## Sample 1 – UW Student

## Introductory Reflection

Top of Form

When I was in fourth grade I learned how to write a paragraph. In fifth grade, I learned about the structure of an essay. By seventh grade, I was taught how to make a claim and create a coherent argument. My sophomore year of high school I learned about persuasion and synthesis in AP Language and Composition. Yet despite having an education focused on developing writing skills throughout my pre-collegiate schooling, it was not until English 131 that I truly am beginning to understand the complex claim and how to include relevant evidence within a research paper.

I decided to take English 131 because I have a love for non-fiction writing and I needed to fulfill a general education requirement. Initially, I thought that the class would be like any other writing class I had taken over the span of my education. However, the discussions and the writing techniques we have gone over in this course have truly taught me something new.

This portfolio serves as a symbol of my personal growth in this course. My writing has not drastically changed, but my thought process has. For the first time in my education, this portfolio has allowed me to respect myself as a writer and analyze my own writing. Before, I never attached any value to my writing, in the context of academic papers, because I felt like I had to write within many confines to achieve a certain grade or score. This made writing a painstakingly boring and arduous task for me to do, leading to procrastination and a general dislike for writing. But this class did not have grades attached to the feedback on assignments. That really helped me see my writing for more than just a grade. It allowed me to appreciate and recognize the feedback I received. Lately, I have been doing more expository writing on my own time, and by writing to my own prompts and claims, I believe that I am continuing to grow as a writer.

Within the scope of this portfolio, I will address the four major course outcomes and analyze how well I have actualized these outcomes. Each of the outcomes are distinguishable on their own, but what is most impressive about them is the ability for them to synergize. I have learnt that well rounded expository writers are able to include all outcomes in their writing. Additionally, when one outcome is lacking, chances are another is as well.

In order to demonstrate my understanding of the four course outcomes, I have revised three pieces of assigned work for my portfolio. To address outcome one, I am using my SA1 to discuss my development in recognizing an imbalance of rhetorical choices within various genres, and also in recognizing the rhetorical choice of the genre.  The mindfulness established in my exploration of outcome one connects with the mindfulness established in outcome two. In my outcome two reflection I will be discussing my SA4, the annotated bibliography for my research paper, as well as my personal growth on the concept of having a perspective on another perspective. Next, I will be using my edited MP2 to demonstrate my understanding of outcomes three and four. While outcome three focuses on the importance of a three-dimensional claim and logical claim, outcome four focuses on revision. These two outcomes are related because one must continuously revise their claim to describe new evidence.  Additionally, if we are not consistently revising, our knowledge will stay stagnant.

## Outcome 1

Top of Form

The first course outcome really focuses on understanding rhetorical choices that authors make to convey their claim and persuade an audience to agree with it. In class, we discussed many different genres how they each appealed differently to their audiences.

It was valuable to be able to analyze these genres separately, but also analyze them with respect to one another. In contrast to what I was taught in high school, I learned that for rhetoric to be effective, it does not have to have an equal amount of ethos, pathos, and logos. Instead, it should use rhetoric that is most effective at appealing to the audience, which may not include equal parts of each component. For instance, in class, we watched a Pepsi advertisement that oversimplified and capitalized on recent political and social protests. That advertisement was meant to persuade people to buy Pepsi. There was no appeal to the viewers logic. Instead, there was a creation of ethos involved and an appeal to emotions. By using known models like Kendall Jenner the advertisement created legitimacy and was relevant. Additionally, by using models of different backgrounds, the visual symbol of unity and diversity appealed to the emotions of the viewer and portrayed Pepsi as a positive commodity. This advertisement lacked a sincere logical appeal to the audience. Yet, it was still effective.

Being able to analyze an audience effectively and then using a thoughtful yet differing amount ethos, pathos and logos is the most effective way of conveying a claim to a target audience. Outcome one has helped me understand that everything that I write is intentional and that I can take a more calculated approach to how I write claims and persuade my audiences.

I will be using my first Short Assignment (SA1) to demonstrate my application of Outcome one. SA1 was a genre translation with the objective of taking a given text and clearly depicting the original’s author’s claims. The text that I was assigned was on the Diallo shooting in New York. I translated an opinion editorial on the Diallo protests into a political cartoon. In my writer’s memo, I explain the rhetorical choices I made within my political cartoon. In contrast to the editorial that was bound to being professional, and politically correct, I was able to make expressive and edgy analogies about the event. For example, in my writer’s memo, I wrote about how the political cartoon is “titled ‘Fuhrer Giuliani’ which directly compares Mayor Giuliani to Hitler” (SA1).  Since I did not have the word count to explain how Giuliani and his policies targeted minorities, I created a more concise and powerful message by comparing him to Hitler. I am aware that World War II is a sensitive topic, but I believe that it was used effectively in my cartoon to show the importance of the situation. To further create a parallel between Giuliani and Hitler, I formatted the visual platform that cartoon Giuliani was standing on as one of World War style with long curtains in the back and a single elevated podium.

