

Interviewer: All right. This is *** and I am interviewing *** on what's today, the 23rd? February 23rd for the Minor in Writing study. All right, so to start off we have a couple of more general questions. How would you describe yourself as a writer when you began at the University of Michigan?

Interviewee: I would say I was pretty confident in my competency as a writer just because of the feedback I'd gotten through high school and previously and just reading other people's writing. Then we had to take that placement writing piece or whatever. We had to read that Malcolm Gladwell piece and I was super nervous about it and I wrote it and I got it back and I got it—I was placed in the intro Sweetland One or whatever. Which totally shook my foundations of how I thought I was as a writer.

Then I was super scared and I didn't do it. I just went into a normal [English course] and I was fine. I think I was probably less confident than I am as opposed to now about how I was as a writer. Just because of that experience. I definitely learned different ways to write. My writing has changed from less confident to confident, more confident in—I'd say—certain genres of writing.

Interviewer: What genres would you say that you are most confident in?

Interviewee: Argumentative and answering questions about being very specific. Also narrowing my writing which I think was one of the biggest changes. I think in high school I could get away more with more broad and general and things. Because I was from a really small high school too so I didn't have that big of a pool that I could compare myself to anyways.

Now it's just narrowing and once you think you've talked about it, like going deeper in it and you're never really—like everything's still really broad—even if you think you're being really specific. Argumentative and scientific writing, yeah, like those kinds.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: I'm past the five paragraph essay.

Interviewer: Okay, and you sort of anticipated my next question, but if it, this—

Interviewee: I thought I did.

Interviewer: I just need to see if this makes you think of anything else. How would you describe yourself as a writer now?

Interviewee: I would definitely say more analytical. I took Science Writing through my major and I really, really enjoyed that. I enjoyed that kind of writing so that's the kind of writing—when I'm given the option—I tend to do. I think I've probably improved in that

realm more than others just because I select myself to do those things. Yeah, definitely more analytical.

I'm in that—just like reading articles and things now. I read them more analytically because I almost read them like I'm going to have to write about it. Challenging the reading more because—you know when you're writing things you're going to be challenged a lot with editing and backing yourself up. That reciprocation of how I've changed as a writer to how I read and kind of back to how I write, sort of.

Interviewer: All right, great. Are there any new ways that you've developed to talk about yourself as a writer or how you learned to write?

Interviewee: Yes, specifically through this Gateway course. I guess I never really thought about it before, this idea of talking about writing or writing about writing kind of thing. I don't know, I've always just like—for me writing's always been either good or bad—that's it. Not really seeing shades of gray. I always thought it was interesting too how people can almost universally agree on good writing versus bad writing. They can just tell.

I guess talking about it, just like about specifics. Like how there's genres of writing and how I guess also humanities versus science writing. I've noticed large differences in that and going from different classes to having to switch over to that kind of writing. I guess just talking about writing more specific. I guess even the word writing because the class is media focused—or new media, whatever. Just all the things that you can call writing, I guess has definitely broadened my definition of it. Like blogging, which I still have some qualms about.

Interviewer: I know, right, well we have a question about that in a minute, so we'll get back to it. Again, I think you've already started to touch on this, but if you have anything else you want to say. To what extent would you say you've grown as a writer?

Interviewee: Yes, just in the areas that I've mentioned and I think I'm a bit more confident in it. Or in certain aspects of writing, and less confident in others like humanities kind of writings and creative isn't even an option anymore. It never has been. I guess, yeah, and just like more breaking down writing and not necessarily having to go—I used to have to be very chronological, I'd do intro, middle, end—and now just being a little bit more open about like see where it goes kind of thing. Just writing and not constraining myself. I guess just being a little bit more comfortable with the ambiguity of the writing process. Try not to be so Type A about it. Yeah.

Interviewer: You've mentioned the Gateway course and you mentioned that you took the Science Writing course, to what else would you attribute the growth that you've experienced as a writer?

