

**Student Evaluations and Reflections on Teaching
2019-2020**

Semester Reviews for [Spring, 2020](#) and [Fall, 2019](#)

- *Positive Aspects and Points for Improvement*
- *A grid with sections for each individual course that contain a summary of the University evaluation information and my reflections on student comments*

At the end of this document I share a few Reflection Journals from EDIS 654 from Fall, 2019. These comments and reflections support the research I am currently undertaking with “The Creativity Project.”

2019-2020 School Year Reflection

What a year. Fall, 2019, was the second full semester of the fully online format, and I am still making accommodations and changes. Suddenly, halfway through Spring, 2020, Ohio (and most of the world) shut down due to COVID-19. The restrictions and school closings began in mid-March, a few weeks into the semester, requiring quick thinking and rewriting of all syllabi to accommodate the fact that these graduate students would all be completely shifting their own teaching formats. Despite the fact that all of my courses are fully online, COVID presented a challenge because many assignments and all of the culminating projects in all courses are integrated deeply with graduate students’/teachers’ interactions with students. When their teaching lives changed, their AU graduate learning lives changed, as well.

Shifting to fully online last semester required finding new ways of interacting with students. After Spring and Summer session, 2019, I decided to eliminate Blackboard Collaborate synchronous sessions and offer drop-in office hours instead. I swapped Blackboard discussion boards for Padlet, and swapped collaborative documents within Blackboard to a less clunky version on Google docs. I also purchased Screencast-o-matic and improved my weekly videos. Student response was positive, overall. Office hours were well attended, and students overlapping their time with me got to talking to one another, a bonus. Padlet gave them a chance to share with one another and interact in a more natural manner, and students could save the Padlet wall to their notebooks. Google docs allowed them a chance to create a collaborative glossary for EDIS 650, and I hope to find more ways to use this in the future. Videos are longer, and take a bit more time on my part to complete and edit, but seem worthwhile because students appear to understand the specifications of assignments. The Saturday optional Face-to-Face in November was cancelled due to weather and low attendance.

In Spring, 2020, I purchased a Padlet subscription so students could have ongoing access to these walls, even after the class. I incorporated jigsaw activities into 650 and 653. I began creating and incorporating my own Pre- and Post-Assessments in EDIS 651 and have one prepared for EDIS 653, in this way students can gauge their own learning of the student outcomes, and I can get comments from which to plan in the future.

Midway through Spring, 2020, COVID shut down schools in Ohio and sent Ashland into fully online learning. When the governor made his announcement, I immediately sent out a Blackboard announcement to all students telling them first that for the rest of the semester I would be lenient on due dates for assignments. I encouraged students to take a break from their AU coursework for a week while I reconfigured the assignments and syllabus to accommodate their being away from students. Below is a sample of my announcement.

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“Well – what a crazy turn of events! As you probably know by now, today Governor DeWine announced that all Ohio schools will close until at least April 3. While the AU course you are taking with me is fully online, there is a component in many of the courses I teach that integrates the work you are doing in the AU class with your own students. This will need to shift considerably. In addition, you are all currently scrambling to move your teaching work online, something I understand completely.

Please know that effective immediately, I will be lenient on due dates for assignments. Take care of your students and your families *first.* As I take the next few days to adjust the course assignments to meet this challenge, I encourage you to take a break from the coursework for a few days and focus on your families and your teaching.

On Monday, March 16, I will post a video with my thoughts on how we will adjust the final project expectations to meet this challenge. With that said, I would like you to be able to use what you are doing currently – this quick adaptation in your content and teaching process to either move online or create other non-interactive student work – as part of your work for this course, especially for the major, final assignment. Toward that end I encourage you to keep a running journal of your thoughts, concerns, any formal or informal research you are doing to adapt your teaching, and your process for moving forward in this new way – in these “uncharted waters” as one of my students said in an email just today. This data can become part of your final project to show how you adapted your work to meet a very unusual, unprecedented need in your teaching life.