Another choice I made to explain the circumstance to my audience was to make Mayor Giuliani’s audience, in the cartoon, all police officers. This directly sends the message to the viewer that Giuliani is associated with them and presides over them. What I thought was interesting was that the editorial and the political cartoon had arguably the same message, but the message was taken to more of an extreme level with the cartoon very easily. The editorial sent the message that Giuliani and his policies were bad, but the political cartoon sent the message that Giuliani and his politics were evil.

Additionally, I concluded that while the article genre did an excellent job at conveying specific facts of the event in a more logical way, the political cartoon appealed greater to the viewer's emotion and deduction based on historical knowledge to understand the same message as stated in the editorial. I believe that I effectively applied outcome one by being able to analyze the opinion editorial effectively, and then by translating it into a new genre with a similar message but a different process.

Similarly, I used a visual source and a written source in my Major Paper I essay where I compared an SNL skit to a Pew Research study on Trump’s voting base. I concluded that the rhetorical choice of the genre along with the rhetorical choices within each genre contribute to slightly different impressions on the reader or viewer.

Before these assignments, I used to only think about rhetorical choices within a written or visual work. However now, I think of the genre as a rhetorical choice itself. This expands my ideas on the scope of influence within all published material in the world. It allows me to see that the importance of rhetoric and really reflect on how I receive information and interpret it.  In class, “Handicapped by History: The Process of Hero-Making” by Loewen and “Constructions of Illusion” by Ramamurthy, helped expand my knowledge of the types of ways in which creators and authors influence.  Ramamurthy in “Constructions of Illusion” explained the significance commodity culture and colonialism and its influence on photography that we see in advertisements. Meanwhile, in “Handicapped by History: The Process of Hero-Making” Loewen discusses a different type of illusion. He writes about the biases created in textbooks and education systems that only teach one side of the story.

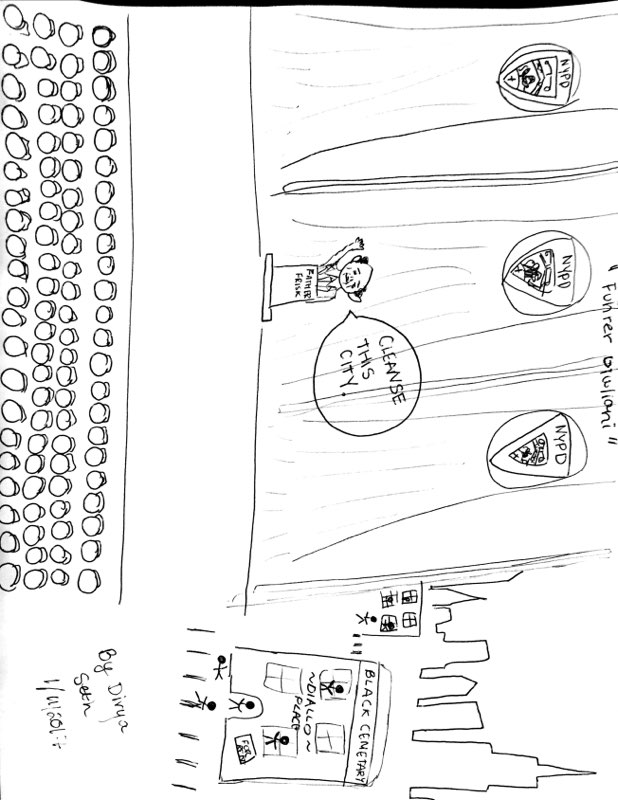
Exploring outcome one has improved my deduction and logic skills in many aspects. It has made me a more calculated writer and influencer (as I now know we all influence). By being more meticulous regarding the writing choices I make, my writing can be more effective. Additionally, by continuing to learn about institutionalized rhetorical choices, I can work on learning to challenge the status quo of knowledge and create my own set of beliefs.

\*In my file submission of SA1 on this page the final version along with the photo is shown first, the original draft is at the bottem of the document.

