GRADUATE PROGRAM IN CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING (CCT)
AQUAD REVIEW SURVEY: *Current CCT students*

Questions asked:

1. Program of study in CCT:

2. For M.A. students, what is your actual or intended specialty area? For example, "creative thinking at work," "science in a changing world," "critical and creative thinking in literature/arts/music," other (please describe).

3. After this semester, how many courses will you need for completion of the Program?

4. How did you hear about the CCT Program? Examples: Graduate catalog, UMB website, CCT wiki, UMB open house, CCT open house, referred by CCT graduate, other (please describe).

5. What information or other features of the Program led you to apply?

5a. If you considered joining other graduate programs, what did CCT seem to offer beyond what might be gained through the other program(s)?

6. What aspirations for professional or personal development did you have when you joined the Program?

7. In what ways (if any) have these aspirations changed at this point in your studies?

8. What (if anything) stands out for you as distinctive in your studies and experience in the Program thus far?

9. What evidence would you provide to show that your studies and experience in the CCT program are contributing to those professional or personal changes?

10. What suggestions do you have for improving the ways the program could serve a student with your aspirations?

11. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the CCT Program?: Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, No Opinion -- please explain if you feel that is needed.

12. What has led you to not yet finish your synthesis yet? (This question applies only if you have completed all coursework but have not submitted a finished capstone synthesis. For those still completing courses, write "N/A").

13. What suggestions (if any) do you have for the program to increase the chances of someone like you finishing and graduating?

Name (optional -- supply only if you choose to identify yourself).

Responses:

1. Program of study in CCT:

a) M.A.
b) M.A.
c) M.A.
d) Graduate Certificate
e) M.A.
f) M.A.
g) M.A.
h) M.A.
i) M.A.
j) Graduate Certificate
k) M.A.
l) M.A.

2. For M.A. students, what is your actual or intended specialty area? For example, "creative thinking at work," "science in a changing world," "critical and creative thinking in literature/arts/music," other (please describe).

a) Transformative Leadership Through Music
b) Critical & Creative Thinking in International Relations
c) Creative/Critical thinking in Education
d) [NO RESPONSE]
e) Critical and creative thinking for life-long learning
f) Creative thinking at work.
g) science in a changing world
h) Science in a Changing World
i) Critical and creative thinking in music, the arts & business
j) [NO RESPONSE]
k) Critical and creative thinking in arts, and in arts work.
l) I don't officially have a specialty but probably critical and creative thinking in the arts would apply to me.

3. After this semester, how many courses will you need for completion of the Program?
a) 1
b) 1
c) 1
d) 3
e) 6
f) 7
g) 1

h) 9
i) 1
j) 3
k) 9
l) 1

4. How did you hear about the CCT Program? Examples: Graduate catalog, UMB website, CCT wiki, UMB open house, CCT open house, referred by CCT graduate, other (please describe).

a) UMB website via Google search
b) UMB website
c) UMB website
d) searching web for specific kinds of coursework
e) Internet search for alternative Master's Degree programs online--CCT stood out because it allows for study in a number of different areas all corresponding to a central theme, rather than a strict discipline.
f) UMB graduate catalog
g) referred by a Umass Boston faculty member, originally a part of LTET
h) Word of mouth - prof from other university
i) A google search led me to the CCT page on the UMB website.
j) online search
k) UMB website
l) I originally took two CCT courses towards applying to the LTET program. When that was no longer available, I applied to the CCT certificate program still thinking I would major in education down the line. After taking more classes, I decided to apply to the CCT MA program.