I anticipate that there will be many questions and concerns for the Wednesday, March 18, Zoom meeting. Because of this, I am going to have specific times during the evening dedicated to each course I teach, you can stop in during that time and ask questions with others in your course. You would still use the same Zoom link or call-in number. “

My thought – for all of my classes and all of my students – was that they could use their course learning and my support to make the transition easier for them and for their students. I wanted capstone students (EDIS/EDUC 710) to record and report on their district’s response to the pandemic, their own reactions and responses, and how they accommodated in their classroom to meet the needs of students. This simply became part of their final presentation. For my students who were teaching the gifted (all EDIS students) this meant how were they accommodating the coursework, assignments, and online components to meet not only the academic needs of their students, but the social and emotional needs as well. In short, I asked them to accommodate based on the learning they had done in their course work at AU, support them in any way I could (email, phone, Zoom, and office hours) as they did so, and asked them to use those accommodations to satisfy the requirements in their AU courses. EDIS 653, EDIS 796, and EDUC 710 students, especially, appreciated the accommodations, and having a week or so to concentrate on their own lives and challenges while I made those changes.

**Semester Teaching Review
 Spring, 2020**

Positive Aspects	Points for Improvement
-I can see indications that Padlet as a discussion board is working well to allow students to interact with one another as well as providing opportunities for them to gain a broader range of knowledge through jigsaw activities.	-I need to find a way to get more students to complete the AU evaluation. -The individual student who was challenging this semester, I should sit down to review the interactions and reflect on how I might have

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<p>-The adaptations of the courses due to COVID, when they were commented on, seemed to be clear and allow them to simply adapt to what/how they are teaching now.</p> <p>-I tend to get more in-depth responses, comments, suggestions from the Pre- and Post-Assessment, but as the responses are more easily traced to individual, they may not feel comfortable providing negative feedback or criticism.</p> <p>-The accommodations for COVID were well received, and well worth the time and effort I spent updating the syllabi. All students completed courses, though a few had ill family members (and still do as the semester finishes).</p>	<p>improved his success, though at this time I cannot.</p> <p>-Remember to use the EDIS 653 Pre- and Post-Assessment survey.</p>
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Summary of Course Evaluations
Spring, 2020
Semester interrupted by COVID-19 move to Online Learning

Course: EDIS 651 OL	Hours: 3		Course: EDIS 653 OL	Hours: 3
Highest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]			Highest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]	
One student participated in the Course Evaluation			All items rated [5]	
All items rated [5]				
Lowest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]			Lowest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]	
No ratings lower than 5			No ratings lower than 5	
Comments on Formal Evaluations			Comments on Formal Evaluations	
<p>1/7 students rated this course.</p> <p>This student appreciated the jigsaw-ed review of various differentiation strategies, which is a new component, to give them a chance to see more models applied.</p>			<p>4/6 students rated this course.</p> <p>2 students commented deeply about the accommodations I had made to the curriculum and calendar after COVID took over our lives.</p> <p>“There was no question as to what was expected, and for that, I’m very grateful. Dr. Groman extended nothing but grace and understanding when everything changed due to the virus. There was a lot to juggle, and she made adjustments and</p>	

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		reworked the syllabus because she knew how much we had on our plates.” I also love reading that students feel they are able to reflect on their teaching and see how the different pieces of the course apply.	
Comments on Pre- and Post-Assessments		Comments on Pre- and Post-Assessments	
<p>All students responded. From the Google Form data charts I can see that student growth is excellent, I am very pleased about that. Most growth in the area of reading and using the WEP, and knowledge of the ODE competencies. Least growth in the area of diversity and special populations.</p>		<p>I forgot to include the Pre- and Post- Assessment for this course. How frustrating. This was new, so I just missed adding it to the syllabus.</p>	
Course: EDIS 781 OL	Hours: 3	Course: EDIS 710 OL	Hours: 3
Highest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]		Highest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]	
Helpfulness of the distance learning staff [5]			
Confidence in instructors knowledge [5]			
Instructor’s enthusiasm [5]			
Lowest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]		Lowest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]	
Quality/helpfulness of instructor response to assignments was [4.5]			
Comments on Formal Evaluations		Comments on Formal Evaluations	
<p>4/6 students rated this course. Students appreciate the flexible and self-directed nature of this course. Students also commented on the time and space to allow them stretch out and research a topic of interest to them more deeply. One student wanted more clarification on the final submission process.</p>		<p>0/2 students evaluated this course.</p>	
Course:	Hours:	Course:	Hours:

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EDIS 796 OL	3	EDUC 710	2
Highest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]		Highest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]	
All items rated [5]		Instructor's enthusiasm was [4.9]	
		Helpfulness of video and audio media in understanding course content [4.9]	
		Relevance and usefulness of course content [4.9]	
		Evaluative and grading techniques [4.9]	
		Reasonableness of assigned work [4.9]	
		Clarity of student responsibilities and requirements [4.9]	
Lowest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]		Lowest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]	
No ratings lower than [5]		The helpfulness of the distance learning staff overall [4.8]	
Comments on Formal Evaluations		Comments on Formal Evaluations	
<p>1/2 students evaluated this course. "Dr. Groman went above and beyond to modify the course to fit the realities of education during this time. Please give Dr. Groman a bonus for all of her hard work. She modified the syllabus 3 times in response to the changing situation and did not put an undue burden on us as students who are trying to teach in this challenging time."</p>		<p>8/19 students evaluated this course. I had one extremely challenging student, who earned a failing grade (for the second time). I can see his comments and ratings throughout. I feel I did everything I could to assist him and move him forward, multiple chances to resubmit, working with the Writing Center. This is early in my use of Padlet to help students interact with one another, and I see a few comments on this. They liked being able to see how other districts were handling COVID. I work very hard at providing individualized and useful feedback on student assignments. Last year I received some negative comments from students who felt I was too harsh, so I set myself a goal of being positive while still giving students constructive criticism. So I loved reading this – especially for this specific course. "The feedback from Dr. Groman was great. I grew as a teacher and person due to her dedication." This semester I worked very hard adapting this course mid-semester to COVID, as it is totally school-based. I am heartened by student comments.</p>	

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	<p>“Dr. Groman did an excellent job of quickly adapting the class to schools closing. She made what could have been a stressful situation (trying to continue project without access to students) useful and as stress-free as possible. I really appreciate how she adapted the class and allowed the students to use their current situation as material for the final project.”</p>
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**Semester Teaching Review
 Fall, 2019**

Fully Online Coursework, but with Liberty Union hybrid cohort

Positive Aspects	Points for Improvement
<p>*I was able to keep my feedback response to submissions to a week or less! *It appears that the new requirements have been implemented without a problem: the Resource Notebook (710 and 796) and the Resource Notebook reflection form to guide the Notebook conference (710 and 796), the new observation format (796) *AU is currently at 100% passing rate for the OAE exam! *In-person observations are very positive, and I gathered a support letter from Dr. Colleen Boyle, gifted coordinator from Columbus City Schools and former OAGC President.</p>	<p>*be mindful of comments put in student work, especially when frustrated or upset. Best to stop grading/commenting and come back when calmer *when students appear to have missed the point of an assignment, connect with them personally, or offer a phone conference or online check-in where they can sign up for a one-on-one time *make a separate video for EDIS and EDUC 710. The addition of the word “gifted” and a few other differences is obviously confusing and frustrating for students *Consider purchasing Padlet or asking Donna if she has/will purchase a site license. This format was very user-friendly, and all can be downloaded and/or printed for the Resource Notebook *reconsider forcing students to respond to posts, or find another way for them to gain points for this *I am seeing “usefulness of audio media (or online resources, or written assignments) in understanding course content” in my lower ratings. I know I need to learn more about online teaching and learning, and the books I have purchased are not as helpful as seeing something in place. Look into this *Find an alternative for the 796 observation. If the class size is smaller, I will just continue to drive to them and observe them in-person, and just eat the cost myself. It is worth it.</p>

