Self-As-Leader Digital Story Assignment

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In the first semester of NCSU’s MSA and Ed.D. programs, students are asked to develop and deliver a digital story. Digital Storytelling is a tool that can be considered participatory action research (Militello & Guajardo, In Press). Lambert (2002) stated, “In traditional cultures, the intermingling of personal stories, communal stories, myths, legends and folktales not only entertained us, but created a powerful empathetic bond between ourselves and our communities” (p. xviii). Here storytelling is the creating and the sharing where “narratives are seen as cultural tools we all relate to and use in our meaning-making and activities” (Erstad & Wertsch, 2008, p. 22).

The assignment begins with students investigating four domains of self: political, cultural, biological, and historical. Each domain has a set of questions to help students understand as contributions to the development of who they are now. Students are asked to write about the development of their leadership through each domain. This usually entails a number of short essays. Students often set about this project as if this were a research project. Students collect data from colleagues, family members, and mentors. In the end, students are asked to craft a 4-5 minute story that uses images, voice, and/or music to tell their story. In this short amount of time students must identify development in at least two domains (it has been our experience that stories that attempt to provide information in all four domains are too long and cumbersome. Moreover, we have found that individuals have one or two domains that dominate their work as a leader).

Many students investigate their past and their surroundings by collecting photos and interviews. These data provide an opportunity for students to investigate and reflect on who they are as a leader. The digital stories that have been developed are nothing short of powerful. The stories are deep. One MSA student used this opportunity to interview their elderly grandparent. The interview provided the principal candidate with a rich historical account of their grandmother as a child of sharecroppers who became one of the first women in the family tree to attend and graduate from college. The digital story included interview footage along with scanned images including her degree and first paycheck.

These digital stories are shared with classmates on a class networking platform. After viewing, a debriefing session is used to clarify and articulate points made in the video. Finally, a plan of action assignment allows students to develop specific action steps in their development as a leader. The action steps have included: the development of additional digital stories, additional data collection (e.g., interviews), and the development of this exercise as a teaching and learning activity for principals and superintendents to use in their current work environment.
Language in my Syllabus

D. Assignment 3: Self-as-Leader Digital Story (25%—25 Points)

This assignment is due on 10/24. Digital storytelling is a powerful means to reflect upon and enter into conversations about your leadership. In this case we are looking at self “as leader.” Digital storytelling can be as simplistic as a set of pictures accompanied by narrative and as complex as fully produced videos. Examples of each will be shared with the class and you will be introduced to specific tools to create a digital story. This story should include the factors that brought you into the educational setting and describe the type of leader you were, are, and what to become. In the end, you should state what you believe you are and want to become as a leader. Use at least two of the domains discussed in class (biological, historical, cultural, political) to tell your story. Below is an explanation of the domains and corresponding questions that will help you think about who you are in each domain. These stories will be shared in class. Stories should not exceed 5 minutes.

**Self-as-Leader Digital Story Rubric:**

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<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 Points</td>
<td>Effectively uses technology (clear audio and video)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Points</td>
<td>Using effective images and music</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Points</td>
<td>Incorporates at least two of the domains of self-as-leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Points</td>
<td>Digital story does not exceed 5 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Points</td>
<td>Overall, story is interesting, informational, and compelling to the viewer</td>
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# Self-As-Leader: Four Domains

## Historical Contributions to the development of the self:
- Present a historical event(s) that has impacted your life…include both micro and macro. Make sure you look at this event historically, i.e. what caused it and what were the future ramifications?
- Micro level events are those that are close to you spatially, geographically, physically, and emotionally.
- Macro level events are those that are more global. i.e. geography and scope, yet they are equally as important in shaping people’s life and surroundings.
- Do a generational analysis (look at your ancestors) of what brought you to the place/space you find yourself in at this time in history…personally, professionally and academically.

## Biological Contributions to the self:
- Present pictures of yourself as a youth and compare them to the present…how have you changed?
- Describe your physical make up and genetic composition and elaborate on where it comes from, i.e. father, mother, grandparents, etc… Though, if you cannot because you do not know this history, imagine what your ancestors looked like based on your genotype and phenotype.
- Connect your genes to your relatives and see where your dominant composition comes from and what are your more prominent characteristics…do you see this in other relatives or your children?
- How have you changed and what will you look like in the future?
- How will this impact what you do from now on?

## Cultural Contributions to the development of the self (culture is defined as the unwritten rules that guide the way we live life):
- What are the values, beliefs and practices that you hold dear and that guide your daily life?
- How aware are you of these values daily?
- Where did these values come from and how have they changed through out your life? (be specific)
- What is the context and conditions that have molded your cultural identity?
- What does diversity mean to you?
- When was one time you resisted diversity and why?

## Political Contributions to the development of the self (politics in the educational literature is simply defined as who gets what when and how):
- Explore and describe the construction of your values and beliefs, and their uses.
- What was your first political action (test your memory)?
- What is your gender identity and how do you use it?
- What is your racial composition and what does this mean to the communities where you live, work and play? And what does this mean to you?
- What is the role of relationships in your life? How do you use these relationships? How do they use you?
- What do your friends say about you?
- How do you define power and how do you use it?
- How do you deal with conflict?
Creating Digital Story From Four Domains

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<tr>
<th>Historical Contributions to the development of the self:</th>
<th>Biological Contributions to the self:</th>
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<th>Cultural Contributions to the development of the self:</th>
<th>Political Contributions to the development of your self:</th>
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Some Guiding Questions:

- How have these four components informed your educational story?
- What is your educational Philosophy?
- What values and theorists have informed it?
- What are your strategies to implementing it?
- What kind of a leader are you and what kind do you want to become?
Want to SEE Some Examples?

Here are some links to good examples:

https://vimeo.com/52936132
https://vimeo.com/52893751
https://vimeo.com/31655887
https://vimeo.com/31649208

Good interview to show class:

https://vimeo.com/24138893

Great examples of Digital Stories of community issues… next step in storytelling—very different assignment.

https://vimeo.com/52893750
https://vimeo.com/52814058
https://vimeo.com/52814057
https://vimeo.com/32097737