

Goal Reflection Essay (ED870)

My Journey of Learning; Learn to Love, Love to Learn.

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It's been three years since I was accepted to the Master's program at Michigan State University. I remember what I did before I submitted my application in September 5, 2011. It took me a whole year to prepare for the required documents for the application process: taking a TOEFL test, contacting the professor for a reference letter, writing two essays, and organizing the documents to submit before the due date. I wrote my academic statement essay way before the due date because I had to seriously ponder upon what my purpose of choosing this program is and what I should be doing throughout the program. My journey of learning already began when I was writing the goal statement for the application. With the help of my coworkers at the school, the professor of my former university, and my family, I finalized the application process by submitting all the documents. I didn't know at that time what would be ahead of my learning path. I just wanted to go forward to another adventure of learning. In my goal statement, I kept saying, "I want to learn more to become a better learner and teacher." I've always believed that a teacher should be a learner to become a true educator. I'm so grateful that I could have that opportunity at MSU.

After being accepted to the Master's program, my real journey of learning started. At first, I was intimidated by the workload of writing. Every course required certain amount of writing. For some of the courses I had to spend hours and hours of thinking and writing to complete the project in such a way that I've never experienced before even in my college years. As I am an international student, I found writing in English the most difficult work. But it turns out that it was most rewarding experience. I came to enjoy the process of writing, which made me become closer to a true learner. Reading, writing, sharing, and supporting other fellow teacher and learners were absolutely beautiful experiences to me.

I mentioned my educational philosophy in the essay, that is, “Learn to love, love to learn.” I am so pleased that I have cherished it until now which makes me learn more and love more. All the experiences I have had with each course were unique and meaningful in terms of opening my educational view and expanding knowledge which adds professionalism to my career. Although I didn’t meet the professors and colleagues face to face, I learned something valuable from the interaction with the professors. Their supportive comments and encouragement made me feel inclusive and confident in every step of learning process, which has contributed to what I am now. What I have learned throughout the course is not just knowledge of education but the way of education. I’m truly grateful for what I have done with the courses and hope my journey of learning will continue.

Academic Statement

May 23, 2011

Since I entered the Teacher’s College at Inha University in Incheon, Korea, I almost never stopped teaching students until now for more than fourteen years. The more I teach somebody, the more I get to think about what really teaching means. Because education involves a lot of humanistic concepts, I think it is important to have understanding of psychological and cognitive aspects of people. That’s why I try to find every possible opportunity to learn more about education to educate myself and understand others. So, when I happened to find this wonderful MAED program from Michigan State University, I felt like my passion for learning can be accomplished with it. Now as I am a public high school teacher, I have difficulty going to graduate school that I am engaged in many works and activities at school, such as a Curriculum Director. Even after school sometimes, I have to teach and counsel students who are slow learners. I believe that this program will provide me with great opportunity to learn more about education.

My philosophy of education is “Love to Learn, Learn to Love.” I think that education itself is a process of making an individual a better member of a society and therefore ultimately making them happy. To make that happen, it is necessary to provide learners with

opportunities to have positive view on themselves and the society to which they belong. And I think it is possible when educators have broad knowledge and experience enough to do that. That is why I want to enroll this MAED program. It would let me review what I have learned and learn deeper extent of knowledge about specific education area.

I am thinking about choosing Literacy Education as my concentration area. I am an English teacher in Korea and what I mostly do is teach students how to read, write, listen and speak, what we call, four skills of language. But reading is a prime goal for ESL learners or any kind of learners to achieve first to progress any further study. Through this course, I hope I may be able to better understand instruction of reading and necessity of devising helpful reading program for students. Especially Secondary Reading Assessment and Instruction and Accommodating Differences in Literacy Learners would be very beneficial courses when it comes to understanding in both an instructor and a learner's place. When I was in college majoring in Education and English Language Education, I learned the basic knowledge of language learning. This advanced education will facilitate me in the achievement or remarkable academic progress, fulfilling my aspiration to become an accomplished professional in the educational arena.

I have been engaged in education sector, this Master's degree program will let me equipped with expertise that I can be more confident in what I work with. As a Curriculum Director in current school, I expect my chosen concentration area, Literacy Education, to play a crucial role in coordinating language education part. Before applying to the graduate course in Michigan State University, I might have read facts about MSU and course description tens of times for a year that I've become accustomed to the school in spite of not being able to be on campus. My academic advisor in my college told me that MSU is a very prestigious school that has a strong education program, so I am looking forward to participating in the course soon. And it would be an honor to become a member of MSU, a school with a tradition and a long history. I hope I can learn not only academic professionalism, but also a spirit of MSU.