[…]

Interviewee: Oh, yeah. What is the date?

Interviewer: It's the 24th.

[…]

Interviewer: Okay. That would make sense. […]. My name is _____ . I'm here with ____, yeah? It is April 24th, and ____ is a part of our comparison group for the writing development study. ____, I have a set of questions here. I'm just gonna set that there so that it can capture both of us. I have a set of questions here, but hopefully this can just be a conversation. Again, there's no right or wrong answers. We're just lookin' to hear a little bit about your experiences as you've developed as a writer during your last few years here. Do you have any questions for me before we start?

Interviewee: No, no questions.

Interviewer: Okay. Okay. Tell me, how do you describe yourself as a writer?

Interviewee: As a writer? Hm. That's actually a pretty difficult question. I think in—my major is business, so I think in professional writing or academic writing, I'm a little more confident because it's not so much about my opinion as just "Oh, this is the argument that I'm trying to prove. Here is my hypothesis, my thesis. These are my supporting evidence. Maybe have a counterargument and the wrap-up."On things that are more freestyle, like if I was to write a novel or something, that'd be extremely challenging. I would say in terms of academic or professional writing, I'm more confident as a writer. Then in other sense, something that has to do with my opinion or more creative or something that people would read in their free time, I cannot do that. *[Laughter]*

Interviewer: Have you been asked to do that much?

Interviewee: No. I took one class. It was for [English course]. I think it was on how—it had to do with economics, but more just casual. We had to talk a lot about ourselves. That was a lot more difficult for me, to meet a certain page requirement and talk about myself. It's easier when you have—if it's a page requirement where you just find evidence, Page 1 will be Point 1, Page 2 is Point 2. When it's talking about myself, I have a lot of transitions. That's more difficult for me.

Interviewer: Okay. Yeah. Yeah. How would you have described yourself as a writer—sorry. How would you describe the writer that you were when you began here at [University of Michigan]?

Interviewee: Oh, like right outta high school? Just horrible. *[Laughter]*

Interviewer: [Laughter] Can you say more about that?

Interviewee: Actually, a few of my friends got together. We were actually talking about our writing skills. I think high school, what we learned was "Oh, you have one point and then just add fluff." It'd just be blab, and literally you could *[inaudible 03:26]* everything aside from a topic sentence. It was just pointless. I think in college, we learned to take that away just in my [English course] and then add to it and actually describe and actually describe and support with evidence. Unfortunately, after my [English course], I had to write, but no one's taught me how to. It's just like, "Here's an assignment. You write it. The teacher will grade it." They never grade you on your writing, just what you're trying to convey. Yeah. I think compared to maybe an English major or someone who is more liberal arts-focused, we're a lot more concise. It's just like, "Oh, what is the main point?" It's not so much thinking about who your audience is and how you wanna convey it. I don't think we put as much thought into that. It's just very monotone, like, "Here's a fact. He's what we're tryin' to prove. Blah blah blah."

Interviewer: Yeah. When you say that they don't teach you how to write in those other classes or when you say they don't grade you on your writing—

Interviewee: Writing. Yeah. I think they are.

Interviewer: I was gonna say, what does that mean to you? I could see somebody saying, "Well, how do you separate the two?"

Interviewee: Yeah. That's actually a really good question. I think in my English classes, when I got feedback, it was like, "What are you actually trying to say with this?" "Maybe you can tweak it another way so that people can interpret it better." In another class, like a business class or a physics class or—we don't write in math. It would just be more along the lines. If you didn't phrase it correctly and they interpret it in a way that the teacher didn't like it or didn't think it supported your argument, it was just be wrong. They wouldn't say, "Oh, you shoulda rephrased it." It's like, "Oh, this doesn't make sense. You're wrong. Let's take points off."

Interviewer: Okay. Which, for you as a student, if I'm hearing you correctly—and talk this back to me if I'm not—for you as a student, that means "I got the concept wrong," not "the concept wasn't written well."