Bottom of Form

11 March 2018

English 131



The Message of the Diallo Protests Genre Translation

For this assignment, I decided to translate the opinion editorial "The Message of the Diallo Protests" into a political cartoon. The article itself is filled with an abundance of information, but I felt that a translation into a political cartoon could augment the emotional response a viewer has to the content described in the editorial. Additionally, there was a large focus in the article on Mayor Giuliani's response to the Diallo protests and his advocacy for stop and frisk policies. However, since the editorial was about the Diallo protests and the shooting, I felt that the article did not criticize Giuliani enough. Thus, another reason that I decided to make a political cartoon was to explore how I could highlight the importance of Giuliani in the context of the Diallo shooting.

The main point of the editorial was that aggressive police tactics, encouraged and spearheaded by Giuliani, have contributed to violent encounters between police and minority civilians as demonstrated in the Diallo shooting. The article uses specific rhetorical choices to be effective. However, one of the most effective choices is that the article is an editorial written by an unanimously agreeing group of writers who specialize in writing about current events. This article echoes what those who were protesting were thinking. It puts their actions into words and adds legitimacy to their movement. As this article is supportive of those who are protesting and critical of the mayor, it can be assumed that the readers are those who already are not in support of Mayor Giuliani and the NYPD. The article does a great job of portraying the Diallo family and minority community as being the "bigger person" as protests were not violent. It also is successful as portraying Mayor Giuliani as fully supportive of the NYPD as oppose to his constituents by mentioning all that he has done to support the police.

In my genre translation, I tried to illustrate the main theme of the article. As oppose to the opinion editorial, I believe I was able to evoke more of an emotional, gut-wrenching and clear reaction from the viewer in terms of who is the victim and who is the orchestrator of the situation. The political cartoon is titled "Fuhrer Giuliani" which directly compares Mayor Giuliani to Hitler. Although this is a hyperbole, the effect I was hoping for was that it would allow viewers to recognize that the Mayor's military was the police and his stop and frisk policy was just a fancy way of cleansing the city of minorities and causing an atmosphere of intimidation throughout the city directed at minorities. The banners in the background are inspired by World War II propaganda and the way in which banners were hung behind Hitler when he spoke. Additionally, his audience or followers are the NYPD officers because those are the people in the audience. In the speech bubble, Giuliani is saying “cleanse this city.” Essentially, I wanted to take the main goal of the stop and frisk program which is to cleanse the city of crime but compare it to Hitler wanting to ethnically cleanse Europe. This rhetorical choice I made was to make it obvious that Giuliani’s policies targeted minorities. I understand that World War II is a sensitive topic, but I thought that it would be effective in my cartoon to demonstrate the gravity of the situation. It is easy for audiences to become desensitized to injustice when it happens so often in the present, but audiences tend to feel strongly about past injustices like the rule of Hitler during World War II.

Next, I wanted to create a juxtaposition between Mayor Giuliani’s power and the impact of his policies one people and their neighborhoods. I labeled an apartment building the "Black Cemetery: Diallo Place" to directly allude to the unjustified shooting of Amadou Diallo. Ideally, what I was going for was a situation in which the viewer could understand people's roles in this conflict and make a larger connection to the ideological roots as well. Mayor Giuliani's program to crack down on crime made minority communities a target and his policy reinforced the ideals of white supremacy.

I believe that both genres, the op-ed and the cartoon, illustrate this conflict. However, I think that the article does a better job describing the specifics of the conflict in a more logical fashion while the cartoon counts on a viewer’s emotion and a historical background to understand the message.

Works Consulted

“The Message of the Diallo Protests.” 29 Feb. 2000.

## Outcome 2

Top of Form

The second outcome is to be able to collect and cite multiple types of evidence and use it in a strategic and focused way. This outcome is important because it involves being able to collect factually correct information and conduct research in an authentic way. This is a difficult outcome because it requires the skill of being able to pick out valuable information from a large collection of information. Something that I struggled with before English 131 was finding impactful evidence to support all aspects of my claim. In high school, I would often feel rushed to find evidence, so I would go use the first available evidence I could find. Therefore, I would feel like my own writing was unreliable because I was using evidence often when it did not apply to support my claim. However, in English 131 I have been able find better evidence and have been shown how to use resources that can help me find multiple sources for evidence.

The writing piece that I will be using to demonstrate my knowledge of outcome two is my fourth Short Assignment (SA4) which was an annotated bibliography of my research paper. As stated in my writer’s memo of SA4, I reflected that I needed to narrow down my sources and my claim, after my first draft of the bibliography (SA4). I was excited with my findings but did not want to force an argument relating political and economic power of fraternity and sorority alumni because with the extensive research I had done, it was not coming as naturally as I would have liked.  Therefore, I decided to focus exclusively on political power of fraternity and sorority alumni. This allowed me to use less sources and it also allowed my essay to be more impactful. Additionally, I was able to add in nuances about economic power without having to address it as a separate topic.

