...]

Interviewee: I think that taking that piece, that [city] piece and seeing it through was gratifying at the end. I think it was difficult in the moment to kind of push my way through those steps, but at the end you saw the same argument but in a different mode and for a different audience. Didn't think you could do that. I think at the time I didn't think I could get to the end of it all. But it was interesting enough, you could pick your own topic and you could pick your piece to take through. That, I think, was important to be committed and invested in something long enough to see it through.

Interviewer: That's great. Now let's try and find the blog as I promised earlier, can you just grab ...

Interviewee: My personal one?

Interviewer: Yeah. If you can just—do you know how to call it up from WordPress maybe?

Interviewee: Yeah, I think it should still be on my ...

Interviewer: Then we can talk a little bit about sort of the decisions you were making as you did ... This may seem weird. As we're talking, I'm gonna also sorta be describing what I'm looking at, but it's really just for the transcript later so that it will make sense as we're going. \*\*\* has just called up her blog portfolio. There is sort of introductory text, and there's also a picture [...]?

Interviewee: [...]. Yeah, it's [relative's] wedding.

Interviewer: Oh, lovely.

Interviewee: It's one of their wedding photos, and it's sort of my favorite picture. I like my [relative's] smiling at the bridesmaid right next to her. Like I just think there's so much happiness in this picture. I love old things, like they look. They bring out character and bring something to—but I think that, yeah, I talk about the wedding photograph up here. Peering down my portfolio, it has a history as well a story 'cause my entire portfolio is based around we have a story to tell or we need to tell our stories.

My [relatives], their picture on their wedding in 1947, kindred 02:15 expressions of joy on their faces. This photo is the root of my love for storytelling. It reminds me of people whose stories were always the best. One of my assignments—I think it's one of my new media, my first new media project is talking about my [relative] telling stories, how that impacted why I tell stories and why I think stories are important. In my intro, I try to talk about why I was shaping my whole portfolio around stories and why that was important to me.

Interviewer: That's great. One of the questions actually asks what was the most memorable aspect of developing a portfolio. I think some of it was probably that. You want to talk a little bit about other factors?

Interviewee: Yeah, I think that it was, you got to see—so you could pick your own theme. I think a lot of people wanted a simple, professional theme in case they gave this to their employers, in case they wanted a recruiter to see this. I echoed that and I think that was really important. I stressed that—I think it's a movie line. I'm sure it's a movie line somewhere—things should begin by being personal I think. Stories and telling people your story is going to let them in and see who you are.

My belief, I'm very naive, but my belief, in the end, is that that's why you should get a job or that's why should be afforded an opportunity to prove yourself in some way. I wanted it to be a professional portfolio like my heading says, but I wanted it to very much tell my story and why I think stories are important. That for me was memorable because I wanted it to reflect me. I think at the end it reflects me as much as I can at this point.

Interviewer: The next question really was how well do you think the portfolio achieved the aims that you had for it?

Interviewee: Yeah, I think it does. I think a lot of work. Looking back, I've added a couple little things since we have done, just I want to keep it up. I think it's an important thing to keep up. I think it achieved what I wanted to and the feeling—I want it to be simple, but I wanted it to have a little color here and there. It's very structured and I tried to keep it very easy, but I wanted it to have a little bit of life. Like my education page has a Michigan photo that I've taken. I have my blog on here.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm, like a remediation project came from?

Interviewee: Yeah, yeah, so I talk about the context of my blog, and then you can click on here. This is the only thing that reflected me everything-at-the-table way. This is what I was writing and this is what I was doing and this is what I'm taking away from that.

Interviewer: Very nice.

Interviewee: I like perspective and I like take-aways, and I think that reflected who I was. I think that was achieved. This is like Disney—this is I did freshman year. I did it in [English course], which was a class about heroes. Then I included that 'cause it was a story so I wanted to include things that I was proud of that told stories and that told this is [...]. This is my video. For me, my take-away for the remediation was tales can be told in more than one way because this was—I've never told a story like this. Really, I was just telling the same story, just in a different way. Yeah, I think that it achieved what I wanted it to just because it was very much me. I wanted it to be personal while still professional kind of [audio obscured by other recording 06:03].