Interviewee: No, no, no. There's two situations. One would be "concept is wrong." Our teacher doesn't like it. Or "concept is correct, but I didn't write it well, so the teacher didn't understand what I was trying to convey." Yeah. I think there's two points to that.

Interviewer: Okay, but either way, you receive that grade as being a grade on the concept.

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah. Both ways. It doesn't matter if concept is right or wrong. Yeah. The teacher would just say, "Your concept is wrong." They won't say, "Oh, you misphrased this" or "It's not worded correctly." I remember I was taking the survey for this just a few days ago. It was talking about how important writing skills are in your career. We were actually talking about this among my friends, progressing through our year. We think maybe, actually, communication and writing are more important than even hard technical skills. *[Laughter]*

Interviewer: Yes! I'm cheering over here, for the people on the recorder. *[Laughter]*

Interviewee: It's all about how you communicate with people. Essentially, if you're ever going to be in a top management position, you're gonna be leading your group of people. The only ways through communication are verbally and through written. If you can't basically communicate with people, no one's gonna want to have you lead a team. Unfortunately, in business school we've had basic classes. One was on presentation. One was communication.It was so basic. It was like, "Oh, don't have a typo" or "Make sure it's short, concise." I was like, "Well, I knew that." We had to write essays getting into B-schools. *[Inaudible 06:53]* already learned this, like syntax, grammar. I remember there was a checklist that asked, "Oh, are you bad with pronouns or adjectives or syntax?" I was like, "Uh, I'm not even sure what half of this really means, exactly." I felt very intellectually challenged at that moment.

Interviewer: Oh, that's so interesting. Yes. That would have been a key moment where someone could have come to you and said, "Here's what syntax is."

Interviewee: Yeah. Essentially, I was in [country] a few months ago. One of my [relatives], he's learning English right now. I was teaching him. I was like, "I can only tell you what's right or wrong. I can't actually describe it to you." He was like, "The adjective goes here, then it's the pronoun." He was listing all these—I was like, "That's not how I learned my language." I can talk fine. I'm not incorrect. I can't describe to you how the English works. In [language], he can't do the same. He's like, "I know what's right or wrong." I was like, "Oh, this is so interesting. This is not how I learned my language." Technically his grammar's better than mine. *[Laughter]* My English is obviously better than his. *[Laughter]*

Interviewer: Right. I think that is so fascinating and compelling. We see that a lot as people who work with English language learners on their writing. This is often the case, that students who are non-native speakers have a better technical grasp.

Interviewee: That's really surprising for me. I think that's the aspect that I need improvement in. Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you have thoughts about whether or not you would actively pursue that?

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah. I've thought about it. I guess on my priority list of things that I want to learn are—my English is fine in the sense that I don't have a problem. I won't write a grammatically incorrect sentence or so incorrect that people will be like, "Oh, she's foreign."I don't know if it's so much important for me to know exactly how everything is written and the grammar to it as long as it's correct for me. It's just not on my—if I had enough time, I would love to do so. I don't have enough motivation to self-teach myself or go through and independently study English. Had I known this earlier, maybe I woulda taken another English class. Then again, it's hard to find also a good professor willing to respond to each individual student's needs, like if my grammar and half of the other class has perfect grammar. I wouldn't take the class to learn 10 percent grammar and 90 percent something else.

Interviewer: Right. Fair enough. Fair enough.

Interviewee: Sorry. Honest answer. *[Laughter]*

Interviewer: No, no! We love honest answers around here. That's great. Yeah. Okay. One of your goals for yourself as a writer—you've been talking around this. You're thinking about how important it is for you going forward, and one of your goals would be to improve some of that technical grasp. Do you have other goals for yourself as a writer as you think about transitioning into your new job?

Interviewee: I guess just being—I think I've gotten so used to being concise—it was what I needed to get done—maybe just more considering the audience. Who am I talking to? What tone of voice do I wanna use? Do I wanna use more casual, more professional? Obviously I don't communicate with my boss the same way as I do with my friends. Figuring out where it is. Yeah. Maybe along those lines.

