

I. "MY SYNTHESIS PRODUCT SHOWS THAT..."

(adapted from the "Phases of research and engagement" in the Practicum course in the expectation that these are also relevant goals for students' work in moving towards the synthesis product)

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

- a) I think my subject was reasonably and consistently clear. I found myself often writing for an audience with a background similar to my own, with a goal of expanding their thinking or sharing my own discoveries and perspectives.
- b) In some cases, I think I was divided between targeting a small and familiar audience versus a larger and more complex audience.

B. 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.

a) I had not done a literature review prior to this program, and have since found it a comfortable genre in which to work. I'm comfortable interviewing experts and collecting input from colleagues.

b) I think there is always going to be room for improvement in terms of how I obtain and manage sources, and develop my process from a kind of omnivorous consumption of data into a more selective gap-filling and synthesizing activity. Knowing when to switch gears from piling up sources into reading them all and then into plugging them together is a work in progress for me.

C. 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.

a) The overall direction and vision of my work seems to come through reasonably clearly in the end, sometimes to a degree that surprises even me. Having gone through a thicket of thoughts, it is always comforting to find myself on a pathway once again by the end.

b) The most difficult part of my vision for me to keep in focus is the part that centers on me – why I am invested in the topic, why I am the person to listen to. I drift away from my own personal stake in a project too readily in favor of the academic argument.

D. 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.

a) I am comfortable and confident finding counter-propositions to my arguments.

b) Sometimes I am a little too energetic in this area, leading myself far afield with counters and counter-counters. In my synthesis, I was proud to discover that I actually could turn a substantial counter-argument into a significant support for my overall argument (the unreliability and manipulability of narrative becomes a strong argument for structured study of narrative, not an argument for exclusion).

E. 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.

- a) I feel good about my ability to set goals and meet deadlines. I almost always complete work on time.

- b) It took me longer than it should have to ask my spouse for more support. Also, I should do more to cross-reference my work plan with my calendar; I had a few lucky breaks in my schedule and should definitely not count on being so fortunate each time.

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

- a) Yes! This is one of the strengths of CCT experience: unique colleagues, interesting readings, and opportunities to grow and expand. I tried to be brave and try out the unfamiliar when given the opportunity.

- b) I have some good leads in terms of continuing my development in the areas we've worked on in CCT, but I'm not sure what I'll do when I come to the end of my reading list, other than to keep in touch with colleagues and try to attend CE events. Some habits are easy to maintain on one's own, but it is refreshing to have a community of practice to provide more support.

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

- a) Yes, I think my work products show an argument and progress.

- b) My projects have not tended to include a lot of story telling about my personal process.

H. 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.

- a) I have improved my writing in this area, and I'm much more comfortable with the 'G' and 'O' parts of this model; S and P are comfort zones.

- b) Sometimes my thinking around 'G' and 'O' takes longer to form, which means that it's not always as thoroughly developed as it might be.

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

- a) This was an enjoyable area of exploration for me, learning via hangout, wiki, learning management system, and virtual classroom. Many of the projects and activities in my courses led to me engaging with community organizations, non-profits, and colleagues.

- b) I need to use my educational experiences to continue to build my broader professional network.

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

- a) I have found that journaling and reflection are effective mechanisms for continuing to provide myself with useful insight into how I'm progressing with my goals.

- b) I need to be more consistent in my journaling, not just reach for it when I'm feeling a particular need. The sustained practice is valuable.

II. DEVELOPING AS A REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER, INCLUDING TAKING INITIATIVE IN AND THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS

1. I have integrated knowledge and perspectives from CCT and other courses into my own inquiry and engagement in social and/or educational change.
 - a) I feel comfortable saying that CCT has changed my personal relationships as well as my professional inquiry and engagement skills. I think I am more able to hang back and reflect on the other person's experience, or just plain keep my mouth shut instead of reacting to something that was said. In a professional context, I have found example after example of ways to apply what I've learned as well as open new possibilities for learning.
 - b) I think I can afford to be a little more open and explicit in my use of CCT knowledge and perspectives.
2. I have also integrated into my own inquiry and engagement the processes, experiences, and struggles of previous courses.
 - a) I have enjoyed watching my inquiry and engagement skills progress over the course of the program, from my initial awkward efforts to a more relaxed and genuine connection-building with classmates. My processes seemed to develop and strengthen with each semester.
 - b) I used the course evaluation as an opportunity to reflect back over a class, but I have not always circled back to the items I left on a "future to-do" list, books on my "read someday" list, and so on.
3. I have developed efficient ways to organize my time, research materials, computer access, bibliographies, etc.
 - a) I have gotten reasonably good at keeping track of everything through my Scrivener virtual notebooks.
 - b) I have not investigated Diigo specifically, although I installed it, I just haven't used it. Many of my colleagues have found it valuable, so I should really take the time.
4. 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.
 - a) I tried a lot of new or new-ish web platforms and tools, and worked with a range of organizations that I otherwise would not have sought out.
 - b) I was not very successful at trying out one of the recommended techniques – meditation – but perhaps I need to try a different style or school of thought to make it work for me.
5. 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.
 - a) I found it very useful to have a writing support group to help keep me cognizant of my emotional responses to my work.
 - b) I did not readily form a support group when one was not provided by the class structure, and I should have.
6. 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.
 - a) Yes, the peer relationships I've found have been tremendously rewarding, and I've learned so much from my classmates that I think the valued gained from their engagement sometimes exceeded or was at least equivalent to the value gained from the course itself.
 - b) I have not always taken enough time to directly and explicitly tell individuals how much I value their contribution, instead tending to outwardly express my appreciation to the group as a whole.
7. 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.

- a) I think I've been fairly brave about sending my work out for comment and critique in terms of intellectual/emotional interactions. I don't mind disagreements and I don't mind being wrong.
- b) I can do more thinking about how to improve my process so that I can take more advantage of the support I'm being offered.

8. 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).

a) I enjoyed the revision process and the range of comments I received. I have developed a revision pattern that helps me to see my errors more clearly, and the process has far better results than anything I followed in college, for sure.

b) I think I should write down my process so that I can refine it more directly and seriously over time.

9. 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.

- a) This has been one of my greatest discoveries about my process in going to grad school – that I can take the formal standards and adapt and interpret them in interesting ways, so that I can say what I need and want to say, not just follow the guidelines in a workmanlike way. It's important to me that I have something interesting to say.
- b) I have not always coordinated my divergences with the instructor as well as I might have; so far this hasn't caused me any issues as far as I know, but it's not a good habit to be in.

10. 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.

- a) I have not found myself harboring concerns that have gone unshared – I consider myself a part of this program, a creator alongside my classmates, not just a consumer.
- b) I am not sure I explicitly thought about this “creator vs. consumer” dichotomy; it was natural to feel a part of the program, but I don't think I spent a lot of time thinking about the work-in-progress element overall. It was a sincere part of almost all of the courses from the beginning and seemed to go without saying that the program and courses were all about learning as we went.