Interviewee: Well, I think just thinking about—because I definitely think my thinking how I think about things has changed since I've been here. Like more analytically and

more challenged and more focused that I try not to generalize things too much. I don't know specifically. I don't know. I just think in like prompts—like even in classes, like Psych class or something where the papers aren't—you know it's not a focal point of the class or whatever—but you're still required to do it.

Just like, in those questions me first thinking—reading them—thinking they're so narrow but then starting to write and realizing that I still have too much to say. That kind of thing. I don't know. I guess it would be like a thinking change first and it just kind of carried over to my writing in just thinking about things differently since I've been here, or started to. Yeah.

Interviewer: Are you a sophomore, or a junior?

Interviewee: I'm a junior.

Interviewer: Junior, okay. All right, great. What are your goals for yourself as a writer?

Interviewee: Well, that's a question. I don't know. My goals have changed since I've come into the Minor. Like from when I applied last summer to now, because I'm an undergrad and that's what I do, is change my mind all the time. I don't know. I think—because I don't want to—I don't really identify myself as a writer, per se. We kind of talked about this in class. You can be—identify yourself as a writer or be an ex who writes. I think that's more of how I think about it.

I think writing's a very, very important skill to have. I don't know how I see, because I just get hung up on the word writer and thinking novelist or like I'm a journalist. That is not at all where I see myself, but I still feel like it's important. I just don't know how I would intertwine it into my career path. Because, I don't know. I'm running around in circles. I have no idea where I see myself as a writer.

Interviewer: Well, maybe a different way to ask it might be to—what are your goals for your writing?

Interviewee: I think again I really like scientific writing. I guess one of the reasons I wanted in the Minor was in the science—science writing—was kind of like my (inaudible 08:16) and I've been really interested in this intersection between research and the public health message. What the research says is not always what people hear and that it was kind of the writing was the medium that it got lost in. Like the lost in translation was so much had to be cut out of these research papers for obviously reasons and then they get over to general magazines and it's just like they don't even say the same thing anymore. I just thought that was really, really interesting.

That's kind of where I started. I guess if I was to take my writing anywhere it would be in that kind of thing. In the idea of being an ex who writes so if I want to do a physician assistant or an exercise physiologist type of thing. Getting some experience as whatever I choose to be kind of thing or whatever. Then writing for people to understand the

research or what I do or my field better. I guess that's where I want my writing to—like I guess where I could see my writing being—like functioning in my career, I guess. Yeah, I don't know if that makes sense or not.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: That's the most appropriate place I see it acting.

Interviewer: All right, great. You mentioned that some of your ideas—your goals had changed since you entered the Minor in Writing. Can you describe those changes a little bit more?

Interviewee: Yeah, so, it's a Science Friday thing, so I had this. I had this summer—I read this book—The Secret Life of Henrietta Lacks and the lady is a science writer. I was like “Oh my gosh, this is so cool.” Then I just—this is going to sound bad—I don't like—again, with being more comfortable with the ambiguity of the writing and the terms that describe it and everything. I don't like it, in that I'm more comfortable with it. I'm very procedural, kind of like black and white kind of person, and I like the hard science kind of things. I just feel as I would be miserable.

Because writing—even though—I don't enjoy writing, it's a very hard process for me. When I care about a paper—I can write papers—but when I'm trying to write a good paper it's a very grueling process, I guess. I just realized I couldn't see myself doing it forever—slash—I don't know. That's where the change was. It was like I wanted to do science writing and then now I don't. That would be the goal change.

With that being said, I still think writing—because I would never write if it wasn't for this course—because I'm not required to in my classes. It would just never happen. I don't want to lose it because I know I'm decent at it and I don't want to let that fall by the wayside. Yeah, that's my goal changes.

I just think—again—I could be an ex who writes. I want to do whatever that is first. I feel like I have to have an expertise in something before I write. I don't want to just spew opinions or whatever. I feel like I have to have some job or career that almost validates me to write kind of thing. I don't know, that's just how I think about it.

