

Pedagogy Interview and Refelction

Throughout the fall quarter of 2025, I have been reflecting on the goals of First Year Composition (FYC). What do we want our students to gain from the course? Which practices will benefit them the most throughout their studies and in the world beyond? How do educators encourage students to reimagine how they think about writing? In the fall of 2025, I had the opportunity to take Teaching First Year Composition (ENG 510) while simultaneously working through the First Year Composition (ENG 101) course. This experience allowed me to engage deeply with these questions. One of the final projects of this course was to observe a professor in the classroom and interview them about their teaching experience and philosophy. Observing Austin Fricke's classroom alongside my work in ENG 101 and ENG 510 demonstrated that effective FYC pedagogy depends on student-centered practices that emphasize reflection, metacognition, dialogic feedback, and sustained engagement with the writing process.

Observing and interviewing Professor Austin Fricke's class was an excellent opportunity to observe how an instructor turns a classroom into a safe space where student voice is elevated and the theory of a student-centered classroom is put into practice. When I walked into the classroom, Fricke was playing music softly for the students to listen to while the warmup was projected on the board (Appendix B 1). I could see myself emulating the practice in my classroom and on the first day incorporating an icebreaker that asks students their favorite music to listen to while studying. Then I would take that information and create a study playlist on Spotify that the students could add to

as they liked. I feel like this sort of thing would benefit student engagement with the course as they feel like they are a part of the construction of the environment that they will learn in.

Beyond the ambience of the classroom, Fricke prioritizes student choice as they work on their writing. He asks, “What do you like doing for fun already, instead of forcing them into a genre that they’re not attracted to, or like hoping that I can sell them on creative writing? I’m like, what do they already love? And I’m like, well, that’s writing, analyze that” (Appendix A 2-3). Academia, particularly English, can act as a gatekeeper by policing literacy through correctness and content. This creates an environment that excludes “non-natives” (Gee 8). Here, Fricke is actively lowering the gates and increasing access. He is encouraging students to think critically about the texts *they are already interacting with*. This is important because this allows students to see rhetoric everywhere, an essential outcome of FYC. It is not relegated to official documents and academic articles but is all around us and ready for exploration. This practice elevates student voices and encourages students to innovate.

Fricke also discusses the importance of meeting students where they are on any given day. “It’s not about trying to find, like, the best instructional model possible. It’s really about how do you best relate information to the students that you have” (Appendix A 1). He prioritizes student mastery of concepts before moving on to the next subject. If students are to construct knowledge, it is essential that they have the cornerstones in place before trying to add more information onto the structure. Simultaneously, this can be an effective way to build trust with students.

If trust is foundational to student-centered pedagogy, instructors must also model the vulnerability they expect from students. Fricke spent much of the class that I observed taking students through his writing process on a large project (Appendix B 1-2). It is important for instructors to be vulnerable and share their own work, especially when we expect students to share their work. Building trust with students is important because researchers have identified an instructor's lack of approachability as one reason students use AI (Chen and Gong 11). By being open and willing to engage with students, instructors can help mitigate student reliance on AI and encourage them to participate more actively in the writing process. A student-centered classroom, therefore, is up to the professor to create, and it will lead to reflection, metacognition, and exploration of the writing process.

Fricke states in the interview that “this class is an opportunity for me [students] to grow as a person” (3). This growth comes through reflection. We started out the term in ENG 101 and ENG 510 by deconstructing the writing myths we learned throughout our education. In other words, we started the class by reflecting on what writing has been like. As students progress through ENG 101, they continue to reflect on what writing is by completing assignments like the rhetorical situation, writing to solve problems, writing influences, backpacks vs. briefcases, writing log, self-portrait, and discourse communities. The class culminates in an ePortfolio, which prioritizes reflection and encourages students to think about how all of their work is connected and put into practice (Michigan 2). All these assignments ask questions like: How do students write? What is their experience with writing in the past? What genres are they familiar with (Appendix A 3)? What discourse communities are they already a part of? All of this reflection gives students a chance to

think not just about their writing process, but to reflect on the preconceived notions they have about the world. This reflection should lead to questioning. It should open the door to student exploration of dominant power structures that might have been invisible to them. Reflection also allows students to “take stock of their writing knowledge by building awareness and regulation of their overall learning, not just about writing” (Winslow and Shaw 194). Reflection is important not just for students to develop agency and intellectual autonomy, but it also allows students to develop metacognitive skills that can be transferred to other classes.

