

Personal Transformation I Reflection Paper

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The Personal Transformation course has helped me to learn more about myself as an individual and as a student in the occupational therapy program here at Sacred Heart University (SHU). The course has helped me build confidence in my academic and professional abilities and behaviors. Being assigned an advisor who is reliable and helpful in making their advisee's feel comfortable and secure in their new role as graduate students, has helped me better transition into this role.

The first semester of graduate school has been overwhelming, stress-inducing, and full of a lot of hard work, but also extremely rewarding and fulfilling. The Personal Transformation course helped me put the semester into perspective in a sense of helping me organize my academic and professional goals and assisting me in the advancement of my knowledge. I enjoyed how the assignments for this course were aimed at helping us learn more about ourselves so we can adjust our routines or goals to better ourselves and our time in the program. For example, completing the VARK assessment in the beginning of the semester really prepared me for the rest of the semester. I used the information I learned from the assessment to adjust my studying techniques to better fit my personal learning style, so that I was understanding and retaining the most amount of information possible. After learning that I was a multi-modal kinesthetic learner (VARK, 2014), I began including and drawing pictures as well as rewriting notes in my own words to help me study and better understand material for other courses. I also found the professional behaviors checklist (Napier, 2012) to be very useful in understanding my personal and professional strengths and weaknesses. After the completion of these assignments I learned that I struggle with confidence and voicing my opinions and feelings, after learning that I became more consciously aware of moments in class or when speaking to others where I could improve. I have spent the rest of the semester and am continuously working to improve my

confidence and communication skills. Another aspect of the course that I found to be extremely helpful were the advisement meetings. I was very nervous coming into graduate school, as I had never known anyone who had done so, it was all very new and unfamiliar to me. It was made clear in the first advising meeting that our advisor would be someone who would always be in our corner and whom we could go to about anything. As a very anxious incoming graduate student, I found this to be very comforting and I am glad that I have been able to have such a good and open connection with my advisor because I feel comfortable going to her about any personal or academic questions or conflicts. My advisor's understanding attitude and calming tone is something that I will take with me in my journey of becoming an occupational therapist. It's important for clients to feel comfortable around you and it's important as an OT to know and understand your clients values and concerns and to be able to set their mind at ease if things don't always go as planned. I feel that this is what my advisor has done for me and I hope to be able to share that with others.

The Personal Transformation course has helped me to learn more about myself as an individual and as a student in the occupational therapy program here at SHU. Throughout this course I learned a lot of valuable information about myself and how I can improve myself to be a better occupational therapy professional. I look forward to applying more of what I've learned in this course in my future as an OT.

References

Napier (2012). *Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Survival Guide: Professional Behaviors*

Checklist. Exercise 6.2.

VARK. (2014, July 30). *VARK Learning Style Questionnaire: How do you learn best?* Vark-

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