

CORE 405-T7
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Student: EB

Reflective Essay

Before starting this class this semester, I really thought that all these core classes were used to extend our time at the Mount and a way to get more tuition from students. After listening to you talk and hearing what you had to say about the liberal arts education, my opinion of these classes really changed. I realized that these classes were used to open our eyes to the world around us and to really give us a well-rounded education. These classes really allow us to form personal and trusting relationships with our classmates. We talk on a personal basis and sometimes share information that we would not normally share with any other class. These classes also allow me to think about deeper questions and problems in life. I am now more educated and well-rounded because I have learned about problems around the world and that other cultures experience.

Liberal arts classes, this one in particular, help us think about and better understand the “big questions in life”. After giving it some thought and again rethinking this question at the end of the semester, I still really think that my “big question” is “How can I, or do I contribute to the common good and what difference can I make in my community?”

I am still currently an intern for a non-profit, Marvin Lewis Community Fund. I love what our fund has to offer and what a difference that we make in youth education. While I am very passionate about what we currently do, I still have a desire to make a bigger impact on the community. I really want to find a way to help the homeless and I believe that my liberal arts education has helped to push me towards feeling this way. These classes have opened my mind up to what others experience.

My junior year, I took a Justice and the Common Good course where we talked about the common good for three hours every week for eight weeks. I had a lot of time to think about and take in all of the information I was given in this class. I am not of Catholic faith, but I gained a lot of insight from Catholic Social Teaching. I was very interested in and thought about three of the teachings: Respect the Human Person, Work for the Common Good, and Pursue Peace and Care for the Poor. Prior to this class I had never heard of Catholic Social Teachings and hadn't given these principles any thought.

I believe another way that my liberal arts education has informed my current perspective on my “big question” is based upon the interactions and conversations with fellow class members. When I am in my business classes, I am with the same students every semester. We talk about finance, marketing, or efficient ways to run a business and I never get to know them past these conversations. In my core classes, I am introduced to different students every semester. We are all from different majors, different backgrounds, and different walks of life. I am able to hear about their lives. I learn about different parts of the world, different cultures, and different religions through conversations in class. These conversations also inform me about what is going on in our community outside of my little world that I live in. Something that really opened my eyes was the “privilege walk” that we did in class this semester. It made me realize all that I have and all that I have been given. This walk made me realize how thankful I should be.

After some thoughtful consideration, I have come to the conclusion that we as individuals/groups are responsible for the global community. We need to go beyond just helping ourselves and help those in developing countries and even those in our own community that are struggling to survive. While I believe that we need to somehow help those in need, I am not exactly positive how. This is the question I keep asking myself as graduation is approaching and I am realizing how much I want to make a difference in my community. I don't have an answer on how we can help the entire world, but I do have small ideas for aiding the community that go beyond just donating money. We can do things such as serving at a homeless shelter or donating food to the free store food bank. While these actions don't seem to make a huge difference, they are small ways to begin working towards the common good. They are ways that will better our community and small differences will add up.

While I donate money at church, I like to do more than just give money. It's easy to put \$20 in the pot at church and call it a day, but going out and actually doing something in the community makes a much bigger impact. If everybody takes at least one day of the month to do something to benefit the community, we will eventually make a huge difference.

In terms of helping developing countries, my money at church can help. It goes towards mission trips, which I would like to go on one day, and projects to aid those that are in major need. I am still not positive what exactly we need to do to help the world or even our community or what exactly I am here to do, but I one day hope to find that out.