Summary of Course Evaluations

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Fall, 2019

Course: EDIS 650 ACLU, Liberty Union Hybrid Cohort	Hours: 3	Course: EDUC 710 OL1	Hours: 2
Highest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]		Highest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]	
Answers to student questions [4.8]		Quality/helpfulness of instructor feedback [4.7]	
Availability of extra help when needed [4.6]		Student confidence in instructor knowledge [4.7]	
Instructor's interest in whether students learned [4.6]		Encouragement given students to express themselves [4.7]	
		Instructor enthusiasm [4.7]	
		Usefulness of audio media in understanding course content [4.7]	
		Reasonableness of assigned work [4.7]	
		Clarity of student responsibilities and requirements [4.7]	
Lowest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]		Lowest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]	
Course organization [3.4]		Tailoring of instruction to varying student skills levels [3.5]	
Relevance and usefulness of course content [3.8]		Timeliness of instructor response to assignments [4.0]	
Reasonableness of assigned work [3.8]		Usefulness of online resources in understanding content [4.0]	
Comments on Formal Evaluations		Comments on Formal Evaluations	
<p>I wish more students had completed this evaluation, especially as it is a new hybrid cohort.</p> <p>The organization of the course was fine, but the syllabus, Blackboard, and in-person explanations of due dates and some components of the assignments were not consistent. I recognize and acknowledge this (especially in delineating Padlet and dropbox items), and need to exhibit constant vigilance in making sure each component is correct.</p> <p>Student appreciate discussion in the face-to-face classes and felt the course was a good foundation for their understanding of gifted education.</p> <p>Note: Two students from this cohort could not participate in the face-to-face meetings, one, as the football coach, was unable to attend classes in</p>		<p>I have never seen such a wide range of comments, from glowing compliments to almost insulting complaints. I also see a number of comments showing me that what might be perceived by some students as a course that is flexible and individualized is most definitely perceived by others as scripted and difficult to decipher (which, in the same person's comment, seem to be an oxymoron. If it is so scripted, how can it be difficult to decipher?).</p> <p>From an instructor point of view, this was the most difficult section I have ever taught – and it is the exact same course set-up as the EDIS 710. Student engagement here, however, and perception was vastly different. There were a number of students who either did not read the syllabus or watch the videos or did not understand the instructions, because I have never</p>	

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the Fall, but wished to be part of the cohort, as he could attend classes in Spring and Summer. Another was the district gifted coordinator, who thought that the students would be more willing to be open about their questions and concerns if she was not in the face-to-face section with them. I thought that this was wise and very understanding. I accommodated these two by connecting them to the 650 OL (fully online) section's Padlet for discussions and sharing. It seemed to work well and after the initial confusion about how and where to access and post assignments, it went very smoothly.

taken so many resubmissions of modules before for not following directions. With this in mind, I offered a Blackboard Collaborate drop-in session to students halfway through the semester to accommodate questions and confusion, but no one took advantage of it.

I did get a constructive comment that it was difficult to wait for others to post to the discussion board to be able to make the requisite responses. I will revisit this component.

In addition, I must say I am upset and discouraged that two student felt I was unprofessional and overly harsh in my comments. I do admit to a strong sense of frustration with a few individual students who just did not write professionally, did not have a delineated strategy put in place, and did not include assessment data. My frustration may have manifested in words more harsh than I meant to use.

I must agree with the words of one of these student comments: *"I am disappointed with this one and am very glad the semester is over."*

But in the words of another, I feel as though I did not completely miss a connection with students:

"I really wish I had the opportunity to make [sic] many more classes with Dr. Groman. She is by far the best instructor I've had during my online coursework in the graduate program. The work set out for students was reasonable yet challenging, and directly related to the work I am doing with my students in my classroom. Dr. Groman allowed us to self-direct our own project depending on our needs for our classroom, which I appreciated. Additionally, she provided extensive, helpful feedback on my writing assignments. I love that she allows students to re-do assignments for mastery. In previous classes, I was not allowed to do this even though it would have furthered my knowledge of the subject. She also posted weekly videos in which she talked

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	<i>through assignments. As someone who overthinks things, it was really nice to have this to refer to and also showed that she really cared about her students, which is a difficult feat in an online course! Finally, I felt she was very fair about due dates which helped me to be less stressed. As a full-time teacher taking this course, I was grateful to know that there was a bit of a grace period on assignments so that I could do my best work and also not have to put off my own pile of planning or grading for my students. Thank you, Dr. Groman!</i>
	No, dear. Thank you.
Comments on In-Course Final Journal Reflections	Comments on In-Course Final Journal Reflections
Did not use.	Did not use.
Course: EDLA 9898 ARR	Hours: 3
Course: EDIS 781 OL	Hours: 3
Highest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]	Highest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]
All items [5.0]	All items rated [5.0]
Lowest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]	Lowest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]
Comments on Formal Evaluations	Comments on Formal Evaluations
<p>No comments.</p> <p>This was a doctoral student independent study researching various traditional (narrative, ethnographic) and non-traditional (arts-based, organic, grounded theory) qualitative methodologies to give her a strong foundation to choose from when she determines her research question and focus. We met every other week for at least an hour, and periodically had a meal together or talked online or phone so I could support and guide her.</p> <p>Now that the semester is over I feel I may have been too unstructured, but I also feel that allowing her to explore and let the ideas move her in different directions was more beneficial to her</p>	<p>Three students taking the masters thesis at one time is a record! It was wonderful opening a space where students could be supportive of one another. This is my second semester using an online spreadsheet for weekly check-ins, similar to the AURWC accountability spreadsheets for small groups. In fact, I tell these students about the AURWC, so they know I continue to research and write as well, and also to drive home the point that the BDS (Brief Daily Session) is the key to getting the thesis to the completion stage.</p> <p>These students felt stretched and I see a sense of growth and learning in their writing. For a group this small, the online synchronous sessions were very beneficial (the technology worked, for one thing!) and I held a mid-semester drop-in session</p>

