

DeCraene-Initial and Reflective Essay 66000A

Initial Essay

In my career, I have been fortunate, in my opinion, to be involved on the corporate side and educational side. Even when I was on the corporate side, I worked for an educational software company, so I was never too far removed from education, as I had to keep up with the latest educational trends. I have to say, they are very different in culture but do overlap in some areas. Currently, I work for the Northwest Indiana Educational Service Center as a program director where I contract trainers to come to our area to provide professional development or I facilitate the trainings myself. I feel we are lagging “behind the times” as far as professional development intertwined with technology. We have not offered any training programs to our teachers in an online mode beside Moodle. I know there is more I can do with professional development with the knowledge that I obtain with this degree and I also know are other ways of delivery besides Moodle. With this degree, I would like to be able to design professional development that is engaging for educators on the latest educational trends. I want to provide professional development for teachers so they do not have to leave their physical classroom but would be able to access professional development online. It is my idea to work in the educational environment for a little longer but I would like to “flip back” onto the corporate side and work with the training of employees and designing that instruction. With my background, I have always ended up working with the training of teachers in education or employees in the corporate world. However, I haven't always known the best processes to design training except what I have learned as an elementary teacher. Eventually, I would like to be able to contract myself out to other entities either in the education or the corporate world and help them design great instruction infused with technology.

Again, this program can help me achieve my goals by giving me the knowledge I need on the development side of instruction, and trends and tools in technology to accommodate that instruction. I want to be able to take a very abstract topic and make it more concrete for the learner. As I continue through this course it will become more evident on what this degree can do for me in my career as I learn new concepts. In fact, I will more than likely have to refine these statements as I gain more knowledge in my courses.

Reflective Essay

Reading and doing the interactive activities in the modules was very helpful. I have to say that I wish Module One would have been the very first module that I clicked on in BlackBoard, but it wasn't. But by the time, I was “finding my way” around the two classes and Blackboard it took me a while to understand the whole concept of organizing, and where I should click on a daily basis. I got it down now! It was one of those things of “I need to know this right away” and “nice to know.” The main module that helped me the most was Module 3-Materials, Resources, and Technology Requirements. It has been a long time since I had to write a research paper and the last time that I did it was in MLA format. And it has been a very long time since I had to refine a search on the ERIC Database. In the past, I found the ERIC Database more difficult to use and one could spend hours just doing a search. Now, I find it easier to use and it does seem to produce better results. Or, I am better educated of doing the tutorials for the library guide on how to work and search with databases. The area of searching for journals, databases, and peer reviewed articles is something that I hope I get better with in time. Believe me when I say, “I

want to work smarter, not harder.” To me it’s going to be a work in progress. Module 3 also helped me with getting the basics of writing a good paper, especially when I wrote my initial draft for my paper in course 51300. Actually, I wish I would have went through Module 3 completely in the beginning of the course to set up the basics of writing the paper in course 51300, but my timing was off. I broke the modules down as follows:

Module one was useful for resources for the Plan of Study, and actually knowing there were groups in IT&D on Facebook and list-serves. Those sources actually help one keep aware of what is going on in the industry and I plan to stay connected to those communities.

Module two was a good guide to give you helpful hints on how to organize yourself through online learning. Good advice existed in organizing some type of filing system and calendar. I found keeping everything on a flash drive with labeled folders helps me tremendously in being more organized. Now I have to organize all those folders.

The one idea that could be added to that module is for students to use Microsoft One Note. I found that I can label my weeks in One Note and then organize the categories within those weeks. I found it really useful when I was watching videos and I took my notes about the video or resources in Microsoft One Note so I can go back and look at them later.

Module four had some great resources on time management. I actually copied down some of the websites for writing goals and staying organized so I can keep reviewing them. It helps define what is a main priority compared to other priorities so you can stay focused.

The hardest assignment for me was completing the CITI certification. It involved a great deal of time to comprehend everything you were reading. And, when the CITI took so much of my time, I had to learn to balance my other duties in life. Maybe I will revisit those time management websites now!

At this time, I don’t want to change my initial reflective essay. However, as I take more courses through this program I could see myself adapting my essay, if something grabs my interest. For example, I did find reading about human performance from the other course interesting and that might be something I might infuse into my essay.