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

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

a) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

Through my synthesis project I can identify what I want in my future career path with the creation of a PowerPoint presentation I can demonstrate my combined efforts to effectively transition from classroom instruction into a community and family engagement role. Through this work I have developed clear strategies to advocate for and promote successful family engagement in any environment. As a result of my pilot program I feel prepared to enter the field to build effective relationships with community partners for families.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

Through this synthesis project I struggled with finding my audience. My writing was not very concise affecting my ability to reach an audience. I submitted several proposal drafts before my paragraph overview was accepted for my synthesis and I began writing my first draft. I noticed poor transitions between paragraphs throughout my paper. This is something that I am continuing on working on to influence and affect my audience. I’m working on becoming a tighter writer in the hope of gaining the ability to write grant proposals to targeted audiences in future work.

**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) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

In order to gain more experience in the field of community and family engagement I attended community events targeted at families in the BPS system. I also talked with people who are in management roles as well as in elementary school settings. I have made connections that I intend on maintaining. Developing relationships was a necessary objective in my transition.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

I want to continue working on my ability to research using library resources. I believe this will help me to make strides in tightening my grant writing skills. I am better at interacting with people in person and gaining knowledge from experiences. I can research using library resources but I want to become better.

**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) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

My synthesis project shows a clear direction and priority in building a community and family engagement pilot program. As well as the intention to secure a rewarding job. Through this synthesis I was able define my next career move which is exactly what I was looking for when I entered the CCT program. Through my synthesis work I have a better understanding of how to build effective sustainable relationships. My pilot program also focuses on families and helps to provide context through my urban school experiences. My pilot program can also inform others in the community and family engagement role.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on

I would like to go into more diverse environments where effective strategies have been implemented. Through my synthesis work I’ve identified family engagement initiations that have shown great progress. The partnership between Austin Interfaith and Alliance School has shown some successes in effective family engagement. The opportunity to learn from their successes and that of other school communities could further inform my pilot program.

**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) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

In my synthesis I was able to establish the importance of CFE and the limitations of current practices. In my synthesis I mentioned the mindsets of educators and families that have flamed the challenges in creating effective strategies. My synthesis focuses on building relationships together in support of students and families. I have also been able to develop new relationships in building community and family engagement close to home. I can articulate my thoughts to others in education and engage in reflective conversations related to CFE and classroom experiences. The conversations are productive in developing further research for improvements to my pilot. The

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

In my synthesis I struggled with defining counter counter propositions to effective community and family engagement strategies being developed. It never occurred to me that besides for some funding concerns, which I mentioned, that people would argue about building relationships in support of students and families.

**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) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

I put a lot of pressure on myself you have deadlines for the completion of synthesis sections. I submitted a timeline of completion. My deadlines were not as realistic as I first imagined but I did submit a finished product that highlights my growth over the course of the semester. I was able to attend events as well as interview participants in the field. I also worked with an editor at the suggestion of my instructor. The experience was frustrating at times but I am confident in my finished product.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

I struggled with meeting deadlines with my editor. I should have given myself more time to complete revisions in a realistic amount of time. If I had given myself more time I believe my editor and I could have had more detailed conversations regarding expectations and CCT guidelines.

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

a) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

While working on my synthesis I gained direct information from working as a long term substitute at a small elementary school. I was able to personally identify challenged and developed strategies for effective engagement. My knowledge culminating in an effective family engagement event, the Creature Features Publishing Party.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on

Now that I am attempting to transition in the CFC field it may be more difficult to gain direct information if I do not find a rewarding job.

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

a) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

Over the course of this synthesis project I have been able to clarify my idea of Building a Successful Community and Family Engagement Pilot as necessary to student success. I provided evidence as to how family engagement plays a major role in a student’s overall well-being and academic success. I was able to use my personal and professional experiences as well as research the US Department of Education’s most recent guidelines. There is a clear progression in my synthesis of my argument.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

Something that I struggled with during the course of my synthesis is demonstrating my thinking clearly. A consistent comment during the course of my revisions was about making the connections clear between my thinking and what is written. By adding my personal observations I was able to clearly show my thinking.

