Excellent Journal Example

Why? Good format, use of quotes and reference page numbers, and personal thought

**1. Make a list of concerns you had or have about starting college. Which of them are you feeling right now? How do you think you can begin  over coming them?**

The main concern I had when I returned to college last year was that I might fail miserably the way I did in my 1st through 12th grades.  I was a twenty-nine year old high school drop-out who was mostly convinced that school was just not for me.  I've always been an extremely dedicated worker in all of my jobs, but I was a terrible student and earned deficiency notices regularly.  Last year, when I decided to give community college a try, I figured I would just jump in with both feet and do everything I could to not sink.  I ended up taking two summer classes during the same term:  English 1A and Elementary Algebra.  I was absolutely terrified of failing again because I figured this would be my last chance to earn an education with which I could actually do something. (p. 4)

Another terrifying concern was how far behind I am from having just a basic education.  Especially because "…college teachers are much more demanding than high schoolteachers" (p. 11), and then I wonder how much more demanding will a four-year college professor be from a two-year college professor. I was such a horrible student in my youth, I rarely paid attention in class and retained very little of the basics taught in those grades.  I'm not confident about my writing ability, and I can not explain the basic structure of a sentence to save my life.  In fact, I was at Costco the other day and was flipping through one of those home study workbooks for grade schoolchildren.  I was looking at the grammar section for 4th graders, and I realized I couldn't remember most of it from my childhood.

My approach to overcoming any issue is to 1) identify the issue, 2) identify the cause of the issue, and 3)actively work towards a resolution.  I'm just going to continue working as hard (and smart) as I can.  In the words of Scrooge McDuck: "work smarter, not harder!"

**2. Think about the extracurricular activities that you might like to be involved with. Have you looked into them yet? If so, have you signed up for the activity? Explain why or why not. If you have not looked into them yet, what do you think is holding you back?**

Unlike many of my classmates, Ihave no desire to "…go to athletic events…," "…build camaraderie with new friends…," or "…feel a sense of school spirit" (p. 5).  However, I am interested in two other activities:H.O.O.K.E.R.S. and holding free classes to teach people office skills. H.O.O.K.E.R.S. (Handmade Out Of Kindness Equals Rescue Scarves) is a group I tried to put together last year in which I would teach people how to crochet in exchange for one handmade scarf.  All scarves collected were going to be donated to homeless shelters, but I had a heck of a time trying to get people together.  Not many people were interested and those who were interested were mostly unresponsive.  So, I just ended up not pursuing it after a while. I had previously put together a group in the Seattle area and I will try again in the future when I have more acquaintances interested already. 

I have just created a free website ([www.officejobs101.webs.com (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](http://www.officejobs101.webs.com/" \t "_blank))to help people in their search for office jobs, but it's so new and I have to add a ton of information.  Once I've completed the website, I want to create and conduct free seminars involving the information on my site as well as classes on how to use the Open Office suite.  The only thing holding me back on this project is time, so it's going rather slowly.  If you happen to visit my website, please note that I haven't edited it yet and will not until I'm close to completion… Just FYI.

**3. What is your purpose in college? Explain your answer.**

My purpose in college is to eventually get my MBA and become a CPA.  I then plan to work in a corporation focused on developing new technologies for enough years to learn what I need to become a CFO.  Once I've attained that level of knowledge and experience, I plan to help build Jina Logic Robotics with my husband,Robert, who is currently at UCSC working towards his Master's in Computer Engineering.  I want our company to be on the front lines of developing cutting-edge technology, and "without a college degree, it is much more difficult to be a leader…" (p.4) capable of building such a corporation. 

**4. Have you received any grades in any of your college courses yet? If so, did you get the grade you expected? How did this make you feel? If you have not received any college grades yet, think of a time you did receive a grade.**

I have completed 32 units, and I am maintaining a 4.0 GPA.  I would have had more completed last semester,but I had to drop some classes because there was a strong chance I was going to have to have a second surgery on my arm.  I'm also going to have to drop several classes this semester because of my extended stay in DC, so I'm pretty bummed about that.  However, I do feel I earned the grades I received, and I am happy about it.  I have noticed that while I may be further behind in certain areas, I am slightly ahead of some of the other students with regard to my maturity level and work ethic.  I have noticed that my "age and life experience" (p. 10) has enabled me to work smarter and get better grades than some of my peers.

**5. Describe the differences you have noticed between the high school experience and being a college student. Describe howyou feel about  these differences. If you believe that there are some negatives about college versus high school, explain how you might turn them into something positive.**

For me, the primary difference between high school and college is life experience, which has involved being married.  I had to live in the "real world" for over ten years before I could fully appreciate the value of an education.  Also, before marrying my husband, I never knew what it meant to study or how to be organized.  My husband and I are opposites in so many ways (example: he won a French spelling bee in grade school), and I needed his influence to know what succeeding in school even looked like.  His continued support has a lot to do with how I've been able to succeed this time around.  I do kind of like the fact that college professors do "…rarely monitor your progress…" (p. 10) because whether I'm going to succeed or fail, it will be on my terms.  I despise being treated like a child, and I am happy to face the consequences of my actions (or non-actions) like a big girl and without my mommy's note of disappointment.  The only negative about college vs. high school that I can think of is the financial investment. 

**6. Describe in detail how you would go about building your portfolio.**

Actually, I have already created an online professional portfolio ([www.tajina.webs.com (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](http://www.tajina.webs.com/" \t "_blank)),but I haven't included much from my academic career as of yet.  I currently have the following pages:

• Resume (though, the truncated version is posted)

• Accomplishments: Where I have listed some of my professional accomplishments.

• References: I have letters of recommendation posted from my last manager and my last accounting teacher.  However, out of respect for their privacy, I have not included their personal information, such as name, contact number, etc.

• Performance Evaluation: I have posted my most recent job performance review/evaluation.

• Work Samples: I only have a sample flier posted at the moment, but intend to post more in the near future

I will be working this year to post more about my academic career, such as samples of accounting reports I've created, homework excerpts, a course listing with grades and GPA, and a summary of the accounting course content I have studied.  At first, the idea of a"skills matrix" (p.14) seemed a little convoluted and not straight-forward enough to get people to actually take the time to study it, but I think a more condensed matrix with fewer example columns might actually be an effective way to convey how each skill was attained/developed.

**7.  What else is on your mind this week? If you wish to share it with your instructor, add it to this journal entry.**

I am just excited to be back in school after the summer break!!  I've really missed the assignments,deadlines, and getting good grades!  Actually, I do have a question… Since you also work in the "counseling center" (p. 13), is there a way for me to get bumped up on the schedule to pick my classes for next semester?  I had to wait several days after the registration process started to register for my fall classes, and I figure there has to be a way to allow me to register at an earlier time.  Thanks!