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EXIT SELF-ASSESSMENT. May. 2011

I. My Synthesis Product Shows That...Developing as a Reflective Practitioner

I can convey who I want to influence/affect concerning what (Subject, Audience, Purpose).

Throughout the program my audience has seemed to change from one stage of development to another. It wasn't until recently that I realized that my audience is larger than I originally predicted. Although the theme for my project has been somewhat consistent I have learned how to align the different components of information with the relevant audience. I now understand that each audience has different needs and interests and catering to the needs of each requires different approaches. Going forward I intend to be more aware of the needs of each independent constituency to ensure that I am addressing their needs appropriately.

I know what others have done before, either in the form of writing or action, that informs and connects with my project, and I know what others are doing now.

I believe I have always understood the importance of understanding what others have done before me in similar and/or related fields. Although, it wasn't until recently that I have understood how necessary it is to guide my constituency through my research. In the past, I have believed if I see it, understand it, connect it, then most everyone will too. I have learned that it is necessary for me to detail my vision more clearly so that my audience can follow my path of research and see how I am connecting similar but unrelated elements together. By doing this I can help my audience connect to my vision of how I see the project developing. Going forward, I think it is important to have the insight of others regarding the direction of the organization and its relevance to my intended audiences.

I have teased out my vision, so as to expand my view of issues associated with the project, expose possible new directions, clarify direction/scope within the larger set of issues, and decide the most important direction.

I feel I have done a very good job of expanding my view of the issues, possible directions etc. My project has changed dramatically since I first began. Originally I feared changing the direction of the plan because I was afraid if I strayed too far from the original concept I would never follow it to fruition. I have since realized that this crippled theory is common. Reflecting back on my time on professional boards I recognize this type of thinking as "do something and do it quickly" mentality. Personally, I needed something substantive in my life so I was eager to make something (anything) happen. Today I realize I was impairing my project by not using my most valuable personal resource – my imagination.

I have identified the premises and propositions that my project depends on, and can state counter-propositions. I have taken stock of the thinking and research I need to do to counter those counter-propositions or to revise my own propositions.

Emotionally, the project has been a roller coaster. In the beginning, during my association in Texas, the project took many unpredicted and unfortunate turns. During the original development stage I shared my vision with people who were not very supportive, and unfortunately, this affected the remainder of the development until I reached the final synthesis stage. During this final stage I have been able to rise above the past with much more confidence and pull together a project that I

am more confident in delivering. This new outlook has provided the confidence to state my counter-propositions and clearly express why I believe my project is worthy of consideration. Moving forward, I will need to continue my research in order to remain relevant on a variety of levels.

I have clear objectives with respect to product, both written and practice, and process, including personal development as a reflective practitioner. I have arranged my work in a sequence (with realistic deadlines) to realize these objectives.

Although I have followed the process, throughout the program I believe I have struggled with sequence of design. Again, I believe much of this was due to personal issues such as planning for an upcoming relocation and then relocating during semesters. In the very near future, I intend to review the process material again to see what I have missed. I intend to redo the assignments to make sure I haven't missed something important within the design process.

I have gained direct information, models, and experience not readily available from other sources.

Throughout this experience I feel I have significantly increased my comfort level and my interest in new media and technology and have a much greater understanding of the role technology plays within the mission of social change and education. Through my exposure to Wikis, Diigo, Ning, and Blackboard (to name a few) I can more easily understand the potential, along with, the current shortcomings of existing technologies. By understanding this I can determine the direction of the innovation and therefore determine the direction my organization within the ongoing development.

Aside from technology, I have also learned the importance of process. Quality planning doesn't happen spontaneously. Although my ideas are typically balanced with a somewhat even amount of pragmatism and creativity, this doesn't mean that it is been properly processed. I once believed that my informal evaluation of process was enough. I now know there are a variety of tools to be used when assessing the value of an idea.

I have clarified the overall progression or argument underlying my research and the written reports.

Until I began working on my presentation I could not provide an honest answer to this question. I had many ideas that appeared to be swirling and circulating in my mind, but until I began working on the presentation I wasn't able to adequately verbalize the design of my organization. But once the presentation started falling into place, all of the research started coming together as my thoughts and theories began to link together producing a very compelling argument for the direction of my project. It was such a relief to see the legitimacy of my work as began to pull everything into one cohesive presentation. Start to finish my synthesis coupled with my presentation explains why my project is valuable to society and why my life experience uniquely qualified me to create it.

My writing and other products Grab the attention of the readers/audience, Orient them, move them along in Steps, so they appreciate the Position I've led them to.

Although I have struggled with doing this throughout the program, I feel I finally have begun to master the art. Since my project relies upon the ability to edutain my target audience of 18-29, it is especially important that I learn how to effectively do this as soon as possible. Prior to designing my presentation I watched an online tutorial on how to design, present, and create the ambiance like Steve Jobs of Apple. For me, this ability is especially important because it is imperative that I learn how to effectively engage and emotionally connect with my target audience. I feel once I passed over the obstacles, namely being the fear that my project lacked potential, I was much more comfortable bringing it all together.

I have facilitated new avenues of classroom, workplace, and public participation.

I have always been somewhat of a loner when I set out to design something. Not because I do not welcome the opinions of others, but because I do not communicate as effectively as I would like. I also tend to design backward and because of this I have always shied away from others until my project was further along. My vision of what I want to create is so perfectly clear that learning to work along a more formalized process has been difficult for me. I now understand the importance of collaboration and because of this I have strengthened my communication skills, which makes it easier to share both my vision and my reasoning. As I move forward I look forward to creating new relationships in my new community here in Arizona. I feel much more confident going forward that I will be successful in building a constituency of friends and supporters that will also embrace and enhance the mission of Pennies for Pause.

