

Mandy—

Yours was one of my favorite papers. I love that you interviewed this guy you really didn't know and had a real question about. That helps give your paper a place to start—you want to answer that question, and I think that for the most part you do. What I'd like to see you do in a revision is think about the organization of your paper. I think that there is a way you could structure this paper to introduce us to Lou in a way that builds to your point that he goes to sports events to stay active and connected to the world and community. I think you take a bit too long getting us in to the apartment. That could be a bit shorter. I think that you could probably shrink up some of us learning about how you noticed him too. Tell us more about his family, and earlier in the paper (do you see the connection between the fact that he used to go to see his kid's games and just got in the habit of going to them?). Keep his earlier life earlier in the paper and his later life later in the paper. Try not to repeat things that you tell me in the paper. I've tried to point out where you are doing this. Finally, take a look at your sentences. They are pretty complicated—more complicated than they need to be. It's OK to sound like a normal person talking when you write a paper. I really look forward to a revision of this paper. I think we might enter it into consideration for publication in *Embracing Writing*.

Terrence—

I think there are two things that you need to work on in a revision of this paper—and they are not unconnected. First off, you've got information all over the place. I don't know, sometimes, why you've got one kind of information stuck next to other kinds. I'm sort of just making this up, but you'll have a sentence about a favorite pet next to how they did well in high school. What was your plan for organizing the information in the paper? I think that the reason it feels so scattered is that you don't really have a thesis. You aren't trying to make me understand your person in any particular way. That's been my big point about this paper from the beginning. I just don't want a list of facts, I want the paper to come together so that I understand a very particular thing about that person. That's what your thesis should be. Once you've figured out a real thesis that actually reflects what you are trying to say about your person, then you can use that to help you organize the paper. It can help you figure out when to tell me certain facts and when to tell me others—and when to just not tell me information at all. We also need to work on those sentences—when they start, stop, need a comma, don't need a comma. You are certainly not the only person that this affects. We will definitely be working on this in class. Go to it. I have great faith in you.

Cole—

Cole I'm going to be honest with you. You say you want to be a writer, and I believe you. And I'm going to be hard on you so that you can become the writer you want to be. I think that this paper has a good idea in it and it needs better execution. I think that you are trying to say something specific about this friend of yours. It has to do with him having wanted a military career for a long time even when his family didn't. It has to do with him having changed after boot camp. It has something to do with this kid taking on a lot of pretty heavy responsibilities at home as well. But I can't point to a place in the paper where I understand how all these ideas fit together. The first part of the paper—where you talk about him and boot camp—takes over most of the paper, and some of the other ideas—how long he wanted to do this, how he's got a lot going on at home—don't get as much space. And I think they need it. I would like to see, also, for you to consider moving some of the stuff about his family life right now, his commitment to school and responsibilities at home to the opening of the paper. And then move the stuff on how he has changed since boot camp to the end of the paper. Because that's where he isn't just imagining a life in the military, he's actually living it—what is good about it and what is pretty rough about it. And how he still really wants it. Which seems like a place to end the essay. I feel like you started this piece with real energy but that maybe you lost steam as you wrote through it. So I want you to renew your energy and commitment to the paper and make it great. Because I believe you can do this.

Jason—

Your paper was one of my most favorites. I loved the Tony Orlando and Dawn opening. It's a great set up for the rest of the paper. If you wanted to, in a revision, you could even develop that a little more. I bet if you went on youtube you could find some clips of the show—if not the whole show. And you could talk about how it doesn't really seem like something that should inspire such a great career—and yet it does. It would just add a depth and richness to the piece. Another thing that you should address in a revision are places where I want to know more information—about the work he is doing, why he likes it, why he finds it fulfilling, etc. and sometimes I just want clarification. You could also bring yourself more into the paper. I'd like to know how you know this guy. I think you could craft the ending of the paper to be about what you learned about how you want to live your life. I think you are heading in that direction, I'd just like to see it developed a bit more. The one thing I don't think you do is develop this guy as a family man. So either get rid of that from the end of your paper or develop it more in the body. I really look forward to a revision of this paper. I think we might enter it into consideration for publication in *Embracing Writing*.

Tyriq—

I'm writing this evaluation letter to make sure that you know that I do not have a paper for you for the first assignment. I have combed through my email to see if you sent it late and whatever communication I have from you, I do not have that paper. If you do not turn in something, you will have earned an F for this portion of the class.

If you turn something in to me by Sunday, 21 October 2018, no later than 5:00 PM, I will get you feedback on it so that you can work on a revision to be turned in on 6 November 2018.

Understand that not turning in a first draft does have consequences. According to the assignment, you should technically fail. I'm not really interested in failing students in their first semester, and I would prefer if you did not put me in the position where I have to do that. But, and this is the important point, if I have nothing from you to evaluate, I will need to assign you an F for this paper. That will be 10% of your grade.

Additionally, when a student totally doesn't turn in one paper, it typically means that they are missing other work or has issues with absences, with book club or with their writing fellow. You should consider if this is your situation as well. If the work of this class is not something you feel you are able to do or if you are unwilling to do it, I am willing to talk with you to find out what I can do to support you in getting this work done. I will clear as many obstacles as it is possible and fair to the rest of your classmates as it is for me to clear. But if you do not think you will be successful in this class—and by successful I mean earning a grade above a D—you should withdraw from the class. It is better to withdraw than it is to earn a D or F in your first semester.