## 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) Achieved: While my project was primarily "self-indulgent" for my own learning experience, I also made it clear that I wanted to influence other creative professionals or aspiring designers concerning integration of reflective practice.

    b) Struggled with/Want to work further on: I do not think I made it explicit in the early part of my paper that I would also want to influence design educators to integrate reflection into courses, though I do briefly present this in my concluding chapter. One thing I struggle with relates to answer B.b (below). I wonder about the resistance to this topic. I think reflective practice needs to be introduced slowly into curriculum and workplaces.


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) Achieved: I began my research on reflective practice in design practice (from past to current work) in CCT693, and it was from that body of research that I was led to the literature I would focus on in my synthesis. I was lucky to have one of those sources as my actual synthesis reader, who has told me that I have "presented your material in a clear and approachable manner." I feel that I am fairly well acquainted with the researchers/writers on my topic and that I have spoken knowledgably in my paper about the various views that have informed my own.

    b) Want to work further on: This is not a topic that I was able to find any discourse around coming from the U.S., and I am interested as to why that is...I am curious if we are just more resistant to the concept of reflection (versus "productivity"), or if reflective practice in design just hasn't "spread" to here yet. I am not sure if I addressed this in my paper. But now that I know that it is not as popular here as it is in the writing, education, and work coming out of Australia, Netherlands, the UK, it motivates me to continue this research. I do wish I had tried to conduct some interviews of US design educators in regards to this topic...I did get a few replies on the AIGA Design Educators Forum, but did not have/make time to follow the leads and integrate it into my synthesis.

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) Achieved: One way that I expanded my view of issues around my project was by opening up my concluding chapter to issues around "Moving from the private to the public," versus just concluding it with my own lessons learned from my personal reflective practice experiment. Among discussed issues in my final chapter are foreseeable issues regarding transferring reflective practice from a solo project or solo design work, to becoming a full-time employee in the future, and how I might introduce elements of reflective practice to a team, or limitations and resistance I can see happening. I also discuss the idea and importance (in my mind) of moving beyond my solo practice to community building, both with other creative professionals and mentors, and reflective practitioners.

    b) Struggled with: Although I did begin my research prior to the synthesis semester, once the synthesis semester starts it all happens very quickly! Part of me wishes I had more time to expand/contract and digest before writing. This kind of relates to B.b, above—although I began research in 693, I did not know what my focus would really be until late January (the beginning of the synthesis semester), and then once I had a direction more research needed to be done. I suppose this is just the way it goes— all the more reason for students to really begin research in 693 or even 692, even if they haven't settled on their focus yet.


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) Achieved: What was helpful in working this out was the "self-assessment of chapter 2 (literature review)" form that Carol Smith gave us to fill out. I also used the knowledge gained from 693 and applied it here.

b) Want to work further on: As I discussed in earlier answers, one area, that would be considered a counter-proposition I suppose, that I would like to explore further is the question of resistance to reflective practice.

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) Achieved: I feel that I was very clear with myself in this goal and organized my tasks well from the beginning, though my plans shifted in the process. My advisor helped a lot in keeping me on track and making me realize that sometimes the deadlines I had set might not be entirely realistic. You have to be open to things shifting or changing, if something in your project needs to change.

b) Struggled with: Part of me wishes I had been able to start the "reflective practice experiment" part of my project earlier on...so that I could have tried the different tools for a bit longer each, but I was still working on the literature review part for a large portion of the semester.

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

a) Achieved: My reader pointed me to the other main source on reflection in design practice that I would end up including in my paper. But I did not just follow that lead blindly, I had read several other works that I dug pretty deep for (using bibliographies in relevant dissertations, etc.)

b) Would want to work further on: Again, I would try to conduct some direct interviews—with my reader if possible (though he was already quite busy), with other researchers/writers on the topic, and design educators (U.S. and abroad) who either involve students in reflection, or who might see resistance to it (as someone mentioned on the AIGA design educators forum).

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

a) Achieved: This happened for me as I went along—It wasn't something that happened as part of a linear process, because my project continued to change slightly. I reworked my outline and table of contents many, many times and this helped keep me organized and also look at my project as a whole (by looking at the progression of sections, how they fit, often moving them around, etc.).

b) Struggled with: I think I struggled early on with what my argument was, or if I even had one... I knew that I /thought reflective practice would benefit the design process and learning from it/from myself, and I knew that I had sufficient literature that agreed with me, but I also knew that the real project was to experiment with these theories. So in that sense I hadn't proved anything.

