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*CCT Program Exit Self-Assessment*

*The assessment centers on your Synthesis experience, but allows room for you to review your CCT experience as a whole. A copy will be kept in your CCT file to help document the Program's effect on students. This assessment also serves as stock-taking to inform your future work; and to provide insight for the instructor, advisors, and for other interested parties. The assessment, which is adaptable to any project of research and engagement, addresses two sets of goals:*

*My Synthesis Product Shows That...*

*Developing as a Reflective Practitioner*

*Describe for each goal*

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

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

*(Even though you may have many examples for some items, one is enough.*

*Download the handout from the website so you can prepare your own document.)*

**I. "My Synthesis Product Shows That..."**

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

I want to influence e-learning developers across my company and other institutional settings that take similar approaches in respect to building e-learning for virtually all of their course offerings. My purpose was to begin to demonstrate to peers that we can't **assume** that all forms of content can be successfully taught via an e-learning module. I think I can convey the purpose of the paper to peers in my field. I still need assistance with conveying this information to others outside my field. I need to work on solidifying my ideas more and taking a more "general" vocabulary approach to the paper. There are a lot of vocabulary terms that are specific to the field. I need to be more sensitive to these nuances and develop them into my 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.*

I spent a lot of time reading what others have researched in respect to my topic. Fortunately, due to my travel schedule, I was able to access most of this information online. This also helped me with reviewing articles that were more recent which is great to keep abreast of the new research. Another positive that I was able to take advantage of through work was conferences and seminars worldwide. This allowed me to learn about what was being developed on a global scale. Finally, I continually travel to client sites. I have the opportunity to ask questions regarding what they used to do and what changes they are currently making.

The negative side to all of this is that I am only looking at a specific margin. These contacts are financial professionals, and although they are spending a lot of money and time, they are segmented to a specific sector. In the future, I hope to broaden this a little and inquire into what others are doing in different sectors.

*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.*

Teasing out the vision was one of the harder components of the project. There is so much information concerning what others are doing relative to e-learning and the workplace. I think that working with two groups in different settings allowed me to expand my view of the issues associated with the project. I was able to take a group of people who were familiar with the newest techniques in e-learning and a group that was simply willing to participate in a new experience. I was able to work well with both groups and that facilitated the entire project. Communicating with both groups was also challenging, but I found different ways to disseminate information regarding the logistics. I struggled with figuring out how to take a larger topic and make it manageable. There was a lot of information circulating around. A challenge was making this project manageable, yet tangible enough for others to understand. I would imagine that, in the future, this would continue to be a challenge.

*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.*

I think my work is based on counter-propositions. I definitely am trying to convey an idea that does not seem to be the norm. I think my work began there. Then, I examined the premises and propositions that my project depended on. For example, the idea for my paper originated from an idea from one of the members of senior management. I didn't agree with the idea and built the paper around the concept of trying to show why we can't assume that e-learning can be built for everything.

The challenge here is that premises and propositions are continually changing. I imagine that will be a struggle for me as I continue my work. I need to continually research what the new methods are. This is very time consuming and will cause my future work to take that much longer.

*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.*

I did have clear objectives once I had the time to define them and the time to begin work on my paper. I think this topic lends itself to being a continual reflective practitioner in the sense that the information is constantly changing and being adopted by more companies. My main objective was to try to determine by assessing a group of people and looking at existing models, if anything could be taught through e-learning.

The weak area centered on keeping realistic deadlines. This was a continual problem for me as I tried to write, revise and be responsive to other peers in the program. Traveling for work on a weekly basis made this all very difficult. Fortunately, with the new developments in our company, I am traveling less.

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

Due to the fact that I was able to attend conference, seminars and participate in client visits and training sessions, I was constantly reviewing information and technical models that were continually evolving. There were a few occasions in which I was able to see beta sites for future work and project plans for future spending and emerging programs. Again, the negative point here is that I am only seeing what professionals in the financial sectors are doing. I have seen new projects and themes emerging from a specific sector.

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

I clarified the overall argument using models that have surfaced around my topic. I also used a study as an example to further explain the progression and theory behind the paper.

A challenge was determining which models to use and how to prioritize them. I will continually find new models and will need to update my work.

*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.*

I think I was able to draw readers in based on the fact that I began with a summary and an explanation of the problem and the population affected by it. I also had ideas/methodologies presented by other people researching similar ideas. Finally, I had a small study to use to explain my rationale of why this particular area needs to be changed. I think a pragmatic example helps others to understand what was trying to be achieved.

A weakness presented itself in the orientation and language of the paper. It was hard to not use vernacular and explain the content. This will need to continually be addressed as I continue work.

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

I have facilitated new avenues in classroom and workplace participation. In the workplace, we have implemented a survey system to see if our clients prefer online or formal instructor led training. The public arena is much more difficult. I still need to find a way to reach the general public.

