

Syllabus

CRCRTH 688: Reflective Practice

Spring 2017 hybrid section (Class #5324 for online students, #5330 for face-to-face students)
January 30 – May 5, 2017

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Catalog Description

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.

Course Format

Hybrid course (instructor-led) involving 5-6 required class meetings scheduled throughout the semester. At least some of these class meetings usually overlap with community events hosted by the Critical and Creative Thinking graduate program, and others will be scheduled separately and only involve those in the Reflective Practice course. Participants attend the events and complete preparation and follow-up assignments.

The course may be taken for 1, 2, or 3 credits, where 2- and 3-credit section involve additional requirements in the form of a semester-long project developed around the piloting of a new practice in a professional or personal environment. The course may be repeated, up to a total of 6 credits.

CCT community events may be either held on campus or arranged as virtual meetings where everyone joins an online session synchronously, and the events are designed to engage participants in a range of types of discussions and activities. Students at a distance may join both types of events via web conference, typically using Google+ Hangout. Students should have a Gmail account to be used to gain access to the live online meetings and the recordings of these sessions. Skype may also be used as a backup.

Community events are open to the general public, and so other CCT and university students, faculty, alumni, prospective applicants, and other guests may be present.

Key Links

Course Wiki: the central place for course documents, materials, and links. Start here and following links to get to all other items related to the course.

<http://crrth688.wikispaces.umb.edu/>

(Requires UMB username and password).

Schedule of Sessions

This course does not involve regular meetings that happen every week. Instead, see the schedule below for required attendance. Starting and ending times are approximate and may occasionally be adjusted slightly in the cases where they overlap with CCT public community events. Any changes will be confirmed as early in advance as possible.

- **Monday, February 6, 2017**
7:00-8:00pm, Wheatley Hall 4th floor, room W04-170, and online.
CRCRTH 688 students only. Introduction to the course and discussion of projects.
- **Monday, February 13, 2017**
7:00-9:00pm, Wheatley Hall 4th floor, room W04-170, and online.
CRCRTH 688 and other CCT students only. Theme: Reflective Practitioner's Portfolio and Spring Introductions
- **Monday, March 6, 2017**
7:00-9:00pm, Wheatley Hall 4th floor, room W04-170, and online.
CCT community event (open to the public as well as CCTers). Theme: Dialogue on *"Reflective Practice to Support Creative Habits"*
- **Monday, April 3, 2017**
7:00-9:00pm, Wheatley Hall 4th floor, room W04-170, and online.
CCT community event (open to the public as well as CCTers). Theme: Dialogue on *"Reflective Practice to Build Resilience Through Life Transitions"*
- **Monday, April 10, 2017**
7:00-9:00pm, Wheatley Hall 4th floor, room W04-170, and online.
CRCRTH 688 students only. Theme: Reflective Practice review, and preparation for public presentations
- **Monday, May 1 and Tuesday, May 2, 2017** (please be prepared to attend either day to give your presentation)
Time and place TBD.
CCT community event (open to the public as well as CCTers). Theme: Presentations by Students Completing Reflective Practice and Synthesis Projects (combined event between CRCRTH 688 and CRCRTH 694).

Course Overview:

- 1 credit option: Students participate in class meetings and complete associated assignments.
- 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 instead of 20.

Students undertaking supervised practice will have a consultation with the instructor outside of the scheduled sessions to discuss and initiate a proposal for the project. 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 always also participate in the scheduled community open houses/events and other sessions.

During the community event, 1) activities and presenters provide students a chance to reflect on their own personal and professional development and/or experience tools and practices that the students may adopt and adapt to their own work and lives; and 2) 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 email discussion; 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 that CCT graduates occasionally attend 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 (alum) Network, <http://cct.wikispaces.umb.edu/CCTNetwork>.) It is hoped that students from the course return as guest presenters at a future date after graduation.

The contribution of the course to producing Thoughtful and Responsive Educators 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 educators, artists, musicians, scientists, organizational leaders, and group facilitators) as well as interested professionals from other graduate programs at UMass Boston.

Pointers about the preparation assumed for this course

There are no special requirements to participate in this course. Students may begin the course with project ideas in early form to be developed into full project proposals, if taking the 2- or 3-credit version of the course. Students from outside the Critical and Creative Thinking program should consult with the instructor before signing up for the supervised practice credits.

Course Goals

Students in this course will:

1. gain experiences and tools for reflective practice and, for supervised practice students, pilot new practices in their schools, communities and workplaces;
2. grow as a community of learners through making connections with colleagues who model new practices and supporting the experimenting and practice of others, especially through participation in program;
3. take stock of experiences and outcomes and reflect 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 (goal 1) and their reflections (goal 3).

Required Texts and Materials

Readings may be distributed/shared over the semester as appropriate to themes related to student projects and CCT community events. No books need to be purchased. Students will need to have a Gmail account, a computer setup including a headphone/microphone, a webcam, and a reliable (wired) Internet connection for web conferencing. Information about using Google+ Hangout will be distributed as needed.