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<p>than staying with our original plan. Mid-semester she was beginning to think about trying to code interviews and survey responses, so we took time to find support research and I walked her through my own process and experience with coding. We also discussed alternate ways of documenting and archiving the information.</p> <p>Alongside the various methods she researched, I continued to encourage her to embrace both sides of her topic of mindfulness – the scientific work that supports it as well as the mind/body/spirit integration that can be documented through less traditional methodologies. I believe that her final product shows this consideration.</p>	<p>for this group to check in with one another. This is something I will continue to do, and even do more of them. 781 students in the past have felt unsupported, and to read, <i>Dr. Groman was extremely supportive and helpful. I learned so much about research, writing, and APA, which is new to me</i>” gave my heart a little thrill.</p> <p>I will want to add a video on finding scholarly articles. If I make one basic video it can be used in multiple courses – 781, 710, 653.</p>
Comments on In-Course Final Journal Reflections	Comments on In-Course Final Journal Reflections
Did not use.	Did not use.
Course: EDIS 710 OL	Hours: 3
Highest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]	Highest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]
All items [4.9] with the exception below	Student confidence in instructor knowledge [5.0] Instructor’s enthusiasm [5.0] Encouragement given students to express themselves [5.0]
Lowest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]	Lowest Ratings in Formative Items [Median out of 5]
Timeliness of instructor response to assignments [4.8]	Usefulness of online resources in understanding content [4.6] Usefulness of written assignments in understanding content [4.6] Relevance and usefulness of course content [4.6]
Comments on Formal Evaluations	Comments on Formal Evaluations
<p>This was an unusually large section for the gifted practicum. This shows the current growth of the program.</p> <p>These students mentioned that the annotated bibliography was “<i>super helpful</i>” – something I am so glad to see! We are always told to make sure our work is grounded in research, but we</p>	<p>First, I find the low rating for “Relevance and usefulness of course content” (at 4.6, it is not low, but it is one of the lowest) confusing. Students choose their lesson topic and manner of teaching and the focus of that choice is meant – and stated as such – to be relevant to their classroom and teaching lives. I don’t know how to make the</p>

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don't always do that research for ourselves. This shows the impact of scholarly work.

Students were able to plan, implement, and report out on a topic or strategy of their choice. The fact that this is based in their choice is reflected in these comments – one implemented a “*very successful mindfulness program,*” one performed a Case Study, one mentioned that the research portion of the project “*got me thinking about using other teaching strategies even if I didn't pick them for my project.*” I can see this teacher trying other some of these other strategies after the course is over.

“This made for an excellent online learning course with timely and helpful feedback along the way and ample support for success.”

Considering the evaluations from previous 710 sections that found the syllabus scattered and the modules difficult to follow, I am glad to read this statement. I have updated how I do these modules – each module has an anchor video description. But every few weeks I do a check-in video that overviews things I see they need based on questions I receive, submissions I get, and using my own intuition about what they might need. I always create a check-in video the week something is due to be submitted.

One of my challenges is that there are two major assignments for the EDIS (Gifted MEd) section that are different from the EDUC (General C&I MEd) section, and I am trying to use the same check-in videos for both sections. While this does not seem to bother the EDIS student, it was confusing for EDUC students. It was not worth the time I saved.

Program Development Note: A portion of the EDIS section has been significantly changed to accommodate the Resource Notebook that is expected at the end of the MEd in Talent Development program. These students must take

course content more relevant than giving them that choice.

The comments do not reveal a great deal, beyond their feeling that the course allows them the opportunity to practice what they have been learning in the gifted coursework. They do comment on the lack of communication between themselves and their colleagues. I wonder if a weekly check in between them all on a spreadsheet or Padlet might be appropriate?