Furthermore, I was able to develop my writing skills in the context of outcome two by learning how to force myself to justify the use of each source and how it connected to my thesis within the annotated bibliography. I learnt that if I did not have a good justification, I needed to eliminate that source. As a result I was able to support my research claim with better evidence and add credibility to my paper.

In contrast to previous writing classes I have taken, I appreciated the opportunity to do research and then make a claim. In high school, I mostly had to make a claim and then find relevant evidence.

Another part of understanding outcome two is the ability to understanding different points of view. I appreciated our class discussions that compared distinct types of view on a similar topic. For instance, our discussion on the contrast between “Is Google Making Us Stupid” by Carr and “The Taming of Tech Criticism” by Morozov. While Carr discusses the psychological dangers associated with our trust in technology, Morozov discusses faults in Carrs’ arguments and how technological criticism is politicized, hypocritical, and anti-progressive. At first I could not criticize Carrs’ essay myself because I was persuaded to agree with it. However, once I read “The Taming of Tech Criticism” I was able to have a three-dimensional perspective on the issue. I also realized that there are different ways to have a perspective. Morozov had a perspective on how Carr used evidence to make his own perspective. Having a perspective on a perspective was something new to me and now that I know about It, I feel like a more open-minded person.  I have developed a greater sense of mindfulness because of discussions on readings like these.

Overall, developing outcome two is critical to my development as a reliable writer and a strategic writer. Having all the evidence in front of me helped me to develop a better plan for how I was going to write my MP2. It also helped me seek out all kinds of evidence and information will help me bring a greater degree of authenticity and thoughtfulness to my writing.

I still have work to do, and realize that I am only beginning to develop this skill. However, I am confident that I will continue to apply outcome 2 to my writing because to put it simply, it makes my writing more valid and logical.

Bottom of Form

**Annotated Bibliography**

The Greek Moderate: How do Greek systems within the United States contribute to the continuous development of political power of the white moderate?

Chang, Clio. “Separate but Unequal in College Greek Life.” *The Century Foundation*, The Century Foundation, 7 Mar. 2016, tcf.org/content/commentary/separate-but-unequal-in-college-greek-life/.

This popular source is an article that discusses elitism within Greek communities, and how that elitism finds its way into modern day politics and campus influence. Additionally, it discusses the influence that Greek alumni have on college campuses and what institutional shifts must take place, according to the author, in order to address socioeconomic and racial disparities within the Greek System. This source is relevant to my research paper because it contains information about the economic and political capital that members of the Greek system have, and why these members have it. Additionally, it addresses the benefits of being in the Greek system, and what that means to those who are excluded. For instance, when students who are in the Greek system graduate, they graduate with a tighter alumni network and leadership experience that they have been provided with from their chapter.

Eidenmuller, Michael E. “Mario Savio.” *American Rhetoric: Mario Savio - Sproul Hall Sit-In Address*, www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mariosaviosproulhallsitin.htm.

This is a copy of a famous speech by student activist Mario Savio. It relates to other evidence presented in my essay about “the Machine” at the University of Alabama. I will use a portion of his speech in my conclusion to provide an explanation on what can be done to combat the ideological influence of Greek Fraternal organizations.

“FSPAC-Fall17.Pdf.” FSPAC, 2017.

This is the most recent newsletter published by the Fraternity and Sorority PAC, an organization that donates to political organizations and candidates to “preserve the Greek experience for future generations of student leaders.” This source is important to include in my paper because it outlines the goals and focus of the organization, as well as includes information about the reach of the organization in terms of how many candidates it has contributed too, etc.

Ross, Lawrence C. *Blackballed: the Black and White Politics of Race on America's Campuses*. St. Martin's Griffin, St. Martin's Press, 2017.

This book is a popular source and teaches about race relations in college campuses in America. The author has been a guest lecturer at over 100 colleges and teaches about the ways in which campuses are still racially segregated and how administrations can work to create a more equal and just campus environment. Included in this source are many examples of racially offensive incidents that fraternities and sororities are responsible for. Additionally, it talks about why fraternities and sororities have the demographics and ideologies that they do. This is relevant to my paper because it discusses what the values taught and preserved within the Greek community are.

“The Center for Responsive Politics.” *OpenSecrets.org*, www.opensecrets.org/pacs/lookup2.php?strID=C00410068&cycle=2018.