Interviewer: Yeah. That's great. That's a perfect segue to my next big section. One of the things that we like to think about as writing instructors is this thing that we call transfer, which is basically when do you use something in one context? When do you carry it over into another context? Like that formal, informal. Where are those dividing lines? When can you cross those boundaries? Those sorts of things. Thinking about your experience at [University of Michigan], what do you think it means to write well?

Interviewee: To write well?

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Interviewee: I think it means to write well as I wrote something, and 80 percent of—if I had 10 friends all in different majors and 80 percent of them liked my style and could understand what I was trying to say. I mean, 100 percent's really going too far, but sometimes I'll read a piece of writing. I'm like, "Oh, I understand what you're tryin' to say, but I hate how it's worded. I would say it's poor writing." If 80 percent of people understand what I'm trying to convey and don't say, "Oh, I didn't like how you wrote it," then I think that's considered good writing. Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. It's a lot about how it's received for you. Okay. What upper-level writing courses did you take? Did you have to?

Interviewee: None. *[Laughter]*

Interviewer: Yeah, cuz you were in the business school.

Interviewee: yeah. I only took one English class. *[Laughter]* That's [English course].

Interviewer: Okay. In your upper-level business courses, what kinds of writing did you have to do?

Interviewee: Mostly it was more project-based. We never wrote an essay about ourselves. I don't recall. We would usually just have a task. It'd be like, if a company had a certain situation, how would you approach it, given this data or this case that you were reading? Together we would construct a paper based on that. At most it'd be five pages. Very rarely—maybe a final project—you'd have ten pages. It's more like a research paper. We would collaborate on it.

Interviewer: How would you say that the work of collaborating differs from what you know of writing a long-form research paper on your own?

Interviewee: I think the pros would be the fact that if you're writing by yourself, you can't ever cover all the bases. You're not as thorough. You don't provide as much evidence. When you work in a team, everyone has their own opinion, so you probably have a better sense of the topic and where you wanna lead. I think the con side is everyone has their own different writing style. Sometimes when you read through, you're like, "Oh, this is this person's work. That's this person's voice." It's very hard to go through and cohesively write a paper that sounds like one unified voice. I never had this in my own group project, but some people would be like, "Oh, who's the best writer in our group?" Two people work on evidence, one person would do the formatting—"How do we wanna convey across?"—and one person would write it so it's one unified voice.

Interviewer: [Cross Talk 13:20].

Interviewee: Yeah. That's happened before, too. I think the downside to that is people who aren't as good at writing, they don't have the opportunity to practice. On the other hand, people who are good at writing, we know that our paper will be written well when it's submitted. Yeah. Play to our strengths.

Interviewer: [Laughter] Sure. Sure. Like any team would. Yeah. You took your [English course] course. You said it really helped you think about things in a more maybe fine-grained, specific way. Did that help you going forward? Was it just a thing that you did and then it was done?

Interviewee: I think that class really helped because in high school, my writing was actually horrible. I think I'm more of a normal standard now. It was a really small class. I think we had under ten people. The teacher really took time to—the assistant professor really took time to explain. We all didn't—we had a similar style. We all had a lotta fluff. We didn't really organize or work on transitions. She really spent a lotta time. She was a really harsh grader. She gave a lotta feedback, which I really appreciate, looking back. She was really good about nitpicking. I was not comfortable with people reading my writing before. We did a lotta peer feedback. We did it in person. I think our class was about twice or three times a week. I don't remember it that well, but each class, we'd focus on one person's writing. Every single person in the class would peer review yours. Then we would talk about pros and we'd talk about cons. The writer—herself or himself—would be in the room.We'd be receiving all of that. We'd go by page by page. We'd talk about anything. That was really—I thought that was really helpful, hearing everyone's feedback. Sometimes people would debate, like, "I like this." "Oh, I don't like that." It was good to hear about all these opinions. I think that really helped.

Interviewer: Cool. Good. Let's see. Have you done any writing outside of the business school, like in general education classes?

