Applied Digital Learning Collaboration

I love teaching, and I always knew I wanted to be a teacher because I love working with others, and most of all, I love learning new things. The students were struggling, teachers like myself were frustrated, and the administration provided minimal support. The easiest thing to do would be to move to a high-performing school, but that is something that I was unwilling to do because I grew up in this neighborhood. The community has not changed much. The apartments, which house most of our students, do not have lines for home internet, and most families are of low socioeconomic status. I remember having a solid supportive community when I was growing up. My teachers, counselors, and family never gave up on me and always motivated me to be the best person. I have friends and relatives that send their children to my school, and leaving would be giving up on them, and no one ever gave up on me. The students want to learn, the parents are involved, and the teachers are dedicated, so why were the students not making the grade?

The school piloted blended learning in specific classrooms, and it was unfortunate that I was not a part of the pilot and that it was cut out the following year. As curious as I was to learn more about blended learning, I started researching and came across Lamar University's webpage and the Applied Digital Learning program. I was convinced that I had to be a part of this program to learn more about blended learning and disruptive innovation to help my students, school, and community.

My ADL journey started by contacting Cristina Molina and Stacie Perez during the live lesson with Dr. H in 5303. I reached out to Cristina and Stacie separately to see if they wanted to be in a community circle, and both ladies agreed. On Friday, March 25th, Cristina and I met through zoom to discuss assignments. Since Cristina is a Lamar Alumni, she showed me how to navigate Blackboard and some quick links. Cristina also broke down how the courses were designed by weeks. We took it week by week, completing assignments that needed to be done for the week. On Sunday, March 27th, I met with Stacie for the first time over zoom. I did a quick summary of what Cristina showed me and what was due that day. I also joined a messaging application, Group Me, organized by Jermecia for anyone that wanted to join.

On Monday, March 28th, the three of us met together for the first time, and we started exploring ideas on how to create documentation for our collaboration. First, we did a calendar on a spreadsheet and added the dates and assignments. Then we did a

google document to place our e-portfolio links, innovation projects, innovation letters, and other helpful information.

Since we shared our assignments first, we could provide feedforward to each other. We discussed significant assignments like innovation projects, letters, literature reviews, and implementation plans. Although Stacie and I worked on the literature review and the implementation plan together, Cristina was a fresh of eyes used to revise our literature review and implementation plan.

Something we can do better is having calendar due dates on the google document instead of a spreadsheet. Since the google document is already being used heavily by everyone, it would make sense to have it on the google document.

We were all flexible with meeting with each other when needed. During the course, we decided to meet on Wednesday to have time to process the information that was being given to us on Monday and Tuesday. Wednesday and Thursday would be our main days to meet, and if needed, we would meet on Sundays. Even though Stacie and Cristina are doing their Eportfolio on Wix, they were still able to help me figure some things out on Bluehost and WordPress. I also joined a zoom call with Bethany for some help with Bluehost.

Additionally, the breakout rooms in the zooms during class time were also part of the learning community because we were able to learn from each other. I also made sure always to create a discussion post and reply to at least two classmates.

At first, I thought this part of the assignment would be useless, but now I see it as part of a self-reflection. Maybe I had to grade myself a pair of times in my life, and I always thought it was useless because the teacher ultimately gave the grade. I did want to give myself a lot lower grade, but speaking to Stacie about all the things I did in the course, I saw growth and productivity in myself. The numerical grade I would give myself is a 95/100 for the course 5303 and a 45/50 for 5305.

I tell myself, "You never know unless you try," so when I doubt myself, I keep trying. I will keep trying for my students, and if I fail, I can get up and reevaluate and try again.