

Technology is a second career for me. In my undergraduate education I received a music education degree and taught music for five years. The reason that I chose to move into technology is because it is something that I enjoy. I have always enjoyed finding out how things work, building things, and discovering emerging technology. I desire to find a job in which I can do those things for a living. The field of Instructional Technology allows me to do that. It combines my education background with my interest in technology. Due to the varied skill set that I have acquired working in an elementary and now, a higher education setting, I would like to work in either of those environments. I can see myself working in a school district as a technology coordinator or working in a higher education setting as an instructional technologist. The experience that I have gained through my years of teaching in an elementary setting will enable me to better serve those students and faculty that I have opportunity to work with by communicating in a patient, logical, goal-oriented manner. The experience that I am getting at The College of Wooster will better inform me of how to prepare younger students and their teachers about technology trends in higher education.

One of the key things that I have learned through this master's degree experience is the poignancy of constructivist educational theory in technology education specifically, and general education more widely. So much of what technology is about is the end product that is developed. By showing the learner how to do a certain skill and then having the learner practice those skills while providing scaffolding for those students that may need it, and supplementation for those students that have higher ability, the educator facilitates higher order thinking skills in the learner. I have, through my education experience, come to a better understand of the role of an educator as a facilitator. I understand more fully how this model enables the teacher and student to work together to explore a topic to the highest degree possible. This understanding has changed how I teach. Prior to this experience I taught using a more traditional mode in which I talked and the students listened. This created a non-participatory environment in which the students could passively absorb and regurgitate the information that I was sharing with them. It was not dynamic and did not encourage higher order thinking skills. I can now present material, and approach teaching from a different place as a facilitator. Doing so enables the students to construct their own understanding of whatever the material is.

I understand now more about the inner workings of a computer, how the components interact with and relate to each other. Researching and building a computer from the ground up was a highlight of my practicum experience. I have a much better understanding of Web 2.0 applications and how to critically evaluate them for implementation in an educational setting. I have the ability and perspective to facilitate a lesson rather than lecture. As I move forward I want to continue to develop my understanding of hardware. I see it as a benefit to be able to recommend and understand physical capabilities and limitations of particular technologies. I also have an interest in Web 2.0 technologies and their use in education. Emerging technologies are all around us. I want to know what they are, how they work, and how I might use them in an educational setting. The horizon is wide open for me in the future. I have had the opportunity to develop a diverse set of skills related to technology and teaching. I see myself moving toward teaching in a technology related field, be that as an instructional technologist at an institution of higher learning or in a PK-12 educational setting.

As I look and contemplate the five ISTE NETs (National Educational Technology) standards for teachers, I can say that I have met all of them through my educational experience. Most of them have been met during my practicum experience as I managed and worked in the computer lab, developed instruction for the faculty and met with a computer club after school. As I work at The College of

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Wooster, I am continuing to develop my skills in designing and delivering instruction. I enjoy working with students and faculty to determine the most efficient and helpful technology for the projects that they are working on. I am also interested in determining how to assess new technology and how to assess digital media projects as part of a larger curriculum. Moving forward, I hope to develop and help other learners gain the skills to critically evaluate technology and its use in an educational setting. As you review the exhibits in this portfolio, it is my hope that you will see this desire being demonstrated through the work that I have done and am doing now.