Interviewee: I've taken some classes. It was at the School of Information. We had little projects. It was more research-based, too. It wasn't anything freestyle. It was more like, "Oh, here's an assignment. Respond to it."

Interviewer: Okay. Okay. Do you see any overlap or consistency between that writing and what you did in [English course] or what you did in the business school?

Interviewee: I think it's a merge of both. It's not quite as professional. Sometimes I would write—what was it? Something like you would see in a magazine. Little longer. Almost like a research report. Almost like a—not interview style, but like a column on a certain topic. It would be casual, but it would be for everyone to read. Informative writing. I've done things like that. Besides that, usually they're short. It's one or two pages. You just type out your thoughts. You organize it and

make sure this paragraph is talking about one cohesive idea and this is talking about another idea. Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Then thinking back over the last couple of years, what experiences have you had in the classroom or even out of the classroom that you think have had an effect on your writing?

Interviewee: I think maybe the courses where there's a little bit more reading. I think the more you read, that affects your writing style, too. Sometimes I'll see a certain type of organization or a certain type of tone or style that I like. Then I'll want to read more of the author's books or I'll reread the books. I'll take note of it. The next time I write, sometimes I'll go back. I'll be like, "Oh, how does she phrase this kind of idea or this kind of sentence?" I'll try to—not mimic it, but if I think it's appropriate to use and better than what I originally had, I would use her style.

Interviewer: Yeah. Can you think of a specific example of a time when that happened?

Interviewee: I'm reading a book right now. It's called *Left Brain, Right Stuff*. I think what I really like about the author is he likes to mention a point and then mention the pros and cons. Not necessarily just say, "Oh, this is solid evidence because of the good sides." He always considers both sides. He ties it into the main idea. It's always like, "How does these little pieces fit into a larger picture?" It's really clear where he's headed with that. I think his organization is done really well. Sometimes when I write, I'll try to think about "What's the big picture? How do I wanna break it into these different pieces? Then how do I tie it all together?" Because of how he wrote, whenever I read, sometimes I pretend I didn't write this. I'm peer reviewing someone else's. Would I be able to understand this? I think just considering more from the audience perspective, maybe, and also how I wanna convey a certain idea.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. Okay. If I use the term "reflective writing," what does that mean to you?

Interviewee: Reflective writing? Sorry, this is wrong.

Interviewer: [Laughter] Like I said, no rights or wrongs.

Interviewee: Just self-reflection. Either I would say it's reflecting on your own writing or it's writing about a reflection. Writing about how I reflect on something, I would say is how I would define it. I don't know. *[Laughter]*

Interviewer: Okay. Super meta. Super meta. I think what they have in mind—I think what they have in mind is, yeah, writing that gives you the chance to process about what you've written. Writing about writing.

Interviewee: Okay, okay. Writing about how you think your writing is?

Interviewer: Yes. Yeah. Yeah. Have you ever done anything like that, like turned something in and then spent some time writing about what that looked like or what your choices were?

Interviewee: Only in my [English course] class. At the end we had an assignment. It was talking about our own writing, how we had improved and things we still wanted to improve on. That was actually a really difficult assignment. I never thought of my writing as a whole, like, "Oh, these are the good things. These are the bad things. Now I have to talk about how I want to improve on it." Yeah. I think that was the only time I've done it. I don't really remember in high school anymore.

Interviewer: That was at the end of [English course]. You reflected on your whole class.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. Okay. You've not done anything like that since. Okay. Okay. You were talking about collaborative writing in the business school. It sounds like sometimes you guys had that experience of assigning to people's strengths. What other strategies did you guys use.

Interviewee: For writing?

Interviewer: For group projects in writing.

Interviewee: Oh, okay. Oh, just for writing?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: Sometimes we'll divide it by sections. "*[Inaudible 20:45]* Point 1. You take Point 2." Before, when I was a sophomore, we would just actually write it out and piece it together and then try to work out the voice. I think not just my group, but all the groups got feedback from the professor that was like, "Oh, yeah. I could hear these different voices." Then I think more junior year was "Oh, you're Point 1. You're Point 2. Bullet point what you wanna say. Don't write it out. Just bullet point it. Then we'll all get in the same room and we'll write it together." Then I think to be more efficient, senior year it was "Oh, bullet point it out, and one person will write it." We'll get in a meeting room. Everyone will talk about their points so the writer knows what's going on. Then he or she will write it all out. That's the progression.

