



EDUC545 Self-Assessment Project Guidelines

For your SA project you will evaluate yourself on a specific learning situation in which you are the “teacher” (facilitator/mentor/group leader) and evaluate yourself *within that particular context* according to the strategies for motivation as outlined in your text. I want it to be very **personal** and very **applied**. This is a multi-layer project and should be approached as described below. This project should be a minimum of 12 pages in **APA format**, and is due on the last day of class, at the end of Week 14.

Part 1: *Briefly introduce the learning situation in which you will evaluate yourself as an instructor.*

Is it a particular training class you deliver? Is it a class you teach? Is it a workshop for fellow educators? If so, who are your learners, what are their characteristics? How many times have you taught this class? What are the learning objectives?...etc.

Part 2: *Answer the following questions as they pertain to the particular learning situation you are evaluating. Be sure to highlight important areas covered by Wlodkowski in the text when addressing these questions.*

- ✓ What is my perception of my role as instructor?
- ✓ What are my assumptions about the motivation of the adults I teach?
- ✓ What are my perceptions of my instructional situation?

Part 3: *Complete the “Instructional Clarity Checklist” on page 85 of your text (use as a self-informing survey) and answer the questions provided in the “Characteristics and Skills for Motivational Instruction” sheet.*

Part 4: *Evaluate yourself according to all of the motivational strategies offered in your text.*

Go through each and every one and indicate whether this is something you do well, need to improve, need to incorporate, how you will incorporate it, etc. etc. Use the excel spreadsheet provided and follow the example. But MAKE IT YOURS!!!!!!

Part 5: *Provide a detailed analysis of what you’ve learned about yourself as a teacher-leader from this self-assessment. This is the meat of the paper!!!* This section alone should be a minimum of 5 pages, longer if you do an adequate job of analysis. *Integrate, evaluate, and synthesize* all of the information succinctly, draw some specific conclusions about yourself as a motivating (or de-motivating – let’s hope not!) instructor, and elaborate upon how this will affect your practice of adult education within the context of being a teacher-leader in your district/building.

EXAMPLE PAPER: A **partial** example paper follows (Part 5 is not included). This paper is based on a college course I taught for several years. I wrote this when I took a class using the Wlodkowski book years ago. It may be a bit outdated (SC was about to launch it’s very first online class EVER and many of the tools we now have for teaching online classes didn’t even exist then!), but I think it will help give you a big picture “overview” without providing too much of a cookie-cutter example. I hope you find it useful. Don’t feel the need to follow it exactly. Be creative and make it your own. In fact, this is more of an outline and example of various parts more than an example of a finished product.

Introduction

In January of 2001, I began delivering instruction in an online modality for a college senior level Research Project class. Because online instruction was new to the institution and program at Southwestern College, Professional Studies, we (administration and faculty) decided to hold a first session of all online classes in person.

This served many purposes. First, it allowed instructors and learners to meet face-to-face. Second, it was a way to ease learners into a new delivery method by demonstrating how the software (Blackboard) could be accessed and utilized. Particularly for my Research Project class, I felt it was of great importance to meet so I could get to know learners one-on-one, find out where their interests/expertise lay, and generally get a feel for their concerns and comfort level with taking an online course. Additionally it allowed us to have a dialogue about choosing topics for a large project and begin some online research together.

Recently, because the institution wants to be able to carry this instruction outside of Wichita, administration decided to eliminate the first session and put the entire course online. I was not at all happy with this and did not know how in the world I could reduce everything I say and do in the introductory session to a written format. I was particularly concerned about how I could ease learners' fears and make them comfortable with the notion that I would help them through the sometimes-intimidating project that lay ahead.

I knew there had to be some way to speak to the learners directly, some way to let them see my face and hear my voice rather than just read what I wrote on paper or on screen. I felt that this was very important since learners are required to take this particular class in this format; they had no choice. I don't know a lot about all the new technologies out there, but I just knew there had to be a way!

I asked for technical support from fellow computer instructors, the Center for Academic Technology, and other people I knew to be knowledgeable about such things, and the consensus was

the same: “some technologies like streaming video exist, but either they’re way too expensive to develop or your learners likely don’t have the technical hardware and software to support them”.

I began to get very frustrated. I had one more session scheduled that was to be delivered in person and finally decided to videotape it and allow future learners access to the videotape. I was going to have my husband come with our home camera and felt we would just do the best we could with what we had. I had severe reservations and knew this wasn’t really a long-term solution, however.

About this time I had a learner call me to tell me he would not be able to be there for the first class. I told him not to worry because I would have the videotape and handouts available for him. It just so happened that he and two other graduates from the program had just started a company where they make CD’s that have the capability of showcasing PowerPoint Presentations, streaming video, uploading handouts and segmenting information. The great part was that all learners needed in order to access this was a CD Rom drive. All of the other components, software, etc. users would need to run the programs were included in the CD. This eliminated the objection from before that users would not have what they needed. I was hooked. Immediately he set an appointment for his cameraman to come to my class and professionally tape the lecture, small group sessions, Blackboard demonstration and online research tutorial.