Metacognition is an important part of Fricke’s classroom as well, with the goal that as students write and reflect they can “at least identify the positive transfer skills in it... They can write across the curriculum” (Appendix A 3). Fricke sees writing as thinking, and ultimately writing as learning, which they carry with them throughout their academic and professional careers. Students need to understand why they do the things they do when they write. This helps writers at all levels achieve success, and it can help show that even beginning writers are farther ahead than they might appear to be from the outside (Perl 634). Writing studies’ most effective tool for engaging reflection and sparking metacognition is examining the writing process.

Reflection and metacognition come together to help students acquire a better understanding of the writing process. Fricke prioritizes the writing process by taking it slow and encouraging his students to fully engage with each step. “It’s not about, like, moving them through the... content as fast as possible. It’s about having them comprehend things in steps and in stages. And until you’ve done that, you can’t really move on; you have to

build on it” (Appendix A 2). FYC can sometimes feel like it is a hoop to jump through, a box to check off, particularly when it is a mandatory class, but instructors should not approach the class in this way. This does a disservice not only to the students, but to the discipline. To ensure that students get the most out of the class, instructors can emphasize the value of the knowledge that is made in it. This is done by ensuring that students understand each step of the process as Fricke discusses, but also by emphasizing student growth over the end product. The assignments and concepts in FYC encourage reflection and metacognition, which lead to growth. Fricke said in the interview that he:

“actually get(s) really excited about... writing process. I shared a lot about myself today, but I get really excited because the students in turn are going to do that back in their own writing, and with a lot of them this is the first time they’ve ever thought about it. Over the next couple weeks, they’re gonna start telling me and expressing things about themselves that they’re excited to learn because they never knew those things about themselves before. That’s how I measure growth and engagement on projects. And then they start really start learning how to ask critical questions because they understand the personal value of it. And so like, this is kind of where I see the term from like, oh, I have to be in this class in English comp or in whatever class to, well, what am I getting out of this and why am I here?” (4)

Fricke creates a sort of formula that goes something like reflection = critical thinking = better learning. ENG 110 has given me the opportunity to complete every assignment that my own students will complete in the class. I have the time to fine-tune these and use them as examples in the classroom. Being open to showing my work and being

comfortable showing my shortcomings, my growth, and my reflections therein will encourage my students to do the same. However, students do not learn just from seeing examples. They learn from putting what they have learned into practice by writing a draft, giving and receiving feedback, and revising their work.

One myth that students come into FYC with is the idea that revision is just copyediting. As Bazerman says, “proofreading is necessary, but it doesn’t lead to deeper improvements” (52). Proofreading or copyediting are important parts of the writing process. However, they are the final stage after much deeper cycles of revision are completed. Revision means examining and determining the most effective way to change the paper to serve the goals of the rhetor. It means reading through each sentence to make sure it is saying what the rhetor hopes it to say, that each paragraph is connected to the main idea of the paper, and that the introduction effectively sets up the paper while the conclusion effectively brings all the ideas together. Revision is an iterative process, meaning it is something that is returned to repeatedly. “The first draft, and all of those which follow, are opportunities to discover what they have to say and how best they can say it” (Murray 611). While students will need to revise their papers, feedback is an opportunity for instructors to accelerate this process of revision and help the students to build the tools they will need to revise on their own.

Feedback is the most laborious aspect of FYC for instructors. Recent research into AI feedback has shown that while AI is effective in reducing the workload of instructors, it is less likely to provide students with long-term acquisition of knowledge (Baz and Aksoy, Deep and Chen, Escalante et al.). Therefore, instructors should resist the incorporation of

AI into the classroom, particularly as it relates to feedback. Fricke identifies the writing process as an essential mitigation tool against students using AI even for feedback (Appendix A 5-6). Simultaneously, it is the most effective way to facilitate long-term student growth and knowledge acquisition.. The instructor should use multimodality in feedback to facilitate deeper engagement with the revision process, focusing on content over mechanics, and finding the successes in a paper as well as the areas of improvement. Students should participate by completing feedback reflections. Feedback becomes a conversation that students are a part of rather than something that is dictated to them. Students have engaged more thoughtfully and deeply with a piece of writing while simultaneously practicing the work of revision. Dialogic feedback is at the heart of creating a student-centered classroom.