**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) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

I believe my synthesis follows my personal and professional journey in the CCT program. I outline my intentions in my abstract. I grab the reader’s attention with a professional and personal story related to how I came to value community and family engagement in connection to student success. I then describe the CCT courses that impacted my current thinking and helped me to build my pilot model using examples from my school experiences. I then try to describe what’s next for me. I think readers are able to follow along.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on

I need to continue to work on GOSP in my written work. Especially as it relates to tightening up my writing. A previous struggle noted is demonstrating GOSP throughout a paper and between paragraphs.

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

a) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

The pilot program described in my synthesis encourages ways to advocate for educational engagement opportunities with families in support of students. My synthesis describes a mini implementation of engagement strategies that proved to be successful. While working as a long- term substitute I was able to create and build relationships in my classroom that have continued past my substitute assignment.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on

I would like to implement my pilot model and gain greater access to educational resources for the benefit of families.

**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) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

My entire synthesis is about what can be changed in the field of community and family engagement. As I continue in the field I want to gain greater insight into engagement strategies that can inform my pilot. There is room for adaptations in the pilot. Not all environments are the same being able to differentiate could help me in possible grant writing for school implementation.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

A major challenge in my future work is found in current limitations. There is a great deal of ambiguity in the field. Currently there are many positions posted for a CFC in BPS schools. Unfortunately if you read the fine print you see that the position can be manipulated so that you are working as a disciplinarian, behavioral or one on one paraprofessional. Even though engagement is important to student success CFCs are paid on the same scale as paraprofessionals. Education wise paraprofessionals do not need a bachelor's degree let alone a master’s. I’m hoping to advocate for myself as I transition into this new field in my future work.

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) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

My journey in CCT has contributed to my current personal and professional goals. One of the goals I had at the start of the CCT program was to inform my future career plans. As recent as last year I still had no direction career wise. It was not until I participated in Research and Engagement Processes. I made my project about me researching possible career paths what I’m passionate about. Not only that but identifying the parts of my personality that would best suit my interests. I was then able to combine my course experiences to present a thoughtful pilot program that encompasses my CCT experiences.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work on

I have struggled with consistent free writing goals. Though I feel I have grown more reflective it has been difficult to maintain some CCT tools that have aided me in my journey so far.

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

a) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

A course that has greatly impacted my own inquiry was issues in anti-racist and multicultural education. I noticed in my synthesis project that the views I expressed were similar to those expressed then. In that course we discussed the achievement gap and how marginalized students are left out. In my CFE pilot I want to provide educational opportunities to students and families. The main goal is access. In the course I remember access to quality education being an issue for marginalized and ELL learners.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

I struggle with detachment in most of my courses related to educational resources. As a product of an urban public school education I have seen the result of effective and ineffective teaching and engagement strategies. In some courses it is difficult to separate my personal and professional experiences from that of course theory. I am working on emotional detachment in a professional environment.

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

a) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

Over the past 2 years I have organized items for my Reflective Practitioners Portfolio in a Google Drive folder. I have also become experienced at using Dropbox to share papers and feedback with instructors. I was also able to download Google Docs and Drive on my phone. I was then able to use my travel time to freewrite and work on assignments.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on

Depending on the course I have struggled with organizing my time between assignments. I may start an assignment put it down and not come back to it until a day or so before it is due. This put pressure on me when I was enrolled in 3 classes in one semester and worked full time in an elementary school. I tried to be organized and proactive but at times I failed to manage my time to complete assignments with satisfaction based on my own criteria. I feel there have been major improvements but time management is something I continue to work on in my classroom practices.

