

CLASS VISITATION REPORT

Michael Russo

Date of Visit: 10/25/16

Subject of Class: ENGL 1030 (DAN 312)

Reading Assignments:

Writing Assignments and Activities:

Form of Assignments:

1. Course content, goals, and activities this day. How did the instructor present the goals and content in the framework of the course as a whole? What were the student responses to the presentation? Michael began class by mentioning that the students should have received their last assignment from him with his feedback. Most students responded enthusiastically. There were students who joked with him but they did so in the context of the lesson. He frequently relates the activities to the course as a whole & their assignments.
2. What were the methods used by the teacher this day (e.g. lecture, discussion, leading, group work)? Which were most effective, and why? What strengths could this instructor build on? Michael urged students to stop researching now and start crafting. Today he said the discussion was on Style, he had a humorous intro & connected individual style to composing style by needing to define terms. He displayed a slide of some images. There was a lively discussion of music styles. They discussed the formal elements of hip-hop vs country music. Then they looked at the images he choose of some women from the 50's, a pirate, etc.
3. Comment on the teacher's preparation; command of material; clarity of explanation, exposition, and delivery; interaction with students, and overall manner. How does this teacher "come across?" Michael had prepared a Powerpoint presentation and different music to play during the activity. He is very energetic and enthusiastic, plus creative as he teaches. He comes across as professional, but fun, approachable, and knowledgeable. His students seemed to enjoy the class a lot.

TA RESPONSE

Signing this response, with or without comment, indicates that you have read and discussed this visitation with the evaluator, and that you understand that it will be filed with your records.

2) (cont'd)

The responses to these images was very good. He mentions the 3 different types of style (Fancy, everyday, minimalist), and shows slides to visually communicate these types. He put up a passage of \& asked a student to read it, but read it with a fancy style. He very comically said commas are like bad friends that tell you to keep drinking, and periods are like good friends that tell you to stop. The Everyday style slide had a picture of normal people, a lightbulb, and a cell phone with a photo of a salad on it. Then a slide with "everyday" style of writing. Another student read this passage. Michael asks great questions \& uses great examples. The 3rd style he called minimalist. The minimalist passage was "Spot spot run." Then he showed a cow jumping over the moon \& read 3 styles of writing about this image. The students applauded. Then he showed an image \& asked the students to write a minimalist response. He added some music. Michael moved around to the tables \& checked with them as they wrote. Then he switched to everyday music, but kept the same image (a princess talking to a frog). Then finally he changed to Fancy music \& they wrote Fancy. He referred them to a thesaurus website to help them. He gave them longer time with this one.

[Not sure about encouraging thesaurus, but for the purpose of this exercise with limited time, it is probably a good thing.] The students were a bit more hesitant, but the student who read first was very dramatic. Then he shifted to ask how this connects to writing style. He reminded them of previous lessons on analytical lens, about the importance of our lexicon. He mentioned that in their drafts they should write more minimally in academic style, to call less attention to language \& push their ideas more forward. Then they had to do their thesis questions in Fancy style, etc. Instead of sharing he showed them a tool. But he cautioned them to still use their brain. He displayed the Hemingway app.

\& pasted in a sample paper. [Not sure about encouraging them to use these apps.] He asked them to put their complex sentences into the app \& try it out. Again he moved among the students \& chatted with them as they work. Then he asked them to put Jonathan Swift's Modest Proposal into the app \& then the groups work together to get his writing down from post-collegiate to 2nd or 3rd grade. The students had a blast with this. It was like a game, a challenge to reduce the language down. Then he went around the room \& asked them to explain how they did it. Finally he asked them to use this with their own next draft \& yet don't lose sight of their unique voices. He wants this to help them learn about the various styles. He did a quick review \& ended class.