Interviewer: Interesting. A sort of merging of these two approaches. Really interesting.

Interviewee: Yeah. Sometimes it'll be one. It'll be two writers. Then we'll all peer review it. We'll all read it. We'll get on Google Docs or we get on Word. We do the edit changes or something. It shows you all the changes that someone made. We'll get back into a room. We'll all discuss it. That's the ways I'm familiar with for group projects.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. Really interesting. Did you use peer review—you used peer review, then, at the end of these group projects, in [English course]. Have you used peer review anywhere else?

Interviewee: Besides classes?

Interviewer: Yeah. Mostly I'm thinking classes, but if you have used peer review in other places that are not classes, we'd love to know about that, too.

Interviewee: I don't think so. At least for my internship experiences, I've never had to really write. It's more presentations. I'll be going to consulting, so it's more presenting to a client. The client doesn't have time to read a thick stack of papers. Usually we'll do PowerPoint presentations. It's more like idea or clusters of ideas. Not an actual paragraph put onto a slide.I remember I took a physics class. We had to read—it was a very nontraditional physics class. At the end we had to do a project. I think it was on environmental control, so CO2—DPC emissions in a certain area. My group was talkin' about the US. I think it was a 20- or 30-page plan. That was a little bit more difficult to write because it was very vague. We had to cover a lot of spots. I think in that, we did a lot of peer reviewing.I think it's really difficult when you have a 30-page paper and you're working in a group and people have differing opinions or different understandings of a certain point. It was really important to make sure that on the first page, whatever we outlined, we were in synch on the 30th page or the 25th page. If we were making the same point, they had to make sense together. Not like one person was talking about Point A, saying it made sense with B, and someone else was saying, "Oh, Point A agrees with C." I think that was where we did a lotta peer reviewing besides that.

Interviewer: Yeah. That makes a lotta sense. Okay. Now that you're about to graduate, what advice would you give to college students about writing?

Interviewee: College students in general?

Interviewer: Yeah. How about we'll start with what advice would you give them when they begin writing a paper?

Interviewee: Well, one, I would say it's important to understand the importance of writing, how it'll affect their career, how they communicate with people, things

like that, and then two, to figure out where they stand on the skill of are you a good writer/are you a bad writer. What type of writing you're good at. What are your weaknesses? Then you've gotta figure out do they want to become a good writer? How much do you wanna provide? I do think it's important for students to take at least one writing class just to make them think about how they write. At the same time, I don't know if I would offer the advice to take multiple just simply because you have to find the right teacher and the right class. It takes a lot of energy. […]. Writing isn't something you can determine in two weeks. I do think it's important, but I don't know what's the best approach to improve in writing. […]. I think being able to communicate well are really important.

Interviewer: Yeah. What shifted your perspective? I'm assuming it's a shift. I don't know that for sure. There might be a better way to phrase that. What led you to this belief in the importance of writing as a skill to carry with you?

Interviewee: I think it was maybe a lot of different things. I like to read the news a lot, especially the things on career progression. Some of it is they talk about undervalued skills, or communicating and writing, how important that is. Most people are able to get a point across, but sometimes not in a way that the audience would—not the most friendly, maybe, way. It's just like, "Yeah." It was talking about those aspects. I think it also has to do with leadership. If I'm on the board of something and I'm writing an email to the members, I would write it. I would always reread it and have my roommate or someone check it over, like, "Is this actually getting the point across?" Sometimes people won't turn in dues or they will say they do this and they don't. Sometimes your email will come across a little bit mean. That's not exactly the most productive. I don't wanna send it out and get the opposite result of what I wanted the email to achieve. Sometimes I'll let it sit for a day and open it in the morning and reread it and make sure my emotions aren't getting the best of me. I think it's little things. Also when I receive emails from people and I'll be like, "Oh, is this what they're tryin' to say or is this what they're tryin' to say?" I think it's just maybe personal experience plus maybe reading and talking with other people. Then it's having people clarify, "Is this what you mean?" I'll be like, "Oh, maybe it's better phrased this way."

