



Colorado State University
Learning Design & Training

COURSE REFLECTIONS

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EDAE-521

INTRODUCTION TO ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Beginning graduate school came with several challenges, from balancing multiple assignments to navigating new platforms like Canvas, the AET Advising Portal, and CSU's library tools. Staying organized quickly became essential for managing due dates and resources across courses.

Another major takeaway was the importance of mastering APA formatting and understanding plagiarism. While I had some prior exposure, this course deepened my understanding of academic integrity and the need for precision in citations and paraphrasing.

These lessons gave me a stronger foundation for academic writing and set clear expectations for how to succeed in graduate-level coursework.



APPLICATION OF LEARNING

To meet these challenges, I created organizational systems to track assignments and resources. Collaborative activities such as the barn-building discussion showed me how structured online engagement can bring diverse perspectives together effectively. Through consistent application of APA style in my written work, I strengthened both my academic voice and my confidence in producing ethical scholarship. These experiences directly supported my growth as both a graduate learner and a future facilitator of online learning.

REFLECTION & IMPACT

By the end of EDAE-521, I felt more confident and prepared to succeed in graduate school. Building my portfolio homepage and archiving resources gave me a foundation I can expand on throughout the program. Choosing Plan B (Portfolio track) allowed me to align my academic work with professional goals, ensuring that my coursework translates into practical growth. Ultimately, this course sharpened my academic skills, clarified my direction, and reinforced my commitment to academic integrity and lifelong learning.



EDAE-520

ADULT EDUCATION

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Studying John Dewey's *Experience and Education* reshaped the way I think about teaching and learning. Dewey's emphasis on continuity of experience and interaction reinforced the idea that learning should be connected to the learner's interests, abilities, and life contexts rather than relying solely on rote memorization.

I realized that when concepts are tied to students' real-world experiences, such as relating programming logic to everyday decision-making, engagement and curiosity grow exponentially.

Dewey's framework also highlighted the importance of balancing learner autonomy with structure, a tension I often experienced in the classroom but now see as an essential aspect of designing meaningful learning environments.



APPLICATION OF LEARNING

Throughout my career as a STEM educator, I applied many of these principles by creating connections between abstract ideas and practical examples, like encouraging students to design scenarios for robots that required problem-solving and critical thinking. This course pushed me to think more intentionally about how to foster experiences that go beyond surface-level relevance to cultivate deeper initiative and growth. In these settings, learning is iterative, adaptive, and responsive to changing technologies and workplace demands, aligning closely with my desire to create professional development experiences that are both innovative and learner-centered.

REFLECTION & IMPACT

Engaging with Dewey's philosophy re-ignited my passion for student-centered education while also clarifying my future direction in adult learning and development. I refined my educational values and developed a stronger foundation for continual self-improvement. Ultimately, EDAE-520 deepened my belief that learning experiences should be transformative, meaningful, and designed with the learner at the center.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

This course gave me the opportunity to articulate and refine my personal teaching philosophy. I identified three core pillars that guide my practice: respect for all learners, real-world relevance, and participatory learning.

I recognized that students are more engaged and successful when they feel valued as individuals, see connections between content and their own lives, and are active participants in building knowledge.

EDAE-620 emphasized that teaching is not about delivering information but about fostering critical thinking, inclusivity, and inquiry-driven dialogue.



APPLICATION OF LEARNING

Through writing and reflecting on my teaching philosophy, I solidified strategies that align with these values. I intentionally create classroom environments where trust, safety, and respect allow students to take risks and bring their authentic selves into discussions. I apply real-world relevance by tying abstract ideas to concrete applications and projects that connect to students' goals. I also integrate collaborative problem-solving and open-ended inquiry, which help learners develop both higher-order thinking and communication skills. These practices reflect my belief that learning is most meaningful when it is co-created and connected to lived experience.

REFLECTION & IMPACT

Completing this course helped me recognize that my philosophy is not static but evolving. As I continue transitioning from K-12 into adult learning and training, I see how these core principles can adapt across contexts while remaining grounded in respect, relevance, and participation. This reflection process itself reinforced the importance of self-examination and intentionality in teaching, ensuring that my practice remains aligned with my values and responsive to learners' needs.



EDAE-624

ADULT TEACHING & LEARNING I

KEY TAKEAWAYS

EDAE-624 was a transformative experience that deepened my understanding of adult teaching and learning. A central theme was the power of critical reflection, both for myself as an educator and for learners navigating their own growth.

Exploring theories such as transformative learning and experiential learning reinforced the value of questioning assumptions and designing experiences that foster meaningful development.

The course also challenged me to consider diverse perspectives, pushing me to confront my own cultural lenses and to better appreciate the varied experiences that shape adult learners.

