

**CrCrTh 694, Synthesis of Theory and Practice (Jeremy Szteiter section), Spring 2018  
Students' Synthetic Statements, from the Final Course Evaluation**

*The synthetic statement is the fourth question on formal course evaluations for the Critical and Creative Thinking Graduate Program. See questions 1-3 listed on <http://bit.ly/CCTEval>*

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Question 4: "Building on your comments from Questions 1-3 in the formal evaluation, compose a synthetic statement (1 or 2 paragraphs) evaluating this course. (Imagine readers who might not be willing to wade through all the answers to Qs 1-3, but are willing to read more than simply the numerical averages of standard course evaluations.) Please make comments that help the instructor develop the course in the future and that enable some third party appreciate the course's strengths and weaknesses. Among other things you might comment on the overall content and progression of classes, the session activities, and the use of mentors to support the learning in the course."

Below are the Synthetic Statements from the respondents who gave permission for these comments to be shared on the web.

- The synthesis course has helped me to understand myself as a learner, teacher, and contributor. Further, it has guided me through the steps it takes to fulfill these roles thoughtfully and responsibly. This includes the ways I have needed to manage my own time and work, and also the ways it is significant to invite the views and suggestions of others. Taking advantage of the small groups and truly investing in the work of a small group of peers is as beneficial as the support itself, in that it models the balance of inviting critique and remaining true to the mission and voice of your own process. The course has been invaluable to me in my development personally, professionally, and academically.
- The course was paced, communal and individual in the perfect balance. The weekly sessions provided the structure necessary to get started, stay committed and complete the process. The essence of this course is watching everyone rise to the occasion of completing a meaningful piece of work. In that co-creation, there is support, revising, frustration, clarity, joy, improvement and emergence. These aspects feel as valuable as the finished project. The level of opportunity for reflection and development gives way to a new way of working and living.
- The synthesis course supports the individual student the the process of reflecting on the program overall and developing a product that reflects the growth in creative and critical thinking and in the area of reflective practice. The products are intensely personal and contextualized but are linked through the common processes of creative and critical thinking. The course structure provides the necessary small group and individual support to complete to complete the synthesis.
- This course strikes a difficult balance of helping to build up the structure needed to support students building towards the completion of their synthesis, without becoming onerous or adding unneeded work. The class work itself is mostly bits and pieces from previous key CCT courses, but reframed within the perspective of moving towards completing the synthesis. This has the advantage of allowing students to focus on what matters to them while also providing value in the new light that familiar concepts are represented in. This can strike some as disappointing, but in my view it is the right balance. If the class featured a lot of new ideas and concepts that would get in the way of what the ultimate goal is. Prospective students should expect that they will engage in activities that are familiar to them and now they have the chance to benefit from that familiarity to wring even greater value from

those activities. The re-use of previous CCT class lessons also furthers the point that these are skills to be honed, used and re-used, not simply assignments to be done to get a score.