Interviewer: The last questions also deal with thinking about the portfolio. The question is the act of creating this portfolio, what effect do you think that had on you as a writer?

Interviewee: I think the act of creating it was very reflective in itself because we, in class, and as we were doing it all, we had a couple, just open rooms with [instructor] as we worked, but it was very, "Why are you doing this? Why do you have this tab how it is? Why are you using this picture?" Creating it was really reflective because you were making all the decisions and you were dictating where people could click. In my opinion, the little path you give them to click is another story, like you're telling them how to read your story. You're telling them how to walk through your story. That was really important.

I think the act of doing it was really reflective and it helped you kind of see a bigger purpose in what you were doing. It helped you see the importance of growing and becoming better and finding different ways to do things. This was very creative. Every click was taking them a different place, and that was all purposeful, and that was all directed. The fact that you could add whatever you wanted—there were some things that were mandated, but some things you could add what you wanted. I work for the [University of Michigan sports team]. I make videos, and I do stuff like that, and you could tell however you wanted. You could tell your story however you wanted to. You constructing it by yourself was a freeing thing, I think, 'cause you called all the shots.

Interviewer: Sure. Just a last question about the role that you think reflective writing played in how this ultimately came out or what you take away from it afterwards, still thinking about the portfolio.

Interviewee: I think especially constructing the portfolio and adding [audio obscured by other recording 08:03] like the writing, I think it was super important. I think that it helps me walk through because I—you had to reflect on who you were. I did a "Who am I?" page. I did a "What inspires me" page. That's all reflective and that's kinda what drives

you. I think this project in particular pulled out your motivations and your goals and your dreams without your realizing it. I think the reflective writing did that. I think that it pushed you to realize that you were doing something and you were doing some important, but you need to see that it was important. I think that achieved that.

Interviewer: Other thoughts or comments you'd want to make about the portfolio project or the Gateway class more generally?

Interviewee: I don't think you should ever get rid of the portfolio project. I think the portfolio project was great. I think at the time it was very daunting. I think I did a bunch of blog posts when we were doing the—during the class, saying like, "I'm scared to even touch it." But I think once you get to the end it's beneficial and it shows—if you let it, it can be a reflection of who you are, which I think is important. I had [instructor] for the Gateway class, and I think she's phenomenal. I think the structure is great. I think Sweetland has set up that structure for all those classes. The point system and the open environment and the very workshop feel is a Sweetland thing. I really appreciate all of that because—I don't know. It's easier to become better when you aren't boxed in to certain things.

I also think that we had a couple—I don't know what I should call them—we saw writers speak on campus. They set up some of those things, which I really loved. We had open workshops for the portfolio, which I think are really important. I think even doing those like open lab workshops with combined classes could be great. Like I said, my class, the makeup of my class was phenomenal just because it was different people from different walks of life and different majors. I think the fact that Sweetland and the minor itself is open to anybody is great. I think it pushes people to listen to each other. I don't think we do enough. We don't listen to each other enough.

I haven't taken the Capstone yet, which I'm excited about, but I couldn't be more happy. I was very hesitant to take a minor in writing just because—I knew I could get the requirements done. I didn't know how it would help me professionally, which is what I needed to get out of it. It's given me tools to be able to speak better, to show myself better, to show a better self, and going back to the reflective thing, to tell people why I'm doing what I'm doing or why I'm passionate about what I'm passionate about. I think at the end of the day is really important to convince someone or to show someone that you're the right person for the job or you're the right person for the position or even just the opportunity.

Interviewer: Great. Other thoughts at all? Anything that I didn't think to ask that you would certainly want to bring up?

Interviewee: I don't think so. I think the course, just the way the course is set up I think is really beneficial. I think that it helps, when you talk writing development, I think it helps writing development. I think that's the goal of it all. Actually, it's hard to quantify any of that, and it's hard to—in the sport management world it's hard to give that justice because it's how people feel and it's how people react. But I think, hopefully, you've talked to

enough people that they will see that the setup is important [audio obscured by other recording 12:30].

[End of Audio]