Interviewer: All right, so shifting gears a little bit. As you think—and again—these questions have so much overlapping—you've already started to talk about some of this—but thinking across your writing experiences that you have—and maybe this gets into your science classes and stuff—what do you think it means to write well?

Interviewee: I think that's like—I don't know. That's kind of what I was talking about a little bit is that you usually recognize good writing and I think it's really hard to put a—like nail down what it is. I always talk about like in rubrics and all that continuity and it flows and it's a specific topic and it's narrowed and all that stuff definitely factors in, but I feel like good writing always has like an x factor. That it's not something you can

exactly put on a rubric, but just—I guess I mean—good writing would be like a rubric writing, but something that elevates it.

There's always like the—I don't know—that's always just like supersedes everything else. I mean, as I've read people's writing where you just like you know when you're like "Oh my gosh, I'm done already" versus other writers where you're like "Oh, how many more pages of this do I have to edit?" kind of thing. I don't know what it. I guess it could be that voice type of thing that they talk about I really don't know what it is. I mean, I just read it a lot of times but I still—I don't know, because I mean—maybe it is the voice then, because there's definitely very different types of good writing. I don't really know what the common denominator is in all them. I don't know. I will let you know when I find out.

Interviewer: Okay, all right. Well there's a post interview too, we come back in a few years.

Interviewee: Oh, if I know by then I'll tell you.

Interviewer: Yeah, all right. What do you think is most important in learning to write?

Interviewee: You mean like when you first learn to write or like in any writing courses, either—

Interviewer: Either one, for somebody who's learning how to write, what do you think are the most important—

Interviewee: What should they be taught?

Interviewer: - factors, yeah.

Interviewee: Well, I feel like when you're first learning to write that you should be allowed to write more about what you want for awhile before you start having to think about introductions, and settings and all that kind of stuff. I don't know, I was always taught—like how I was taught to write—is always more of a focus on the creative story telling. That before—and then it was like all of a sudden none of that mattered—then it was non-fiction, research. That kind of stuff.

I don't really think that's the best approach because it was like "Why do I need to do all that? I'm never going to use it." I think there should be more of a crossover or let kids write what they want to write about. When I want to write about something—like I'm interested in body building—that's always a different kind of paper than if I have to write about it. You don't want kids to start hating writing already. Because I feel like now I'll be like "Oh, I have to write a paper." I'm like that too. There are few people I know that are like "Yes, let me write a paper."

I feel like it almost starts back then when you—and once you also start to introduce the elements of writing—like I can't read a book anymore without thinking about introductions metaphors and syntax and everything. It's very—unless the book's really good—it's like that x factor kind of writing before I forget about that kind of stuff. I don't know, I think that's important is that you let people explore it first before you start putting in the formalities and the rules and the grammar, like that kind of stuff about the writing.

Interviewer: All right. What did you learn in your first year writing requirement course? You said you took [English course] right, so what did you learn in [English course] that you've continued to use in your writing since?

Interviewee: Well, definitely the narrowing—the focus—of your paper. Keeping it narrow and addressing counter points of view. That's something I've continued to think about. What else? I guess introduction. The idea of introduction's not just being the first paragraph of your paper. That it can be more of an extended introduction thing.

We did it in my [English course], there were four essays. There was descriptive—I couldn't tell you the second two but—the last one was argumentative. I feel like that's the kind of writing I've continued to do over and over again with other classes. I guess to—I guess probably the biggest thing would be the addressing the counter points of view. Writing your paper, then kind of stepping back and thinking about what would other people think about it and then trying to address it in your paper. I think that's probably what's carried over most from my [English course].

Interviewer: Okay, great. You said you were recommended to take [Sweetland course], but you didn't, you went right to [English course].

Interviewee: No, yep.

Interviewer: You felt like that was the right decision for you?

Interviewee: I probably was hurt a little bit, so I just more did it out of a reactive thing than anything. I think I did fine.

Interviewer: Yeah. Do you think you worked harder in the [English course] class to prove that—

Interviewee: Possibly, and I was a freshman and scared and intimidated. I just did my work all the time anyways, and have since declined.

