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Dr. Smagorinsky

LLED 3461-S

Spring 2017

LLED Course Project

Option 3: Blogging Experience

Blog #1

This semester, I will be mentoring students at Classic City High School as a service-learning project for one of my classes at UGA.

In order to keep track of each of my experiences in the classrooms that I will be working in, I am going to write this blog as a kind of journal or diary to catalog my experiences.

Below are the questions that I will be answering about my day-to-day experiences in my classrooms and with the teachers that I am working with.

Your observations (of the classroom, students, teacher, etc.)

What you are learning (from your student(s), teacher, on your own, etc.)

Your student or students' progress

Your own progress as a tutor and mentor

References to your book club books, as well as other groups' books and presentations (e.g., how you can apply them to what you're seeing in the classroom, how they helped you better understand something/handle something, things in the classroom and with your student(s) that support or question what was talked about, etc.)

Your relationship with your student(s) (how it's growing/not growing, building trust, etc.)

Your expectations v. the realities of the classroom

Comparisons on how you learn and your experiences versus your student's
or students' and the PLC

Tactics and methods you use that both succeeded and failed, and reasons
why

Until next time bloggers....

(1/31/2017)

Blog #2

Hey Bloggers,

So I guess I'm going to start this off by talking about my first day at Classic City High School. I went to this school this past Thursday (01/19/2017) and was thrown into a completely different world! I did not expect to walk into a classroom where technology was used, cell phones were used and every student was listening to music while they worked. This school is very different from what I expected.

During the entire time that I was in the school, not one student spoke to me without being prompted by either myself or by my classroom teacher.

I am not completely sure how I feel how this school just yet....I am just feeling very out of place so far.

Until next time bloggers....

(2/02/2017)

Blog #3

Hey Bloggers,

So here is my third post...here we go...

On my third visit to the school I had to leave about thirty minutes after I arrived at the school due to some very severe tummy problems that came out of nowhere...I'll spare you the details.

So once my unexpected tummy virus decided to leave my system, I went back to Classic City the following week and it was a much better environment than I was first exposed to. My attitude has been changed about this school in one single class period. During my first period with my students, I was complemented and even made a connection with a student who told me all about his life and how he ended up at Classic City. At the end of our conversation and a brief reading of his essay, he told me I was "real chill". According to the teacher that I work with, this is a very high complement.

I will be heading back to Classic City again this week so we will have to wait and see if this great experience sticks....

Until next time bloggers...

(02/10/2017)

Blog #4

Hello, Bloggers!

Well a lot has happened in the past weeks and I haven't had the chance to blog very much, so here is an update...

Classic City has become a much more comfortable environment for me to be in and I feel like I have really become a part of the school and classroom environment. The students are used to me being around and have started to ask me for help when they need it.

I have flipped flopped classrooms and am now working in two classrooms. Each of the classrooms is very different but have their positive and negative aspects. One of my classrooms is very technology based while the other is a face-to-face, more traditional classroom. I love each of the classrooms and I have made some great connections with the students in each of the class periods that I am working in.

I am really enjoying my time in the classrooms and working with the teachers in the school.

Until next time bloggers!

(02/28/2017)

Blog #5

Hey Bloggers,

For this blog, I am going to focus on my time with one specific student that I had the pleasure of working with during my time at Classic City High School. For the sake of privacy, I'm going to call this student "M". During my time at Classic City, I was able to work with a lovely young girl who worked very hard every day so that she could get caught up in English Language Arts class. I worked with this student every single visit that I had to Classic City and over that time I was able to see her make some very serious progress. When I first met "M", I was introduced to a very shy and quiet girl who seemed to fear to make a mistake to the point where she would not try very hard to find the correct answers in her work with serious guidance from the tutor she was working with that day. I made it my goal for the semester to help her to move past this fear and very slowly made progress day by day. She began to show more confidence in her work and was less afraid to make mistakes nearing the end of the time that I spent with her this semester.

I am so incredibly proud of the student that I was working with during my time at Classic City. She really made the experience worthwhile for me.

Until next time bloggers! (03/02/2017)

Blog #6

Hey Bloggers,

For this blog, I want to talk about the expectations versus the reality that I was faced with when it comes to the classroom and school that I was placed in. I can tell you right from the start of this blog that it was nothing like I had expected. To begin, I will be completely truthful with you... I was very concerned going into this school when I was told that we would be volunteering in an alternative high school in Athens, Ga. Athens, to begin with, has some good and bad points, but the area that the school is located was not a place that I really ever spent time near or around. I honestly had no idea where the school was even located, to begin with.

I expected to walk into a school where I would not be wanted by the students or the teachers because I came from UGA; a middle and upper middle-class public ivy league school that is not exactly easy to be admitted to or stay in.

I was expecting to have a very hard time connecting with the students that I would work with every few days for a couple of weeks. Finally, I expected to be ignored for the most part during my time at the school. I was very much incorrect in my assumptions about this school.

I was constantly needed during my time at Classic City High School.

I was accepted and embraced (quite literally) but the teachers that I had been assigned to work with.

-I was asked about UGA by students that I was working with and they were very interested in my major and my sorority on campus.

The number one lesson that I have learned through this experience...NEVER judge a school by its name!

Until next time bloggers!

(04/19/2017)

Blog #7

Hey Bloggers,

For this blog, I am going to focus a bit more than usual on the school itself and the teachers that I worked with while at Classic City High School.

