
Writer's Statement for "A Genre Analysis of Patient Notes and Documentation Practices in the ICU"

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When I first walked into my ENC 1102 class at the beginning of the fall semester, I was unsure what I should expect. My professor, Melissa Pompos Mansfield, began explaining the basic concepts we would learn and use throughout the semester. She explained that we would be analyzing genres using activity and genre systems. We were told to brainstorm different writing-based activities that we could potentially investigate and questions we had about those activities. At first, I struggled with finding a community or area of inquiry because many of my classmates were studying their sports or sororities and I was not involved in those groups, but one day I noticed my mother emptying her pockets after a day of work. She had haphazard notes on many different types of material, such as gloves or crumpled napkins, regarding her patients. This instance was like a light bulb illuminating above my head, and I knew that this would be the perfect topic for my research paper for my class.

As a class, we had to respond to discussion posts, which allowed us to really develop the areas of inquiry that we were researching. These discussion posts broke down the different learning concepts that we were supposed to utilize. After I settled on my topic, the research was a breeze because there is existing scholarship about nursing documentation, so I did not have any trouble finding sources to help establish the conversation. We used framing concepts, which allowed us to break our data into different categories, and we explained how every aspect was related to each other. Since this was a class assignment, every piece of writing was peer-reviewed and we were given feedback from our professor as well. This peer review process allowed for many improvements within my rough drafts.

There were numerous steps that we followed to complete this research project, and, surprisingly, the most difficult aspect was actually analyzing the genre. I had never done this before, so it was a new concept to me. Once I got feedback from my peers and professor, I was able to rework my genre analyses and create better and more effective codes for my data. Once I had a solid foundation of the analysis of my data, my research paper easily came together. This research paper was mainly written with an audience of my peers or other school faculty in mind.

My research responded to the very alarming problem within the nursing setting in the hospital. The manner in which nurses document about their patients currently is not adequate, and I felt that something needed to be changed. After completing this course and research project, I am more apt to noticing the large role that writing plays in many every day activities. This paper gave

me a great experience with becoming more familiar in the style of research literature, and I hope to continue with other research projects in the future.