Student-centered has become a ubiquitous term, bordering on a buzzword, in education. This means that while it is often talked about in professional development meetings, it is less likely to be put into practice. Stenberg and Lee emphasize that “we inherited a model that equates the professor and specialist. The professor, first and foremost is a scholar—not a teacher” (327). This interpretation leads many professors to act as if they were a bank whose currency was knowledge, and they deposit knowledge into their students. In my classroom, I will not use this model and instead will use a constructivist pedagogy that is student-centered, elevates student voice, and focuses on growth over product. Students must actively engage with material and build knowledge; they must be the meaning-makers, not the instructor. My goal in this sense is to have, in the

words of bellhooks, “the courage to transgress those boundaries that would confine each pupil to a rote, assembly-line approach to learning” (13).

In the classroom, this will look like prioritizing student voice. As we did in ENG 101, students will reflect on their writing process and identify the factors that lead to their best writing. Rather than utilizing large summative assessments that are assigned at the beginning of the term and submitted at the end, assignments will be broken up into smaller, more manageable chunks that replicate and necessitate engagement with the writing process. They will receive feedback from their peers and offer their own feedback in return. It is important to remember that “how we envision these larger goals of instruction will influence how we read and what we look for when we read and evaluate student writing” (Straub 37). Instructor feedback will meet the students where they are and attempt to facilitate student growth. Students will revise their work, and in this way the classroom will prioritize growth over product. While this is a progressive mission, it is important to be wary of fad curriculum and instruction techniques such as learning styles, which are not grounded in research and evidence (Pashler et al.). It is also essential to create a classroom environment that is conducive to exploration and student expression.

Doing new things can be scary, but the work I have completed in ENG 510 and ENG 101 along with my classroom observation and interview with Professor Fricke has prepared me for what is to come. I am open to learning and experimenting because this work has given me a tool belt full of best practices that I can use to ensure that my classroom is a safe place where students can learn. I look forward to creating a student-centered class that fulfills its definition, rather than being an example of an overused buzzword.

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Appendix A - Interview

Interview Questions

- How do you communicate the value of learning about writing to your students?
- What is one thing you wish you had known before you started teaching? What advice do you offer new writing teachers?
- What is your teaching philosophy and approach? How did you construct it? Has it changed the longer you've taught?
- What lesson or concept do you get most excited to teach and why? Which lesson or concept do you think is most beneficial for students?
- What have you noticed is the most challenging concept for students to grasp?
- Do you have any concerns about AI? If so, what are they? Have you had to deal with any AI-related issues in the classroom?
- What has been the most impactful part of teaching for you?
- What has been the most effective tool to bring all learners to the table?

Interview Transcript – Austin Ficke

Jordan 00:00

What is one thing you wish you'd known before you started teaching?

Austin

That, I don't know, the approach to like trying to, really the kind of what I learned from actually doing a writing process here is kind of a reaffirmation that it's not about trying to find like the best instructional model possible.

Austin 00:42

It's really about how do you best relate information to the students that you have. So, I kind of stopped trying to develop, like I'm going to do this, these really solid lesson plans that, actually, are they in here?

Austin 00:59

They totally are. I can't believe I have this on me. But, let's see, I went, I have an education degree from Eastern, and to get your education certificate and teaching certification in the state of Washington, you have to pass what's called the education certificate.

Austin 01:17

And they want to know your entire teaching plan at a glance, literally everything written down to the minute, how are you going to build instructions for students, and it's exhausting. It is completely, what's the word? Unreasonable to expect any teacher to do that for every single lesson.

Austin 01:40

And I kind of shifted back to like, I might have an abnormal, I mean, main talking points, I'm going to hit this topic, and sort of this activity, and we're going to sit with it basically until it's been properly done, or until at least I feel like we've done enough, we can move on to something else.

