

University of Massachusetts at Boston
Graduate College of Education - Critical & Creative Thinking Program
Reflective Practice (Spring 2012) - CrCrTh688 (1-3 credits)

Syllabus

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Classes: class sessions correspond with the events of the CCT Network

(<http://cct.wikispaces.umb.edu/CCTNetwork>) and vary by topic and time and place each semester

Schedule of Sessions (5 Total events, including)

1. Monday, Feb. 6, 2012 – Overview (6:45-9:00pm, Campus Center, 2nd Floor, Room 2540)
2. Monday, Mar. 5, 2012 - Topic TBD (6:45-9:00pm, Campus Center, 2nd Floor, Room 2545)
3. Monday, Apr. 2, 2012 - Topic TBD (6:45-9:00pm, Campus Center, 2nd Floor, Room 2545)
4. Monday, Apr. 30, 2012 - Presentations (6:45-9:00pm, Campus Center, 2nd Floor, Room 2540)
5. One other meeting session

Office/phone call hours: contact the instructor for an appointment

Syllabus Website with links: <http://www.cct.umb.edu/688-12.html>

Course wiki: <http://cct.wikispaces.umb.edu/RefPrac>

General email: Emails sent to crcrth688-spr2012@googlegroups.com go to everyone in the course.

Course Descriptions

Reflective practitioners in any profession pilot new practices, take stock of outcomes and reflect on possible directions, and make plans to revise their practice accordingly. They also make connections with colleagues who model new practices and support the experimenting and practice of others. Students in this course gain experiences and exposure to tools for reflective practice through presentations, interactive and experiential sessions, and, optionally, supervised pilot activities in schools, workplaces, and communities.

Overview

Each semester that the course is offered, it can be taken for 1-3 credits, and can be repeated for up to 6 credits total.

1 credit option: Students participate in five 2.5-hour sessions (which primarily include attendance and participation at CCT Network events but may also include smaller meetings depending on availability of the participants)

2 credit option: Participation in sessions above plus students undertake 20 hours of supervised preparation and piloting of new practices in their schools, workplaces, or communities

3 credit option: Same as 2 credit option, except 40 hours of supervised practice, not 20. Students undertaking supervised practice will have a consultation with the instructor outside of the scheduled sessions to discuss and initiate a proposal for their supervised practice. Please note that even if a student has previously taken the 1-credit option, there is no option to undertake supervised practice only; that is, supervised practice students must also participate the same semester in the five scheduled sessions.

During the five scheduled sessions:

- a) guest presenters reflect on their own personal and professional development and/or

- introduce tools and practices that the students may adopt and adapt to their own work and lives; and
- b) supervised-practice students report on their progress and plans.

Between sessions: students submit reflection papers on the sessions; build a community of support for each other through an email bulletin board; develop and revise their plans for experimenting with and adopting new practices; and, in the case of students piloting new practices, meet regularly with the instructor.

A distinctive feature of this course is the involvement of graduates of CCT as guest presenters and participants in the sessions. The graduates model to current students a commitment to personal and professional development, community building, and educational-innovation beyond the formal CCT program of studies. (The involvement of graduates is made possible by collaboration with the CCT (alumni) Network, <http://cct.wikispaces.umb.edu/CCTNetwork>.)

It is hoped that students from the course return as guest presenters at a future date. The contribution of the course to producing Thoughtful and Responsive Educators (which has been the overarching goal of the Professional Education Unit and the Graduate College of Education) centers on the Commitments of Ethical behavior, Lifelong Learning, Dedication, and Modeling and Mentoring; the Practices of Caring, Collaboration, Reflection; and Understandings about Pedagogy in the broad sense of instruction and facilitation. In addition to its role in the field of school and college education, the course is intended to serve the range of practitioners who study in CCT (such as adult educators, artists, musicians, science educators, and group facilitators) as well as interested professionals from other graduate programs at UMass Boston.

Objectives

Students in this course will:

1. gain experiences and up-to-date tools for reflective practice and, for supervised practice students, pilot new practices in their schools, communities and workplaces;
2. learn ways of forming a community of learning, by making connections with colleagues who model new practices and supporting the experimenting and practice of others;
3. practice taking stock of experiences and outcomes and reflecting on possible directions that build on such evaluation; and
4. make plans to revise their practice so as to incorporate new tools they learn about (objective 1) and their reflections (objective 3).

Assessment and Requirements

1. **Attendance and participation** in each session of this course (5 sessions x 6 points = 30 points). [related to objective 1]

2. **At least one weekly email** submitted to crcrth688-spr2012@googlegroups.com (for 10 weeks of the semester). Help contribute to building a community of learning and support during the course (at least 1 email per week x 10 weeks x 1 points each = 10 points) [related to objective 2]

Emails may include the following types of:

- Commentary on, and reactions to, the most recent reflective practice session
- Responses to the commentary and reactions of fellow students
- Offering suggestions or information about resources that support reflective practice and workplace change.
- Responses to questions posed by the instructor
- Stories or brief descriptions of specific scenarios that you encounter within your own workplace or life that relate to challenges and successes of supporting change as a

reflective practitioner

3. **Reflection papers**, after each presenter sessions, 500 words each, due 2 weeks after the session. (4 papers x 10 points = 40 points). [related to objective 3] Specific guidelines and assessment rubrics will be distributed for each session, but the general themes will include:

- What did you learn? What parts resonated for you? What new insights do you have? How were you challenged?
- Based on the speakers and their presentations, what successes and challenges were apparent with respect to creating workplace and other change?
- Connections you see among the sessions, and possible applications to your work, personal life, studies, and community involvements.

