

Research project based on the following Governing Question:

What are the steps that I can take to engage the adult learning communities in using the principles of theater arts to prepare them to create social change?

I. "MY SUBMISSION SHOWS THAT..." (goals of the ten phases of research and engagement)

A. I can convey who I want to influence/affect concerning what (Subject, Audience, Purpose).

Did well: I was able to converge onto my ideas fairly quickly and found a true personal interest and passion about my topic that I believe I was able to convey to others with sincerity through the course of the project.

To be improved: I would like to continue exploring how my topic can connect in more personal ways to others, and I would like to be able to demonstrate the enjoyment of using theater in education for social change in more active ways.

B. I know what others have done before, either in the form of writing or action, that informs and connects with my project, and I know what others are doing now.

Did well: I was able to identify the areas of the work of Augusto Boal that applied to my topic and found that other independent threads often connected to that as a foundation.

To be improved: I still would like to know more about other adult education practitioners who might already share my ideas but who are not also formal theater practitioners - I have found fewer people of this type so far.

C. I have teased out my vision, so as to expand my view of issues associated with the project, expose possible new directions, clarify direction/scope within the larger set of issues, and decide the most important direction.

Did well: My idea-mapping allowed a major breakthrough to happen as it helped me to prioritize the relationship between theater, education, and social change and helped me to choose the scope of my research in a more confident way.

To be improved: Because I am interested in so many areas, it was easy throughout my research to follow new threads, meaning that I needed to constantly step back from my work and verify that I was using my time effectively.

D. I have identified the premises and propositions that my project depends on, and can state counter-propositions. I have taken stock of the thinking and research I need to do to counter those counter-propositions or to revise my own propositions.

Did well: I was able to use information from my initial informants as well as from published research to understand counter-propositions, which I believe added a more grounded element to them and therefore helped me to think about them in practical ways.

To be improved: I feel in some ways that my counter-counter-propositions in writing are still limited in that they may not address deeper feelings of hesitation of adult learners to engage in

any kind of “theater”, so I realize that a part of my research is to appreciate the need for ongoing, long-term conversations with people as well as simply making a logical argument.

E. I have clear objectives with respect to product, both written and practice, and process, including personal development as a reflective practitioner. I have arranged my work in a sequence (with realistic deadlines) to realize these objectives.

Did well: I was able to develop a strategy which allowed me to start to limit the expanse of my research and finally decide to address specific areas within my interests, so this greatly improved my timeline of work and kept it in to a realistic form.

To be improved: As I focused on my final conclusions in the later part of the research, I sometimes neglected some of the smaller organizational elements that might have helped me consider my work in smaller chunks.

F. I have gained direct information, models, and experience not readily available from other sources.

Did well: I was able to speak with several people involved in areas within my research as well as observe a practical application.

To be improved: All of my interviews and informants suggested additional threads of inquiry, and it will be an ongoing process to follow them as this continues to expand.

G. I have clarified the overall progression or argument underlying my research and the written reports.

Did well: I was able to gain insight about my presentation from my practice presentation, and this prompted me to consider new ideas about my final project.

To be improved: I would like to continue to develop group activities that could be used in future presentations or situations to more specifically demonstrate how theater concepts relate to social change.

H. My writing and other products Grab the attention of the readers/audience, Orient them, move them along in Steps, so they appreciate the Position I've led them to.

Did well: Because of my ranges of ideas, I felt that I was able to explore several in my writing while also find a writing organization that made sense.

To be improved: I would like to continue to improve the way that I utilize other members of the class and become partners in our writing and research efforts.

I. I have facilitated new avenues of classroom, workplace, and public participation.

Did well: I believe that my personal enthusiasm for my topic and the flexibility of it allows for numerous opportunities for participation and even depends upon it. so I look forward to continuing how that may work.

To be improved: I would like to continue to improve my own abilities as a facilitator of groups and gain some practical experience.

J. To feed into my future learning and other work, I have taken stock of what has been working well and what needs changing.

Did well: I was able to discipline myself fairly well throughout the research process and never felt that I was behind according to the progress that I intended to make.

To be improved: It took me a while to understand my pockets of time during a given week due to a completely new and complex schedule relative to my classes and work experiences. I need to find a better way to examine this in the future.

II. DEVELOPING AS A REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER, INCLUDING TAKING INITIATIVE IN AND THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS

1. I have integrated knowledge and perspectives from CCT and other courses into my own inquiry and engagement in social and/or educational change.

Did well: I feel that my recent CCT experience had already started me to be much more aware of relinquishing my old "labels" for myself, and that encouraged me through this course to start to consider ideas and interests that I did not accept before.

To be improved: I would like to make sure to engage in dialogue with more of the CCT community – even though I have attended department events, I would like to appreciate the work of other students even more.

2. I have also integrated into my own inquiry and engagement the processes, experiences, and struggles of previous courses.

Did well: I found that I was much more able to allow myself to be assisted by others in my inquiry compared to past experiences, in which I spent more time in independent study and research.

To be improved: Through the Dialogue course this winter, I would like to pay particular attention to use of dialogue in groups and need to think of this as another key layer to my current research.

3. I have developed efficient ways to organize my time, research materials, computer access, bibliographies...

Did well: It arose early in the course that my "in-between" times might be utilized more effectively, such as when I am traveling between places or while I am waiting for class to begin, etc. I feel that I have trained myself to actually plan to think as well as finish tasks during certain times, and I have never before really organized my time to actually carve out space for merely thinking.