This source is a website that list public information about all PACs. I have used it to do research on the Fraternity and Sorority PAC to see which political candidates, organizations, and parties it donates to. This is relevant to my research because I can compare who the organization donates too, to see if their donations support candidates or organizations with ideologies similar to those taught in Greek systems.

“The Nation's Most Virulent Hate Group Mounts a Recruiting Drive at American Colleges and Universities.” *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, no. 31, 2001, pp. 72–73. *JSTOR*, JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/2679183](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2679183)

This source discusses how Greek college students were recruited by white supremacy groups. It is relevant to my research paper because it discusses demographics of the Greek system and what makes these students attractive recruits for certain ideologies.

Valenti, Jessica. “A Call to Abolish Greek Life.” *Marie Claire*, Marie Claire, 12 Oct. 2017, www.marieclaire.com/politics/a29155/frats-and-sororities-should-be-banned/.

This is a popular source that includes data on recent events that have happened at fraternities and sororities that are racist and that target minorities. This source is relevant to my thesis because it gives examples for how ideologies within Greek organizations manifest themselves as physical events. There is a bias in this article as it appears that the article contains evidence on why Greek communities should be banned. However, the factual information is useful for the purposes of my research paper because it provides me for evidence with my separate claim.

## Outcome 3

Top of Form

Outcome three aims to help students like me be able to create nuanced and thoughtful claims that can be supported by smaller sub-claims.  This is important because it allows for writing to have greater organization because it requires the complex claim to include all five parts. These five parts are the claim, counterclaim, stakes, evidence, and roadmap. The claim that I will be using to address my personal growth in the context of outcome three is from Major Paper two.

Before I took this course, I did not know that a complex claim included a concession or counterclaim. This was informative for me and will allow me to build better claims as I continue to write in the future. I think it is important to include other perspectives in claims so that the author does not appear ignorant and so that the argument can connect to the rest of the world.

Writing complex claims starts with writing questions. When struggling to make a claim, I did my research before I made my claim because SA4 was due before the first draft of MP2. This was very helpful because I had a question that evolved throughout my research. After completing SA4 my research question was “How do Greek systems within the United States contribute to the continuous development of political power of the white moderate?” (SA4). Then I was able to answer that question with my claim which is, “By analyzing the ideology preserved through Greek organizations, the methods in which alumni organizations work to perpetuate it, and how student government in college can act as a microcosm for the U.S. government, it can be understood why political power within the United States has been held by white members of sororities and fraternities nationwide.” (MP1 Draft 2). Although I wish that my claim could be less chunky, it answers the question that I was originally asking.

Having a clear roadmap as part of my thesis was something that I struggled with in my second major paper based on feedback I received during our peer review session. My claim regarding the Greek Moderate had a lot of different parts and was very detailed. Before it involved both the economic and political power that those in Greek communities go on to have. However, after peer revisions, I realized that I had too many sources in my annotated bibliography to properly cover all parts of my claim within the physical constraints of the essay.  Ultimately, I revised my claim to fit a narrower scope, specifically just the political power that those in Greek communities tend to go on to have, but in doing so was able to have the evidence presented in my essay have a greater impact on my claim. I think that this is a good example of how outcome two is directly connected to outcome three. The sources and research that is done directly impacts the complex claim because it helps identify the scope and stakes involved. Additionally, it helped me to find acceptable counterclaims and supplementing evidence before I made my claim.

This has personally inspired me to make my writing more nuanced and complex. I now no longer want to just talk about one claim in my essays because I have been shown how I can tackle multiple issues that are connected to one another, and multiple aspects of a topic. Something else that we learnt about in class that helped me recognize when an author for one of my sources or an author from one of the reading in class was making a logical claim was the concept of warrants. Warrants can tell the reader what the unstated assumption of the author is. This is helping both with my writing and reading, but also outside the classroom. I have become more aware of the numerous assumptions we make when we speak to one another, and how sometimes they can create stereotypes.

\*MP2 along with its original draft will be put in outcome 4.

## Outcome 4

Top of Form

Outcome four has to do with understanding the importance of an effective revision process. Throughout this course, I have recognized that I have the most work to do in this stage of the writing process. To succeed at outcome four, evidence of multiple drafts is essential to prove that revisions have been made. Previously, I was at a school inside of an incredibly competitive program. Although revision was encouraged by teachers, the only person I ever felt gave feedback on my work was me. Peer review and teachers feedback was not a priority of the classes I was in.

