

Where Are You Headed?

What are some of your thoughts, wants, and feelings as you begin your Capella University program? There are no doubt many of them: how the courseroom works, what is expected of you and what you can expect of your instructor, how to best plan your time, and so forth. We are all similar, but no two of us are identical. Our feelings affect our learning outcomes, and expressing feelings openly improves our learning experiences. The purpose of this discussion is to give you a safe, welcoming place to express your thoughts, wants, and feelings upon entering the course.

For your initial post in this discussion, share some of your thoughts, feelings, or concerns. You will accomplish this goal best by focusing on "I" statements rather than on generalizations about other people.

Based on the self-assessment you did as part of this unit's preparation study, respond to the following:

- List several areas of strength. What evidence do you have that these areas are strengths for you?
- List several opportunities for improvement. What evidence do you have that these areas provide opportunities for improvement?
 - You may provide various kinds of evidence according to your unique situation. For example, to support a strength, you could cite positive evaluations received from a supervisor related to that strength; to support an area for opportunity, you might state that you have not had training or job experience to develop your skill in that area. As long as you support your assertions, the type of evidence you choose is up to you.
- How do these strengths and areas for development impact your professional practice?
- How will strengthening your weaker areas enhance your development as a practitioner-scholar?

Your post should be at least 250 words. You do not need to attach the self-assessment itself to the discussion.

Make a Connection

In addition to responding to the discussion prompt, at the end of your post, pose a question or note an issue of interest to you. This is meant to help engage your peers and let them know how they can best support you.

Response Guidelines

These guidelines apply to your responses to other learners, which are in addition to your response to the discussion topic itself.

Read the posts of your peers and respond to at least one learner, completing the following:

- Begin each response with a positive reflection on an idea or viewpoint expressed by the learner.
- Add your own perspective or a relevant reference from the literature.

Post your initial responses in the discussion area by Thursday at 11:59 p.m. (Central time zone). Comments to other learners' posts are due by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. (Central time zone).

Learning Components

This activity will help you achieve the following learning components:

- Determine areas of strength.
- Identify opportunities for improvement.
- Reflect on career and academic accomplishments.
- Analyze academic requirements for desired goals.

Resources

Discussion Participation Scoring Guide.

Diversity and Multiculturalism

In this course, you will consider diversity and multiculturalism. The two course competencies related to these topics are:

1. Create inclusive learning environments that demonstrate respect and value of diverse backgrounds.
2. Incorporate multicultural perspectives into curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Consider these competencies and complete the first two columns of a KWL chart about them. A *KWL chart* is a way to activate background knowledge and to stimulate thinking about a topic; the K stands for what you *know* about the topic and the W stands for what you *want* to know about the topic. Using the KWL chart template linked in the Resources, complete the K and W sections. Post the chart to the discussion board. Then discuss the following:

- What content related to these topics feels "solid" to you? In other words, about which content do you have the firmest knowledge and experience?
- What about these topics feels "muddy" to you? In other words, with which topics do you have less knowledge and experience?
- How do this knowledge and the areas of gap affect your instructional practice?
- How would you and your students benefit if you strengthened your knowledge and skills in this area?

For this discussion, you are not required to cite sources. The discussion is asking you to assess the state of your own knowledge, so there are no right or wrong answers. However, if you wish to make reference to academic literature to enrich your discussion, you are encouraged to do so.

Make a Connection

In addition to responding to the discussion prompt, at the end of your post, pose a question or note an issue of interest to you. This is meant to help engage your peers and let them know how they can best support you.

What If I Am Not a Classroom Teacher?

Your professional role—or the one that you are preparing for in your Capella program—may not involve classroom teaching. If that is the case, consider the more general concept of providing adaptive experiences for those students or clients with whom you work. The KWL chart contains prompts that will help you situate your professional specialization in the general framework of the discussion.

Response Guidelines

These guidelines apply to your responses to other learners, which are in addition to your response to the discussion topic itself.

Respond to at least one learner. Identify similarities and differences between each colleague's KWL chart and your own. To what do you attribute those differences? Provide one suggestion for your colleague in regard to how to address what he or she wants to know about these topics.

Post your initial responses in the discussion area by Thursday at 11:59 p.m. (Central time zone). Comments to other learners' posts are due by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. (Central time zone).

Resources

Discussion Participation Scoring Guide.

KWL Chart.

Updates and Handouts »