A Story of Creation

Once upon a time, a new faculty at MSU-Mankato was assigned to teach a course known as ESSP 610 or Special Education Research Methods
ESSP 610 follows ESSP 600, an introduction to research course in which Master’s Degree students were to:

1. learn all about educational research
2. fully design a capstone research project
3. complete the capstone proposal
4. complete the introductory chapter of capstone project
ESSP 600 was taught differently by different faculty without any set curriculum. Each ESSP 600 faculty explained the Capstone Project and expectations for what would follow in ESSP 610 differently. Furthermore, the department faculty had no unified outcome expectations for ESSP 600, 610 or the Capstone Project.
The new faculty member was faced not only with the typical challenges of course construction, but of ameliorating a major problem with the Master’s Degree Capstone for the department.

But, accepting the challenge, the new faculty member grabbed the seat of her pants, took what she learned in the CETL teacher certificate program and created…
The New & Improved
ESSP 610

CETL Teaching Certificate
Program Capstone Project

By: Beth Handler
The new faculty member’s experience in ESSP 610 this semester is best summarized by the Hopi term Koyaanisquatsi. In terms of both the current instructional activities of the course and the future changes required.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From the Hopi Language meaning</th>
<th>ESSP 610</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>crazy life</td>
<td>Students had various preparation, skill levels, expectations, content foci</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>life in turmoil</td>
<td>Course outcome (i.e., a completed 2nd chapter of capstone) was unreasonable &amp; unattainable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>life disintegrating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>life out of balance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a state of life that calls for another way of living</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Koyaanisqatsi of 610 caused students to be confused about what they were supposed to be writing.
The Koyaanisqatsi of 610 caused the new faculty member great frustration and anxiety until...
she could take it no more.
The new faculty member racked her brain and decided that departmental action was called for.
She took her ideas to the department faculty. They agreed that ESSP 600, 610 & the capstone needed revision and gave her their blessing to create something new.
So, the new faculty member has begun working on the blueprint for the new and improved Master’s Degree Activity Sequence.
The new faculty member has much to do in developing the new Master’s Degree Activity Sequence

She has begun that creation with the restructuring of the ESSP 610
Revised Course Structure for ESSP 610

Students will develop skills through modeled practice & class-based activities in a Mock Review of Research

The class will complete an actual mini-review of research together

Class-based activities will parallel independent project activities
Mock Review of Research

Instructor will provide literature & topic focus

Students will individually review literature provided & share review notes with group

Group will determine quality & relevance of literature, organize material based on topic or themes & identify need for additional information

Individuals will search for, evaluate & share additional information with group

Group will integrate all material & sketch-out a draft of a review of research
Final Product

Each Student will Produce an Independently Completed Integrated Review of Research

On a topic from an instructor chosen list & a partial reference list

To be completed in phases across the semester
Through this restructuring, the new faculty member hopes to take the Koyaanisqatsi out of ESSP 610...
and to create a comprehensive, rigorous, & valuable sequence of research activities for MSU-Mankato Special Education Master’s Degree Students.
Questions?

Music from the Film Soundtrack
“KOYAANI SQATSI”
Composed by Philip Glass
Conducted by Michael Riesman
Available on CD from Nonesuch Records