Master of Science in Instructional Technology and Distance Education Program Reflection

In four intense semesters I have been able to develop professionally and learn extensively about what the field of Instructional Technology & Distance Education encompasses. This program has given me insight and knowledge of the multiple opportunities to continue to grow professionally within the Instructional Technology & Distance Education arena. In this paper, I will synthesize a final reflection of what I have learned from this program and I explain personal changes that have occurred as a direct consequence of learning outcomes from the courses taken and will include examples.

Designing Conditions for Learning

The ability to design efficient and proper learning conditions is imperative to successful transfer learning. In my current position as a Communications Technician, I have the opportunity to facilitate some training and even assist in the creation of some online modules. Prior to enrolling into the ITDE program, my knowledge on instructional technology and instructional design was limited to being self-taught. Through courses like Principles of Distance Education and Principles of Instructional Technology, I learned the fundamentals of instructional systems design and strategies. Further, I learned how to apply the instructional design ADDIE model, as a guideline when creating and facilitating trainings. Through research and readings in EDD 8008 and EDD 7005 courses, I learned about message design, instructional strategies and learner characteristics that helped me implement new concepts into my trainings and creation of online learning materials. Understanding some of the theories taught in these courses allowed me to gain perspective on how to truly engage learners and prepare not only the setting, but each component of a course in order to create the best learning condition.

Developing Instructional Materials & Experiences

My current role in the workplace exposes me to only one part of the instructional design process which incorporates media into modules that need to be enhanced. Some of the courses in this program such as EDD 7007, EDD7005, and EDD8123 included assignments that incorporated using various media like audio, video, and print. The lessons in these courses expanded to incorporate theories and research that helped me appreciate and validate the work that I do. The Instructional Design course showed me how much thought and planning it takes to create an effective and high quality instructional content. Having to learn each step in creating instructional material has helped me create my first instructional media guide for my department, has taught me how to apply the principles of instruction, and how to integrate them with technology.

Using Best Practices, Processes, and Resources

Almost every course in this program incorporates the application of best practices, processes, and resources when it comes to the use of media, implementing processes, and policy making. In the EDD8012 course, there were assignments that involved implementing policies and processes. Through the series of "Critical Incidents", I was able to learn about the importance of creating policies in order to ensure the department has a smooth process among all employees. After conducting research on associations and conferences for EDD 8008, I became aware of interesting resources available in the ITDE arena and that I need to continue to utilize these resources when working on projects or even to network for potential career opportunities.

Planning, Organizing, Coordinating, and Supervising Instructional Technology

One of the most important lessons this program has taught me is that planning and having organizational skills is effective and empowering for any scenario. In the CUR 526, EDD8001,

and EDD9100 courses time management, organization, and planning were essential in being able to successfully complete the course.

Evaluating the Adequacy of Instruction and Learning

Lastly, but most definitely not least, are the lessons learned in evaluating the adequacy of instruction and learning. In some of the courses like CUR 526, EDD 7007, & EDD 8001 I was able to learn how to create evaluations and implement some of them into lessons I created. The evaluation process is critical in that it affords us the opportunity to create the most effective learning materials through feedback from our peers and our learners. These lessons also help validate and accredit many organizations and departments through the data provided in the evaluations.

In the end, after completing everything required for this program, I have a great sense of accomplishment, pride, and confidence in my competency and ability to achieve any goal I set to achieve.