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) Achieved: aside from my classmates/advisor/reader, I had a couple of (non-designer) people read my introduction (after my advisor Carol Smith pushed me to really clarify the design terms, etc.), and was told that it GOSPed them to want to read more. I feel good about the finished product, how I organized it and how it moves readers along, from my background story/inspiration (chapter 1), to a literature review of the topic and its significance (ch.2), to the application of the topic in the creative project section (ch. 3), and then to the "what now? what will I do with this, with myself, *post*-CCT?"

b) Struggled with: It was challenging for me to clearly articulate what my project was all about to my classmates. While I *thought* that what I was doing and how I was explaining it to them was clear, it wasn't entirely clear to them. The work-in-progress presentation brought that to light for me. Also, in the early phases of my writing, I was assuming that the reader knew certain design terms, etc. Carol had to push me to clarify further and further. I often assumed that my audience was solely designers, but it's not—First, my classmates and CCT-ers are my audience. One of my classmates said she didn't

"get it" (about my project) until we did practice presentations together the day before our final public presentations (so at least I finally achieved the clarification by the end!).

I.  I have facilitated new avenues of classroom, workplace, and public participation.
   a) Achieved: in the final chapter of my synthesis, I reflected on how I only began thinking about how my values as a feminist would play a role in my career as a designer, while I was in the CCT program. I had never thought about this before. As soon as I finished my synthesis I started working on a pro-bono project, a branding system (logo, business cards, overall "image" for her business identity) for what will be a local *antique/vintage meets modern* home furnishings boutique started by a young woman who I have known since she was little! Next week, I am attending a networking event for women in Boston, so I hope to continue this endeavor.
   b) Need to work on: What will be a challenge is bringing my reflective practice to, or facilitating participation at my upcoming new full-time job. The office culture seems sort of "traditional" (and fast-paced). I am coming into a brand new position they have created there, one that they have never had there before, so I think I can experiment with facilitating meetings in fresh new ways and see what happens!

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) Achieved: in terms of my future design work and learning, this was the basis of my whole synthesis (reflective practice in design process), so I achieved learning about my process here, what works well and what I want to improve.
   b) Want to work further on: In terms of my scholarly learning and work- now that I have finished the synthesis and the program, I want to reflect on that experience as a whole (which I am starting to do here in this self-assessment). I think that is really important. I think it would be great to plan a reflection/dialogue session with my fellow classmates soon.

## 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) Achieved: Yes, all of the CCT courses have changed my perspectives in many areas of my life, but I think the Consortium in Women's Studies elective course was one of the most significant for me in terms of a culmination of my own background and interests combined with gained CCT knowledge and perspectives applied to course work with social and educational change as the forefront goal.

    b) Want to work further on:  the "engagement" part—exploring what this is for me.


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

    c) Achieved: In each semester (because I was taking 2 courses in back to back semesters), I found myself transferring experiences and tools across courses. I also think that because I was a graduate assistant, I was even more involved in the CCT experience and was constantly transferring ideas and experiences (good or bad). I especially learned from experiences and struggles with presenting—my undergraduate presentations were so different (speaking about a design product), and I had to do so much more bringing of my*self* to the presentation, so much more revealing of my thinking to do. I learned about my approaches to this in each presentation and tried to improve the next.

    d) Struggled with: Although my answer in 1.a  shows that this course was one of my favorites, it was also the course I struggled with most. This might have had a lot to do with the fact that I was doing this course alongside my synthesis, but also it was a very different kind of course than the rest of the CCT courses.


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

    a) Achieved: Timelime, timeline, timeline. Even though the timeline ended up changing as the semester progressed, it was invaluable to planning my project from beginning to end. My advisor helped me to be realistic about goal dates. I also had a ton of PDF articles, which I kept organized in folders on my computer (changing file names from the random number codes they are named when you download them from databases, to the author's last name and maybe year). I started to remember authors and publication years quickly this way, and it made retrieval of information quite efficient.

    b) Struggled with: I had been using RefWorks since 692, and started out the synthesis semester using it as well. But then somewhere in my "busy-ness," and as I started adding on additional references during the semester, I started adding them directly to my working bibliography Word doc instead of going through RefWorks. Well, this bit me in the bottom the weekend before synthesis was due! I ended up spending a full half-day fixing up loose ends in the bibliography (making sure it was all in APA formatting). It took me longer than expected (but I had a lot of resources).