To feed into my future learning and other work, I have taken stock of what has been working well and what needs changing.

I absolutely feel as though my project has been revised for the better due to the commitment to the evaluation process. The most important change to the project was the decision to target the 18-29 populations and to include males. These two decisions set my organization apart from all the others. Through research to determine what others are currently doing, I evaluated the need for a different approach. The recession and my inability to obtain federal funding for the program offered the unique insight into the decision to create conjoined businesses. When I stopped to assess the long-term benefit of "giving" something to a participant versus offering them the opportunity to earn it through the support of on-the-job training, there was no longer a question of whether there was a better design.

II. Developing as a Reflective Practitioner, Including Taking Initiatives in and Through Relationships

I have integrated knowledge and perspectives from CCT and other courses into my own inquiry and engagement in social and/or educational change.

The most fundamental concept of CCT is to determine the issue. We cannot use our formal skillsets until we have correctly identified the problem. CCT 693s first class began with Peter asking what we could do to make snack time better. Although there were some very interesting suggestions we didn't bother to ask what Peter what issue we were trying to improve, therefore, we unable to effectively address the problem. One of the most useful skills I have developed within the program is the ability to understand what needs fixing through the use of formal research tools.

I have also integrated into my own inquiry and engagement the processes, experiences, and struggles of previous courses.

Professor Millman's philosophy class taught me the usefulness of Socratic questioning. I have used this tool in the classes that followed to develop a better understanding of the situation at hand. Through a series of questions I can determine what has been done before me, how is it different that what I am currently doing, how can I do it differently, etc. The series of questions provides a trail for research to enhance my understanding of where I am, where I am going, and why I am going in the current direction. By constantly questioning my motives I can have a better understanding of my needs.

I have developed efficient ways to organize my time, research materials, computer access, bibliographies, etc.

I must admit, in the beginning, the many tools that were used within the CCT program were overwhelming. Once I gained a clear understanding of how useful these organizing methods were to me it was much easier to use the tools. I have recently read that the greatest gift an instructor can provide is the lesson of organization. Being organized by learning to use new technology is essential in an educational environment that will continue to rely more heavily on online research.

I have experimented with new tools and experiences, even if not every one became part of my toolkit as a learner, teacher/facilitator of others, and reflective practitioner.

There are a number of new tools especially online technologies that may not have worked well for me but I am well aware that there is always a new and improved version waiting around the corner. I believe the key to technology is to do your best to stay as current as possible. New tools are created everyday and whatever issue did not work so well will be redesigned and reintroduced.

I have paid attention to the emotional dimensions of undertaking my own project but have found ways to clear away distractions from other sources (present & past) and not get blocked, turning apparent obstacles into opportunities to move into unfamiliar or uncomfortable territory.

I am now aware of the destruction creative blocks can have on the process of innovation. I am also aware of the role stress plays within one's own creative process. Learning to recognize the existence of this stress in an effort to manage creative blocks is essential in understanding one's personal creative process. Prior to taking the Creative Blocks seminar I was completely unaware of the role stress plays within the process and many times believed the lack of creativity was a personal inadequacy.

I have developed peer and other horizontal relationships. I have sought support and advice from peers, and have given support and advice to them when asked for.

Honestly, I have not accomplished this goal to the degree that I would like. Due to medical issues, relocation and being the only online student within many of the courses, I didn't truly find my "place" until the end of the program. There have been a significant amount of personal issues that have played a role in my interaction within the program. Going forward I do intend to stay in touch with my classmates and stay as active within the program as possible.

I have taken the lead, not dragged my feet, in dialogue with my advisor and other readers. I didn't wait for the them to tell me how to solve an expository problem, what must be read and covered in a literature review, or what was meant by some comment I didn't understand. I didn't put off giving my writing to my advisor and other readers or avoid talking to them because I thought that they didn't see things the same way as I do.

If this happened, it was never intentional. Although, I do believe that there wasn't a warm embrace of project until the very end of the program. One reason is my inability to adequately communicate my intentions or my classmates' inability to understand the greater mission. At times I did feel somewhat isolated due to being the only online student. Ideally, there would be other online students working to help each other with the day-to-day requirements etc.

I have revised seriously, which involved responding to the comments of others. I came to see this not as bowing down to the views of others, but taking them in and working them into my own reflective inquiry until I could convey more powerfully to others what I'm about (which may have changed as a result of the reflective inquiry).

I have always appreciated the comments and insight of my classmates and professors. At times I have felt due to my own personal desire to embrace every tiny detail of development as if they are equally important within the process, has somewhat hampered my collaboration with others. I believe that this is mainly due to the emotional attachment that I have to my project.

I have inquired and negotiated about formal standards, but gone on to develop and internalize my own criteria for doing work--criteria other than jumping through hoops set by the professor so I get a good grade.

At the time I was attending the class, I felt as though I was jumping through hoops. But as the courses progressed I had a better understanding of the connectivity between the coursework and a clearer vision of how I plan to integrate the methodology within my professional endeavors going forward. I look forward to revisiting the coursework and creating a curriculum that I can use within my organization.

I have approached the CCT synthesis course and the CCT program as works-in-progress, which means that, instead of harboring criticisms to submit after the fact, I have found opportunities to affirm what is working well and to suggest directions for further development.

As an online student I have a unique understanding of how the program operates for distance learners and how it can be enhanced to create a more comfortable learning environment for those who rely upon Skype and other technologies to participate within the program. Since my organization Pennies for Pause will operate via virtual communities, I look forward to sharing and collaborating with my professors and classmates on technologies that will enhance the learning process for students.