

Ashley Mott

FTLC 1000

SLCC AFA – Fall 2012

FTLC 1000 Final Reflection

As a member of the FTLC 1000 course, I learned valuable tools I can use and apply in my daily lessons, was reminded of the fundamental values of my teaching philosophy, and expanded my knowledge of diverse approaches to teaching and learning that my cohort members implement. I appreciated the flexibility of the program, especially given my schedule this semester; it was nice completing the modules when I had time. The guidelines for completion were helpful, but I was glad they were not mandatory for successful completion of the course.

The most challenging part of this course, for me, was finding and making time to read all the posts from all of my colleagues, some of which were very interesting and insightful. I work two jobs, live in a different county, and was choreographing five dances (and making rehearsal times for all of them this semester). So, I got behind on my modules and postings for a few weeks, but I was eventually able to catch up. Just making time to spend as long as I would have liked was tricky for me, and, as a result, I found myself reading the modules thoroughly, but somewhat skimming the posts to look for the ones that were interesting to me. It reminded me a bit of scanning through the newspaper to find sections of interest, but not thoroughly reading every word.

The most rewarding part of the class was the new ideas I got from the module lessons and also from my cohort members. It was good to be reminded of some teaching strategies I had forgotten or don't use regularly, to hear how others implement different ideas in their classrooms, and to feel inspired to refresh and reinvent some of my own lessons and approaches. Specifically, I think I have gained a broader understanding of the scope of service learning and ways to try to implement some components of it into my class, even if the course doesn't have a 'service learning' designation, per se. I

also have previously strayed away from much inter-disciplinary collaboration, and am now more willing to try it in small steps. I realized to use active learning and collaboration, one doesn't suddenly have to be Super Teacher and plan trips to Africa to change people's lives on no budget, but, instead, one can just try simple things each week (or even each semester) to gradually offer students more and more 'real world' applications and experiences.

I wish that I could have actually known who my cohort members are in a more personal way, even if it would have just been introductions at the orientation. It was a little awkward for me, being in the humanities and fine arts (which rely so heavily on inter-personal connections) to be in a course with people who were, to me, little more than text on a screen and sometimes an accompanying photo. I really appreciated, however, all the new materials I got from the course, such as checklists, surveys, lesson plan ideas and so forth. As opposed to just theory and debate, the course offered user-friendly tools that I could immediately access or adapt for use in my classroom. Overall, this course was a positive experience for me and helped me to renew my passion for education, which has already improved the classroom experience for my students.