5. What information or other features of the Program led you to apply?

a) The website description "to develop clarity and confidence to make deep changes in their learning, teaching, work, activism, research, and artistry", and the option to study online.
b) Living in Italy, I can complete my entire degree online.   Absolutely wonderful.
c) The flexibility of applicability, CCT covers pretty much everything and I knew I could connect my studies to my work, which I have and it's been great.
d) course content
e) Online learning, relatively affordable, flexible courses (not just psychology, philosophy, or literature, but all and more)
f) This program offers skills that are largely necessary for working in higher education, but are not always available in other courses and programs.
g) The flexibility in learning environments (on campus, hybrid courses). The exploration of critical and creative thinking along the lines of my professional work (highly applicable to what I do)
h) Interdisciplinary nature, ability to complete online
i) The description of the program exactly as it appears on the website (originally spotted Summer of 2015), and the selection of core CCT courses, and the variety of electives.
j) flexibility, online classes, courses that interested me

k) Courses offered, the hybrid-online style, reading into the work of past students and current instructors.
l) I felt that I could apply what I was learning to both art and education. Logistically, the ability to take the majority of courses online and in the evening was a significant consideration as well.

5a. If you considered joining other graduate programs, what did CCT seem to offer beyond what might be gained through the other program(s)?

a) Other programs seem to push toward confining oneself to a certain "box", CCT offers the tools to position oneself without limitation.
b) I considered Harvard University Extension and Northeastern University as both had highly recommended International Relations graduate programs. However, neither were 100% online and both have a very neoliberal approach to their geopolitic programs and I did not want to go that route.
c) It offered a unique approach to improving my abilities as a teacher. Yes I could have explored education further by joining a masters in ed program, but this has had a greater impact across a greater number of axes in my life.
d) flexibility w/work life
e) Ability to pursue multiple paths simultaneously without wandering off course.
f) Other programs weren't flexible enough to gear toward higher education.
g) Originally a part of LTET
h) Established expertise in online delivery, international perspectives
i) The freedom to model my learning in precisely the direction I choose.
j) better accommodation of my work life
k) More immediate/direct applicability to working life than might be seen in an MFA or more theoretical graduate program.
l) I was originally planning on studying education and also considered pursuing a graduate degree in painting. I felt like the CCT program could apply to both of these interests. I also like the diversity of the student population in regards to professions/backgrounds/interests.

6. What aspirations for professional or personal development did you have when you joined the Program?

a) After almost 40 years as a practitioner in my field, I was looking to explore how to make "deep changes" in multiple facets of my life and work.
b) I greatly appreciated that going into CCT I could put the 'critical and creative thinking' lens in my approach to IR and this was and is entirely unique to any other graduate program I could find. Knowing this, I knew I would certainly personally benefit because the world is sorely lacking in these skills at every level and everywhere. Professionally I am hoping to get into a good PhD program.
c) I wanted to become a better teacher, or more specifically a designer of a better classroom for my students.
d) Looking for formal framework for work I try to do in the classroom

e) I knew I needed a higher degree for any of the jobs I was pursuing, but I didn't want to settle on getting a degree just so I could get a better job. I wanted to go back to school for more than just career advancement. The CCT Program offers the tools to follow any of my many career goals and personal goals without needed three different degrees to do so. I can keep working in supplemental education or move to mainstream classroom, higher education, administration, curriculum design, creative writing, study abroad, or pretty much any area I choose.
f) I want to achieve the qualifications necessary to move to the professional union, and move up at UMass.
g) improve my teaching and my students learning experiences
h) [NO RESPONSE]
i) My aspiration was/is "to make deep changes in my learning, teaching, work, activism, research, and artistry".
j) [NO RESPONSE]
k) The ability to leverage my ongoing learning in a manner that would continue to benefit my professional and artistic practices.
l) Professionally, I was planning to make a career change. Personally / professionally, I was hoping to pursue making art more seriously.