Interviewer: All right, so this is—you've already talked some about the Gateway course—but we have a set of questions related specifically to your experiences in that course. Again, I think you've spoken to this, but if you want to add anything else—what impact has the Gateway course had overall on your writing?

Interviewee: Yeah, so basically the definition of expanding what writing is. This idea of media and I feel like that is—out in the workforce—going to be probably one of the more practical aspects of learning—writing well kind of thing. That, I just, I'm very uncomfortable with new media and blog. I had never blogged before this class. I still don't blog. I just—I don't know, but I think it's important because—

Oh an idea of audience. That was a big thing that was emphasized. I kind of thought about it but in my other classes I mostly just think about it's for my professor, catering to what I think they want. That was more focused on—you were actually putting this on the internet and that internet audience, that's like a whole different kind of person. I guess, I just think about audience a lot more with whatever I write. It's just really good to be exposed to those kind of new medias even if I—just to say I tried my hand at them, kind of thing. I tried—I used Prezi and all sorts of other things I never, ever, ever would have tried. I think the audience thing's probably the biggest.

Interviewer: All right, so—you might not like this one—but what impact has that class had on your sense of yourself as a writer?

Interviewee: Yes, well—again—I do not identify myself as a writer. I would just say—we wrote a lot of paper—not a lot of papers—we wrote a couple of articles of the why I write kind of things, like George Orwell, or Joan Didion or whatever. I don't know. I just hated the way they talked about writing and I hated myself for like—but they just talk about how it—it sounds like a very selfish act of you feeling the need to impart your words on other people. That just made me super uncomfortable.

I don't know how it did. It also made me very self-aware of the act of writing and when you're putting that out there for everyone to read and what does that say about you and all this kind of stuff. I don't like that center of attention feeling ever. When you're a writer—even though it's anonymous, you can make it anonymous on the internet and everything else—you're not there, writing's a very personal thing so it's always a personal attack. Or—I don't know—it's made me very self-aware of the act of writing at all.

Which is why I think I kind of tend towards scientific writing and everything because I feel like I'm writing about something, then it's—I don't know—it's more useful or more practical. Somebody's going to be getting something out of it. I don't know. I think, that's just how I think, which is not to say I'm right in any sense or how I should be thinking about it, but I don't know. This class has made me like that kind of writing more because I just hate the idea of this writing to put your feelings and that kind of stuff out there. I don't know. That made no sense.

Interviewer: No, no, it actually makes a lot of sense.

Interviewee: That's where I stand on it.

Interviewer: You know you've already talked about blogs and Prezi [online presentation creator] and that sort of thing, but if you want to add anything, how would you describe your experiences using new media writing in the course?

Interviewee: Very different from—because I felt like the emphasis was on learning the new media. I wasn't—when I was trying to do Prezi and the voice over thing, even the blogs after a certain point—I wasn't worried about the writing anymore, I was worried about the visual aspects of it and making it aesthetically pleasing and making sure I was maximizing this technology.

Using all the things that were there, like blogs, you realize you can insert pictures and change the colors and all this kind of stuff. I wasn't doing any of that and—even I as I was scrolling through the blog roll, I'd go to the ones that had pictures and had colors in it, because I just would. Or the ones that there were just paragraphs that were black and white like mine, I'd skip right over. The Prezi and knowing—kind of like smart phones where I know there's like six billion things on there I can do, but I don't do any of them. I just use email and texting like on a normal phone. It was like I don't know what I'm doing and the Prezi is the same thing.

I felt like the emphasis was never on the text or the words, it's going to be on the swirls coming in, the pictures and the graphics that popped up. I felt like—and I wrote about that for the last paper that we did with the new media writing. I felt like the aesthetics trumped the text. Whereas like with print or the old school versions, like books and newspapers and stuff, the emphasis was always going to be on the text because you didn't have distracters. Or, also with the new media writing I feel like it's always like you're looking for something right away and you know what you're looking for when you're going in. When you get on the internet, I'm already looking to look something up.