I am excited by the amount of feedback I have received from my instructor this quarter. I really believe that I now know what I can learn more about so that I can write with greater clarity. More specifically, I can focus more on grammar and sentence structure. Additionally, I have realized that I write a lot like how I speak, and that negatively impacts the quality of my writing despite the amount of personal voice it brings. My writing style results in sentence fragments and sometimes incomplete ideas.

A student must understand proper grammar and punctuation to be able to create clarity and emphasis within sentences. As seen in both the peer and instructor feedback received for the first draft of my MP2 I struggled with clear concise sentences and punctuation. In my final version of the paper, I have focused on being more thoughtful in the mechanics of my writing so that my complex ideas can be more accessible. Additionally, in my MP1, which I had handwritten, I noticed that my writing had a lack of organization and contained incomplete ideas. This was also shown with the feedback I received from my instructor. This moment in time was particularly interesting to me because I was forced to write on paper because of my broken arm. When I revised my first draft into my second, instead of going back and rereading, then rephrasing, I found it easier to simply rewrite the entire essay. If I was to write a third draft, I would have incorporated the best of both drafts along with my instructor’s feedback. This type of revision was new to me because normally when revising I do not rewrite the entire paper. However, I admired this style because it allowed me to interpret my writing at face-value and then go back and clarify. When I went back to revise my MP2 for the second time, I used what I had learned from my handwritten MP1 drafts, and rewrote my entire essay, but used functional parts of the first draft. I believe that because of this, my essay has evolved into a more refined piece of work.

Overall, I have learned that the revision process never truly ends, and I am excited because I have learned a new tool for revising my papers. Additionally, I have grown appreciative of receiving outside feedback and believe that my writing has benefitted from peer review, instructor feedback, and outside feedback I have sought from my family and sorority sisters.

10 March 2018

English 131

The “Greek Moderate”

According to the North-American Interfraternity Conference website, “44% of U.S. Presidents have held fraternity membership,” and currently 156 members of Congress belonged to a Greek organization while in college (NAIC). Without a doubt, people belonging to Greek organizations dominate a large minority of our political leadership today. The history of American fraternity organizations began before the American Civil War as spaces of brotherhood for white Christian men. Post-Civil War, fraternities and sororities were successful as more men and women started attending college (Ross). College campuses have arguably always been one of the most politically active places in America with diverse minds colliding over a range of political and social issues, yet college campuses have not traditionally been open to those who were not white.

In recent times, diversity has been encouraged by college administrations and supported by U.S. regulations such as Affirmative Action. Despite a recent focus on inclusion in college campuses, the historically exclusive nature of Greek organizations contributes to the continuity of political influence that the white moderate holds within the United States. By analyzing the ideology preserved through Greek organizations, the methods in which alumni organizations work to perpetuate it, and how student government in college can act as a microcosm for the U.S. government, it can be understood why political power within the United States has been held by white members of sororities and fraternities nationwide.

The term “white moderate” best described by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., as a community of white people “more devoted to order than to justice” (King). This group is comprised of white people that are not overtly racist but aren’t actively non-racist. Additionally, the definition of racism that I will be using in this essay is as follows: Racism is when someone discriminates against another person or group because of their race by holding power over them and sustaining inequality between races. Although some believe that educational programs like affirmative action are proof of reverse racism, a program that seeks to redress the power imbalance between races is not racist.

The ideology that is preserved through Greek organizations is one that often subtly contributes to the reinforcement of white supremacy. The subtle rules within these organizations manifest themselves as overt acts of racism on campus. However, it is important to note that these ideologies contribute to the development of new. In current times, relics of racist history are still used in fraternities and sororities to uphold values of the past. Examples of these relics include paddles, confederate founders, and racial ritual language. Paddles were originally used to punish slaves without scaring them. Slave owners and traders did not want to “mark the backs of the slaves, and thus deteriorate their value.” (Bertram) Currently, new sorority and fraternity members exchange paddles with each other as a way of symbolizing sisterhood, brotherhood, and respect between one another. This is an example of how the dark history of an object is glorified within Greek culture. The ideological aspect that is thus preserved through this practice is one of not acknowledging slave history and denying racism. The object is glorified while the historical importance is denied leaving students ignorant of the past. Another example of how ideologies are passed down is through the heroification of the fraternal organization's founders. The founders of fraternal organizations are taught to be the equivalent of gods or spiritual leaders to new members of the organization. The picture-perfect history of founders often overshadows the racism associated with the founders. For instance, General Robert E. Lee, best known as the commander of the Confederate Army, has been designated as the “Spiritual Founder” of the Kappa Alpha Order fraternity. The fraternity founders were inspired to create Kappa Alpha Order by what they believed to be “exemplary values” upheld by General Lee. What is not taught, however, is that General Lee was a slave owner, who led an army in the name of preserving slavery within the United States. Another example is the glorification is idolizing Alpha chapters. For instance, pledges are taught of the heroic feminism of the five Sigma Kappa founders who founded the first chapter at Colby College. However, what is not included in the new member education curriculum is the acknowledgment that the first three Sigma Kappa chapters were shut down because of their inability to allow a person of color to join the sorority.

