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**Reflection on Participating in the 2020 Department
Magazine Production**

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Reflection on Participating in the 2020 Department Magazine Production

Department Magazine has been a traditional production for the Department of English Language & Literature in FJCU. Every year, some senior students work together to produce the department magazine that collected various sorts of news that happened during the year. Basically, as one of the professional writing courses, this course is only provided for the senior students of the English department to take. After reading all the course descriptions from different professional writing courses provided in our department, I am more interested in this course.

To put it simply, there are three main reasons why I chose to take this course. Firstly, I hope to keep improving my writing skill after the completion of all the Conversation & Composition courses in the English department. Although paper writing has always been a tough challenge, as an English-major, I think professional English-writing is the basic required skill for us. In order to maintain this professional skill until I enter the workplace, I would like to keep on my writing journey. Since the title of the course is “Journalism Writing & Department Magazine,” I think the training for professional writing would be valued more highly and carefully in this course. Secondly, I would like to participate in the department activity for my last college year. Honestly speaking, I didn’t attend many activities in our department due to my personal schedule for club activities, some off-campus training courses, and part-time work. Usually, I worked alone rather than worked in a team. As a

consequence, I think this time I need to contribute a little effort to our department before I graduate, no matter the theater performance or magazine production. And finally, I decided to join in the team of magazine production based on my personal preference. Lastly and most importantly, I am really interested in layout design of magazine and website. By this course, I can learn more professional lessons and practical experiences about layout design. So, that is the reason why I volunteered to attend the group of magazine layout design.

With the guide of Professor Donna T. Tong, we start a warm-up before annual magazine production which is “Department Newsletter”. To elaborate specifically, “Department Newsletter” is the main focus for the previous semester in 2019, which is the entirely new project planned by Professor Tong. According to Professor Tong, the aim of this project is basically a preparation for our magazine production. Not only help us to understand different essay genre in journalism but also more professional skills and regulations for writing a news or magazine article. Perhaps the whole process is quite tough; however, I have gained a lot from this valuable experience and truly enjoyed it. During the process of “Department Newsletter” production, I worked as a writer, copy editor, and also layout designer.

To be honest, I was frustrated at the beginning in the writing process. As a writer, I didn’t do well in my article because it did not fit in some of the regulations for journalism writing. “This doesn’t look like news!” which is my most impressive words said by the professor. Thanks to her strict requirements for writing, I have spent more time studying journalism writing rules and gradually found some specific problems in my writing.

For layout design, it has always been my interest, and I also take some off-campus courses for enriching this skill; however, due to insufficient experiences, I had never truly got the chance to design website or magazine layout for any

institutions. Therefore, by joining this course, I get the chance to participate in the layout group to learn more practical experience for layout design. As a layout designer for the “Department Newsletter”, I’ve started to work on something new to me which is “Website Design”. To be frank, I must say it is regarded as a crucial experience for me. At the beginning of this work, I got really anxious since I had no experience with Website design at all. I’ve spent many days figuring out numerous instructions of the website we chose to use, and gradually got into the right path. During the process, in order to make the website as perfect as possible, I not only asked for classmates’ advice but also searched for information on the Internet, such as some teaching videos by YouTuber. Every time when I finished the revision of website layout, I gained a sense of accomplishment not only for myself but also for my team. This experience reminds me that although the working process may be hard, when we walk through it and finally overcome it, the outcome is wonderful. Moreover, this is a really useful skill for me to mention in my resume. Considering my interest, I would like to find some jobs which related to magazine layout design in the future. Thus, the experience I have learned from this course is surely important to me.

After the training of the production for “Department Newsletter” in the previous semester, students have relatively got the main idea about what we have to do to publish a department magazine. This year, students worked more smoothly and tacitly with each other. In my opinion, our chief editor of department magazine, Emily and Tyler took the major credit for this success. Basically, the main direction and some important things for the magazine have already been well planned by Emily and Tyler in the previous semester, so the rest of the classmates just needed to follow the schedule they planned. Also, whenever we finished the class discussion with our professor, they clearly marked the details that we needed to revise. With this kind of leader for the team, everyone was easier to keep up.

Our topic for the magazine is “Summer”. It not only represents the vitality of summer but also the season for graduation. That is the reason why we chose this topic since we are all seniors! For our contents, we basically classify them into the following sections: News, Campus, Art & Lifestyle, Travel, and Poetry & Fiction. Each section has a section editor for helping the editor in chief review the articles in their section. This is a hard work as well. Specifically, section editors not only need to finalize the articles which belong to their section but also in charge of the fundraising. In order to make our department magazine more high-quality, they need to raise more money as possible as they could. This year, our section editors raised money by doing online advertising for the stores near our school for free. Actually, I think this work is quite challenging since it definitely needs a great talent for communication.

During the final stage for magazine production, which was the busiest time for all of us, each writer needed to revise their articles several times after receiving professor’s comments. For section editor, they needed to review and finalize each article in their section, including correcting writer’s grammar mistakes, sentence structures, etc. As a layout designer, I needed to revise the layout format after each class meeting with the professor in order to make our work more perfect in every detail. This year, there is another teacher, Professor Chou, Te-Lien to assist us for layout design. We had spent about 5-6 classes learning some professional skill for designing magazine layout with *Adobe InDesign* and various kinds of useful applications. During these days, I have developed deeper understanding for the field of layout design and got more inspiration for our magazine layout. We not only completed the print version prototype for the magazine but also the interactive version, which is a more creative and interesting way to promote our magazine. By using the application like, *Powtoon*, we can promote our magazine online for free. As an internet generation, I think the digital way of promoting is important as well. In the

final process, I revised the format for multiple times when the writer sent me their new revision or when the layout group decided to change some details. Although this work seemed to be exhausting, I pretty enjoyed it during the process.

Generally speaking, I really appreciate the chance to participate in the team of 2020 Department Magazine Production. Every member of the team is awesome, and magazine production would not go successfully without anyone, including Joshua, our best photographer. With the lead of Professor Tong and the assist of Professor Chou, we have learned more crucial concepts on professional writing and layout designing. Even though the process was tough, the most precious thing I think is the memory of working with these good friends together. When it comes to “what I have learned from this course” I think it is too much for me to say. All in all, I think the course not only taught me the professional skills but also the important value of teamwork. I would like to thank the two professors again for their teaching and all my classmates’ cooperation in this course.