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. Okay. *[Inaudible 28:10]* you recommend—one of the things that you recommended to a beginning writer is try to benchmark yourself against other people. How would you recommend people about doing that?

Interviewee: I think probably one is find a good English class. I got lucky in the sense that if you're reading so many other people's writing and hearing people give feedback, it's easy to place yourself. "Oh, I may be pretty good at this and also bad at that." Within the class, I'd just talk a lot to your professor and ask them. Even though I would say every professor has their own—they have things that they like and things that they don't like. It's one opinion out of many. I think they can probably provide a pretty objective viewpoint of maybe what areas you need to improve in or maybe if your grammar's *[laughter]* really that bad. I also

think just friends. English majors are probably a lot better at writing than just other majors. If you have any English major friends or people who like writing in their free time, have them review your papers and provide some feedback. Maybe just reading a lot. By reading, you understand—if someone is able to publish a book and has their whole team review a book, it's probably written pretty well. If you can read that, you can see how they convey their ideas and then compare it to how you personally write. Maybe that's a pretty good way to benchmark yourself.

Interviewer: Okay. Okay. Have you had any experiences working with new media writing, like blogs, websites, putting together an electronic portfolio? Anything like that?

Interviewee: When I took my informatics class, I remember our discussion group had to create a Twitter page. I think it was write 100 words or less about a short description of something you read or something you wanted to post about. We did that. It was very independent. Someone created a group class portfolio. Actually, I think it was Tumblr. We also tweeted. You would just log in, you'd post, and then you would close it. If you really wanted to, you could read other people's. We didn't organize it or anything. It was just a scatter of different ideas on a Tumblr page.

Interviewer: Okay. What's your take on that at this point?

Interviewee: If it's useful or not?

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewee: I think that we did that to complete an assignment. It was so disorganized. If I was looking for something, I wouldn't be able to find it. I would read the top posts and see if they were interesting, but I would never really go further on. I think content sharing's really interesting, but you have to find a way to organize it. I don't know.

Interviewer: Right. You feel like it could have been effective, but maybe it just wasn't implemented well. Yeah.

Interviewee: Yeah. I think the whole purpose was you wanna make it available for everyone to see. If you're writing something, it's so easy to share across different platforms as long as someone is able to locate you through Google search or whatever link or Facebook share. It's easy to click it and open so much content. It's all available. It's just in what form and how you wanna access it.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. Okay. You haven't done an electronic portfolio or anything of that sort? Okay. Okay. You've been uploading writing to the archive on CTools [learning management system]. *[Laughter]* You laugh about that.

Interviewee: Sometimes I upload one additional piece because I feel like the first one I uploaded was too poor. I was like, "Hopefully two of these can somehow—" *[Laughter]* Yeah.

Interviewer: How have you chosen the pieces that you wanna upload?

Interviewee: I think about what the purpose of why they want our—why whoever is collecting and analyzing, what the purpose is. I try to choose something in the same category usually so you can see how my voice or how my style has changed. I usually try to find something longer in length so they have something to work on. Truthfully, I haven't written that much. I remember I think one of my friends […] was a communications major. She said she had to write 18 papers or something in a semester. I think I've written maybe 18 in total across 4 years. I only have four to choose from. It's like, "Well, if one's five pages or two pages, I'll automatically eliminate that." I don't have that many options. Outta the three, I'll just be like, "Oh, these two are pretty good. I'll upload two."

Interviewer: Oh, okay. Yeah. What do you take to be the purpose that they're collecting them for?