Interestingly enough, this is the first semester that 796 has had the required Resource Notebook, and I have used the updated observation document that is based in the Ohio gifted PD competencies. No mention is made of either of these, so I (hopefully!) can consider that a good thing – the changeover process has been successful, and all anticipated glitches have been, well, anticipated – and have been solved.

In addition, I visit each student personally to observe them. I drove to Columbus, Akron, Sandusky, and the Cincinnati area for these observations, something I have been told I will no longer be supported financially to do. I wish I had seen some evidence to share with my administration that this effort had been considered in this evaluation – but there are no comments. I also, while observing students, had a student-led Resource Notebook review session, which allowed me to see many styles and iterations of their archived work from the program. These were so impressive, and based on their in-class notebook reflections, they are able to see it as a working document, whether it is hard-copy or electronic, and something they will use, add to, and share in the future.

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the OAE exam to get their GIS endorsement. The endorsement students compile a Resource Notebook, which is due (with their required Log of Hours) at the end of EDIS 796, the Internship, and I meet with them on their face-to-face observation day to go over their Notebook.

710 students do not take 796. To accommodate, I made the Resource Notebook (and the required Log of Hours) one of the submissions for 710, and they review these with me in a student-led video conference on Blackboard Collaborate (or by phone) prior to the end of the course. This requirement has added to the preparation and instructional time required for the course, but the benefits have been enormous. Students have the opportunity for one-on-one time with the instructor, but even better, their notebook is given personal attention, a powerful reward for their hard work.

See the “updated resource notebook form” as a guiding document.

Comments on In-Course Final Journal Reflections

Did not use.

Course: HON 390	Hours: 3 (4 instructors)
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**Highest Ratings in Formative Items
[Median out of 5]**

Instructor’s enthusiasm [4.9]

All others [4.8]

**Lowest Ratings in Formative Items
[Median out of 5]**

Comments on Formal Evaluations

Comments on In-Course Final Journal Reflections

Did not use.

Course: EDIS 654 OLS	Hours: 3
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**Highest Ratings in Formative Items
[Median out of 5]**

Helpfulness of the distance learning staff [5.0]

Student confidence in instructor knowledge [5.0]

Instructor’s enthusiasm [5.0]

Encouragement given students to express themselves [5.0]

**Lowest Ratings in Formative Items
[Median out of 5]**

Usefulness of the video media in understanding course content [4.8]

Usefulness of the audio media in understanding course content [4.8]

Comments on Formal Evaluations

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I submitted a proposal to the Honors Seminar so that I could have an opportunity to teach a class face-to-face. My 4-week section of this course was on Creativity Theory, an abbreviated version of the graduate Creativity Studies course and a few workshop activities I do with students and teachers. I thought that gifted/honor students might benefit from the knowledge and strategies from Piirto's model.

As with graduate course evaluations, I have to grin reading four statements saying the content was different from anything they had ever learned, and then one lone voice saying "*most of what we learned seemed really obvious.*"

Not very many comments from this group, but I can see they appreciate the thoughtlog, their own creativity project, and the biography. In addition, "*The knowledge and teaching style of the professor were the most important contributions to the learning environment of the section.*" Not only does this sentence correctly use the verb "were" (which most graduate students cannot do in a case like this) but I am glad that my work with graduate students has not made it so I am unable to relate to undergraduates.

In future I will take the students' advice and eliminate one of the two large projects – the biography or the creativity project. Or make it a choice, or find a way to shorten one of them, because the student presentations for both of these were spellbinding. The level of understanding, connection to, and application of the ideas in the model to a famous person of their choice was very high level, and their creativity projects showed risk-taking and a true unique look at their own abilities (one student cut another's hair for her creativity project, one created an intricate foreign language for his D&D characters, a few took on photography, creative writing, and a commercial for a future radio program).

It is evident that this course is so much better suited to 12 weeks than seven weeks. Students state that they did not feel overwhelmed, even at the end of the semester, and they felt it was a good pace. One student commented that the videos are hard because (s)he prefers reading to listening and another mentioned that because of the online format, (s)he felt challenged to stay on task.

As a result of the creativity course I took this summer, I have been adding a short creative thinking, mindfulness, or reflective activity at the end of each week's video to help them apply the week's concepts. This is something I would do with a face-to-face class, but had not used over the summer. The creativity course in Florence reminded me that these can be just as effective as self-reflective activities in student thoughtlogs – and I was correct.