To be improved: Because of my limited physical space for organizing class materials, I would like to find a new system for maintaining my books, articles, notebooks, and other items. I

need to think more about “containers” for my research that might take a different form other than bookshelves.

4. I have experimented with new tools and experiences, even if not every one became part of my toolkit as a learner, teacher/facilitator of others, and reflective practitioner.

Did well: I feel that the experiences of both freewriting and writing feedback were particularly powerful to me, since the freewriting allows me to dedicate time to my inner dialogue and allow it to make connections between ideas and then see them visually on a page. I appreciate the idea of writing feedback styles because I observe that allowing a point of view in feedback really helps me to view my writing in terms of intentions and impact on others rather than simply getting out what I want to say.

To be improved: In our use of Post-it activities, I found this to be useful but feel that I didn't take advantage of Post-its enough independently in my own work. I think this is necessary because I do tend to write easily and extensively, but the Post-it activities help me to condense my language and find essence more easily.

5. I have paid attention to the emotional dimensions of undertaking my own project but have found ways to clear away distractions from other sources (present & past) and not get blocked, turning apparent obstacles into opportunities to move into unfamiliar or uncomfortable territory.

Did well: I have been able to expose the emotional impact of my research to friends, family, and classmates much more than I have done in the past, and for me this is an important breakthrough because I have been able to focus on my accomplishments when I have gotten lost in my “to-do” list, and this has actually helped me to feel more comfortable about taking care of high-priority items first without worrying about “everything else”.

To be improved: I found that I did still tend to consider large elements of my project and become hesitant to address them all at once, so I need to become better at simply starting the first short steps of a new assignment or task right away after I am ready for them, rather than feeling that I need to reflect on the meaning first. In other words, I would like to improve on getting physically involved in a piece of work before I really know what I am doing.

6. I have developed peer and other horizontal relationships. I have sought support and advice from peers, and have given support and advice to them when asked for.

Did well: I have found that I have been able to share my work and ideas with other peers outside of the context of class, even with those not taking the course. I have found that it has become much easier for me to ask someone, “what do you think?” and frame it in a way that indicates that I am not just looking for approval but challenges to help me. In this sense, my style of communication in seeking support from peers has improved.

To be improved: I would like to continue to find new ways to engage others in dialogue about our directions and interests, particularly with respect to CCT as a whole. I feel that I know many

peers on the level of classwork but would like to continue to establish peer relationships that persist more cohesively between classes as well as within a single class.

7. I have taken the lead, not dragged my feet, in dialogue with my instructor and other readers. I didn't wait for them to tell me how to solve an expository problem, what must be read and covered in the literature, or what was meant by some comment I didn't understand. I didn't put off giving my writing to my instructor and other readers or avoid talking to them because I thought that they didn't see things the same way as I do.

Did well: I feel that I really took advantage of the suggested assignment dates for the course by making them a self-imposed requirement, and this gave me a way to restrict my work so that I felt that I had to finish milestones on-time. Also, I came to realize more and more that comments from instructors and peers were not necessarily meant to be taken as literal action items, but instead could be filtered back through my own ideas, allowing me to more easily accept comments from others such that I was then actually making them my own.

To be improved: Because I consider an important element of my research to be encouraging others to participate in some of my ideas, I need to spend more time and thought considering the fact that others don't see things my way, and that I am not really trying to convince others but instead am trying to invite others to explore these ideas with me.

8. I have revised seriously, which involved responding to the comments of others. I came to see this not as bowing down to the views of others, but taking them in and working them into my own reflective inquiry until I could convey more powerfully to others what I'm about (which may have changed as a result of the reflective inquiry).

Did well: As mentioned above, I have become more successful at accepting comments from the point of view of making them my own. Additionally, I feel that I have been allow my own enthusiasm to come out more in my presentation of ideas verbally and in writing.

To be improved: I would like to find creative ways to prompt additionally feedback, since I would have liked even more from peers. Because of the limits of the time of others, I would like to both find alternative ways to know the views of others and also allow myself more opportunities to use methodological believing in my own daily work.

9. I have inquired and negotiated about formal standards, but gone on to develop and internalize my own criteria for doing work—criteria other than jumping through hoops set by the instructor so I get a good grade.

Did well: I feel that as the course progressed, I was able to think much more about creating a foundation of work that could be sustained outside the course and after it was over. This helped me to take attention off of criteria and on to making sure that I was making sense to myself and actually was creating work that I could stand behind with confidence.

To be improved: This particular issue may always be a challenge for me, because even more so than with grades and evaluations, it has been important to me to feel that I have showed my

best work to others. I believe that if I can more naturally and immediately observe coursework and the CCT program as a process that happens to result in certain products, then I can relieve myself of being concerned with actually creating the products and understand how well I am utilizing the process.

10. I have approached this course as a work-in-progress. Instead of harboring criticisms to submit after the fact, I have found opportunities to affirm what is working well and suggest directions for further development.

Did well: Most of all, I feel that this course has represented a starting point of future work, so I have been able to find ways to “forgive” myself for unexplored areas and have found through that realization that I do now possess knowledge and skills in my area of interest that might actually be able to benefit others as well as my own continued work.

To be improved: Because my work involves collaboration and experimentation with others, I would like to make sure to keep my momentum going and notice when I come across opportunities to have personal and direct involvement in areas where my interests appear. This means actively seeking out opportunities and making sure to continue to discuss my work in CCT with people outside of the program.