This emphasis on inclusivity and reflection has expanded my vision of what it means to create equitable and engaging learning environments.



APPLICATION OF LEARNING

The theory-to-practice project, where I analyzed the App Creators program using the Twin-Cycle Experiential Learning Model, gave me practical experience applying theory to real-world contexts. Peer feedback and class discussions enriched my analysis, and I now feel more confident using adult learning frameworks to evaluate and improve program design.

REFLECTION & IMPACT

This course strengthened my commitment to fostering inclusive, reflective, and transformative learning environments. The reflective journal, in particular, showed me the value of documenting growth and connecting theory to practice. Moving forward, I will carry these insights into my teaching and training, ensuring that my practice remains intentional and learner-centered.



EDRM-600

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH METHODS

KEY TAKEAWAYS

This course strengthened my understanding of research design and methods, especially the value of mixed-methods approaches. By conducting my study on the effects of pair programming on middle school students' computational thinking and engagement, I learned how to integrate quantitative and qualitative data to create a fuller picture of the research problem.

Designing surveys, interviews, and assessments deepened my awareness of validity, reliability, and ethical considerations. Most importantly, I came to appreciate how research can be both rigorous and practical, addressing real educational challenges while contributing to broader conversations about equity in computer science education



APPLICATION OF LEARNING

I applied course concepts directly in my project by designing a quasi-experimental study with pre- and post-tests, paired with focus groups and interviews. Using both statistical analysis and thematic coding gave me confidence in drawing meaningful conclusions. These skills will support future program evaluations, whether in academic research or professional practice.

REFLECTION & IMPACT

Completing this study gave me a stronger foundation in research literacy and greater confidence in evaluating evidence-based practices. It also showed me how I can contribute to advancing inclusive, equitable education through applied research. This experience will continue to shape how I design, assess, and improve learning programs in my future career.



EDOD-506

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

KEY TAKEAWAYS

This course deepened my understanding of Human Resource Development as a systematic, multi-level practice aimed at enhancing both learning and performance. Defining HRD helped me see it not simply as training, but as a strategic function aligned with organizational effectiveness and competitive advantage.

I also recognized the importance of systems thinking, where changes in one part of an organization can have ripple effects throughout.

The exploration of problems of practice, such as high turnover in a customer service department, underscored how inadequate onboarding, lack of career progression, and weak skill development can become pressing HRD challenges.



APPLICATION OF LEARNING

By analyzing my selected problem of practice through different lenses, I applied key HRD tools and frameworks. Using the ADDIE model, I connected individual-level turnover issues to systemic training processes. Reviewing empirical research on job embeddedness provided evidence-based strategies for increasing organizational commitment. These exercises helped me see how theory, research, and structured models can directly inform practical interventions in real organizations.

REFLECTION & IMPACT

This course shifted how I view organizational change: it is less about new processes and more about influencing culture, building empowerment, and aligning with strategy. I now feel more confident in diagnosing workplace challenges, framing them as HRD problems, and applying structured approaches to address them. The work I did here laid the foundation for seeing myself not just as a trainer, but as a strategic partner in organizational development and long-term effectiveness.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

This course allowed me to apply instructional design principles in a real-world context by creating a professional development program for middle school STEM teachers. I learned how to align design decisions with actual needs uncovered through analysis, such as the demand for clear PBL frameworks, concrete examples, and authentic assessment strategies.

Using the ADDIE model and backward design gave me a structured process to guide the project, while iterative feedback emphasized the importance of making connections between traditional lesson planning and PBL units.



APPLICATION OF LEARNING

I applied course concepts by building a five-module asynchronous training hosted on Google Classroom. Each module focused on a practical stage of PBL, from foundations to technology integration, and incorporated opportunities for collaboration, micro-teaching, and authentic assessment. Design choices such as platform selection, embedded peer support, and progressive scaffolding reflected the instructional strategies I studied and practiced.

REFLECTION & IMPACT

This course gave me confidence in designing professional learning experiences that are both structured and flexible. It reinforced the value of iterative design, stakeholder feedback, and technology integration in creating programs that teachers can immediately apply. EDAE-639 strengthened my skills as an instructional designer and prepared me to create scalable, practice-oriented training in both education and organizational contexts.



EDUC-651

DIVERSITY/EQUITY/INCLUSION IN ORGANIZATIONS

KEY TAKEAWAYS

This course introduced me to the complex intersections of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice within education. Through readings such as *Is Everyone Really Equal?*, *How to Be an Antiracist*, and *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*, I gained a deeper understanding of how social, cultural, and institutional forces shape opportunities and inequities in education.

Key themes such as the cycle of socialization, intersectionality, and structural oppression challenged me to critically examine both my personal assumptions and the systemic barriers learners face.



