

Reflection - EDUC 623
Models and Strategies for Teaching and Learning in IB Schools
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This is the third course in the Certificate in Advanced IB Studies Program and focused on the relationship between teaching and learning. When I took this course, I was also taking my first “official” Ph.D. in Education Program class, *Ways of Knowing*, as I had been admitted to the George Mason’s doctoral program earlier in the fall. As I had already been attending classes through the IB Certificate Program, it was not difficult for me to get into the rhythm of being a doctoral student, although the one major switch that did start to become evident in my assignments was my use of APA style instead of my previous MLA format.

One of the things that I have always appreciated about the IB Certificate coursework is the requirement that teachers in that program tie their learning into their own practice. This course was no exception. The activities that we did in class forced me to consider my own practice and my professional path. As someone who has been in education for several years, I have often become bored with some of the politics in individual schools. Studying topics such as differentiation, instructional strategies, research, and assessment for some reason has had an invigorating effect on my restlessness. I need to be around people who think in similar ways and am often rejuvenated by those around me. The small group that took this course allowed me to be a part of this community of learners and I am grateful for this as they probably made me a better educator. What this course also did for my thinking was start to solidify what I already was developing as a potential focus for my doctoral degree; I knew that I would have a primary focus in international education for my doctoral degree but within that focus, I wanted to specifically focus on IB as a learning program.

In terms of artifacts, I have chosen to include two pieces of work from this course – my Final Journal and a Video Teaching Episode. The final journal is a reflection concerning two readings that I selected and had to critically apply to my own classroom. In the video teaching episode paper, our EDUC 623 class was charged with videotaping a classroom lesson and then reflecting on practice. This was a difficult paper and assignment for me to complete, mainly because of the fact that the bulk of my “new material instruction” was completed by early to mid-April and I was in review mode because of the timing of the IB English HL examination. Despite this, I decided to evaluate myself on an overall topic (how well I have taught my students to conduct discourse) while I was also assessing my students on a completely different issue (how well they can interact with multiple texts). The topic I was evaluating for myself was actually never revealed to my students.