7. In what ways (if any) have these aspirations changed at this point in your studies?

a) My aspirations are intact, however, CCT has helped me identify exactly what these aspirations are, and how I will set them into motion.
b) They have not changed.
c) I guess not-surprisingly I've become a much more productive self critic of my teaching. This capacity to turn my own criticisms into productive actions, and in turn give my students some insights about this process, has been pretty revelatory
d) n/a
e) They haven't changed too much. I still want to pursue all of my dream careers at once, but now I confidently feel like I can.
f) n/a
g) not much has changed in relation to my overall goal but I often find new and unanticipated angles as I take the different classes
h) [NO RESPONSE]
i) The general aspiration has gradually become more specific.
j) [NO RESPONSE]
k) My aspirations have evolved slightly, seeing how I might attempt to "prove" my learning in a quantifiable, data-driven way.
l) N/A

8. What (if anything) stands out for you as distinctive in your studies and experience in the Program thus far?

a) The dedication of the program directors, and their knowledge and competencies as educators and advisors. B. The age, gender, racial, cultural, and geographic diversity of the program. C. The program's curriculum design.

b) Beyond what I've just mentioned, the fact that students can plug their own interests through the CCT filter is truly excellent. I love how diverse our classes are. Were I at Harvard or Northeastern, everyone would be going through the same dry curriculum. With CCT, we go on a fascinating journey with a very diverse collection of students from around the world.
c) The flexibility.   every class features a wide array of students with different goals ideas and sphere's of study, and the instructors are never at a loss for providing help, support and direction
d) The ways an online class can create community, investment of instructors
e) How applicable what I am learning is to so many different parts of my life.
f) Everything in the program so far is pretty flexible and I can fit it to my interests.
g) Most of my work has a theme related to public education and the various dualities that seem to exist. Teacher-student, administrators-classroom teachers, traditional instruction-alternative education, adults-adolescents, etc. Each class I have wrestled with one or more of these in the context of the content of the class and asked questions of my teaching and of myself.
h) [NO RESPONSE]
i) Rewarding selection of courses, knowledgeable, well-read instructors and professors, and a diverse (in terms of gender/race/age/geography/culture/nationality) community of intelligent, engaged CCT classmates.
j) the diversity of the students in my classes
k) The emphasis on respecting contributions of others, and partaking/being instrumental in the learning of peers, and vice versa.
l) Personal development is given value and attention. The courses in the program are very interactive and elevate the online format.

9. What evidence would you provide to show that your studies and experience in the CCT progr
The body of written work I've developed, some of which is exhibited in my reflective portfolio, and my upcoming capstone thesis.

a) I've been tentatively offered a teaching job and will formally interview next spring at St. George's British International School here in Rome to teach English. But I am unsure I want to teach and am actually hoping to find a PhD program here in Rome. Right now I am mostly considering "Theory of the State and Comparative Political Institutions" at Sapienza University here in Rome. However, the 3 year program is in Italian and I will either need to greatly improve my Italian very soon or find an interpreter that will be with me through the experience.
b) While I've been enrolled in the CCT program I have also at the same time had the chance to develop the curriculum for students at my school, and the curriculum I have developed has CCT's fingerprints all over it. As a result my teaching reviews from students have increased dramatically, and I have been asked to assist in other teacher's classroom planning.
c) Curricula from classes I teach now vs two or three years ago
d) Where to start? I came in to the CCT program with the goal of starting a study abroad program aimed at connecting students to their learning and preparing them for life outside the classroom. That goal is underway but has been joined by a number of other

interesting developments. I have now started a children's book series that I am going to shop to publishers once I have a few more stories written. The series has gotten enormously positive feedback. I have also recently been hired by a leading curriculum tech company to be a part of an entirely new education department. My biggest fear about going back to school was that I would be limited by the scope of the degree (if I got my degree in education, I could only work in education; if I got my degree in literature, I could only teach literature..), and the CCT program has allayed that fear completely. I don't have to choose which career I want. I can actually have them all.

e) I have changed the way we budget in my department and my chair trusts me because these skills have been acquired through a masters program.

f) I could point to several new or adjusted practices in my classroom.

g) [NO RESPONSE]

h) At present, the best evidence would be to compare my writing (and the ideas expressed within) from Spring 2016 with that of Fall 2017 and beyond.

i) lesson plans & syllabi for the courses I currently teach

j) Professional changes such as: new job title, responsibilities, opportunities, and greater independence. Personally: greater emphasis on reflection, strategies for encouraging/engendering creativity.

k) Understanding my own thinking and habits has helped me to be more organized and deliberate in taking steps towards my goals.am are contributing to those professional or personal changes?