I am now in the process of editing the video and putting the final touches on the finished product. The final CD is designed to be for all future students enrolled in Research Project to use, along with things posted on Blackboard, throughout the online class. They will be able to revisit any segment at any time by simply loading the CD on their computer.

I have developed and adapted some of the checklists/suggestions from the text and have filled these out as assessment for the final product for my online class. The objective was to critically apply Wlodkowski’s suggestions and make adjustments where needed.

First, I completed the Instructor Self-Assessment regarding motivation. I also filled out an Instructional Clarity Checklist as a self-informing survey, as Wlodkowski suggests. I then assess my characteristics as a motivating instructor, adapting the material from the first three chapters of the text.

I then briefly explore whether or not I need and/or meet the suggested standards for Wlodkowski's Motivational Strategies.

Instructor Self-Assessment Regarding Motivation

What is my perception of my role as instructor?

Actually, this is evolving and changing. I used to see myself as provider of knowledge. I thought I needed to know it all, be able to answer any questions, and be the hub of all communication and questions. I felt I was a fraud if I did not meet these expectations. The more experience I get, the more I realize what a rich resource the learners in my class are. I have them rely on each other, particularly in the online course, as they direct all questions to the Discussion Board first. If they get no reply from other learners I will step in and provide direction, or round out other feedback. My workload has decreased and their satisfaction has increased. It is empowering to learners to know they have some answers and can provide help.

Wlodkowski speaks as if being a guide/facilitator is mutually exclusive with being a director/lecturer. I must disagree. I think good instructors are all of those things at different times, depending on the subject and the learner. It is my responsibility to understand that most learners in my online class 1) have not ever before had to do a large individual project like I ask them to; 2) likely do not have great familiarity with most of the concepts that are presented; 3) have almost no experience with online database research; and 4) have not had an online class before. Given this situation I think I should be a blend –a facilitator (guiding and showing them successful ways to research and put together their projects) AFTER I have directed and lectured about research methods and the expectations of the course.

In adult education “lecture” has a terrible connotation and is considered almost evil. Some of the best feedback I get from learners is from the lectures I deliver. They can be the most appropriate way to motivate if certain conditions are met. First, I am a good public speaker, which overcomes a lot of the negatives with lecturing. Second, I provide visual aids with which learners can interact during the lectures. And third, I make appropriate and effective use of time through lecturing. It can be a succinct way to present information.

What are my assumptions about the motivation of the adults I teach?

My experience is that most of the learners in my classes are highly motivated in one way or another when they come in. Some are motivated because it is their last class, some are motivated because they need to complete a project for work and want to integrate this with the project requirements. Some are motivated because they generally love to learn and are excited to be presented with a new challenge. Others are motivated to get that “piece of paper” and they know they have to get through the class in order to do so.

My challenge is to create an environment in which they become motivated to have successful, meaningful, relevant experiences. I think it is my responsibility to do that through demonstrating enthusiasm and respect, and also not wasting the learners’ time. I need to show them that they will benefit from completing the project. When I succeed in doing that, I have learners who are motivated for all the right reasons.

What are my perceptions of my instructional situation?

I have very high priorities for my instruction. I have set out to change the world through education, after all! I truly want all learners in my classes to develop better thinking skills and walk away thinking "WOW" I learned a lot. I don't even care so much *what* they learn about. It could be the world, themselves, their peers, their work environment, Egypt , whatever, as long as they come away *thinking* more.

The Wlodkowski book has helped in many ways. Mostly it has provided a framework in which I can critically assess my teaching and myself. I have noted areas for improvement in my instructional plan. I definitely need to be more sensitive culturally. I thought I was before but now realize I have some work to do in that area. Also, I need to rely on students a bit more and take some of the pressure off myself. I don't need to know it all; I just need to show them how they can know it.

I think my learners would answer the following sentence this way:

My instructor helps me feel motivated because she...

...cares about me and my learning.

...really wants me to succeed.

...works really hard and inspires me to do the same.

...pushes me to think outside the box.

Exhibit 2.1. Instructional Clarity Checklist.

This is a checklist for learners to complete, but it can also be adapted to become a self-informing survey. In its present form, it can be given to learners for their feedback on your instruction. This will tell you from their point of view what you do well and what you may need to do to improve the clarity of your instruction.

(After each statement, place a check mark under the category that most accurately applies to it.)