Grading and Summary of Requirements

Please see the document "Course Notes and Instructions" for full details of all of the assignments summarized below.

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

2. Written Online Discussion Posts - we'll communicate by contributing ideas and sharing experiences in Reflective Practice. Approximately once every week or two, the instructor will pose a question, prompt, or brief reading related to Reflective Practice, and we'll address these by sharing responses in the form of written discussion posts. Respond to 10 of these prompts throughout the semester (10 weeks x 1 points each = 10 points) [related to objective 2]. This requirement may be adjusted depending upon the interests and number of students in the course.

Kinds of posts that may be requested may cover items such as the following:

- Reactions and reflections based on short readings (provided as needed throughout the course)
- Commentary on issues and challenges related to reflective practice
- Exploring or offering resources or stories of experiences that support reflective practice and organizational or community change

3. Reflection papers, after each community event, 500-600 words each, typically due 2 weeks after the event. (4 papers x 10 points = 40 points). [related to objective 3]

Specific guidelines and assessment rubrics will be distributed for each paper if appropriate, but the general themes will include:

- What did you learn about developing as a reflective practitioner? What parts resonated for you? What new insights do you have? How were you challenged?
- Based on the participation of others, including speakers making formal presentations, what successes and challenges were apparent with respect to using reflective practice for fostering personal or organizational change? How did examples and ideas get you to think about how you might develop your practices?
- Other 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), and accompanying presentation (20 minutes), 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.

Students will make brief presentations of their plans for practice during the final community event meeting (open to the entire CCT community and general public). (20 points) [related to objective 4].

Supervised piloting of new practices

(for 2- and 3-credit option only; 20 hour option (expect to spend about 1.5 extra hrs/week) [the first figure in items below] 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. Individual 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. 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, posted/submitted by certain class meetings (about 200 words). These are in addition to, and separate from, the Written Online Discussion Posts mentioned above (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 93 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.

Policy on Late Assignments

Written assignments (discussion responses and reflection papers) may be turned in after the due date but may be submitted after the due date but may be reduced in points for grading purposes. Assignments related to piloting of a new practice (for 2- or 3-credit option) are time-sensitive and must be submitted or completed on time to receive credit for grading, since these all represent points of measured progress in the piloting of your new practice. These include submission of the Log of Hours, the Progress Reports, Briefings, and Supervisory Meetings. For example, if you submit your fourth Progress Report after the due date, Progress Report #4 is recorded as having been missed, and what you did submit will simply be regarded as Progress Report #5; the time-sensitive nature of the assignments here means that it doesn't make sense to miss several progress reports and then try to catch up later by trying to submit multiple reports in the last week of class.

Code of Student Conduct

It is understood that students will follow the UMass Boston Code of Student Conduct governing students' rights and responsibilities, including academic honesty, is given in the Graduate Studies Catalog:

<http://catalog.umb.edu/content.php?catoid=14&navoid=1770>.

Additional Background, Examples of Tools, and Optional Resources

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. Examples of topics used for such activities are listed below:

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

A Brief List of Suggested Readings

(For background only; to be supplemented each semester with readings specific to the sessions, as described above.)

Dominicé, P. (2000). *Learning from our lives: Using educational biographies with adults*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Ghaye, T., & Ghaye, T. (2011). *Teaching and learning through reflective practice: A practical guide for positive action*. London: Routledge.

Hargreaves, J. (2013). *Reflective Practice*. Polity.

Holman, P., & Devane, T. (1999). *The change handbook: Group methods for shaping the future*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

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

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York: Basic Books.

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.

Syllabus Version

January 2017; This syllabus is subject to change and updated versions may be distributed after the course begins, but the workload expectations will not be increased after the semester starts.

Reflective Practice Portfolio

This only applies to students in the Critical and Creative Thinking MA Program: the final paper (Plan for Practice) is appropriate and recommended for inclusion in your MA program's Reflective Practice Portfolio, although other assignments may be appropriate as well based on your directions throughout the course.

Course Evaluation

At the end of the course, you will be asked to complete an anonymous, online course evaluation (<http://bit.ly/CCTEval>) as required by the Critical and Creative Thinking program. This evaluation is in addition to any other general evaluations requested of you by the university or College of Advancing and Professional Studies.

Accommodation Statement

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 (617-287-7430). The student must present these recommendations to each professor within a reasonable period, preferably by the end of the Drop/Add period.

Instructor Background and Experience

Jeremy Szteiter is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University (Cognitive Science) and University of Massachusetts Boston (Critical and Creative Thinking) and now serves as the Assistant Director of the graduate program in Critical and Creative Thinking at UMass Boston. His work has centered on program and organizational development, particularly in adult education in community-based human services and has involved managing, developing, and teaching programs to lifelong learners, with an emphasis on a learning process that involves the teaching of others what has been learned and supporting the growth of individuals to become nonformal teachers of what they know. Jeremy's work draws upon principles and practices of social change pedagogy, technology-enhanced collaboration, instructional design, and participatory theater.