APPLICATION OF LEARNING

I applied course concepts by engaging in reflective assignments such as the cultural profile, mini-ethnography, and dialogue journals. These activities pushed me to analyze my own cultural background, step outside my comfort zone to experience being the “cultural other,” and connect theory to lived practice. Weekly discussions also provided opportunities to test ideas in dialogue, consider multiple perspectives, and sharpen my ability to communicate about equity-focused issues in professional contexts.

REFLECTION & IMPACT

This course has had a lasting impact on how I view my role as an educator and leader. It reinforced the idea that teaching for equity is not a static goal but an ongoing process of reflection, action, and accountability. I leave the course with stronger tools to recognize inequities, more confidence to address them, and a clearer sense of responsibility to advocate for inclusive, socially just learning environments.



EDOD-652

HIGH IMPACT ON-DEMAND SOLUTIONS

KEY TAKEAWAYS

This course focused on the design and development of high-impact, on-demand (HI-OD) performance solutions.

I learned how to recognize situations where microlearning and rapid development strategies can accelerate performance improvement.

Key insights included how to structure HI-OD assets, align objectives with measurable performance outcomes, and leverage tools like audio, visual, simulations, and conversation scenarios to create effective just-in-time resources.



APPLICATION OF LEARNING

Through projects such as designing audio and visual prototypes, conversation scenarios, and guided simulations, I applied course principles in hands-on ways. Peer critiques and team collaboration provided valuable feedback that mirrored real-world design team dynamics. These experiences gave me practical skills in rapid design planning, prototyping, and integrating social media and analytics into performance solutions.

REFLECTION & IMPACT

This course strengthened my ability to create scalable, performance-focused learning interventions that meet immediate workplace needs. It also reinforced the importance of peer review, iterative design, and tool selection in producing high-quality assets under time constraints. EDOD-652 helped me see how HI-OD design can bridge the gap between traditional training and real-time performance support, preparing me to bring innovative, efficient solutions to organizational contexts.



EDAE-664

ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION IN ADULT EDUCATION

KEY TAKEAWAYS

This course provided a deep exploration of assessment, evaluation, and return on investment (ROI) in adult education and training contexts. I learned how assessment goes beyond grading—it measures learning effectiveness, informs instructional decisions, and connects to program-level evaluation.

The readings from Learning Assessment Techniques (Barkley & Howell Major, 2016) and ROI case studies highlighted the importance of aligning assessments with clear goals and objectives, considering both cognitive and affective domains.

Another key takeaway was the distinction between formative and summative evaluation, and how each contributes to continuous improvement.



APPLICATION OF LEARNING

Assignments such as developing learning goals and objectives, creating assessment rubrics, and implementing three Learning Assessment Techniques (LATs) allowed me to apply course concepts in practice. Building an assessment plan and evaluation plan helped me simulate real-world responsibilities of designing tools for stakeholders, integrating both micro-level classroom assessments and macro-level ROI considerations. Peer discussions also reinforced learning by allowing me to test ideas and refine my approach.

REFLECTION & IMPACT

This course shifted how I approach assessment in adult education. Rather than viewing it as a compliance task, I now see it as a process for improving performance and demonstrating value to both learners and organizations. I feel more confident in designing assessment tools, implementing evaluation strategies, and even considering ROI analysis when justifying programs to stakeholders. EDAE-664 prepared me to approach assessment and evaluation not only as measures of learning, but as drivers of instructional quality and organizational effectiveness.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

This capstone course was an opportunity to integrate the knowledge, skills, and values I gained throughout the LDT program.

A major takeaway was recognizing how the different models, theories, and practices from earlier courses interconnect to shape my professional identity as an educator and leader.

The structured focus on building the portfolio and preparing the final presentation reinforced the importance of synthesis—not just listing what I learned, but weaving it into a coherent narrative about my growth and direction.



APPLICATION OF LEARNING

I applied my learning by curating and refining my portfolio, ensuring that each artifact represented meaningful progress in instructional design, assessment, program evaluation, and adult learning theory. Developing the final presentation pushed me to highlight overarching themes and communicate them in an engaging, professional way. Additionally, drafting a Professional Development Plan helped me set goals for continued growth, identifying conferences, certifications, and communities of practice that will support my trajectory beyond graduation.

REFLECTION & IMPACT

Completing EDAE-698 was both a conclusion and a launch point. Looking back, I could clearly see how my thinking and skills evolved since my first course. Looking forward, I now feel confident in my ability to step into new roles with both practical tools and a strong grounding in theory. This course affirmed my readiness to contribute as a reflective practitioner, an advocate for lifelong learning, and a leader in adult education.