Austin 01:57

It's not about like moving them to the... content as fast as possible. It's about having them comprehend things in steps and in stages. And until you've done that, you can't really, you have to build on it.

Austin 02:12

So there's not much more you can do. So to really just come in and individualize instruction to the day and to the students. And like in yesterday, when the whole canvas went out and everything, I noticed I just came in, I'm like, okay, we're gonna talk about this today.

Austin 02:29

We can't use canvas, but let's cook up a discussion. We'll just do it right now. So it's mainly just about relating everything to what's relevant to the students in that day. And that's how I would interpret content rather than trying to plan everything out to every single minute detail.

Austin 02:49

That's not, I don't know, improv, I guess. I don't know.

Mush

That's great. First of all, thanks for your staying at the time.

Austin

Oh, yeah, of course.

Mush

How do you communicate about the value of writing to students for this class?

Austin 03:09

A lot of students here come in from different backgrounds. Some are more inclined towards writing, and some really just see this as a general evidence. So my question is, what is the end goal for them to understand from this course?

Austin 03:30

So part of the writing that they do in the morning is part of it. Half of them are, I would say all of them are reflective in nature, pretty much. And it's about some students, like you said, they're ready.

Austin 03:44

They're already like, they're big artists already. They're big writers. Or they've at least had enough reading that they're ready to uptake that. Others are more about slowly making them become aware of the influence that writing has already had in their life.

Austin 04:01

They're like, oh, I don't value creative writing, because that's what they think writing is. And like, no, look around the text that are around. Do you have, what are the pictures on the wall? What cartoons did you watch as a kid?

Austin 04:16

What do you like doing for fun already, instead of forcing them into a genre that they're not attracted to, or like hoping that I can sell them on creative writing? I'm like, what do they already love?

Austin 04:32

And I'm like, well, that's writing, analyze that. And then, I don't need them to love creative writing, but are they gonna at least identify the positive transfer skills in it? They can write across the curriculum.

Austin 04:45

They can apply it to pretty much everything. So that's my main goal, is to know what writing is, and how they use it, and how it affects them and her. And if I can do that. They pass the class but I don't care really what format or mode or genre that happens to be you know they write essays on the class but that's mainly just because I haven't constructed an alternate project yet but they totally could in practice the same skills.

Jordan 05:18

What lesson or concept do you get most excited to teach and why?

Austin

I actually get really excited about you know the one I'm doing right now writing process. I shared a lot about myself today but I get really excited about it because the students in turn are going to do that back in their own writing and with a lot of them this is the first time they've ever thought about it so they're doing critical reflections of the self in a very open-ended like non-deterministic way so in the over the next couple weeks they're gonna start telling me and expressing things about themselves that they're excited to learn because They never knew those things about themselves before.

Austin 05:59

That's what I'm really excited to see. Because it's like that's how I measure growth and engagement on projects is like both by excitement level or like, you know, but also like the questioning. And then they start, really start learning how to ask critical research and questions because they understand the personal value of it.

Austin 06:22

And so like, this is kind of where I see the term from like, oh, I have to be in this class in English comp or in whatever class to, well, what am I getting out of this and why am I here? And then they kind of, you know, they buy, they get out of like the product mindset of them trying to get a 4.0 or a 3.5 or whatever because that's what I need to.

Austin 06:46

This class is an opportunity for me to grow as a person. So I just like seeing it out of my students. It's exciting.

Mush

What have you noticed is the most challenging concept for students who grasp in this class so far?

Austin 07:03

Constraints in the rhetorical situation is very hard for them to identify constraints. They get it confused with response a lot of the time. And it's hard because constraint is hard to identify in a text because it's about like what didn't happen.

Austin 07:20

And it's hard to know like what's relatively important about what didn't happen or what can't happen because it's a lot of really knowing a genre and knowing the possibilities and knowing what wasn't possible.

Austin 07:37

So it takes a huge amount of genre awareness that English 101 students don't really have developed yet. So I guess I would encourage them to, I tell them to do genres they already know really well or really wanna know more about but they always struggle with that one.

