Portfolio Reflection #1

While my time as a sociology major has been short and quite different from others, I have seen a lot of personal growth within myself. My college career has been somewhat unordinary in a way, but I do not regret any decisions throughout my journey here at Longwood. In 2020, I started my college career as a nursing major. It surely was challenging and unlike anything I have ever experienced but I gave it my shot even though it unfortunately did not work in my favor. Before coming to college, I would have considered my writing skills as satisfactory. I could have improved in some areas, but overall, I was very proud of my work. Moving forward to my first semester of college I wrote papers, but to a minimum. They were for my beginner level courses and very straight forward. Once I began my nursing courses, I never wrote detailed and intricate papers, and that is how it was during my two years as a nursing major. Fast forward to 2023, I was excited to begin my journey as a sociology major. I was nervous for what was to come but very excited. One of the first things I realized was that sociologists have a different way of thinking. One that is logical, reasonable, and research based. Anything taught or read about was not opinion based and it was backed up somewhere in research. I started to learn to be thoughtful and driven with my writing. Not that my writing was irrelevant before, but a lot of it included personal opinions. Which is okay, but I learned that you need to have research to back it up for it to be trustworthy. I slowly became more knowledgeable with writing which strengthened my writing ability tremendously. I found out what was effective and what was not and realized which concepts are most important when formulating pieces of work. When reviewing my writing, one of the greatest differences among work years ago versus now, was its rationality. My work started to become insightful and straight to the point. I eliminated amounts of pointless information and had some sort of analysis behind what I was writing.

Throughout my completion of sociology courses and the study of different institutions, my beliefs and attitudes toward certain views have been influenced. I have a better understanding of how society operates, and the impact different social forces have. Individual choices are shaped by larger social factors and are not merely based on independent elements. I have learned to understand the importance of critical thinking and the complexities between the relationship between individuals and society. Many concepts learned throughout my sociology courses relate to these beliefs. In Childhood and Parenting, I learned that parenting practices affect a child's development, mentally and physically. Different parenting choices are influenced by many factors, such as other parents and how each parental figure was raised as a child. Another factor that affects children and families is divorce. Divorce affects the relationship quality between parents and children which in return affects all of family involvement. In the course, Sociology of Education, I learned about the many elements of our education system. Factors such as race, class, and gender play a role in educational outcomes. Classrooms are full of stressors and teachers are not provided with sustainable resources making them leave the field. This concept shows just how much of an effect social behaviors and attitudes have on individuals. Along with these two courses, the institution of Medical Sociology changed attitude on the field. Our medical system is socially constructed and full of inequities. Not only does the United States system involve many disparities, but they are relevant around the world. The cost of healthcare and its lack as a human right makes it inaccessible for many. Each of these institutions show how much they are affected by social forces. Each related concept is dependent on a social factor or action, and I have learned to not let these social behaviors impact my decision making as a sociologist.

I have a long-term career goal of working in healthcare, specifically as a nurse or in clinical research. The field of sociology has taught me all the issues prevalent in the field making me more determined to advocate for my patients. In my job, I will provide my patients with the best and equal care and work to give them any resource necessary. If I ever work with children, I have a better understanding of the importance of effective care not just for the child but the parents as well. Care needs to be cohesive between family members so that the relationship amongst everyone does not fall apart. I have learned the effects of social factors and I will work to diminish those at all costs.