Liberal Arts

Manchester College is a liberal arts school. Since Manchester is a liberal arts college, it holds a high standard of education that deals with extra courses that deal with the liberal arts. To add to the high standard of learning, Manchester College is, “Committed to being a community of faith and learning that welcomes students of diverse interest and ages, as well as those of different ethnic, religious and racial backgrounds,” which is written in the mission statement in the Manchester Catalog (7). It’s within the liberal arts courses and multitude of backgrounds that are on campus that have affected me and will help me become a better person and teacher.

As a teacher I must have an open mind to many different personalities and beliefs. Here at Manchester I have been trained for just this sort of thing. Everyday I converse with a wide range of international students and people with other religious beliefs. When first coming to Manchester I was sheltered from the rest of the world and only knew about the area that I was from. I did not meet many people that were different from me. Since being here I have learned a lot about different religions, cultures, and races. Even though I do not agree with some of the people that I have met I have been able to get along and even become friends with many of them. After being in this kind of environment it has helped me become a better teacher, because I will have a better understanding of the rest of the world, which I can relate to my subject. Also, after living around many different people I will be able help keep a better-controlled classroom that is filled with students with many beliefs and personalities.
Students here must take a wide range of classes from sciences, history, art history, philosophy, cultural connections, and many more. Teachers must know their subject area inside and out but at the same time have a wide range of other knowledge to help relate to their subject. Manchester College has used this idea in their curriculum. For example, in my Western Civilization course we were taught the history of Western Europe. The class explained how societies came and went. After going through this class I definitely can relate this to my art classes because much of the art of cultures is influenced by the native culture but rather by the people that invaded. For example, I learned in Western Civilization that the Visigoths, who are Islamic, invaded and took over Spain. This helped me understand why the art in Spain has a large Islamic look to it. Also, during this class we talked about different rulers and kings. With in these rulers and kings they issued certain rules that people had to follow. This affected the artwork of the day. After learning about these rulers I could make more sense about why the art was the way it was. For example, Constantine became the emperor of Rome and created new capitol called Constantinople. He legalized Christianity and this affected the artwork. After hearing I had a better understanding why Byzantine art was focused around Christianity. These types of things will help me make my classroom a more diverse learning environment and will help students understand the subject matter much better.

Here at Manchester every student must take one religious course. I choose to take Old Testament. During this class we read and study stories of the Old Testament. I took the opportunity to read the Bible and focus on the deeper
meaning. After taking this class I not only have a better understanding of the bible but also have become a better person and Christian. This will in turn reflect through my teaching and help with my student-to-teacher relationship.

Manchester College has not only helped me to become an art teacher but to become an art teacher with multiple sources to pull my classroom together with. Being here has made me open myself up to new people and new ideas. In return this will help me become a teacher that will have better management of diverse personalities and ideas. In the end I will be proud to receive a Bachelor of Science degree from Manchester College.