

Feedback Correspondence

Aloha e Dr. Mike,

Let me just preface my individual feedback by saying that this group was absolutely amazing! Every single student within this group (including my part-timer Wendy Laros) went above and beyond my personal expectations, in terms of the quality level of their submitted assignments and discussion posts. At times, it felt like I was observing a hive mind in the way they interacted and collaborated with one another. There was a high degree of respect and appreciation for the insights, experiences, and attitudes that everyone brought to the table. There is not one incident of contention that I can speak of.

As a whole, the members of this group were timely in submitting their assignments and weekly discussion posts. While there were a few individuals who posted shortly after midnight, they nonetheless worked their tails off to get their assignment in before the 5 am deadline. I was unable to find anyone in this group who didn't understand the goals and expectations for each assignment or the context in which the discussion threads were focused. Everyone was very much on the same page in this respect. The discussion responses from this group were consistently supportive, introspectively reflective, and surprisingly thoughtful.

For someone like myself, who has been a part of the online scene for more years than I'd care to count, I have never witnessed this level of interactive outreach, courtesy, and kindness before. Even during the TA roundtable and collaborative team meetings, the individuals in this group exchanged insights and ideas in a way that would make many corporate professionals envious. There's no doubt in my mind that each member of this group possesses the qualities and abilities of a true educational professional. They didn't just strive to keep pace with one another, but in the proud tradition of the educational community, helped (through team unification) raise the academic bar for a higher degree of overall success.

- Vera Blalock was the first to hit the discussion block. She was like the self-appointed cheerleader of the group who articulated her thoughts clearly and with authoritative fervor. Vera did not mince words when she posted. Her candor and inquisitive nature helped her approach the discussion forum with a level of decorum that exudes professionalism (and on occasion: humor). She was always on point, asking questions about an assignment when she felt clarification was needed. I found Vera to be a very dedicated student with much to offer the group.

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- Rachel Kaneshiro had me at "Understanding IDDE". I greatly appreciate her attention to details with her consistent use of statistical data and useful reference links in her posts. In addition to her thorough approach to the course content, Rachel also possesses a very collaborative spirit that is very apparent in the way she connects with other members of the group. Her use of personal anecdotes, to help qualify her understanding and personal reflection of a peer's post, is admirable.
- Tim Freitas' posts were very gratifying to read. I found his discussion threads to be both concise in delivery and insightful in content. His feedback to peers were always positive and supportive, conveying a true sense of interest with his open line of candid and thought provoking questions. During the synchronous TA roundtable, Tim was a polite gentleman, conveying a sense of sincerity and appreciation for his group during his presentation. He also provided useful and encouraging feedback to fellow students.
- Anne Rosa struck me as a slightly modest yet keenly introspective student. What I enjoyed most about Anne was the simplicity in her posts. Her writing style is very clean making for better conducive synthesis of what it is she's conveying. Even when her posts incorporated the need for statistics, her approach was never convoluted or over-stated. Her frequent use of the term "I wonder" made for a very perceptive and engaging read. In my opinion, Anne was the silent luminary in the group.
- Erin Williams was the analytical techie of the group. Her posts always consisted of a nice balance of factual information and personal insights. As a kindred spirit, I could tell by her discussions that she relishes the progressive use of technology within an educational setting. Her experience and positive conveyance of technology helped to clarify and affirm its need and usefulness within distance education courses. Erin has a wonderful way of interweaving the content of this course with personal anecdotes that added body to the discussions.
- Ryoko Sekiguchi was a much needed asset to the group. As an employee (and current student) of the University of Hawaii System, Ryoko brought a level of credence to the discussions, which added a breadth of appreciation and empathetic understanding, which were consistently reflected in her posts. She never appeared hesitant when posing inquiries that would question the didactic approach and implemented strategies within her own locus of control (UH System). Ryoko's interaction with her peers was

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always cordial and inviting, making for a high degree of volleyed interaction with her peers.

- Jenny Yamamoto was a breath of fresh air. Her positive and lighthearted contributions made for very approachable and enjoyable reads. Her effective use of terms like "amazing", "enjoyed", "fascinating", "inspiring", and "drawn to" effectively illustrates her professionalism as a tenured high school educator. Like her fellow peers, Jenny employs the necessary demeanor required to effectively work within collaborative group sessions. Her posts were consistently positive with an objective perspective that added weight and acceptance to her well-founded and substantive assertions.
- Lorraine Brooks was a little late to the party but her active and effective participation more than made up for it. Based on what I've seen from her interactions with the previous group, Lorraine's insightful input, with regard to IDDE and how it applies to her locus of control (Master Gardening), helped to bring focus to the need for hybrid courses. She was very thorough in pointing out important aspects of the IDDE concept (and process) that should be considered with a keen degree of interest. Her use of the terms "frustrated", "weaknesses", and "challenges" emoted a sense of personal vulnerability that made me admire her concerns, passions, and convictions for pedagogy even more.

All-in-all, this collection of individuals showed me that there definitely can be effective and successful collaborative learning among peers who are willing to openly share their insights and experiences with an ample dose of respect and appreciation for each other's contributions. The attitudes, enthusiasm, and commitment from each and every one of these individuals went well beyond expectation. The level of support, reflection, and thoughtful discussion made for an engaging and robust forum that exemplifies the level of graduate study. It was an extreme honor working among dedicated and disciplined individuals whose positive attitudes and staunch commitment to the course helped to further my understanding of instructional design while making for a very rewarding educational experience.

Aloha Kaua,

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