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) Achieved: Upon entering and throughout the program, I kept myself so open to trying new things! I think the real learning will come now, when I see how/when I apply various tools in various areas of my life.

    b) Struggled with/Want to work further on: I struggled with dialogue sessions. Getting comfortable with silence in a large group is a hard thing to do. I wish I had taken the Dialogue course whilst in the program, I think this would have really helped me and taught me a lot that might have transformed me, but even though I was sometimes uncomfortable with the silence and the anticipation, but eventually I learned that my anticipation was not necessary at all. I want to continue to attend the CCT events and partake in the dialogues because even when I am just listening and taking it all in, the themes and energy that come out of these dialogues always blows my mind. I think that in my busy

day-to-day life, having a place to sit down with others and slow down for a short period of time, can make so much difference in the thinking that I take away from it.

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) Achieved: I actually did have some distractions this semester, and my solution was to pour myself into my synthesis project, basically ignoring the distractions. Whether or not this was the best way to handle it, I will see when/if the distraction is still unresolved as a result! My synthesis was indeed my highest priority and that was my mentality all semester long.
   b) Struggled with: The end of the semester, finishing up the last details of the project, was a struggle. I think at this point you are exhausted and you just want to be finished. It takes a lot of emotional strength to not lose that motivation and momentum towards the end, and you have really find that in yourself, conjure it up and rally until the end!

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) Achieved: This is an area I feel that I achieved greatly and also took advantage of fully for the synthesis as well as throughout the program in general. I have always been good at building peer relationships in school, etc., but the collaborative and diverse nature of the CCT program really brought this out of me. Especially if you are doing the synthesis in one fell swoop semester, you really need all the support you can get and so do your peers. We helped keep each other on track by doing spontaneous check-ins with each other.
   b) Want to work more on: In terms of other horizontal relationships, as I reflected upon in my synthesis paper I want to seek and build support systems of local creative professionals, especially in building mentor relationships. It's also important to me to continue to foster my CCT professor mentor relationships post-CCT.

7.  I have taken the lead, not dragged my feet, in dialogue with my advisor and other readers.  I didn't wait for 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) Achieved: I asked my reader and advisor a LOT of questions. Whenever I had new thinking that made me want to modify an aspect of my project, I would discuss it with my advisor. It helped me to get a second view other than my own, or even just to verbalize it and think out loud about it when you are so wrapped up in a project. We also had a lot of dialogue via the comment boxes in the Word document track changes! She would comment, I would ask her questions, etc. This continuous dialogue really helped me along.
   b) Struggled with: However, there were definitely a couple of periods where my initiated dialogue slowed down—not because I wanted to avoid talking to them or showing them my work, but because those were the times that I was struggling and catching up. I did always keep her posted with where I was in the process, even if I wasn't ready to send her my work/revisions.

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.  Achieved: I never saw the feedback/comments given to me from others as views that I was obligated to abide by, but rather as comments for me to think about, to question my thinking more deeply, and respond to intelligently. Luckily I almost always found my advisor's comments to be thought provoking and to push me to think things through further in my writing.

b. Struggled with: At the same time, that was often a struggle in itself! There were times when that further thinking that needed to be done required late nights from me, or that conjuring up of a life force to push through.


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) Achieved: The emphasis was really on the value of the project here, and my advisor Carol did nothing less than push me and encourage me in areas that needed improvement...and not just that she thought needed improvement, areas that I needed to do more thinking in, to put more of myself into. So the criteria became this in addition to my own criteria for the personal goals I had set for myself in this project and what I really wanted to get out of it.
   b) Struggled with: This isn't really a struggled with, but do not think I ever really did inquire about formal standards grades-wise. I just focused on the project. I think I just got used to the lack of the course's focus on grades throughout most of the program.


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) Achieved: This "work-in-progress" concept, academically, was a new one for me when I became a CCT student.  As I mention in my synthesis paper, undergraduate design school critiques are often focused on the product. As an artist however, outside of school, everything is always a work in progress—songwriting, painting, design work, it's all about the process (for me anyways). So coming into the program and experiencing this emphasis on process, and doing the WIP presentations, was so refreshing and I was really able to connect with that concept and get a lot of out it as a student, and from my peers' feedback. I definitely carried this over to my synthesis, especially being that my project was experimental. I acknowledged that doing the project itself was a reflective learning experience.
   b) Want to work more on: This work-in-progress mentality might not be acceptable in, for example, a fast-paced results-oriented corporate graphic design job...They want the work finished, not in-progress. But in terms of my own learning in this workplace atmosphere, I can reflect on my work and affirm what is working well and what can be improved further.