Whereas if I read the newspaper or I'm reading a book, I may not know what I'm looking for right away. I'm more open to searching for it or I don't know other points of view. Whereas with the internet—or if I see, if I click on a website and it looks poorly designed or illegitimate like some teenager threw it together, I'm going to click right off. That's the aesthetic part of it. The text could be Harvard business review or something and I'd be like “No, this looks crappy.” That was my big take from new media writing was just that it was so much on aesthetics, which is just different.

Interviewer: All right. Separate from those aspects of new media writing, how would you describe your experiences creating the portfolio?

Interviewee: Frustrating. I just didn't—it was—I didn't have a concept of what the portfolio was supposed to be for a very long time. I still don't know if I fully do or not. I talked to my advisor, set up an appointment or whatever we were required to go to and we kind of—I sort of had a mini epiphany in there about what I wanted it to be. Then that just kind of came up against the reality of what I could do with web site making. I don't know a whole lot about it and I have to use a template, I don't know how to code. It's not realistic for me to learn how to code.

Just, I don't know, it was just really frustrating. I'm happy with what I came out with, because I think for the most part got what I wanted in there, but—again—I still don't feel like I have a totally, 100% grasp on the functional portfolio. Especially for someone like me who doesn't want to write, be a writer. I don't know. I guess the other thing I had a hard time with the portfolio was the writing is so different. There's the new media writing class and there's my science writing classes and then there's just random assignments. English classes and Psych classes.

She was saying, I kept hearing to include blog reports and all these other manner of things. I couldn't—there's nothing cohesive I felt about it. I know you can Tab 25:20 and organize that stuff but I don't know, it still feels pretty disjointed to me. It still feels kind of like hodge podge. I've collected all these things into this blog. I don't know, maybe the final, not Gateway, whatever the exit one—

Interviewer: Capstone or whatever it is.

Interviewee: Capstone, yes, that, I'll have a better grasp of it. It's still kind of not there.

Interviewer: All right. What impact would you say that creating the portfolio has had on your writing?

Interviewee: I don't know that it has had an impact on my personal writing I guess. I don't know. Again, this kind of goes back to the whole thing of not being really comfortable of showcasing it as my writing kind of thing. I try to make the format of my portfolio—I did tabs—I was kind of like introspected writing—like about me sort of writing. Then like an exploratory tab—I put on the homepage of the tabs—these are the things that have inspired me to write more about and I'd link it to outside web sites or books or things or videos that I was trying to emulate, sort of thing. It was more of like a learning platform because—again—I just felt like that was more validated me putting my writing out there more. I guess, it forced me to think about how I wanted to showcase myself as a writer. Yeah, I don't know if it's had an impact on my writing though. I think it's just a thing that I've done, still.

Interviewer: Since taking the Gateway course, how would you say your writing process has changed?

Interviewee: Again, I don't know that it really has. I've never been a person that has a totally concrete process like this is what I do every time I go sit down to write a paper. The Gateway course was really different because personally I didn't feel like the emphasis was on writing. I felt like again, for me I just felt like I was always trying to catch up to this new media and learn what it was and how to use it and how make the best use of it. I don't ever feel like my writing process was totally affected.

I felt like I was trying to figure out these resources first and then writing was secondary to that. By that point I didn't really feel like I was going through my normal writing

process. I was taking [upper level English course] at the same time, and that I felt like was definitely more of the writing process of the scribbling and the notes and that kind of stuff. Not in the Gateway course.

Interviewer: Okay. The way that you talk about how you were writing in [upper level English course], is that still how you approach assignments now?

Interviewee: Yeah. I mean—

Interviewer: We're not quite into final season yet.

