Weekly Journal

Week of February 6-10

This week was more challenging than I thought. On Sunday, I thought I created a reasonable outline that I could carry out. I found it difficult to find time daily to work on the paper. I knew at once times was not on my side. It was hard to find time to read, write down my thoughts, take notes, and categorize the papers. I feel like I even lost one day searching for articles that were not relevant. I expect doing work every day is going to be difficult and I need to put more thought into my schedule. At the end of the week, I did not make my goal of a completed outline. I found that there are more questions than answers. I am going to use this weekend to think about this week and what I could have done better. I also need think about what I am trying to understand with my article. I also discovered that I work a lot better in the daytime than at night. My schedule is something that needs to be evaluated. TIME, TIME, TIME.

Week of February 20-24

This was a better week for me with my paper. I worked on my chart of leadership theories. Working on the chart allowed me to visualize leadership theories and see how they have changed over time. While working on the chart, I could find connections with leadership theories and how they could be used to support change.

I created a rough draft that I had to send to my partner to read. Further in the week, we reviewed my rough draft and my partner gave my great feedback. I reviewed my partners rough draft and it helped me understand the direction of my paper and what direction I needed to change too. I found an added variable with my partner’s feedback that I will incorporate in my paper. This process with this paper has been a great lesson in my thinking. I usually do not commit the time to a paper and just write it. I see the benefit of practicing our daily routines with our paper. I feel myself constantly thinking about the paper and not feeing rushed. I will take the time this weekend to flush out my paper so I can continue to add to it throughout the week.

Week of February 27-3

This was a long week. It started off smooth but shifted towards the end of the week. The prior week and I finished my chart and had a better understanding about the evolution of the leadership theories. I was clear with my outline a new direction a was moving towards with the leadership theories. I thought I was ready to talk about systemic change in leadership. What I quickly discovered after reading to all of my articles is that there is a gap in the literature. I wasn’t clear that if it was me and my lack of research searching skills or if I discovered a gap in the literature. I set a meeting with Anne to help me search for added articles on systemic change in schools. After talking to Anne, I realize that there was not a lot of literature on systemic change in school and even less literature on what leadership practices are effective for systemic change in schools. I brought this to my committee chair and we thought about the paper for portfolio three.

What I discovered in the evolution of leadership theories we were currently in the contemporary leadership theories. Underneath this umbrella, I read briefly about shared leadership, service leadership, cultural leadership, and various others. I am going to create a chart to describe predominate leadership theories under the contemporary leadership theories. I am still going to use my chart with evolution of leadership theories. I am going to rewrite my introduction to focus on research to practice gap, how that impacts LD students and reading, and what school leaders need to do to prepare for systemic change to implement programs to help close the research to practice gap. That is going to be my introduction. Then I will transition into the evolution of leadership theories followed by the newly developed chart about the predominant leadership theories in the contemporary leadership. I’m going to pick one theory from the contemporary leadership model and dig deep into that theory. I will use that identified theory to justify systemic change in a school building. This weekend I will have to be productive and put in more time to make up for the last couple of weeks that I worked. Overall, I’m not too upset about the prior 2 to 3 weeks I’ve spent trying to outline this topic. I do feel better that I have a lot clearer understanding of the direction I want to go. In the future, I will meet with my committee chair earlier to talk to all these concerns and issues.

Week of March 6-10

This week was a challenging week. After meeting with my committee chair last Thursday, she changed the direction of my paper for portfolio three. I spent the majority of this week reading articles and doing more research. I do admit that I did a better job this week of finding my articles and being very clear, in my mind, with the direction I was going. I found myself constantly thinking about my paper and how to write my introduction to my paper. Day after day, I found excuses to delay the writing of my introduction. Later in the week I just wrote whatever came to my mind and left it on the paper and walked away. On Friday, I told myself I would spend 45 minutes looking at my introduction for the paper. However, I ended up spending three hours mapping out the introduction and rewriting my introduction. I’m glad I took the week to really think about outlining my introduction. I’m trying to be purposeful in everything I do to help me with my dissertation. I even reconnected with one of my colleagues to work on my writing this weekend. Next week is spring break and I will use this week to be productive and put a big chunk into my writing. Overall, I’m feeling good and I’m starting to build of habit of writing every day. I’m not filling any stress with the paper and moving at a good pace. Slow and steady.

Week of March 13-17

I spent the week working on my introduction…Spring break

Week of March 20-24

This was another challenge. I spent a lot of tine working on my introduction. With both of my kids participating in two different sports, I do not feel that this week was productive. I need to focus on time management. I need to create a schedule that works around their sports.

Week of April 1-5

This week was better than last week. I could get focus and get back on task. I revised the historical part of leadership theories and begin to introduce distributive leadership. This paper is taking me a long time to do. I typically do not pace myself with the paper. I find myself consistently going over material I wrote over and over again. I feel like I’m actually moving slower because every time I reread my material I am not happy with what I wrote.

Week of April 3-7

My wife was at a conference this week and the week flew by. I was constantly finding myself in a rush with working on my paper. I typically find a quiet space that I can write. This strategy works well for me. However, with my wife out of town, I was trying to work on my paper in between my kids practices. That did not go well at all. I was able to discuss distributive leadership and add some additional theories into it. I did read six articles this week and came up with some themes for distributive leadership. I also developed an outline. My wife is back and I’m going to use Saturday and Sunday to make up for this week. Hopefully, I will have a rough outline of distributive leadership. My plan of attack is going to be to address the themes that I have uncovered and just put it all on paper. Once I get it on paper, I can move it work the draft and make it flow. I only have 11 pages and I am 19 pages short. Next week I’m going to have to exercise *no* with my wife and put a dent in this paper. I have a conference at the end of the month and I need to have the paper done.

Week of April 10-14

His week went by in a blur. I was not successful exercising *no* with my wife. She received a call from a client, and had to fly out-of-town. This left me shuttling the kids and handling extracurricular activities. However, on April 12 and 13th I could go to the Johnson Center at George Mason. I spent a lot of time formatting my paper and wrote over the weekend. That was my redeeming feature for this week. In between working and shuttling the kids, I could work on different parts of my paper. I was I also focus on constructing additional tables to add into my literature review. On April 15, I was able to go back to Mason and do some more work. By Sunday, I had 20 pages almost written. One thing I am finding difficult with this process of writing every day, is remember being what I’m writing. Meaning, the flow my paper changes every day that I write. The way I am interpreting and making connections with the literature is changing. I hope this is not affect my overall paper.

Week of April 17-21

This is a busy week. When I got to work on Monday, one of our presenters decided to change the slides that we were going to present at the conference at the end of the week. My paper was put on a halt. I was able to find time in the morning or late at night to work on my paper. As stated earlier, working at night does not work well for me. There was not a lot of substance put into my paper this week. I also attended a conference and ate something that did not agree with my stomach. For almost 2 days, I was feeling sick. I lost a lot of time focusing on the conference and redoing the slides. Luckily for me, the conference ended on a Saturday. I booked my flight so I returned on Sunday. I was able to spend more time on my writing this weekend. The weekend seems to be best for me to write. It is easier to break away from everyone and get the writing done. One thing that was difficult with me in this paper was a conclusion. I was not sure what I actually wanted to conclude. I talked about so many different things in the paper. I found myself constantly going back to the beginning of the paper to read my problem. By Sunday, I had a rough draft almost complete.