10. What suggestions do you have for improving the ways the program could serve a student with your aspirations?

a) There are a number of CCT courses through which I experienced a particular quality of personal growth, and therefore wish the courses could have been extended to last for two semesters.

b) Living here in Europe on CET time, the most challenging aspect is/was having some classes running from 01h00 - 04h00AM in the morning. This has been extremely difficult but there isn't really anything anyone can do as I understand that many students in the Boston area are taking courses after work, etc.

c) I would struggle to make any kind of long list, but I guess that class availability and long term schedule planning could be a little clearer.

d) it's hard to find the courses I want to take - if you miss a semester offering, you're stuck until someone decides to offer it again, and who knows when that will be

e) None come to mind.

f) Make note of the flexibility of the program and that it can be geared toward higher education. Everything I've done is because I want to do it, not because it is encouraged.

g) I think that every teacher could benefit from this kind of learning. What about advertising directly to teachers and providing a specific course pathway to follow.

h) [NO RESPONSE]

i) In my opinion, the main sources of required reading for each course should be released earlier, e.g. at least one month before the course, for those of us who typically sign up early. For me, the chance to "dig in" would mean the difference between "hanging on for dear life" and "being on top of things". I have a preference for the latter. Also, the Healey

Library orientation should be introduced with the foundation courses, so students both have a chance to use its resources early on in the CCT journey, and are comfortable with using the library's resources by the time they get to the research courses toward the end of the program. I suggest another solution for online news, communication, syllabi, etc. other than the clunky, outdated tech behind the wiki. What's needed is a clean, minimalist, mobile-friendly, responsive, webpage or website for each course - for example, as offered by Wordpress, at no charge.

j) Having courses available more frequently, rather than on a 2 year rotation
k) More course options per semester, if this is possible.
l) I think just promoting awareness the program more to attract people who might not realize the applications would be helpful.

11. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the CCT Program?: Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, No Opinion -- please explain if you feel that is needed.

a) Excellent, life-changing.
b) EXCELLENT
c) Tremendous, I am incredibly satisfied with my choice of joining the CCT program
d) good
e) Excellent.
f) Good. There are things that could be improved, such as instructor variety and qualification.
g) Excellent
h) Good
i) Excellent. Life-transforming.
j) good
k) Excellent.
l) Excellent

12. What has led you to not yet finish your synthesis yet? (This question applies only if you have completed all coursework but have not submitted a finished capstone synthesis. For those still completing courses, write "N/A").

a) N/A
b) N/A
c) N/A
d) n/a
e) N/A
f) n/a
g) N/A
h) N/A
i) N/A
j) n/a
k) N/A

l) N/A

13. What suggestions (if any) do you have for the program to increase the chances of someone like you finishing and graduating?

a) As per my personal experience, frequent contact/check-ins with a faculty advisor(s) who are motivated to see me succeed seems to be a key asset.
b) Stick with it because 3/4 of the way through this graduate program you can see how all the time, money and sleepless nights are worth it.
c) I started in the spring semester, and that lead to some scheduling wonkiness where required courses were offered in semesters where it wasn't ideal for me to take them
d) If there were no such thing as a budget ... offer courses on a 1 year cycle rather than 2
e) Offering the required courses each semester.
f) [NO RESPONSE]
g) Not sure. I moved at a snails pace at the start but that was due to the complexities of life. When I started to drill down on the work, CCT was ready and supportive at all points.
h) [NO RESPONSE]
i) N/A
j) please please offer all courses in the program more frequently
k) More course options per semester, if this is possible.
l) N/A

Name (optional -- supply only if you choose to identify yourself).

a) Bobby Ricketts
b) Stephan McGuire
c) Ray Symonds
d) [NO RESPONSE]
e) [NO RESPONSE]
f) [NO RESPONSE]
g) Brad Kozel
h) [NO RESPONSE]
i) Bobby Ricketts
j) [NO RESPONSE]
k) [NO RESPONSE]
l) Alison Akell