https://xtl-education.online/?p=1461 (ePortfolio)

Assignment 1 – COVA & CSLE Reflections

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EDLD-5320 _ **CAPSTONE**

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I had two pointed questions surrounding my decision to enroll in the master's in education Digital Leading and Learning program. One, was this something that would be relevant to what I currently do or aspire to do as an educator? Two, would I be engrossed in course work and assignments that were immediately gratifying but non-purpose serving in my current role as my organization's training manager?

When I joined in my first online course in February 2020, my professor clearly articulated that this journey would be as real, innovative, and afforded me the choice of coming up with a "live" plan that should disruptively serve the best interests of my organization. Wow! Talk about imagining the experience of a paleontologist digging, finding, and examining fossil relic structures of what existed eons ago. Then creatively taking that knowledgebase, innovatively integrating it with the current advances and technology raves in reimagining a current day Jurassic Park in education! That kind of freedom was unexpected right out of the gate. But it was exciting and welcomed. Immediately I made justifications and had visions that personally engaged my mindset to not doing something different from my daily job task responsibilities. Rather it was a live project that will serve me well in what I do currently.

The last almost 16 months have been a blur. Very challenging, mentally exhausting at times with the volume of reading material (assigned and researched personally for further clarification or support), but emphatically, rewardingly fun in the outcomes I am currently witnessing. The relative afforded freedom to schedule my pacing around personal and professional responsibilities has been great.

I found common ground in the thought process intent and coining of the acronym CSLE. Transitioning from a content focused mandate of time delivered information, to a student-centered environment enabling responsibility to take ownership in developing as self-directed learners was concisely and precisely defined. This closely aligns with my existing personal

philosophy of learning (*Stewart, MY_Phyilosphy*). This was firmly developed while serving as

department chair and instructor in the engineering academy back in 2004 – 2009; I had great

success in taking my project industry blueprint of project execution and morphing it onto the

curricula, appropriated for grades 9th – 12th. The Carl Perkins federal grant mandated that I had

an effective functioning advisory committee of immediate industry personnel decision makers

that can and would make meaningful input in vetting what we taught, helping with employment

for the students, and availing students of multiple enablers for academic career choice

explorations and support. It also helped tremendously that we had an abundance of mentors from

industry that came alongside our kids during and after school academic activities. They

exemplified the *facilitator-coach-mentor* model coming alongside me as the instructor.

Six (6) months prior to enrolling in the DLL program, my team and I had been working

on porting our onsite face-to-face courses to a mixture of blended and stand-alone delivery for

our industry clientele. Quite a bit of planning went into deciding on which courses we would

start with first; how would we responsibly approximate the meaningful dynamics of the many in-

classroom content discussions between instructor-student, and student-student; enable students'

choice in self-pace planning; and afford ready access to instructor for addressing questions,

comments, or concerns. We had done our homework and made critical decisions on the way

forward. Executive management did buy-in and came alongside us with unfailing support. Still,

with no intent on proselyting, I recalled an entrenched Biblical verse

"Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety."

(Proverbs 11:14, King James Version)

My journey through the DLL program has exposed me to consistently taking the design

approach in starting with student outcomes being sought first and validated through multiple beta

testing that we were on the right path in affording students to choose their level of engagement,

taking ownership of their learning and expressing their voices in walking away with an authentic

learning experience from being in our CLSE. Certainly, there are lessons we are learning from

the constructive feedback received, some missteps here and there, but not deal breakers and

overall has left my entire team with a tremendous sense of willing ownership. "Look what we

did!"

Terms such as "Disruptive leader", "Innovation plan", "the 4DX Principles", "Fink's

Template", and the "Understanding by Design (UbD)" template were all new to me. This was the

counsel that my professors exposed me to and provided. All proved crucial in allowing my team

and I to not experience a "people fall" or wandering in the wilderness unnecessarily. That impact

has seen buy-in from key observers.

Taken together, COVA + CLSE, has provided a scaffolding prescription that has served

as a staple in pulling off my innovation plan within my organization. The artifacts of learning are

authentic, auditable, traceable, and reproduceable with room for improvements. Examples of

some live artifacts are

- Innovation/Implementation Plan (url: https://xtl-education.online/?page_id=1006)

- Developing of a Growth Mindset Plan *(Stewart, 2020, Developing a Growth…)*
    - Considers the Impact of My CSLE
    - The Coloring of My Philosophy
    - Aligning Outcomes, Assessments, Activities

- Aligning Outcomes, Assessments, & Activities – Fink's Template *(Stewart, 2020, Aligning Outcomes…)*
    - Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG)
    - Learning Goals (Modules)
    - Learning Activities
    - Assessment Activities

- Understanding by Design Template – UbD *(Stewart, 2020, Understanding by Design)*

- An actual scaled down version sample of the course completed and deployed in EDLD-5318: Instructional Design *(Stewart, 2020, Instructional Design)*
    - The Moodle LMS is used

- Students afforded choice of self-pacing, student-to-student forums, student-to-instructor forums, multiple varied style assessments, and asynchronous access.

References

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