Despite the significance of Brown v. Board of Education declaring the concept of “separate by equal” to be unconstitutional in public education and overturning Jim Crow Laws, white fraternal organizations found other ways to keep their membership strictly white. The National Interfraternity Conference successfully sued the College of New York in the early 1950s over their effort to desegregate fraternities and sororities (Ross). However, after the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the government could threaten to cut off funding to universities if their Greek organizations did not open to people other than white Christians to join. To combat this requirement in present times, most fraternal organizations require chapters to submit pictures of potential pledges. This allows for groups to eliminate those who they believe visually unfit, based on the color of their skin or elsewise. Therefore, the aspect of the Greek ideology that is preserving white membership has strongly prevailed. According to research done at Princeton University, 77% of sorority members and 73% of fraternity members at that University are white, compared to only 47% of the student body. Another study done at Mississippi State University reported that only 3.8% of members from eight fraternities on east coast college campuses identified as nonwhite. Thus, there are still unwritten rules for who is accepted into fraternal organizations, and who is not.

The ideology preserved through Greek organizations has modern-day implications. For instance, in 2015 Sigma Alpha Epsilon brothers were recorded singing, “there will never be a n\_\_\_\_ in SAE.” Or when the Psi Upsilon chapter at Yale did not allow black and Asian girls into their parties in 2017. Or when Kappa Sigma at Baylor University hosted a “Cindo de Drinko” party where members dressed up as Mexican stereotypes and in brown-face (Valenti). Additionally, in many instances, when historically white sororities have pledged members of color, alumni from corporation boards, advisory boards, and nationals will step in and have the new member removed. Social norms and ideology within fraternal organizations regulate the behavior of the members. College students are easily persuaded and influenced to make decisions because the pre-frontal cortex in the brain is not fully developed until the age of twenty-five. Therefore, it takes less for an ideology to become a lifestyle for a college student. Therefore, these students can internalize these ideologies even through graduation, because they are part of their everyday lifestyle. This makes students in the Greek community easy targets for racist, sexist, and homophobic advertising. In 2001, The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education published an article discussing how the National Alliance, one of the most powerful and dangerous white supremacist groups in the United States, targeted white fraternities to recruit new members by sending literature and pamphlets to fraternities all over.

Perhaps what is most interesting, is the political power that those in Greek organizations hold across college campuses, disproportionate to the demographic of the rest of the student body. A notable example is “the Machine” at the University of Alabama. The Machine “is a coalition of twenty-eight white fraternities and sororities that uses its collective power to run the University of Alabama student government, determine which monies go to which campus activities…and sometimes influence matters off-campus.” (Ross). The Machine was and currently is successful because it helps gets its own members elected into student government and holds a large voting bloc. According to Lawrence Ross, an author specializing in race relations, the Machine is also known as a system where those who would like to be politicians get there training. Many of the Machine’s former members are now important members of Alabama’s political hierarchy.” (Ross). These members include Senator Richard Shelby of Alabama and Congressman Jack Edwards for instance. The power that Greek communities have over the general student body is not just limited at the University of Alabama, it can be seen from coast to coast. All Panhellenic and North American Interfraternity Conference fraternities and sororities offer students the ability to travel to the district and state-wide conferences to build their leadership skills. Students are also encouraged to take up executive and cabinet positions in the house, with in some cases, over fifty options for leadership involvement. It is clear, one of the biggest values promoted within Greek organizations is leadership, but really what that means is white leadership. Because the populations that make up fraternal organizations are overwhelmingly white, although in some cases minority leadership may not be discouraged, it certainly is not openly encouraged. In a way, student government on campuses is a microcosm of real life government. Those in leadership belong to sororities and fraternities, and later they belong to the U.S. Congress, supreme court, or even the white house. The experience that students get college with the support of their Greek organization gives them an edge in the real world. Today, fraternal organizations use this concept to advertise themselves while ignoring the issue with a lack of diversity within their organizations.

