Initial Reflective Essay

I have been waiting years to go back and get my masters. I waited for two main reasons. I wanted to build up my experience in the classroom, as well as pinpoint where I wanted to go in the future. After working with our technology department and other administrators, I have decided to begin heading towards a career in educational technology. I have taken part in many different areas of technology at my school. I’ve offered professional development, led E-Learning discussions, hired technology personnel, helped make decisions on district projects regarding technology and repairing software issues daily for Chromebooks. These areas are exciting and I have decided I want to be a part of this type of work full-time, instead of balancing these duties with my regular third grade classroom. My career goal for this program is to continue to grow in technology and concentrate on the “why”. I want to make sure that when I move out of the classroom that I will be ready in my future new technology role. I know that Purdue has also made this commitment to me through their rigorous curriculum. I am ready for this exciting new challenge.

Through this program I know that they will cover a variety of topics from E-learning to best practices in learning design. I’m excited for the “why” factor. In my experience, teachers will say something like, “we are moving that way, so we need to use computers!”. However, it is so much more than that. There are so many opportunities through educational technology that we need to expose to our students. I know this program will help me share that “why” with teachers in my building and district. Personally, I also want to keep pushing myself. I believe in lifelong learning and I want to be an example to myself, my colleagues and my students, showing them that it is important to keep learning and growing. My career and this program will be challenging to balance, but it can be done and I want to prove it to myself. I am excited about my time here at Purdue, because I know it will be opening many opportunities for me.  
  
Final Reflective Essay

Now that this part of boot camp is over, I feel more confident moving forward. For me, it was a great jumpstart back into student mode. Although it was more challenging than I anticipated, the plagiarism activity in module two was a great reminder of how to cite. Also, the module with all the OWL resources were great! I felt confident when finding articles for my annotated bibliography. That assignment also thrusted me back into “student mode” quickly! I didn’t realize how much I had forgotten until I began working on the assignment. These modules helped answer my questions by sharing strategies on how to use resources offered at Purdue. As I have learned by going back to school, you can’t always do it on your own, and Purdue is ready to assist. I used the OWL lab quite a bit for the first set of classes. I have a feeling it will remain a great resource for me throughout the rest of my time here.

My goals here at Purdue will remain the same as my initial posting.  I want to do my best and keep looking forward to my future career in technology. I am proud that I have already started meshing my graduate work with my career. I’ve used real scenarios for my case studies, and have shared articles with my staff that I’ve found or have been shared with me by fellow Purdue students. That overlap is exciting. It also helps keep me accountable on both ends. I need to stay alert for my students and look for situations that we may have discussed in class to get a glimpse of that specific occurrence in the real world. However, I also need to stay engaged with my studies here at Purdue, and share what I can with my colleagues so that they may get something meaningful from this experience as well! Some strategies that I need to keep in mind is that some days, I cannot keep my studies to the time I allotted them. If I plan 5 hours for a certain day, that’s great, but sometimes it’s going to be 7 hours and I need to accept it! I’m scrapping hours all together and focusing on goals. I set smart, reasonable goals for myself every night and I work until I meet them. This change has been very helpful! The main concern I have for myself is keeping up with postings. I tend to be someone who likes to watch and take-in. However, I am inspired by my cohorts and their honesty. They’ve been amazing to work with and it’s only the beginning! I have learned that posting quality replies are more important than quantity. However, if I see something I don’t understand or want to applaud, a quick reply is also beneficial! Learning that I don’t have to reply to everything, has been comforting! I’m very excited to keep moving forward!