

For as long as I can remember, I wanted to be a teacher. As a little girl, I would set up my chalkboard and desks in the basement and play for hours teaching my dolls and little brother when he would allow it. Life takes twists and turns and at twenty-eight, I found myself back in University realizing my goal of becoming a teacher. This year as I complete my Masters in Education in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of New England it will mark my tenth year as an educator. Every day I get to live my dream when I walk into my workplace. Through my time spent at UNE it has allowed me to become a far better educator by expanding my teaching repertoire and continue my own love of learning.

I was like an excited child at Christmas when each new class was about to begin. I would wait up until it was midnight and would check out the course as soon as it became available online. My reaction each time was almost identical, totally overwhelmed, looking at all the content to cover in eight short weeks but each course has had a direct and immediate impact on my teaching.

I take great pride in my ability to provide students with a supportive comfortable learning environment. The year begins with building relationships, learner profiles and teaching the students Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. Making not only myself but also them aware of how they best learn. My knowledge base of the five motivational theories has provided me with strategies to implement with different students to motivate and engage them in their learning. The class that had the biggest impact on my teaching was Differentiation Theory and Strategies. I was a teacher that always tried to teach to my student's ability but through this course, I applied the research in the field directly to my classroom. The ability to articulate the rationale behind differentiated instruction has provided clarity to families and the community I teach in. By applying, the Universal Design for Learning it has provided my students with a

learning environment suited to meet their needs. I utilize a backwards planning model and teach from the curriculum not to the curriculum. Formative and summative assessment is used in all planning. The evolution of my teaching practices will be a continual process as I pursue more skills and strategies to place in my teaching toolbox.

The practical application of what was I was learning changed and advanced my teaching with each course I took. I work in a wonderful school where I tell my students daily to strive to be the best they can be. One of the greatest assets of being a student myself was the modelling I was able to do for my students. I made them aware that I was “in school” and that I worked hard and put time, thought, and dedication into being the best I could be. We shared in my successes and they loved to hear about new things I was learning from my classmates. As a teacher, I feel it is my job to be a role model and mentor to my students. Through my time taking my masters I was able to practice what I preached to my students and have them see that learning does not end when you graduate high school. I will forever be a lifelong learner and strive to continue building my knowledge base. Knowledge is power and the more you know the more you are able to accomplish. I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience here at UNE and have even considered taking further classes to continue my learning journey. I have shared many moments of my journey with co-workers and am very excited that a fellow co-worker will be beginning her journey with UNE in September.

Assignment: evaluate the course and seek feedback on your draft portfolio.

1. Share your draft portfolio with at least two colleagues at your school or work place ask them if this work applies to your work setting and also to evaluate your portfolio against 21st Century "best practices". Share their responses.
2. Give us recommendations for future course modifications and explain your reasons for the recommendations. (3 points)