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

a) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

I believe that my learning specialist support (LSSG) created last year to use dialogue to enhance conversations in an abusive work environment. Using the tools learned in dialogue processes I was able to create a container of trust. In the group I was able to facilitate and participate in conversations that gave us hope at times and new ways of approaching students in distress.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

Though I have experimented with tools throughout my time in CCT. I continue to struggle with listening without responding. I remember attempting to listen effectively in class and I did okay but outside of the classroom in my personal life I have been told I should listen more. My problem is that I move straight to solutions sometimes without fully knowing the problem. It's interesting because I am told the opposite at work, apparently I listen best to students and families.

**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) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

Over my time in the CCT program I was able to clear away distractions by practicing mindfulness. I thought of my professional and personal needs and wants separately to unravel what goals I had for myself and my career. When I began this program I was looking for direction because I viewed my circumstance as an obstacle but I was able to turn my abusive work environment into a learning opportunity to gain strength and advocate for others. Ultimately leading me down my current path.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

I struggled with my own mind and body at times being an obstacle. At times I struggle with the outlook of the obstacle not the obstacle itself. It’s the viewpoint of my obstacles that I struggle with. When I am able to participate in effective mindfulness practices I am able to see the obstacle clearly and the possibilities with fresh a perspective.

**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) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

I have developed relationships with CCT program classmates. I feel that the relationships have been mutually beneficial. Over the course of the synthesis project I met with my duet partner for 30 minutes. In that time we were able to discuss the work that she had sent me that week and vice versa. It became very easy to talk her and we came to reach out to each other outside of class.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

I would like to expand my relationship building skills with other graduate alumnae to expand my network. One of my goals during the synthesis project was to expand my social network.

**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) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

I believe I had enough meetings with my advisor to feel comfortable with how to proceed. My advisor and readers gave me suggestions on how to enhance my work but I was able to weed out what I found practical to my synthesis. I continually updated my work as a part of my daily writing experiences. Any problems I found in my writing, along the way, I took as an opportunity to make sure that my voice was heard and my passion was clear. Those were the most important details for me.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

I was able to give feedback to my duet partner in a timely manner. There were times when I cut it close but I do believe that we both benefited from our collaboration.

**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) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

In my synthesis project I revised based on feedback and noting where my own knowledge could have been made clearer. I had many drafts over the course of the semester. I would read through my feedback while I was sitting next to a paper copy of my thesis. I would then incorporate their feedback as needed. My overall goal was to convey GOSP and make my thinking clear. The feedback that I received from my trio then duet partner informed my revisions in terms of answering whether my passion for the topic was clear.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

I can give myself more time in the future to make revisions based on the feedback I receive from others.

**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) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

I feel confident in Peter’s final goal not to worry about his opinion but to trust my own. There were points during the synthesis project when I felt that I could not move forward in my writing without receiving feedback from others. By the submission of my synthesis I felt confident in my ability to express my knowledge and the platforms in my pilot program in support of others. In CCT it is not about the grade but what you learn about yourself.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

Initially I had trouble adjusting to creating my own criteria to do my work. As an undergraduate I liked when teachers gave you the rubric at the start and put up grades over the course of the semester. Then I knew what was due, what it was worth, and once completed the grade I would receive. I cried when I received my first C as an undergraduate. It was not until a semester into the CCT program and a follow-up conversation with Jeremy that I noticed the lack of importance on grade versus knowledge acquired.

**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) something that reflects what you have achieved well related to this goal, and

I will continue to participate in various forms of the CCT program. This year many former students shared their CCT experiences with us, I may do the same. I am also interested in continued development of relationships with wonderful people to further develop myself as a reflective practitioner. I feel that over the span of two years I have grown personally and professionally and having people in my life that knows how to question me is important. I know that I can use the tools and processes I have learned in CCT to keep questioning myself as well.

b) something you have struggled with/ need more help on/ want to work further on.

My challenge is to follow through with my intentions to continue using CCT tools to be a mindful and reflective practitioner.