Interviewee: Right, yeah, and I have no papers to write this semester. Again, it's just the magnitude of the assignment to me. I definitely prioritized. Again, if it's a paper for Psych [Psychology], it gets done days in advance. Whereas my final paper for [upper level English course]—he was a professor that I really was desperate to get an A from on his papers because I figured I really enjoyed his class and he kind of threw the gauntlet down on the last assignment. Saying "If you get an A on this last essay then you're—" or no "If you've done well on the other assignments then you're a student who writes essays" but he's like "If you do well on this last assignment, then you're an essayist." I was like "Challenge accepted."

I put a lot, a lot, a lot of work and time into that paper. Because that was just something I really valued. That was the kind of paper that was supposed to be philosophy based and that is not me. It was a lot of work, but that would probably be the most representative of a process if I had one. Yeah, when I ascribe that much value to an assignment that's usually what it is. That's the painstaking, grueling part of it. Is how me keeping my little notepad next to my bed so I can write stuff down when I think about it. Voice recording myself on my phone.

Yeah, but it's few and far between that I ever care that much about a paper to do that. Because I know I can—I have enough of a competency level with writing that I can get away with not putting a lot of time in.

Interviewer: The Gateway course emphasized reflective writing in a lot of ways. How would you describe your experience with this kind of reflection?

Interviewee: The reflection writing I enjoyed the most was after you had your final and you had to go and use the review function in Word or whatever, and kind of explain yourself. I thought that was super helpful. I've never done that in class before and I thought that was really, really interesting and really helpful.

Because the thought has crossed my mind several times, before turning in papers, especially with editing. Oh I really hope they notice I worked on this part and I changed it and everything else. Not just having to churn, and you're blank, just your clean sheet still. I thought that was really interesting because you could justify yourself. Or say "This is what I was trying to do here." Or like I started off doing this, and then after editing, this is

where I came from. That's probably another thing that's helped strengthen and if in the future when I write papers that's definitely something that I'll do is throughout my personal editing process.

Yeah, I really, really enjoyed that aspect of it, because I've never had the chance to do it before. It just did force you to look at your paper, justify everything you did and call—if suggestions were made and say why you did or did not take them. I really liked that part of it for the reflective writing.

Interviewer: All right. Are you still—well it sounds like you're not doing a lot of writing this semester—but are you still using reflection in your current writing whether it's assigned or on your own?

Interviewee: No, I mean, I turn in a paper today, that's the only paper I have been and will be required to for this semester. I just, I don't—I sometimes write in a journal, but it's around holidays, like once a year. I don't really keep up with it or anything. I don't write. I don't do it unless I'm forced to. No.

Interviewer: All right. Looking forward, what kinds of writing do you think will be most valuable for your career? I know it's a little bit of fraught question to ask a junior, but—

Interviewee: It's all right. I guess scientific writing. Just that research and analytical. I think a lot of the writing, reading research and then transposing it from there. But also the flip of that is having this idea or concept or research or whatever, then for the first time writing it over there. I guess that kind of writing will be the most useful.

I don't know, I think also being able to—this isn't even writing—I mean it probably is. Being able to clearly communicate your ideas in print. Whether it's via e-mail or if your sending out instructions or something to someone. Just being able to articulate yourself with words. Because I've seen that so many times. I do it a lot too with words. It's in my head and then I go to write it down and this is not what I was trying to say.

Even just writing in that sense, where it's not lengthy or anything, but just that you can be succinct and short and say what you need to say and people are going to understand it. Yeah, for whatever I do, I don't know, I feel like that would probably be like a general sense the most applicable thing.

Interviewer: Okay, great. If you could tell your teachers one thing about writing or how to teach writing, what would you say?

Interviewee: Well, I don't know. This is kind of like a double edged sword because I feel like with the new media course—my instinct is to say let—especially at this stage of the game—to let people write about, or not write about, but do the kind of writing that they want to do. Just because I think we have sectioned writing off into so many sciences, and humanities and whatever X, Y and Z. Or like magazine writing. I had a girl in my class

who was very interested in that. That being said, I came up against it in class and it was really, really hard to grade people doing really different kinds of writing.