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

We have developed an online system for colleagues to log into to explain what is going well and which items need improvement. Reports can be run from the application to quickly pinpoint the positives and the negatives. We have been using this to determine the scope of our future projects.

The “what needs changing” components are costing us money that we don’t have right now. We have to put some of our ideas on the backburner. A challenge for us is trying to think of alternate less-costly ways.

*II. Developing as a Reflective Practitioner, Including Taking Initiatives 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.*

An example that comes to mind here is the Dialogue Class. I integrated concepts from the Dialogue class to use in my synthesis paper. Through the paper, I also introduced some of the Dialogue concepts to my co-workers. Some of which we have combined with our new application to identify strengths and weaknesses.

I would like to be able to integrate more of the Creative Thinking theories into my workplace. This is one area that needs a lot of work, as my immediate as well as company-wide environment is very conservative. I would like to introduce more of Mihaly’s flow concepts. He mentions that are different ways to achieve creative flow and they can differ by surrounding.

*2. I have also integrated into my own inquiry and engagement the processes,*

*experiences, and struggles of previous courses.* I was fortunate enough to write my research papers focusing on the course material and which applicable social/educational topics were/are of interest to me. An example that comes to mind is from the Antiracist and Multicultural class. I was interested in looking at biases surrounding magnet schools. I had taught at one prior to attending UMass and that topic was of great interest to me. I thoroughly enjoyed using the course materials and books to assist me with my research on common magnet school biases and stereotypes. I wanted to integrate more of my own inquiry in the Cognitive Psychology. I wished I had used more pragmatic examples to do my research and not just confined myself within the assigned readings.

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

When I was full-time in the program, I had a great time management system. I was able to get research, reading and administrative CCT work done on time. I also thought the quality of the work was high.

The struggle surfaced when I became a part-time student in the program. It became very difficult to manage a job with sporadic hours and a very grueling travel schedule. I still struggle with that. One of the things I did to help myself was to try to find as many online resources as possible. This allowed me to “carry” more of my work with me as I traveled.

*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.*

I believe that in every class we gained tools to add to our personal and professional toolkits. I think we all use them knowingly and unknowingly as we live our lives and work to make changes and develop better programs professionally.

The challenge for me is knowing when it is appropriate to “experiment” with new tools in a professional setting. When are you a positive agent of change and when do you go too far “out of the box?”

*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.*

This one is probably the most difficult because I think that emotion about a particular topic is what makes you driven to research it more fully. So, although I have paid attention to emotional dimensions there are times when I also let them lead. I guess this can be strength and a weakness.

*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.*

I found peer advice extremely helpful in all of the classes. Peers were great editors, collaborators, question askers and audiences. I offered assistance to many people and still continue to offer assistance when called upon by former as well as existing students. One challenge I found was finding times to meet with everyone having different schedules. A solution that we came up with was arriving early or leaving late on the evenings when we had class. This allowed to have time to talk.

*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.*

For my core CCT classes, I did not drag my feet and took the initiative to visit professors during their office hours if necessary.

During my synthesis, I did try to take other's opinions as I wrote, but I will admit time has a tendency to be the major player here. One comment I would like to add is that I often got conflictive comments from professors regarding my writing. Often times I would see comments that stated I should keep something while another person may opt to take the same sentence out. This does become very frustrating especially if you are dealing with a time crunch.

*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).*

I completely agree with this statement as I felt that many times my research and writing was very one-sided until other peers had the opportunity to read suggest revisions and areas for clarification. My peers have made me a better writer and have started me in the habit of trying to “explain” more in my writing. I need to continue to work on this and hopefully excel at being unassuming.

*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.*

I think that I have had to set my own criteria especially when I transitioned from full to part time. I think it is a good idea to ask people as part of this exit assessment, what did they consider to be the most valuable criteria. Here is mine...

How can I use this work to be an agent of change?

What do my peers think of what I am conveying? Is there a way to say or show it better?

Can I use this in my personal/social or professional life?

How can I introduce this idea to someone new?

What are the next steps?

Have I done any other work or research that my tie this together to solidify my ideas?

The challenge here is that I wished I had had enough time to record more of these thoughts. They will be useful in the future.

*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.*

I definitely feel that my papers are all works-in-progress especially relating to my synthesis. I think I have just begun to study the concept of evaluating different forms of e-learning. There are several different avenues that I would like to follow as I continue to work and grow personally and professionally. First and foremost, I would like to continue gaining insight into how I might tailor different forms of e-learning to suit the content being taught. I intend to continue to work on this by seizing new opportunities at work. As we develop content related e-learning modules, I have developed a survey to try to gauge our clients' satisfaction level with our various offerings.

Additionally, I would like to collaborate with other trainers at firms in the area. There are a few corporate education forums that run intermittently throughout the year. I would like to start attending them to see what other firms are doing and where they feel their strengths and weaknesses are. It would also be interesting to discuss ideas with colleagues in different industries than financial services. Do they have a different attitude towards online learning?