Table 1

Content of Written Reflections by Condition

No Prime Condition

In my first year, I wasn't sure what major to choose but I really enjoyed the variety of courses I was able to take. As it turns out, I talked to students in upper years and TAs from different majors and they were really enthusiastic about chatting with me and helping me to discover what I was most passionate about. Looking back, I'm really glad that I reached out to others because it helped me to develop a better idea of what I want to do and I'm really happy with my choice of major.

Prime Condition

For my first co-op job I worked as a Guest Service Assistant for Brydson Group Ltd. At first, it seemed totally unrelated to my program, but I was just happy to have a job. As it turns out, I was able to develop my problemsolving skills, and took the initiative to do an extra project where I was able to apply some concepts I had learned in class. Looking back, I realize that it was relevant because I developed a lot of skills that have helped me to be successful with my subsequent co-op jobs. I learned that some jobs might seem unrelated to my program but still offer a great opportunity to develop useful skills.

Note: Co-op (co-operative education) is a form of work-integrated learning in which students alternate between academic terms and paid work terms. All students who participated in this study were familiar with co-op because the University they attended had a large co-op program.