In addition, I added the use of Padlet this semester to help me monitor and view discussions more quickly. Blackboard discussion forums are not user-friendly, as each post must be opened individually before reading. Padlet was also an excellent place to post their videos and presentations on various aspects of the course. I kept them to a strict minimum time limit, and they responded by creating focused, well presented projects and chapter responses.

Only three took advantage of the optional Face-to-Face Meditation Day, but I believe it was still worthwhile, as I was able to connect with those three and they created a very strong collaborative bond that day.

I must admit I had my doubts about putting this course online. This group was the end of the Summer Institute cohort, and they were excellent, dedicated, and downright fun to work with. I just have to continue to remember that there are faces and lives on the other side of those postings and on the receiving end of my videos.

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	<p>“...enjoyed the class and the relaxed attitude of the course. Dr. Groman’s passion for creativity was noted and felt by students. She has been a fabulous instructor throughout this program!”</p>
Comments on In-Course Final Journal Reflections	Comments on In-Course Final Journal Reflections
<p>Did not use.</p>	<p>The AU evaluations were nicely detailed, but the reflection journals for this course are more deeply personal, showing how the course has been transformative. So much so, in fact, that I am including a compendium of them of them below as an addendum to this semester’s reflection.</p> <p>These particular students were very fearful of this course, more so than most previous students, which is why these comments and revelations mean so much to me and inspire me to keep tweaking these courses to make them fully accessible to these wonderful graduate students.</p>

EDIS 654 Reflection Journals (Fall, 2019)

I enjoyed this 12 week creativity course. It was a topic that I was looking forward to learning more about as I have never had taken a class on this topic. I preferred the *Understanding Creativity* text and felt it had a wealth of information in regards to traits of creative people and excellent explanations as to how those traits apply to the different areas of creativity.

This was my first experience with Padlet and it was a welcomed change to allow a bit more interaction with my colleagues and to see the types of work they were creating. Commenting on posts were easy and it had a more laid-back feeling about it, which I liked. I never enjoyed the thread discussions on Blackboard and liked the layout of how Padlet was. Uploading projects was quite easy, unless you had a large file which made uploading difficult. I am really glad that Padlet was used this semester.

I loved the concert, movie or field trip options to the course. This made not attending the day in Columbus not extremely inconveniencing and I really enjoyed going to the concert I attended and watching a movie with purpose. The course being flexible in this way made it less stressful and I feel that I really learned from the experiences that I had to write about.

I also enjoyed the weekly videos that incorporated an activity at the end of them. I felt like that was something that we would have done if we were face-to-face (which I miss that experience), but did not feel like the weekly videos were just reviewing what assignments were coming due.

I also liked the option of ways to respond to the Focus Questions. After taking so many of these courses back to back, I feel like my Focus Question papers were all starting to sound the same. I liked being able

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to make practical applications of the material that I was reading and create something that I can use again at a later date.

I will ask that if there are any more books with techniques of using creativity in the classroom, would you let me know? I remember at our face-to-face in August at Ashland that someone had presented their professional development project on incorporating creativity and she had mentioned a book that she had used that I thought was from class. I did not write the name of it down, but would like to add a few books to my growing gifted ed library!

As I have said before, thank you Dr. G. for all of your knowledge, guidance and patience these past several months. I am so thrilled that I took these courses, learned so much and had you as an instructor along the way. I am a different person than I was a few months ago and I have you to thank for it! Your passion for gifted education is more than apparent and I truly appreciate you!

WR

Reflecting on EDIS 654... where do I begin?

I will start by stating how grateful I am for this course. Through assigned activities (*Note from Dr. Groman – this refers to the Week 1 Scavenger Hunt where students were to find creative elements in their surroundings*), I went out into my (relatively new) community and saw things that I had yet to experience. I believe the activities we were asked to complete and participate in were appropriate and personally challenging. Although I think some of Jane Piirto's texts are hard to read (a little dry), I did enjoy the information assigned in *Understanding Creativity*. This course also led me to not being so rigid in my classroom; although, I did not have much luck with the meditation part, I did learn to relax with my students. I also gained respect for those possessing various creative talents and needs.

Thank you Dr. Groman, for your continued support, encouragement, advice, and praise. This gifted cohort is enjoyable due to what you bring to the program.

RL

At first, I thought that I was going to dislike this class since I have never embraced my creativity. After reading over the syllabus, I was apprehensive about taking risks and being vulnerable with other students on Padlet. However, this course really surprised me and actually became *my favorite* of the whole program.