Austin 08:01

and I used to think discourse communities but I was just teaching it wrong but constraints has been consistently tough for students okay what was um what was wrong with the discourse community I was just I didn't understand it well so I had to go back to wasn't um actually it was G a G the article that Dan was using in the class was an article by G and it is really really on the nose and like it's great but G later published like a revised form of that article that cleared up a lot of the elements that were confusing to me and actually this

right here is working through with this whole thing oh nice so I was like trying to understand What is genre to students?

Austin 08:58

So the genre of discourse communities was what they were not getting, which genre is not a category of stuff. It's not like a category of descriptors, like sci-fi is time travel, space travel, human transmogrification or transmutation or whatever.

Austin 09:18

Those are just identifiers and artifices that we use to talk about science fiction. What science fiction really is, is an idea around which the authors will congregate. It's like a fire, it's like a fire.

Austin 09:38

It's a camping fire around people gathering. They share stories. This fire is blue. This fire has salmon. This fire has asparagus or whatever. And that's why they're there, because they're talking about the relationship between technology and humanity.

Austin 09:56

And that's what science fiction is. And then they just use different tools to discuss it. So until I knew what genre was, I couldn't tell them what genres of communication were and why discourse communities form and how, because they're drawn to common ideas, but they use genres as the features that they use to discuss those ideas.

Austin 10:29

And it's also conceptual that there's like, there's not an example of this you can hold in your hand. Like it's all conceptual. So that was really hard.

Jordan

That's a great image.

Austin

Thank you.

Jordan 10:44

Yeah, that works really well. I like that. I guess it's a bit of a shift, but do you have any concerns about AI? If so, what are they? Have you had to deal with any AI related issues in the classroom?

Austin

Not really, currently, you know, they've been freaking about this in the department for the past year or so.

Austin 11:03

But it hasn't been a problem in the class since they do so much of their writing in process, bit by bit in the class.

Austin 11:25

Like Dan's already done most of the work to mitigate them using AI to turn in an assignment. They might use it to synthesize their stuff together. But like honestly, at the end of the day, there's no way for us to prove whether or not they did.

Austin 11:39

Something I like to point out is that the more AI writing is out there, the more students will replicate it. So like even the, you know, the M dashes or the... the prepositional phrases that it likes to use, like students are going to emulate it subconsciously if it's just in their environments.

Austin 12:02

The detectors aren't going to work, so it's just about, you know, if they're writing the process a bit every day and at the end for their big projects that turn into essay, they just have to put it all together, they want to put it all together, they've already done all the work, they don't feel the need to do it.

Austin 12:18

So it's mainly just about giving them enough time and scaffolding the project so that they don't want to use it. I did a bunch of research on this for college in the high school that I do in one of our other programs, and it's like, you know, even if you create an AI-friendly environment and you like teach them to use certain AI tools and how to use them, and you allow them to use it on final projects,

Austin 12:47

less than a third of students will even do it. And if, you know, I say in the syllabus, you're not allowed to use AI in here anyway, and I don't have an environment that they feel constrained that they would have to, because the reason they do it is because they get stressed, they run out of time, they don't have time to think about it, but if you give them time to think, you give them time to write,

Austin 13:11

and they don't want to already, it doesn't really become an issue. And if someone does turn to me, I'm like, this does really sound like AI, I say back to them, I'm like, you need to rewrite to your audience better, sounds like AI writing, so I just have them redo the paper and turn it in.

Austin 13:33

Because I would never want to be in a situation like, bring to the Dean and get someone to expel or ruin their transcript, because I thought they used AI when there's no way to

definitively prove it, but I think I've only ever had to do that for like a discussion response or something, a couple small things.

Austin 13:54

But no, it's if you build the class properly and you encourage the students and like, you know Make them excited to be part of the project or at least give them the opportunity to do it It's really cuts down on it.

Austin 14:07

So it's mainly a structural Solution, okay, then a punitive one at the end, right?

Mush

What has it been the most impactful part of teaching for you so far?

