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Goal 1.3 Reflection

In this section I will be discussing the major principles of ecology and evolution and how my knowledge has evolved since I have been a freshman. The first document shows the Wooly Worm experiment that I did in Biology 251. This experiment consisted of going out onto Chichester lawn and distributing worms of various colors all over the lawn. We were then given a period of time to collect the worms. What we found was that worms of brighter colors were picked up the most because they were easiest to see, the other colors (brown and green) blended in more with the grass and therefore were much harder to see and not picked up as often. We came to the conclusion that those worms with brighter colors would have a disadvantage over the worms of darker color. The other two artifacts that I provided were from my Ecology class my senior year. The first artifact was special because we were given a prompt and asked to answer questions on that prompt about oysters using only the vague knowledge we had and our notes. The third artifact was my final lab report of our semester long project on the invasive plant *Microstegium vimineum*. In this experiment we looked at different things that would affect the growth of this invasive plant species.

I learned a lot from these courses, and it shows a lot of my progress. Working on the Wooly Worm report I was not confident in my writing abilities at all and it showed in my final product and grade. I was not equipped with the best knowledge to write in the biological sciences at this point in my undergraduate career. I was very frustrated because although I took my time, the finished product was not at all what I wanted it to be, but I had to turn it in anyways. Looking forward to my upper level Ecology course you can see a very distinct transition that occurred, and at this point in my college career I felt way more confident, although I still need to work on my ability to write in the sciences, I think that my 4 page Wooly Worm report compared to my 10 page *Microstegium* project speaks volumes on what I have learned here and Longwood and how I’ve grown.

Moving forward I want to continue to improve my writing in the sciences which I think will happen with continued practice and persistence. As I said in my last reflection these skills are so important in what I want to continue to do with my career. The Wooly Worm showed me all the things I could potentially improve in and the other two artifacts confirmed the improvement that I wanted to see all along.