                            PATHWAYS TO GLOBAL COMMUNICATION

                                           REFLECTIVE PORTFOLIO TEMPLATE

Part 1

Reflecting on Theory, Practice, and Communication

(To be written after workshops 1 and 2)

What is your teaching philosophy?

My transition from technical services librarian to instructional librarian was motivated by a desire to teach. My interest in teaching comes from my own positive experience as an undergraduate and from a love of libraries. I have always experienced libraries as a place of immense learning and creative potential. I believe that inspiring students to see their potential is at the center of my teaching philosophy.

In considering how one goes about inspiring students to explore the potential of their minds and in essence sharing my love of learning, I reflect on how I connect with students. What encourages one student may intimidate another. Students also bring different levels of maturity, interest and motivation. My challenge is to make a library instruction class accessible to all students and to be responsive to individuals who are having difficulty integrating new research methods.

I believe that learning can and should be inspiring and that students who are active participants learn much more than those whose participation is largely passive. Public participation is uncomfortable but if participants trust their teacher than participation can be made easier. My goal is that each student feels seen and heard and my hope is that if they see I care and am enthusiastic that they will too.

What do you see as the benefits and/or challenges to having culturally and linguistically diverse students in your class? I see the benefits and challenges are often the same. For example cultural diversity is a classroom forces everyone to open their eyes to different points of view and creating a community where we can connect intellectually even though we have different ways of seeing the world. These differences can also be a challenge because many of us feel like the way we see the world is “more correct” and it can be uncomfortable to have our perceptions challenged.

How might the ideas about language, diversity, and cross-cultural communication discussed during the NEA workshops thus far contribute to your classroom practice? I am a very self -reflective teacher but until this workshop I did not think about my teaching as specific to language. I think my style was to treat everyone one the same; as fluent English speakers and living in a Western tradition. I have become more sensitive to the way I speak to students and to consider that students come for different backgrounds than I do and this must be addressed in order to be a more effective teacher.

I also see myself as very much an outsider because I am a librarian and not a traditional classroom teacher, in a sense I speak a different language and I am now trying to think more about how I can connect with students and teach them to utilize my academic point of view.

Part 2

Moving Theory into Practice: Diversity as Resource

(To be written after workshops 3 and 4)

How might you change an existing lesson/assignment as a result of participating in the NEA project? I think since this workshop I have tried to slow things down (less information but more useful and helpful information), and working with students more one-on-one.

What new assignment might you develop that would incorporate lessons learned as a result of the Pathways to Globalization workshops? I might try to use an object or image in my class to make a point about different approaches to doing research and the different questions that may be researched based on how students view the image.

Part 3

Teaching Goals Statement

(To be written upon completion of the program)

Given the topics discussed in the NEA workshops and your own experiences teaching, please prepare a personal statement describing your teaching goals for the next few years

My teaching goals over the next years will focus on taking more risks in the classroom and implementing a peer observation program.

The NEA workshop has made me more aware of how students’ diverse cultural and language background influences how they learn and understand information. Going forward I will attempt to experiment more in how I teach. For example, I recently had students write a one-minute paper at the end of class to see what they learned and what they found confusing. In the past I only had students work in groups and afterwards they would verbally present their quandaries. I was not fully aware of how uncomtarable this could be for culturally and language diverse students. I would also like to implement more object and image based teaching into the class and let this aluminate the different points of view within the classroom rather than me being the person to determine what questions we should be ask and what answers are of value.

Since attending the NEA workshop I have formed a group among librarian who would like to participate in a “peer review grogram”. As valuable as self –reflective teaching is we bring many of our own assumptions and we are clearly not the best judges of our own teaching. There is a tendency to be overly critical of how one teaches or not aware of how our practice is affecting students and the diverse cultural and language needs of the classroom. My hope is that by having feedback from trusted colleagues we can all help each other become better and more effective teachers.