Austin

I've been teaching for so long It's really like kind of been like the breadth of approaches and I don't I Get to learn about something new every single time like I'm excited to come to class because I never know what students are gonna say or bring or what they're gonna write about Like you know,

Austin 14:50

sometimes there's many, many projects that I want to do or things I want to read or, you know, I get most of my movie suggestions from students' rhetorical situation papers and I read them like, okay, they watched it so now I don't have to or they really, really liked it and I think they have good taste or they at least have good criticism from what I've seen in the class so then I'll check it out later.

Austin 15:13

So I guess the best thing about teaching is what I was talking about today. It's helped me stay current and like in current events with, you know, what are the young folks doing, you know, and half my work is, you know, staying, you know, fresh on, you know, my own brand of like social medias but not getting fossilized.

Austin 15:36

I know the language that students use, you know, I poked fun at it today, you know, because everything you do as a teacher is always cringe but that's your power. You can use that. They know that. You'll never tell a funny joke that isn't cringe in a classroom.

Austin 15:52

So I use that, you know, I make fun of myself, I poke fun at what's going on but like the nice thing about it is that I, you know, I get to stay. I know what's happening and, you know, students will tell me what's going on on campus and like, you know, it helps us, helps them and me relate to each other personally because there's not this like huge gap of understanding.

Austin 16:15

Like the professors that have no idea what you're talking about or they can't relate to you because, you know, you're living in the dorms or whatever.

Austin 16:28

Like he has no idea what these students are like but they are like my opportunity to know actually what's really going on in the world from their perspective.

Jordan

Yeah. That's great. And then the last question I have is what has been the most effective tool to bring all learners to the table?

Austin 16:48

I would say choice. I, you know, they get to choose their top. in their directions, but it's mainly, you know, when they've been struggling a student that gets stuck or is usually like, I don't know how to start, is usually just asking and clarifying questions about something that they care about and that they can talk about.

Austin 17:08

It's usually like, they're just disorganized in their head or they don't know, they haven't written enough in a process to know the basic beats of how to get started. And so it's mainly, you know, my main approach is just sit down with the student, you know, one-on-one.

Austin 17:26

And this usually doesn't take but a few minutes and just learn how to hone in on, get them to hone in on what it is they wanna talk about or what they wanna write about. It's like, so it's a lot of rhetorical questioning.

Austin 17:42

And I tell them like, this is a rhetorical situation class. I'm gonna ask you a lot of rhetorical questions. They are meant to be annoying. They are meant to frustrate you, but this is the, this is the basic lens that we're going to be used to deconstructing stuff.

Austin 17:56

And I'm going to do the same thing, that you are ideas and I expect you to do the same thing to me. So like, I'm not free from criticism in the class either. They can edit things.

Um, I tell them that if they find a mistake in Canvas and they will, I give them free Eastern swag every time they do it.

Austin 18:14

You know, it's not like they can't just come up to the office and get it if they want to, but sort of like a novelty thing. Yeah. They get, they get a flex for the class. They're like, Oh, we've got a sticker or whatever.

Austin 18:24

It's mostly just for fun. Like students thrive on novelty because classrooms are usually just pretty bowl, dull and boring. So any sort of flashes or anything out of the ordinary is nice. But I would say, you know, clarifying questions, learning how to get them to hone in on what the ideas are, getting them to organize their thoughts and then giving them an environment where that is easy for them to do.

Austin 18:49

So if it's quiet, um, or they come into class, like I always have music playing at the beginning of class, I can help it because it's a relaxed, you know, sort of, you know, it's a chill environment.

Austin 19:01

They can come down and sit and they know no one's going to be interrogating them or like, you know, throwing, you know, genre concepts that say like nine or 10 in the morning, they have time to sit, calm down in space to think.

Austin 19:17

And then it's about clarifying things, what they already have in their heads or what they're already passionate about, rather than heaping on more stuff, get the sift through. I tell them like, you already know everything there is to know about this class, you just have to know what it's called, right?

Austin 19:33

And that's what we do here. So I, I tell them that they already know everything. I tell them that try to build up their confidence and I'm like, you already know, like we're just going to be examining your own life and naming stuff and then examine.