That—like I don't like having to write—I don't know, the ways that I don't feel like I'm going to need in the future. Like similarly for people—like the girl who was interested in magazine writing—didn't want to write a research paper, but I wouldn't want to write a magazine article. It was also really hard because when we were editing each other's papers I was trying to—this girl—she's a history major—I had no idea what her subject matter was about.

Just like the styles and the conventions of whatever, journalism, that kind of stuff. I mean, I was really only good for editing commas and like that kind of stuff because I didn't know. Or for the magazine kind of writing, I don't know, we just had a really hard time with that. With some kids, or people in my class doing children's stories and it was really hard to judge—not judge, but like—give feedback on things. I feel like by now a lot of us have been pretty narrowed into the kinds of writing we've been doing.

The new media kind of, sort of forced us to get out of that a little bit, but, I don't know, I want to say to teachers let people write in the style that they want to write but at the same time I think it's really impractical. Like impractical to do it, so I don't really know. I guess another thing would be (inaudible 36:43) is editing. I really, really, really, really hate when I put in time to edit somebody else's paper and I get back like a comma or it looks good. I'm like “No.”

Finding a way to get some reciprocity with the kinds of people that are writing or the kinds of writers they are, I don't know, if there's people that are—that really always bothered me. It's just like you was by yourself and you—even without—I get a feeling that you always need someone else to read it at least once because it's really easy to get stuck inside your own head. You're like “Oh, it makes sense to me, it's fine.” That's always been a really big pet peeve of mine in English classes. Something about editing.

Interviewer: Do you have any suggestions for teachers that you have maybe in other courses that aren't English or writing related about how they teach writing in the course?

Interviewee: Yeah, again, it's kind of goes back to this conventions or whatever discipline you're in, because I feel like with them and—I'm just going to keep coming back to Psych because it's the only class I'm really—it's not English based that has papers. Well, I've had some for Bio and stuff too actually. Just like them expecting a certain kind of unifalls 38:19 or conventions that aren't in a Biology discipline or Psychology discipline, but you're not knowing what they are because you're taking a Psych class or your taking a Bio class and kind of try to have to feel those out along the way with

Psych saying it's okay to use quotes sometimes and blah, blah, blah. Bio being like never, ever, ever, ever, ever quote anything. I feel like they overlook that kind of stuff because it's “Oh, you should know how to write a paper by now.” At the same time, it's not just

writing, there's Psych writing, and Bio [Biology] writing, and Science writing and History writing. Despite what they probably think they are very sectioned off from one another.

Or at least the sense, the feeling that I've gotten as I've gone from these different kinds of classes is that you definitely have to switch over kinds of writing. Flowery language and cutting—unless every single word is—my Science course especially is if every single word is not contributing to some larger meaning, then get rid of it. Taking the groups of words and making it go down to one word because you don't need to say that many words. I guess just addressing that differences exist, because they do. It's just to give people kind of a springboard to start writing the papers. Yeah, that makes sense.

Interviewer: Yeah, no it makes total sense. While we've got you on the record, is there anything else that you'd like to say about the Minor in Writing or about writing in general or about writing at Michigan?

Interviewee: I think I spewed pretty much all of my feelings about writing. Writing at Michigan, no, no I mean, I—actually one thing—I think I was kind of surprised at how stark the differences were between writers. Huge differences in the levels of writing people were at. I mean, I know not everybody's going to be—that's just not some people's strengths or strong suits, they're good at other things. Just I was really, really, really blown away by what a spectrum there was, that it wasn't a lot more narrowed. It kind of—it started—it definitely was the most narrow in the Minor in Writing by far.

I had gone from each successive class, it's gone a little bit more narrow and a little bit more narrow, but I was really, really, really shocked. I think a lot of that has to do with our backgrounds. Like how we were taught writing in high school and like that kind of stuff. I never wrote a research paper in high school until my junior year, that kind of stuff. For my final comment I don't think I have any more opinions on writing.

Interviewer: All right, well, we'll get you next time in a year or two. All right, well thank you so much.

Interviewee: No problem.

[End of Audio]