

Okay, so my name is Christina LaVecchia, and I'm a second-year master's student at the University of Cincinnati. And graduate school for me, I think the, I think, not only did I learn to think in a new way, but learning to write in a new way and read in a new way, I think was really challenging for me especially in my first year, and it wasn't really until last fall that I felt like I was finally starting to get it. The reading part, just from kind-of being submerged in it...I hadn't done a lot of theory and critical reading as an undergraduate, I took one theory survey course and I mean I guess there's nothing for it but just to to plunge in and kind-of enter conversations and get used to it. But you know foreign words and concepts and terms are being thrown at you and if you don't have any grounding in any of these conversations it's...it was kind-of tricky at first for me to be able to read through some of the stuff I was being asked to read through. But I think particularly with writing, I would be gripped by this panic every time I would go into finals week about how I didn't know anything and I wasn't any good, and it was all a lie that I should be kicked out of graduate school...I just didn't know what I was doing. I felt like...I would just kind-of write something and somehow magically get an okay grade in the class. And I think it wasn't until, I took a course last fall... it was really small...it was pretty much an independent study but three of us were invited to take it, and we did a lot of work-shopping. In addition to that we spent a lot time in the class actually analyzing what scholars were doing with their writing – organizationally in terms of style and in terms of just the ways they would expand on ideas, and that was I think the most helpful writing experience I've had as a graduate student...to really purposefully go through and do this sort-of do the same kinds of analysis that I lead my students through all the time in composition, but to do it myself with graduate level reading and theory and things I think was just really eye-opening and something that I wish I had the chance to do more of...just looking at writing and how it works and what are different ways I could structure it and how I could change it. So, I've started to feel better about writing, I feel like I have... to take some terms I use in composition teaching my students all the time...I have stuff in my toolbox that I can pull out, some strategies but...so yeah, that was I think a really big adjustment for me.