
Retrospective

SHRAVAN YANDRA

Shravan Yandra's article, "[Note-Taking Involving Native and Modern Languages: A Detailed Analysis of My Code-Meshing](#)" was published in Stylus 7.2 in Fall 2016 and later republished in the UCF edition of EasyWriter, a handbook used in composition classrooms across the university. He also served as assistant editor for Issue 8.1.

*S*tylus was my first research paper publication at UCF. Between being an average student in my English classes at high school and being exposed to the British educational writing styles in India, I lacked confidence in my writing classes as I felt writing in the United States was arduous and convoluted. This fear came as a boon, in a way, as I would allocate more time for my writing classes. After the publication, I gained immense self-confidence to overcome not just my fear of writing and an increased vitality to work towards strengthening my weaknesses in life. During my sophomore year, I was selected as a student editor, which was an eye-opening experience. This helped me take a look into the minds of students who presented their writings in an artistic fashion. I was exposed to numerous pieces of writing and each had a unique style of conveying ideas in a strategic manner.

Those experiences in my sophomore year were helpful for my daily life, my friends in UCF Global (which is an international program at UCF), and to my high school friends in India. The development in my writing skills helped me save a great deal of time in my research paper as it enabled me to focus mainly on the content and figure out the structure of the paper in a much more efficient style. Furthermore, these skills made it easy for me to handle writing detailed reports of issues faced by clients and send it to the higher authorities at my place of work. As preparing a speedy and accurate report is crucial to improve the productivity of problem solving at my workplace. Besides improving my self-efficacy at work, I helped my friends from diverse writing backgrounds in the UCF Global program by proofreading their writings and delivering suggestions about how they could better present their ideas with minor tweaks in organization. This helped them integrate their writing methods with the composition writing approaches and at the same time expanded my exposure to novel writings. Since some of my high school friends in India are not exposed to the American academic writing styles—with emphasis on writing a thesis statement and writing it felicitously—I shared excerpts from my writing and proofread their Statements of Purpose, benefitting their university applications. Sharing my knowledge helped them get useful insights into college writing. All of the mutual knowledge exchange interactions helped me develop a stronger network with my friends, improve my writing skills, and, importantly, gave me a glimmer of rest from my unvarying class schedules during the semester.

I feel there is always room for improvement even in the best of writers. There are great resources available to students on campus to develop their writing skills. Most importantly, office hours of professors are a very effective way to learn, as one-on-one interaction with the professor enables students to ask several questions that are not answered in class due to time constraints, hesitation of students, or simply not being tailored for a class interaction. In my experience, these interactions helped me immensely to better understand the questions in class, to brainstorm any innovative ideas, to proofread my assignments, and to receive other valuable suggestions to develop my writing. Secondly, the UCF University Writing Center has been a very effective place to develop my writing skills outside the classroom. The eagerness to help and methodologies followed by the

tutors in the Writing Center makes college writing much simpler for students. I suggest my composition friends in the international program to visit to the Writing Center even for the most elementary reasons such as brainstorming ideas or checking grammar, as the tutors help you solve your own problem by providing guidance. This procedure of learning helped me develop critical thinking skills and the confidence to solve similar problems by myself. In my time at the composition class, I scheduled appointments with tutors based on the type of issue I was facing with writing. For example, some tutors explained the grammar in an easier manner while some helped improve the organization of my assignment. Thus, I harnessed my time with multiple tutors before submitting my final draft assignment to develop various aspects of my writing and eventually gained confidence over my writing. Lastly, class participation played a vital role in promoting critical and divergent thinking. As there is a lot of brainstorming done in the class for the writing assignments, I used to try and participate in these sessions and listen to the ideas of my classmates, link multiple ideas and come up with unique ideas for my writing. During those discussions, professors gave an explanation about how an idea could be molded and implemented in writing assignments. Besides participating in class, providing a detailed peer review will benefit both the reviewee and reviewer. The reviewee gets an additional proofreader and the reviewer can learn from the positives and negatives of the reviewee's writing. In a nutshell, attending office hours of professors, participating in class, working with tutors in the Writing Center, and improving the details in the peer-review will be helpful for the composition writing class and altogether improve the overall development of one's writing skills.

Shravan Yandra

Shravan Yandra majors in Computer Engineering and minors in Mathematics at UCF. He is in his senior year and will be graduating in Fall 2020. He participated in Major League Hacking (MLH) camp last summer and worked overseas in India as an intern in Cedar software firm. He has been preparing to migrate to Canada after his graduation to pursue a Master's in Computer Sciences to aspire and gain in depth knowledge in Computer Automation and DevOps.