

Portfolio Process Reflection

My reflection of the portfolio process has been profound. I feel as if I started the program recently and time has flown by. Three lessons that keep coming up for me as I continually analyze and think about my experience are personal growth, content retention, and relationship building.

Personal Growth

As I identified artifacts and wrote my narratives, it astounded me how much I have grown personally and in my professional identity. First, I want to address my own identity. For the first time in my life, I was pushed to reflect on what I was bringing to the table. Specifically my identity as a multiracial individual became very salient and important to my work in student development. Second, I have developed a more critical lens when approaching literature, theory, and practice. I love learning about new theories and research but now I am also first to question the applicability across populations and how it impacts systems of oppression. I look forward to continuing this messy and difficult journey in social justice throughout my work. Finally, I have used these past two years to define my leadership style and professional identity. I had an idea of the professional I wanted to become, but in this program, I was given an outlet and the guideless to articulate my philosophies.

Content Retention

Relating fairly closely to my personal and professional growth, I am also amazed at the multitude of content I have retained from my coursework. Particularly in writing the narratives, when I came up with my integrative themes, I could easily identify articles, texts, research, and theory to apply and synthesize to my experiences. I have

found I retain knowledge the greatest when I am passionate and interested in a subject. I know now this transition was the right decision and I could not be more happy and excited to see what comes next.

Relationship Building

I knew entering a higher education program would be much different from my experiences in computer science and the software industry. I did not know how many relationships I would form within the program and across the greater Seattle area. This was very evident when working on portfolio with my peers and colleagues. I constantly felt and still feel the support of my classmates as we all are wrapping up the program. This support also extends to the job search – colleagues are more than willing to refer me to professionals I need to connect with or recommend jobs they think I will fit in. I have always been challenged by networking in authentic and genuine ways and further challenged by maintaining networks. I now feel more confident on making those connections in ways that resonate with me and affirmed I do not have to network just to network.

The faculty in the SDA program and the professionals who support it have been great mentors and instructors. I have grown throughout the past two years and my growth is evident in my portfolio.