

Iman Sheshtawy

Professor James Jones

PROV 501 & PROV 502

April 6, 2015

## **Pathway Reflection Essay**

As a non-western international student who wanted to pursue a masters degree in the field of telecommunications engineering, I faced a lot of barriers and challenges at the beginning of my study in the United States. On the other hand, based on the courses that are provided in the program in which I was enrolled, I gradually overcame those problems, and now I feel that I can easily fit in the graduate school and join the school of engineering without any concern. During my first year in the pathway program, I have learned too many subjects with the help of the professors and the instructors, which allowed me to achieve an academic success in the courses that I took in my discipline.

One of the most efficient courses that I took in fall 2014 was PROV 501, in which I learned how to get used to the western education, understand the American norms, think in a critical way, and challenge and debate with professors and peers over a subject in a polite way. Drawing on Badke (2003) and his book, in which he stated that “Critical thinking is a process of evaluation that uses logic and evidence to determine whether information is correct or incorrect” (William B. Badke, 2003, p.22). In different words, now I know how to write a research paper, by starting questioning myself questions, such as why, who, what, where, and when in which it helped me to write a research with an argumentative edge (William Badke, 2014). In addition to one important thing that I was not familiar with it back in my country, which is the term

“socialization”, which means to interact with American students and learn how to fit in a group, and share ideas to reach a better knowledge and be more acquainted. Based on what I have taught in the PROV 501 course, I now can cite papers and write references giving the right to the author, so I can avoid what so-called “plagiarism”. “Students are expected to give full credit for the borrowing of other's words or ideas. Intentional or unintentional use of another's words or ideas without acknowledging this use constitutes plagiarism.” (As stated in Michael W. Smith et al., 2005). Now, for spring 2015, I am taking the PROV 502, in which I am getting more information about the grad school life, and how to adopt myself in this new life. I have attended to campus events and workshops in the past semester as well as this semester, and I have learned how to write reflection essays, which positively have helped me to know how to express my thoughts in an academic way of writing, also to interact more with American students, and to practice my English by speaking with native speakers. Moreover, I have learned how to manage my time, by writing a to do list and organize what I am willing to do in a schedule, so I can feel more comfortable and not to stress myself, and finish my work on time, which was my weakness point that I have experienced during the last semester by letting some bad situation affected my assignments by submitting it late. I have learned from this experience which made me lose grades, and now I am more professional in managing my time and I am more responsible for submitting my work on time.

I have done a lot of short presentations which were like a practice for me to be more professional and have a self-confidence, so I do not afraid from such a thing when I present in the future in my major classes. I have learned about the term “body language” which is a way of expressing my self and trade ideas and share information. In the PROV 502 course, I am learning

now how to write a resume, cover letter, and statement of purpose, in addition to the portfolio that will help me and give me the opportunity in the future to apply for a job.

Applying the instructions and the feedback that I have learned, have lead me and will lead me as well to continue my path and pursue a masters degree from the United states. The selection of the materials, as well as the books and the plan of study were very helpful, and it guided me in a way to decide what are exactly my ambitions and goals from studying in the abroad. Now, I feel acquainted and have well acknowledgement.

(Word count: 748 Words)

## References

- Michael W. Smith, Michael E. Dupre, and David A. Mackey. "Deterring Research Paper Plagiarism with Technology: Establishing a Department-level Electronic Research Paper Database with E-mail." *Journal of Criminal Justice Education* 16.1 (2005) pp: 193-204
- W. B. Badke, "*Beyond the answer sheet : Academic Success for International Students*", (2003)
- W. Badke, "*Research Strategies*" 5<sup>th</sup> edition, (2014) pp:30-36