Lastly, it is important to note that Greek organizations are supported by their own political and alumni organizations that actively work to preserve the ideology of what I call the “Greek Moderate ©,” a term which refers to those in Greek systems being actionably and successfully influenced by white moderate ideology. Currently, the largest political action committee for higher education is the Fraternity and Sorority PAC, which according to its website is “dedicated to preserving the Greek experience for future generations of student leaders.” Mainly this PAC focuses on supporting legislation that benefits the infrastructure of collegiate housing, supporting candidates who are alumni of Greek organizations, maintain the current statuary exception of fraternal college organizations from Title IX requirements, and the College Fire Prevention Act. Every year the PAC has raised over half a million dollars. The PAC has notably applied political pressure using PAC funds to kill a bill that would have made students convicted of hazing by their universities ineligible to receive financial aid. This is important because it means that the alumni are not willing to be a proponent of punishing hazing that is damaging to the health of fraternal members, and the expense of admitting that it is wrong. Additionally, according to opensecret.com, a public database of where PAC’s donate their money, 68% of all funds donated by the FRATPAC are given to the republican party or Republican politicians. This is also significant because it reflects the ideologies of Greek organizations that correlate with key tenets of republicanism and conservatism. The most notable example would be of conservative immigration reform or the idea of not allowing minorities to enter the country, or in the case of college, the fraternities. Additionally, Greek Alumni are also the biggest donors to college campuses, and this is important because it shows how involved Alumni are in the preservation of the college experience they had. (Chang).

Other organizations in the background that support each individual fraternity or sorority are the national organizations, which send officers to see if fraternal organizations are in compliance and reward chapters that are. Out of the national organizations, there is an advisory board that oversees the executive decisions that the student leaders make. The advisors have a final say on issues pertaining to student liability and comprise of a majority of those who sit on the judicial standards board. So, for instance, if someone is caught with drugs in a house. The advisory board would make the final decision of whether the member would be kicked out of the house. In addition, the advisory board plays a big role in the continuation of ritual and new member education. And finally, the parent’s clubs and the corporation board also see that the quality of life does not change and get worse for those living in fraternal houses. All in all, collectively, these organizations help support the students and the ideologies that the students are taught within their fraternal organizations.

Free Speech Student Activist Mario Savio once said, “There’s a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you sick at heart, that you can’t take part! You’ve got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels…and you’ve got to make it stop…And you’ve got to indicate to the people who run it, to the people who own it, that unless you’re free, the machine will be prevented from working at all!”. The biggest takeaway from all this research is that there is something bitter hiding behind the sweet façade Greek organizations put out, and in the end, it lies upon the students to act and fight against discrimination and racism, and instead for progress and leadership for not just white students, but all students. The way in which fraternal organizations can guide members into holding influence politically after college is amazing, but the values that these organizations promote are arguably questionable and prioritize white leadership over diverse intersectional leadership.

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## Final Reflection

Top of Form

After taking English 131 I feel more confident in my writing process. I do believe that I have made personal growth with respect to the four outcomes. However, I acknowledge that there is still work to be done and I have a lot of improvement I can make with my writing mechanics. As an economics major, I will be doing a lot of expository writing and one day hope to publish a research paper of my own. By learning about rhetoric, assumptions, and good ways to research reliable information, I feel more confident in my abilities to conduct research and draw conclusions. Ever further along the line, I one day hope to be a lawyer and expository writing and research skills are very important to success in that field.

Additionally, I feel better about other people reading my papers because I am proud of the work I have produced this quarter. By having others read my work, I have been able to not only get positive feedback, to my surprise, but also find ways to better my writing skills. Before this class, I never really understood what a true revision process was. However, I now have a process in place that I intend to use with other pieces I write.

This quarter has been bumpy outside of the classroom. I broke my arm after the second week of the quarter, so it was harder for me to write some of my assignments online. However, there was a silver lining because it helped me with my revision process and it also allowed me to be more thoughtful about the information I sought out.

Although we explored a wide variety of outcomes and social topics in class, if I had to describe this class in one word, it would be mindfulness. Whether it is being able to analyze a perspective beyond what is written or rewriting an essay by using the information only available in the first draft, I have realized that there is a higher-level consciousness that exists within the writing process. There is a distinct flow of ideas but within that flow of ideas, there is a sub-flow of ideas and so forth. Similarly, there is a claim, but within that claim, there are numerous assumptions. By having a higher level of consciousness in writing a student like me can tackle complex topics and understand the scope of what is real and what is a social construction.

Lastly, I am very thankful to my instructor because she allowed me to have the freedom to choose topics that interest me and emphasized to her students that writing is more than just words on a page; it is concepts, ideas, and discussions.

Bottom of Form