4. **Plan for Practice** (2000-3000 words), building on reflection papers (and, for supervised-practice students, their briefings/updates), demonstrating:

- a) how and when the student plans to put into practice the skills and tools from all sessions of the course - in their work, personal life, studies, and community involvements, and/or how they could adapt and practice using those tools for opportunities in the future. (The plan should include a process for evaluating the outcome so the student learns from experience and practice);
- b) for supervised students, how their plans builds on their experience preparing for and piloting new practices.

Guidelines and examples will be distributed to assist in developing a Plan for Practice.) Students will make brief presentations of their plans for practice at the last session. (20 points) [related to objective 4]

Supervised piloting of new practices

(*for 2- and 3-credit option only*; 20 hour option (about 1.5 extra hrs/week) [the first figure] or 40 hour option (about 3 extra hrs/week) [the second figure])

1. **Log of hours** in meetings, practice sessions, and piloting of new practices, adding up to 20 or 40 hours. (2 points for each hour = 40 or 80 points) [related to objective 1]
2. **Supervisory meetings**, 3 or 5 during the semester (3 or 5 meetings x 10 points = 30 or 50 points). [related to objectives 1-4]
3. **Email progress reports**, submitted to instructor (for at least 3 or 8 weeks during the semester), providing plans and reports on preparation for piloting of new practices and reflection on progress, setbacks, and outcomes (3 or 8 emails x 5 points = 15 or 40 points) [related to objective 1, 3, 4]
4. **Briefings/updates** to fellow students, distributed at sessions 2 to 4, 200 or 400 words. (3 briefings x 5 or 10 points = 15 or 30 points) [related to objectives 2 & 3]

Total course points are divided by the number of credits taken, then converted to letter grades as follows: the minimum grade for A is 95 points, for A- is 87.5, for B+ is 80, for B is 72.5; for B- is 65; for C+ is 57.5; and for C is 50.

THE CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT governing students' rights and responsibilities, including academic honesty, is given in the Graduate Bulletin.

NO PREREQUISITES: Students from outside CCT should consult with the instructor before signing up for the supervised practice credits.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Sections 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 offer guidelines for curriculum modifications and adaptations for students with documented disabilities.

If applicable, students may obtain adaptation recommendations from the Ross Center (287-7430). The student must present these recommendations to each professor within a reasonable period, preferably by the end of the Drop/Add period. Students are advised to retain a copy of this syllabus in personal files for use when applying for certification, licensure, or transfer credit.

This syllabus is subject to change, but workload expectations will not be increased after the semester starts.

Schedule of Supervision

(for 2- and 3-credit option only)

The schedule depends on the specific project of the student. An initial prospectus (300-400 words describing the practices, site(s)/location(s), collaborators, timeline) must be brought to the first supervisory meeting, which takes place during the first or second week of the semester. This prospectus may, of course, end up being substantially developed and revised through conversation with the instructor.

Examples of Reflective Practice Tools Used in Past Sessions

Past sessions have included activities, discussions, presentations, and experimentation with tools. These may be developed through the semester based on student interest and types of supervised practice for those taking the 2 or 3 credit option.

- online social networking
- reflective practice portfolios
- research and writing tools and techniques
- dialogue process
- small-group sharing and discussion
- storytelling
- collaborative knowledge building, including online tools such as wikis
- student and alum presentations and discussion

Suggested Readings

(To be supplemented each semester with readings specific to the sessions, as illustrated above.)

Eyler, J., and D. E. Giles (1999). *Where's the learning in service learning?* San Francisco, Jossey Bass.

Horton, M. and B. Moyers (1983). "The adventures of a radical hillbilly: An interview with Myles Horton." *Appalachian Journal* 9(4): 248-285.

Jenkins, M. (2000). "Action learning: Taking the time it takes." Presented to the International Association of Facilitators, Toronto, April 27 2000.

Rokovich, M. A., M. Stevens, et al. (2000). "Implementing change at SJUSD: An unfinished case study." Presented to the International Association of Facilitators, Toronto, April 27 2000.

Schon, D. and Agyris, C. (1996). *Organizational learning II*. Reading, MA, Addison Wesley
Schuman, S., Ed. (2006). *Creating a Culture of Collaboration: The International Association of Facilitators Handbook*. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.

Senge, P., A. Kleiner, et al. (1994). *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*. New York, Currency.
Stanfield, R. B. (2002). *The Workshop Book: From Individual Creativity to Group Action*. Toronto, Canadian Institute of Cultural Affairs.

Taylor, P. J. (2008). *Developing Critical Thinking is Like a Journey. Teachers and Teaching Strategies, Problems and Innovations*. G. F. Ollington. Hauppauge, NY, Nova Science Publishers.

Taylor, P. J., S. J. Fifield, et al. (2008). "Cultivating Collaborators: Concepts and Questions Emerging Interactively From An Evolving, Interdisciplinary Workshop." Manuscript.