

Portfolio Reflection

Building this portfolio has been an amazing opportunity to make connections with who I am as an instructor, the goals of my program and the goals of my students. The concepts we reviewed and worked to create exemplars for were thought provoking and challenging. Week one's focus on the personal, professional, and cultural characteristics of our students helped me see them more as individuals and not just as a group. It reminded me not to make hasty judgements or assumptions about student situations. Week two's focus on assessments and backwards design helped clarify the goal of assessments. Week three's focus on problem-based learning reinforced the need for real-world applications of the knowledge we are seeking to impart to assist students in retaining the information.

Weeks four and six focused on creating culturally relevant lessons and activities, as well as supporting student well being underscored how a person's home life and other obligations can impact our students and provided tools for assisting them. Week five's focus on engaging students with active learning activities that allow them to collaborate stressed the importance that skill will be when they enter their professions. Week seven's information on universal design for learning pulled in the previous weeks' elements to illustrate how culture, personal situations, and adult learning styles can be addressed to promote better outcomes in courses. By pulling it all together this week, I am able to see how many of my own instincts about teaching and learning have been on track. I have also been able to see gaps and areas I can work on to improve.

As far as my strengths are concerned, I believe one of my strongest examples is the culturally relevant lesson I revised using the herbal supplements/medications poll to

launch a discussion of how they are used, their cultures of origin, and the student's experiences with them that in their opinion, supports or invalidates the beliefs surrounding them. By bringing their experiences and cultures into the lesson, the students are validated in their own identities and they learn to validate others' perspectives as well. This will not only help them learn the material, but also help them connect with classmates and future clients and coworkers.

Concerning weaknesses, the area I see a gap in skill or knowledge relates to how I can re-work some assessments and class activities into problem based learning opportunities. I used a case study example for my assignment, however, this would not be effective to do every week. I will be looking into some other ways to incorporate the content the students need to learn into activities they can do in class that will engage them and challenge them.