During my time at Classic City High School, I was able to work with two different teachers on a semi-regular basis. I worked with both a female and a male teacher in English Language Arts. Each of these teachers had their own unique way of doing things in their perspective classrooms and both were very interesting to be a part of during the weeks that I was at the school.

During my experience with each of the teachers, I was exposed to two amazing people who wanted to make sure their students succeeded in their own time and way. Each of these teachers helped me to learn more about myself as a teacher and how I don't have to change who I am just to a fit into a mold. The female teacher (Mrs. J), which I worked with taught me a very important lesson that meant much more to me than she could probably know. She taught me that just because my memory isn't very great, it doesn't mean that I can't become a great teacher. This may not seem like a very life-changing lesson, but to me, it means much more than most can see. The male teacher (Mr. J), that I worked with helped me to see that you can use real creativity in lessons every day in class instead of lessons that follow the

typical pathway that most teachers tend to follow. He helped me see exactly how I was to teach and write my lessons to both teach and interest my students in school.

I learned so much from these two educators and I don't think I will ever be able to express to them how much I appreciate the lessons they taught me as I go into my student teaching year this coming fall.

Well until next time bloggers!

(04/20/2017)

Blog #8

Hey Bloggers,

For this blog, I would like to talk about a more serious topic that was brought to my attention by one of my students. While I was working in Mr. J's classroom, I was paired up with a specific student who I will name "K". She was working on a class assignment about bravery. For this assignment, students had to write a narrative story about a time in their life when they had to exhibit bravery. Mr. J explained to the students that bravery did not mean "pulling a baby from a burning building all the time" but instead something that was personal to them.

While sitting down with this student, I noticed that she had almost completely finished her narrative essay and simply wanted me to read along with her and help her to make corrections to spelling and grammar usage.

While I read her story, I almost started to cry. This student had not only lost one of her parents but also had witnessed her brother's suicide. She saw my eyes widen and show concern when I reached this section of her essay and she stopped my reading so that she could explain. She shared with me that her father was not apart of her life anymore and her brother took his life due to bullying and other issues going on in his life at the time. She had since

been raised by her mother and had, in turn, helped her mother get through losing her brother.

This story was an eye-opener for me. It was a story that I questioned talking about at all on my blog because of the serious topics it brings up. A family is a very important support system for children, even for me as an adult.

In my PLC group (book club) for my class, we read a book called "The Unfinished Revolution" by Kathleen Gerson. This book is about different family situations and how they have a direct effect on the children involved.

In this book, the author speaks about a family who is held together by a single, working mother. This reminded me of "K" and how much her family must have gone through when she lost her brother and father from her life.

This book introduced me to the idea of a single mother household and how the children are affected, something that I personally have not been affected by.

Every time I see "K" in the halls, I always make it a point to show her that I care by asking her how she is doing. She is always very positive in her answers and smiles at me as she heads off to class.

Until next time bloggers!

(04/20/2017)

Blog #9

Hey Bloggers,

For this blog, I would like to explicitly thank the teachers that I worked with while working at Classic City High School this semester. I worked with two teachers during my time at Classic City and they were both such fantastic role models for me. I spent the vast majority of my time with Mrs. Johns.

This teacher always went out of her way to make sure that I felt welcomed at the school and in her classroom. She was always such a positive light in the classroom and I looked forward to visiting her classroom every week so I could spend time with her and her students. I learned so much from Mrs.

Johns that I can connect to things I have learned in my classes and from many books that I have read over the course of this semester. One book specifically that I can connect with her teaching style would be a book called "Growing Up Literate". This book followed the lives of inner-city children

and their families. I can connect this book to Mrs. Johns because she introduced me to a new way of thinking and teaching when it came to working with students who grew up in an inner city environment such as Athens. Though Athens is small when compared to other cities, it is still very poor and has the inner city feel to it. The students that I was working

with at Classic City all had different stories about how they grew up and each of those stories struck me in a different way.

Overall, Mrs. Johns was a glowing role model for me and I truly wish that I could work with more in the future!

(04/25/2017)

Blog #10

Hey Bloggers,

Well, this is the time. This will be my very last blog of the semester. For this final blog, I want to talk about my experiences at Classic City and what I learned about myself as a future teacher.

During my time at Classic City, I was exposed to many amazing people, both teachers, and students. Each and every time I visited the school, was different. Some days the students were willing and ready to work from the beginning of class until the last bell. Other days, the students were tired and not as willing to accept my help on their work. Each and every student that I worked with was different. Each had their own stories and personality to share with me. I believe that this was my biggest takeaway from this semester. I learned so much about how to not only be a teacher but how also to be a friend or advocate for my students. For my entire life, I have been the person that people come to when they need someone to listen or talk to and I have always wanted to bring that personality with me into my classroom. This experience showed me that not only is that possible, but it is also needed. Students need someone that they can depend on to be there when they don't have anyone else. I want to continue to be that person moving forward in my career.

My experience at Classic City High School was one for the books. I enjoyed every moment of it and I hope to be able to go back to the school and work with more students as a tutor in the future.

(04/25/2017)

Snapshot of my blog on blogger app

Experiencing Education

About Me

 **NatalieGrace**

[View my complete profile](#)



Blog Archive

▼ 2017 (10)

▶ April (6)

▶ February (1)

▼ January (3)

Blog #3

Blog #2

Blog #1



Monday, January 23, 2017

Blog # 1

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3. your student's or students' progress
4. your own progress as a tutor and mentor
5. references to your book club books, as well as other groups' books and presentations (e.g., how you can apply them to what you're seeing in the classroom, how they helped you better understand something/handle something, things in the classroom and with your student(s) that support or question