

# CI-4900 Final Reflection for Student-Teaching Experience Spring 2021

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## Prompts:

Write a narrative about the following:

Reflect on your experiences in student teaching. How did you grow professionally in your student teaching experience? Did your professional growth goals contribute to this growth? How has your professional growth changed since PSY3010 and SPE3300?

Document how you have communicated with various stakeholders during student teaching for the purpose of advocating for student success. Examples may include your participation in parent-teacher conferences, attending IEP meetings, working with agencies to provide services to your students, etc. Provide a synopsis and analysis of the knowledge/skills you acquired as a result of these communications.

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In reflecting on my student teaching experience, I feel that I grew professionally in that I was able to design lesson plans that both allowed for student choice of materials and composition, and that could connect students to a variety of other subject matter and multidisciplinary concepts. In this way I have felt more professional, and feel that my students will be more prepared for higher level courses and to better participate with the global community.

My professional growth goals were to better get to know my students interests and academic needs to serve them better. I feel that I have achieved these goals by developing sets of daily drawing warm-ups that prompt students to reflect on their feelings, thoughts, and on some of the foundations of art. I would ask students to draw how they are feeling, what they enjoy, their aspirations, and some silly or fun questions, too. Some of my academic prompts were to draw using particular elements of art (line, space, shape, form, texture, value, and color). In this way I am able to gauge the students' comprehension of the foundations of art, and design certain lessons that would help improve some of the misconceptions or areas of weakness students may have.

Over time I have also got to know my students' academic needs. Some students have documentation of an IEP, 504, or AIG status, while other students were fatigued, stressed, or held anxiety from the previous and current year of the Covid-19 Pandemic Restrictions. In observing my students I was able to better understand where some students needed more help understanding, getting organized, or being motivated. The pandemic, unfortunately, made a good amount of students less social and less motivated to get their work done in class or at home. By providing information and expectations on the current weekly activities and projects on the Canvas platform I was able to reach the whole class. I also printed out instructional materials for small groups of students who may want to write notes as I introduced the focus topic of the week. I also sat with individual students who were struggling academically, who

were not technology proficient, or who had organizational issues to help them get started and to help them catch up when they fell behind on assignments.

I feel that my professional growth goals have contributed to my overall growth. Since my previous student-teaching internships through PSY-3010 and SPE-3300, I feel my professional growth has changed significantly. I had my SPE-3300 course during the start of the pandemic, and we watched and analyzed videos of teachers, rather than interacting with live classes. Analyzing videos was okay, but it's hard to gauge your own growth with limited public interaction. I had my PSY-3010 course before the pandemic, and I helped with a group of K-5 students after school. It was nice working with small groups and one-on-one to help students get their homework done, play together, and meet together. It was also nice to collaborate with other student-teachers and share ideas, especially since we were all in different majors.

I feel that I was getting my toes wet in the PSY-3010 internship, but that I fully dived in, so to speak, during this CI-4900 internship. Instead of learning about psychology or special education, I am putting into practice all of the knowledge I have gathered from every course I have taken, and that I have the freedom to experiment and plan, and just enjoy the internship and learn by doing. I feel that we can learn academically in any class by researching and writing papers, but we actually learn and process better when we have experiences and practice. While every course has value, internships that allow for self exploration and risks are the most meaningful. I can put my whole self into it. That is how I feel I have grown the most. Every class was leading up to this moment.

I have communicated with various stakeholders during student teaching for the purpose of advocating for student success. Some examples of this include communicating with students and parents via email to provide academic information and options of support, keeping notes on when students complete assignments verbally or by showing their work in person, and by explaining to the class how I give students several opportunities and options to submit their work to ensure they understand that they can be academically successful. I have attended IEP meetings, but instead of participating I observed and offered information that would help my Clinical Educator.

By communicating in all these ways I have practiced and enhanced many professional skills such as thinking critically, problem solving, and being supportive to the parents and students. I have also learned to take time to respond to difficult communications, such as irritated parents, struggling students, and students who need more resources to better handle unexpected difficulties, such as added anxiety and stress from the previous and current year of having Covid-19 Pandemic Restrictions. I have learned to be more resourceful in finding solutions, to collaborate with students and other professionals, and to find multiple ways to relay information so that all students will have equal access and opportunities to learn effectively. I have developed more empathy and understanding as I consider the feelings and thoughts expressed from parents and students. Such understandings resulted in the modification and planning of particular lessons and assignments to dig deeper into those thoughts and feelings, to help the students better express themselves through artmaking, analyzing art, and presenting art. For

students who are not very comfortable with presenting in front of their peers, I offered for them to evaluate their own works by writing or by recording themselves speaking in the comfort and privacy of their home for credit. I have also offered to sit and speak with underachieving or overwhelmed students about their artwork and assignments for credit, rather than limiting them to writing about their work and submitting it to the online assignment. A quick 5-minute conversation at the comfort of their desk could easily earn full credit if they answer a few questions and express their thoughts regarding the assignment's prompts. In these ways I have helped even the most *uncaring* and underachieving students to catch up and receive a more passing grade. Through these means and through conversations I have helped those students to understand that they can succeed, even if it's in a different way. With their success I have truly found my own.