Reflection on the Liberal Arts

“Finding the right college is about finding a great fit,” is the opening statement when learning about Manchester College. As a high school senior, many teenagers are unsure about what kind of education will provide them with the tools they need to succeed in the real world. Fortunately, choosing Manchester College was the perfect fit for me. The opportunities that Manchester has provided have enabled me to grow spiritually, politically, and culturally. A liberal arts institution establishes the significance of values to the search for not only a well-rounded education, but also establishing a cultured community.

Manchester College has introduced a community of diverse interests and various ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds. These interactions have been a result of networking with various students and professors, and indulging myself in classes of interesting or unfamiliar content. This in turn, has enabled me to open up and learn about issues or ideas that may have once turned me away. As I have been preparing to be a teacher, those interactions with people and classes have proved themselves to be a key ingredient in establishing myself as a well-rounded person. I believe that it is especially important for teachers to constantly be open to new ideas, cultures, and beliefs because then one is frequently learning new things. That idea links to one of teachers’ main goals which is life-long learning. Being a part of a liberal arts college has helped set a standard for wanting my students to interact with assorted beliefs and ideas outside of their own.
This will provide a framework for students to become more aware of their world, country, state, city, and neighborhood; which will consequently form well cultured students.

Through my interaction with liberal arts preparation, I have encountered many opportunities to indeed learn and grow according to the changing world and changing people around me. Travel opportunities at Manchester have allowed me to explore foreign grounds, and interact with people from all over the world. When else would I have had the opportunity to compare the civilizations of Spain, France, and Italy, or study the world of arts in New York City? Having hands on experiences in other countries and states can be a very useful tool once I begin teaching. I have many pictures and artifacts that can help support lessons, and even inspire students to explore unfamiliar places. Furthermore, these unique introductions to various subject matters have sparked an interest inside of me, which leaves me wanting to learn more. This once again links itself to the idea of life long learning, which has been a continuous theme throughout my stay at Manchester.

Since attending a college that is committed to educating a student body of diverse proportions, I have met many interesting individuals. These individuals represent assorted populations, or differ from me in beliefs and values. The challenge these individuals have initiated is to learn as much as I can about their specific viewpoint and accept it; regardless of my beliefs and values. This will enable me to be more appreciative of the beauty of diversity. In addition, these experiences with diversity have laid a foundation that will allow me to respect and accept colleagues, parents, and staff even if their beliefs are different than mine. Personally, my beliefs and values have not
changed, but I have become more aware of them. I have discovered the importance of sharing my thoughts and values because that is how people grow and change.

The significance of broadening oneself to view life from a global perspective helps people become more involved with the life outside of their immediate surroundings. Young adults are often so absorbed in their immediate lives, that they have no idea what is going on in the world around them. Surrounding yourself with people that care about different religions, cultures, world events, and race issues becomes infectious, and challenges you to be a part of that. As a result of my liberal arts education, I have developed a sense of respect and open-mindedness when confronted with unfamiliar or new situations. This will contribute to being a flexible, which is a crucial component of being an affective teacher. I believe that providing a well rounded education and establishing a cultured community is the perfect way to present young learners with the opportunities to succeed; which is a teacher’s ultimate goal.
Works Cited

http://www.manchester.edu/Common/AboutManchester/Index.htm