*Old Dominion University Darden College of Education*

**WEEKLY JOURNAL**

*(To be submitted each week to the Old Dominion University Supervisor)*

Use this journal to describe your progress in becoming a Professional Educator in relation to the goals of The Unit’s Model in the Handbook.

Name \_\_Erica Guardino\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_2/21/2016\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. What was the purpose of your lesson this week?

This week I presented a lesson for my sociology classes that would summarize all the concepts they have been learning this unit and play a review game to prepare them for their test on Tuesday (this lesson occurred on Friday, February 19).

1. How did you engage your learners with your materials?

To sum up their learning to date I had the students listen to an interview on NPR from Tuesday of this week. The interview included Terry Gross (Fresh Air) interviewing Sue Klebold, mother of one of the Columbine High School shooters. She recently released a book about her experience as a mother and woman in American society dealing with the aftermath of this tragedy. I had the students listen to a selected portion of the interview, then write a letter to Ms. Klebold (these letters were purely an empathy exercise and were not actually mailed out to Ms. Klebold) with their reactions, thoughts, and sociological analysis of the shooting and her experience since.

1. Were you effective in meeting the purpose of the lessons – how are you measuring this?

I do think I was effective in meeting my goal for this lesson. I created a handout to guide the students through the interview and the letter writing activity which included prompts and talking points. I measured their success based on the complexity of their responses to the questions. Most students were able to respond to all five question themes and provided a wide variety of reactions, opinions, and analyses in their own words.

1. What are the strength of this lesson? (Identify at least two areas)

This lesson served as a comprehensive review lesson for their unit of study on the institution of family in society (including family violence). It was also an exercise in empathy through the practice of mindful listening and letter writing. Although it might seem obvious, I wanted to close the unit by emphasizing the genuine human component of what we are studying and to give them an idea of their ability to shape the future through things like their response to a national tragedy, however small that response may be.

1. What areas will you seek to improve in future lessons?

Some students were unclear about how to structure a letter (some simply numbered their paper 1-5 and answered the question) while others were confused by the voice of the questions. Next time I will provide more explicit instructions on how to format a letter and have another person review my questions to be sure they are clearly understood.

1. Did you make any changes in your plans after teaching the lesson? Why or why not?

I had initiated this lesson the day before in first block sociology; because of a number of schedule changes this month first block was ahead of schedule. When I tried it the first time, I had the students listen to snippets of the interview, paused, and had brief discussion sessions between listening times. This led to some technical difficulties on my end (trying to find my place in the mp3 copy of the interview) and also made time management difficult (as some students were more willing to talk on certain issues than others). I decided to keep the interview but let second block listen to it for an extended period (20 minutes) and created the letter writing activity to emphasize the importance of the individual in major family and societal issues. I think that was an improvement over the first attempt at this lesson.

1. What do you regard as your most important personal learning experience during this week?

Reading the students’ letters I was moved by the sensitivity and thoughtfulness that many of them brought to activity. However, I was also surprised by their writing capabilities. This is an area where I think I should most certainly focus my efforts; I saw phonetic spellings of words, little or incorrect punctuation in some, and issues with maintaining voice and other basic writing techniques.

1. Did you have a conference this week with your clinical faculty? How many times? If not, why?

Yes, we met on Friday as usual when she gave me my feedback form. I also solicited feedback from her and others in the department throughout the week.

1. Tell me about something that happened this week that you are proud of.

After giving an exam in psychology on Thursday, I was happy to receive some unsolicited feedback from the students. Several of them told me they thought my lessons were fun and interesting; that they could tell I made an effort when I taught them; and that I showed enthusiasm for being there. I was so proud to have the students put into words themselves what I have been hoping to communicate these past few weeks.

1. Are you having problems that you feel require attention and assistance from me?

No, not at this time.

1. When would be a good time for me to stop by your school next week?

Most of the day Wednesday will be taken up with a Black History Month assembly, so I would not recommend coming on this day. I have not finished planning out the activity yet, but on Thursday (fourth block) and Friday (first, second, and fourth block) I plan to teach the students about the hunger drive and obesity in America by exploring the concept of food deserts. This might be worth taking a look at, and I can provide you with more information on the activity soon.

COMMENTS: