“Meet Your Instructor”

My name is Andy Bourelle and I’m will be the lead instructor for this course. I have a bachelor’s degree in journalism and I worked as a newspaper reporter for several years before returning to school for my master’s degree and my PhD in English. This is my 9th year teaching college-level English classes, both online and in traditional classroom settings. I love teaching composition classes such as this one, as well as creative writing and literature courses. I love to read and write and I enjoy sharing my passion for language with students. I am particularly excited about working with all of you in the Writers’ Studio, a new, innovative way of teaching first-year composition. In the Writers’ Studio, a whole team is available to help you learn. Even though this is an online course, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me with any questions. You may email me or contact me during my office hours via Skype, and you are strongly encouraged to use the Writers’ Lounge where either my colleagues or I will answer your questions promptly. We, as a team, are here to help.

“Video Feedback to Student”

This time I thought I’d give you feedback in the form of a video so that I can kind of walk you through your travel blog and talk about the things that I really like and then ask questions to get you to think about how you might revise and make improvements. So first off I’d like to say that I really like the background because I think that the lights really look like lights you might see in a theater, and I love the pictures you use. I think they’re really vibrant and bright and I think that those juxtaposed with the criteria really do a great job of persuading your audience to attend the Rialto. I also wanted to say that I like the introduction because I think you do a nice job of showing instead of telling and drawing us in describing a typical night at the Rialto, so I think you do a nice job of hooking us from the very beginning. The main things that I want to talk about and ask questions about are the second paragraph here where you describe the criteria and you ask questions of the criteria. So my question to you is: where might these questions better fit within the travel blog? So in the next few paragraphs, like right here, and then on down, you discuss your criteria even further. So what I’m sort of wondering is: How might you integrate these questions that are in the second paragraph throughout your blog? I also want you to take another look at the pictures because I think that the pictures you use do a nice job of complementing the text and the text complements the pictures, so it’s kind of this relationship you’ve established between the two of them. But I want to know if you can maybe make improvements on the uniformity of the pictures. So for instance, here again, you wrap the text against the pictures, and then you don’t down here where you discus the bands and you evaluate the acts that come to the Rialto. So I’m wondering what you might be able to do to kind of make the blog look a little more uniform in terms of using the text and the pictures together. So just think about that. Think about the idea of uniformity when you go to make revisions. I know you have to do one more revision, and you’re going to work with me on this a little bit further, so feel free to ask me questions via email, and I’d be happy to meet on Skype as well.

“Audio Feedback to Student”

Hi Megan,

This is feedback on your project #1, your family tradition of going to the resort. You’ve done a great, great job of rich description. It almost reads like a travel brochure, which I think is really lovely; it looks a little like a fairy tale location from the images you have given. You give us good details about the place and the activities that go on. The one recommendation I would make to you is to build the characters a little bit more. Help us see the people in the place with you. Since you are sharing a family tradition, show those family members a little bit more.

On your “audience” in your self-assessment, you say you are writing for family readers. You want to make sure that these are family members who have not attended the reunion because they participated in it, and we write to share experiences with those who have not participated. So think real carefully about that audience, again, it could be family members on the opposite side of your family so there’s no problem with that audience. However, you say that you are writing a magazine article. And this does not parallel with your audience. So, if you are writing for a magazine, then you are writing for a much broader, bigger audience like families who want to go to a particular location or families about the significance of family reunions. So, you really have to think about how your audience and genre come together. The way you can do that is think very specifically about what type of document you’re going to produce and where’s it going to show up. So if you’re going to do a newspaper article, is it going to show up in the travel section of the Arizona Republic? If so, obviously all of the people who read that are not only the primarily audience, but also you may have secondary audience who are just readers. People that you may have not intended to write for who may simply read the piece.

So think a little bit more carefully about your audience and your genre as you move forward. This project is at “green light” status, which means it’s ready to go into your portfolio without a lot changes, and I would encourage you do to a little more writing on audience, genre, and context to make sure you are clear on those learning outcomes. Thanks for your great work here, Megan. I look forward to seeing project #2.