The most significant takeaway that I have from this course is the idea of creativity being truly innate in people. I will always remember that when creativity is stifled in children, we are setting them up to be scared to take risks and be who they really are (myself included!). I have already started to integrate creative ideas into all of the lessons I have created since starting the class.

SP

Overall, this course challenged me in positive ways both as a teacher of creative, gifted learners and as an individual with my own creative interests. The combination of readings, assignments, and long-term projects created an effective balance of the exploration of Piirto's pyramid in connection to different realms of creativity and also incorporated application, reflection, and self-discovery of our own personal creativities thus promoting a lasting connection with the material. I appreciate the balance of

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assignments to include more Focus Questions at the beginning of the semester and then transitioning into ongoing work connected to the more extensive projects by the end of the semester.

The Padlet seemed to be a beneficial central location to share our stored assignments making it very easy to access other's postings, scroll back and forth among the various assignments, and respond to our colleagues' contributions. This allowed for more ease of interaction and sharing compared to posting and replying to peers within Blackboard.

Overall, I would not rearrange or eliminate anything about this course; the detailed syllabus served as the most helpful guide to keep all assignments and deadlines organized. I also benefited from the week-to-week suggestions to begin working on some of the more extensive projects with my favorite one being the personal Creativity Project. This course not only allowed me to explore development and inspiration of various creative individuals but also encouraged me to personally connect to useful applications for my students and to discover my own creativities which will ultimately help me to better serve my students. Thank you for a wonderfully enriching and reflective semester!

AW

As I am pursuing my master's degree in gifted education, creativity is the topic that has most piqued my interest. Therefore, this has truly been one of my favorite courses this year. I enjoyed the assignments given, especially when we were creating and sharing. It was fun to see everyone's work throughout the semester. I thought that the workload was fair and the assignments were valuable. Nothing felt like busywork throughout the semester, I could see the value and application of the content both personally and professionally.

Because of the nature of the content of creativity, I found the meditation day field trip invaluable. It was nice to collaborate in person with some of the colleagues I have gotten to know throughout this series of classes. And it makes a difference to be able to bounce ideas off of one another when creating.

It would be nice to have an area on the Padlet that was designated for resources or miscellaneous information that people find as they are going through the course. I recall that we had a lot of great exchanges of ideas and resources at the face-to-face field trip, but if I did not write something down, it was difficult to remember the websites or titles. If we had a column to add things, that would help with this.

ET

First I must say...WOW! This particular course challenged me in more ways than I knew I could be challenged. I was asked to look at myself in a way that I do not normally look at myself and it has not been comfortable. I think my biggest takeaway is that I have given myself "permission" to accept that I can be, and am, creative. Creativity, for me, is not just creating something new or working with open-ended solutions. It is a mindset. I've started to look at myself differently and though it has been a bit uncomfortable at times, I am looking forward with new eyes.

I wish that I would have attended the field trip. I feel that I missed out on a lot that day. The activities were difficult at first, not because they were too intense, but because of my "I'm not creative" mindset

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that resurfaced for much of the course. Piirto's text is very informative and I will continue to reference it in my classroom.

I do like the idea of Padlet. It is easy to use and very easy to make comments on other people's submissions. The downside to Padlet is that if you post something sensitive, and all students can see it, you might think twice about including that information.

Using Padlet, in addition to drop boxes, was a little confusing to me. Going back and forth from one to the other seemed, at times, like I did not know where I was supposed to post things. I think I would only use one. I do like Padlet more than the drop box system.

The discussion boards are nice to be able to communicate with others in the class. I liked the online face-to-face sessions, too. (Even though the technology knowledge of some of us isn't what it probably should be.) :)

I would keep the online course options for future students. I would also use Padlet more. All of the textbooks were helpful and I would keep those, too.

SP

I think that you do a wonderful job of keeping us informed and making yourself available. You are very accommodating and understanding. I thought all the assignments were great for a creativity class. I personally had a hard time because I try to do things too thoroughly and I felt like I was working all weekend. It was very time consuming for me especially with taking 796 at the same time.

The biographical sketch and the creativity project were a lot of work for me. Now that the class is done, it will be more relaxing for me to do the poetry without pressure of a deadline. I think the Padlet was a good way for everyone to see responses. I think that was better than trying to read them on blackboard. With that being said, I liked working on the assignments but they were very time consuming for me.

SH