Adela Barca CIS 102 T Refection Paper

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My Experience

 When I was making my schedule last semester for the spring, I realized that I needed to fulfill and Area One, therefore I registered for CIS 102 T. The first day of class is also when I realized that this course required me to teach elderly people how to use computers, I thought it was just a regular CIS class. Being that this was my busiest and hardest semester, I was considering dropping the course to lower my stress level, because this class does require a lot of work and strong effort. However, I obviously chose to stay, and I honestly, have mixed feelings about whether I am happy with the decision I made.

 This course has had many pros and cons for me. Firstly, I would like to say that I lost my grandmother who I was very close with just before the semester started and it has been extremely difficult for me, and even more so because I am taking a course that requires me to spend time with elderly women and it is impossible to not think of my grandmother when doing so. There have honestly been many times where I have left the residence upset. I can recall a specific time when Laura and I were meeting with Evelyn after class to work on our term projects, and she proceeded to talk for a half hour about how she wants to die, and feels that “doctors should help you and make it easy for you, there should be a pill you can take”, pretty much like when you put an animal down. This comment was very hard for me to hear, and it was also very hard for me to like her and want to work with her on a webpage. Considering the fact that I am mourning the loss of my grandmother who died at a young age, and who did not want to die at all because she loved life and her family. On the brighter side it helped me to feel better about my grandmother life, because she was may have lived a shorter life then some of our students at the residence, but her life was much more plentiful. It saddens me to see that so many of the elderly people at the residence do not have family and are so lonely and sick. I remember having a class discussion before we even visited the residence at the beginning of the course about how sweet all the student were going to be, I honestly would have to disagree. I understand that they are very different from us and that patience is needed, and I respect that but that doesn’t mean that I liked everyone. Some yes, were sweet, others said things that were offensive, like one student who kept bashing the Bronx after I told her that is where I am from and live. I also made appointments with students who didn’t show up; dealing with them was not always an easy and fun experience.

 I had more of a positive attitude at the beginning of the class when I met Sally who was my student for 3 weeks, I liked her very much, and she was very sweet and smart. Teaching her was a challenge that I enjoyed, it was harder for her to maneuver the mouse because she had broken her shoulder. However, unfortunately after spring break I never saw her again, because she became ill. I would have liked to work on my term project with her, I related to her in the way that, she was from Argentina and missed her town, which she talked about often and we googled pictures of. It reminded me of the town my family comes from in Italy, and I was able to understand a culture that I was not familiar with. I feel that Sally was different from the others, and we also had somewhat of a bond, I noticed that Sally was the only one who kissed their teacher goodbye, this simple gesture changed our relationship for the better, I really looked forward to seeing her every week. Which also meant a lot to me because I had a lot of tension going on inside of me because of what I had been going through with my grandmother that I honestly didn’t expect to like another elderly woman as much as I liked Sally. I understand that this may sound mean and hard to understand but I have to be honest.

After Sally got sick, for the rest of the classes, I kind of floated around the room trying to help anyone that needed help or didn’t have a teacher. I found this fun and interesting despite the fact that I wished Sally was there and it was also annoying not to have a set student, but I was able to meet more of the residents and I felt like I knew all of them and what their personalities were like. This was a great experience and something very new to me. It has been very gratifying to make an elderly persons day and teach them something new. I realize that what may be the smallest and easiest gesture to us, such as clicking “send” on an e-mail, may make an elderly person live a happier life. Therefore I understand that I am involved in such a great program, which I appreciate and for that reason I do not regret staying in the course. But yes, I have found it overwhelming. Also because of Sally’s absence and the inconsistency of the student’s attendance Laura and I are forced to do our term projects with the elderly people in our families. I do not mind this because I have been enjoying working with my grandfather and uncle on the webpage’s; it makes me happy to teach them and see them happy. So far the project is going very well and I am happy with what Laura and I are helping them create.

I would like to also say that this class has really benefited my grandfather because I have been teaching a lot about computers and blogging about it over the semester. I have experienced what most of the other teachers in the class are experiencing with their students, which I lacked somewhat because of Sally not returning, with my grandfather. Which I am very thankful that I was able to do, it has also been somewhat of a distraction for him and something new to do after the loss of my grandmother. Therefore, once again I am happy that I chose to stay in the class, because it has made me look at things from a different aspect. I have also learned to appreciate and embrace life more than I used to. Overall this has been a positive but difficult experience for me.