As our instructor you:	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Never	Doesn't Apply
<input type="radio"/> 1. Explain things simply.	—	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	—	—	—
<input type="radio"/> 2. Give explanations we understand.	—	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	—	—	—
<input type="radio"/> 3. Teach at a pace that is not too fast and not too slow.	—	—	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	—	—
<input type="radio"/> 4. Stay with the topic until we understand.	—	—	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	—	—
<input checked="" type="radio"/> 5. Try to find out when we don't understand and then repeat things.	—	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	—	—	—
<input type="radio"/> 6. Show graphics, diagrams, and examples to help us understand.	—	—	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	—	—
<input type="radio"/> 7. Describe the work to be done and how to do it.	—	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	—	—	—
<input checked="" type="radio"/> 8. Ask if we know what to do and how to do it.	—	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	—	—	—
<input checked="" type="radio"/> 9. Repeat things when we don't understand.	—	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	—	—	—
<input type="radio"/> 10. Explain something and then use an example to illustrate it.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	—	—	—	—
<input checked="" type="radio"/> 11. Explain something and then stop so we can ask questions.	—	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	—	—	—
<input type="radio"/> 12. Prepare us for what we will be doing next.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	—	—	—	—

Characteristics and Skills for Motivational Instruction

Offering Expertise:

1. I provide concrete examples of the knowledge and skills I can offer? **Y** N

I discuss not only my experience with research, but also my experience with teaching in general and specifically that I've taught the class many times, with very successful students and positive feedback.

2. I know my subject well. **Y** N

I constantly read updated texts, look for new instructional materials and regularly adapt better teaching techniques

3. My instruction flows. **Y** N

The Power Point Presentation on the video flows nicely. I am "in the groove" when presenting the material and it shows on the video. I appear professional and knowledgeable.

Demonstrating Empathy:

4. I have a realistic understanding of learners' goals, perspectives and expectations for what is being learned. Y **N**

This is an area of weakness for me. I regularly forget (but constantly try to remind myself) that not everyone likes to research and most people HATE to write. I do not always have time to assess completely the level of ability/interest coming in. The more I learn and more experience I get, the more I try to move away from objective standards to more subjective ones because the expectations and perceptions do vary so much.

5. I have adapted my level of instruction to the learners' levels of experience and skill development. **Y** N

I have adapted my level of instruction in terms of the instructional materials I provide and the way I present information. As mentioned, I still need to work on adapting my expectations however.

6. I consider the learners' perspectives and feelings. **Y** N

I definitely try to get to know the learners throughout the course. I am beginning to be more sensitive to the frustrations they experience and the lack of self-confidence they sometimes display. I try to be sensitive to it and take extra time to help develop their self-esteem.

I also try to understand the bias that shows through in some of their writing when they are researching topics about which they are passionate. While I do require them to display critical thinking skills and explore opposing viewpoints I am careful to respect their feelings.

Showing Enthusiasm

7. I demonstrate that I value what I teach through appropriate degrees of emotion and expression. **Y** N

Actually the learners always laugh at me when I'm helping them research. I just LOVE to get on the computer and start hunting. I get really excited when we "hit the jackpot!" I also show enthusiasm about teaching in general. I believe my learners know they are important to me and that I value them and what they're trying to accomplish.

CONDITION	PURPOSE	STRATEGY #	Learning Activity or Instructor Behavior
		27	I need to work on this! I use visual and auditory materials only.
		29	The entire project is based on their prior experience (what they know) as they pick relevant topics, and then they determine what they WANT to know, and the final format assesses to a large extent what they have learned.
Meaning	Maintain learners' attention Invite/ evoke interest	30-34	AREAS OF WEAKNESS. I tend to talk a lot. PPP is too long at 42 minutes. I'm afraid I lose them.
		36	Again, they choose their own topic, and also the examples I give tend to be relevant to most learners' work world (many in aerospace industry).
		37	I provide examples of the promotions, cost savings, and other benefits that have occurred for past learners and encourage them that they can use the project for similar gain.
		38	I can laugh at myself (and do, during the PPP). Self-deprecating style.
		40	PPP is rife with examples to illustrate points (too many?)
	Develop engagement and challenge	42	I have learners participate somewhat in answering questions during PPP; elicit responses. This area could be better. I should be engaging them in critical thought more up front because I expect this to be demonstrated in the final product.
		44-45	Provide example and intriguing results of past survey for them to think about and analyze to illustrate how important it is to ANALYZE data.
		46-47	I need to work on this!
Competence	Engender competence with assessment	48	This is one of the areas in which I excel. I provide ample feedback with suggestions, examples, etc. constantly. Sometimes the learners can be a bit overwhelmed with the level of feedback. I am constantly in touch with learners through e-mail phone and visit.
		49	I'm not aware of cultural biases
		51-54	These are largely missing so far in this course.
	Engender competence with communication	55	I'm too good at this. I am a firm believer that while encouragement is great I also have a responsibility to point out what learners may be doing wrong and leading them to a successful solution.
		56/60	I ALWAYS thank learners for their efforts, at the very least, and try to take more time to develop relationships and really point out the successes, even small ones, they make.
		57	Any time a learner thanks me for "getting me through" I tell him/her I didn't do it - you did!