Austin 19:50

how they're connected to each other rather than like so instead of like I'm not the like pinnacle of all knowledge like I don't know everything in the world but I also like if I do that I don't have to carry the the pressure of having to know everything and having an answer to every question and so if they ask me a question I don't know I say that's a good question you should look or like I'll fight if it's like a discussion-based thing I'll you know I'll even take the time in class to do something in class or bring it back the next day so like we're all working together and it's a very cooperative environment it's not competitive and anything I try to get the students even stop competing with themselves or like this idea of themselves that they build up which is usually like the writer termination comes from like I can't do I can't write a story I'm like it's like well No one said it had to be good.

Austin 20:51

Everything, like shitty first drafts, like it's gonna be shitty when we start and so is everything I do. So like I work with them, I'm not, you know, I am the authority in the classroom, but I am not an authoritarian.

Austin 21:06

They just look, I facilitate stuff, I don't mandate it, so.

Jordan

Awesome. So do you have anything else? All right, well thank you so much for your time. That was really, really helpful. I feel like I learned a lot.

Appendix B - Classroom Observation Notes

- What is the classroom lesson focusing on for the day? Why?
 - Reanalyzing writing process. Encouraging the students to engage with and think more deeply about their writing process.
- How is the class time organized?
 - Ten minutes for warm up (not collected).
 - Direct Instruction about instructors writing process (rest of class, overran direct instruction time)
- What are students doing? Why?
 - Working on the warm up. To help them think more deeply about their writing environment. How much does external environments impact our own interiority?
 - Students have headphones in while working on warm up
 - Students work quietly, some are distracted by phones, but they may have already finished the assignment
- What is the instructor doing? Why?
 - Playing music for the students when they walk in. Create a relaxing environment.
 - Explaining the warm up. Let students work. Instructor says it's a nice way to get them focused on the lesson for the day and it gives time for him to get prepared for the lesson for the day. It also opens the door for discussion later on in the class.
 - Preparing for the next activity
 - Writing on board: unfolding situation, goal/task, develop ideas, resources, materials, plan/organize, produce text, sources, improve text, response/publishing.
 - Direct instruction: Bazerman writing process
 - Teacher explaining their own writing process
 - Discrediting myths—if I cant think of anything im a failure, writing is complex

- Showing rough drafts and also the writing process
 - Timetrain
 - Talks a lot about sources
 - Erikson’s Stage of Psychosocial Development
 - Focusing on literature
 - Using a novel to talk about writing process might be too long and unwieldy to get through in one class. Though the instructor is very passionate about his project. Could be better to use an academic piece of writing.
- What kinds of activities are students doing?
 - Warm-up: recreating or considering the environment that we create to start writing. Draw a diagram or picture your preferred or most common writing environment.
 - “Consider the following: aural (sound), social, signs and symbols, images, ‘coding’ of spaces, textures/temperatures, arrangement of space/objects, other senses—smell/light”
 - What is the goal of this constructed environment?
 - How do our chosen external environments reflect our own interiority?
 - Revisiting Bazerman writing process
 - Listening to direct instruction:
 - Some students are taking notes
 - Most are listening
 - The students on the edges of the room seem to be less engaged.
 - What kinds of teaching tools is the instructor using?
 - Projector—instructions, material to reference
 - Whiteboard—homework, class schedule, other notes
 - Direct instruction—stand and deliver
 - Independent Practice—students working individually on their warm up

- What kinds of multimedia are students using and to what effect?
 - Lots of students have headphones in and are on their phones before class starts it seems like it is most likely for entertainment.
 - Lots of students have computers, probably to take notes
 - Students were forced to use pencil and paper today to draw
- How well do students engage the material and each other?
 - Warm-Up:
 - most students are drawing, some students are taking time to think about it.
 - With direct instruction I feel like the instructor is saying a lot of things that are way over the students head. Maybe he is just trusting that students will be able to follow along.
- How well do students engage the instructor?
 - Nothing to start in the classroom
 - Nothing during direct instruction
 - Got a laugh
 - For the most part they seem focused
- What works well in the lesson?
 - Warm-up: creative way to engage the students and get them to consider their writing environment.
 - Instructor is very transparent about their writing process
 - Instructor offers EC for reading from the book list.
 - Tries his best to engage with the students and connect with them.
- What are students struggling with?
 - Coming to class with the materials they need (teacher had to give materials to students).