Interviewee: Since it's been across three or four years, I think the first thing is to figure out how my writing has changed or developed across the four years. I think second may be just to see—I don't know. I guess they know my major and what classes I'm taking. Maybe how writing styles vary across different majors. Then there's these interviews and everything. Maybe our perspective on writing versus how we write. I'm actually pretty curious about that. I don't know if we—I didn't wanna ask when you asked me if I had questions cuz I wasn't sure if we had enough time. […].

[…]

Interviewer: Yeah. Interesting. Okay. What do you think instructors should know about teaching writing to undergraduates?

Interviewee: Oh. I think the instructors should know that students actually care. I think most people share the same perspective as me, at least a lot of my friends. I will go to class and pay attention if the professor makes enough effort and is actually engaging and interesting. I think a lot of professors act like they— especially if they're working at the university for 10, 15, 20 years, a lot of them don't have enthusiasm anymore. If I'm only going to class for participation and you don't seem to care about the class, I'm not gonna want to learn because you don't care and you're forcing me to come to class. Usually if there's no participation or *[inaudible 39:45]* attendance getting checked, I can easily gain what I need to out of reading a textbook or talking to a classmate or reading lecture notes. I'm not gonna go to class. I'm not going to class for you to read the lecture slides for me. I'm going to class and paying tuition so you can teach me

what I need to learn. I think most people are actually—I think they're in college. They do want to learn to a certain level. I've seen people who don't wake up at 8:30 a.m., go to 8:30 a.m. classes when they have a good professor. I think instructors should be aware that people actually wanna learn. It's just I know it's a lot of pressure and a lot of word, making a class engaging and actually being enthusiastic about what they're talking about. Even the most boring topics, with an enthusiastic teacher, it can really be an interesting topic. That's probably what I want to say. *[Laughter]*

Interviewer: [Laughter] Okay. Okay. Great. Well has any of this kicked up any other ideas, thoughts about your writing here or writing in general that you'd like to get on the table?

Interviewee: I guess that survey had me thinking about if I was a freshman, I'd seen this survey before, what I would have changed. I might have taken writing a little bit more seriously. It's not something that I thought about improving. It's almost like a tool that you have. It's like a pencil. You can't really change the color or the lead size or what kinda eraser you have. I just thought it was a tool that you use. I never viewed it as something you could change or maybe improve on. I'd known that, but it's just never been on my mind.I think in college, we're so caught up "Oh, where are you gonna work?" "Oh, what are you gonna do this summer?" "I want to hang out with my friends." "I'm off to get a good grade." It's just not on your priority list. For us, to get in we all had to write college essays. It's not like someone really—I'm sure there are people who writing's just not their forte, but it's not like anyone actually really sucks. I think some people are like, "Oh, if I can get by on how I'm writing right now, that's not really gonna improve my chances of getting an A in the class. I'm gonna focus on actually getting the A in the class. I'll focus on understanding the content, blah blah blah." I think everyone subconsciously, at least, understands that writing's important. It just might not be on their priority list at the moment because there are so many other things going on in their life.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm. Yeah. Can I ask do you know what it was about that survey that made you think about this?

Interviewee: I think it just asked a lotta questions. I don't really remember a specific one. It just asked about a long—it was a pretty drastic list. It was like, "How long in these four years have you done this, this, this, and this? How would you rate yourself as a writer? Also how important do you think writing is in your future in these situations?" I think I was just imagining myself, especially as a consultant, where you're dealing with clients and technically—I mean, my career progression is very dependent on how people view me. That's how I communicate and how I write.I don't remember who—I think it was maybe my mother. She was just like, "It doesn't matter if you're right or wrong. If you can't communicate it across, then what use is it?" It's great that you understand it, but especially in the field that you're working in, if you can't get your ideas across, it's technically

useless. I think that just made a lot of sense. I don't know. It's always been on my to-do list. I'm not actually sure if I have enough motivation to make the step to improve it. Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. As long as you know that for the rest of your career, this is gonna be—

Interviewee: It's important, yeah.

[…]

Interviewer: Yeah. That's really interesting. That's really interesting. Great. Well, thank you so much.

Interviewee: Thank you.

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[End of Audio]