First day of teaching –

Well, after much anxiety and anticipation, the day is finally here, my first day of teaching. I have been at Upper Darby since January, I know all the names of the students in the classes I will teach, and I have even been given the opportunity by my cooperating teacher to teach some of her lessons. I have familiarity in front of the classroom and already have the respect of the students merely because I know their names (and they just thought I was sitting in class observing); however, with all this initial experience, the first day was rough.

Prior to this day, my cooperating teacher and I sat down to discuss the scope of the upcoming unit on the Quantum Theory. This had to be the worst unit to start because it is confusing and unrelated to the students’ everyday life. Combine this with the fact that I am a new teacher, one who is nervous and unsure of exactly how I want to present myself in the classroom, and this makes for an interesting start to the transition from Ms. Woods to myself. Nancy and I decided that a day of lecture notes would be the best method to start the unit. I was leery about spending the whole block lecturing because this is something that I wanted to avoid in my teaching. As part of my philosophy, taking notes should be done at a minimum so class time could be devoted to more fun and exploratory activities, or other activities that allow students to work through problems and worksheets together as a team approach. Since it was my first day, however, I stuck with her suggestion and notes it was for 80 minutes.

The material went well, I felt confident in front of the class, confident with the material I was teaching and confident with my speech. My piece of the teaching thing was ok, but I could clearly tell by the sleepy eyes and begrudging moans that the students were bored out of their minds. Great, my first day and I’ve already bored my students practically to death. I have to admit, class was dreadful, even at times for me. This isn’t the teacher I want to be. Rather than belabor the issue, I’ll just chalk it up to it being my first day. According to my cooperating teacher, this unit leads itself more to lecture based notes anyway, so I’m not going to beat myself up too much. This class was good for me to experience because it confirmed my initial thoughts that lecture for the whole block is not a good teaching strategy. I have come to realize that variety is of utmost importance and this first day has provided me with something to reflect upon in my future lessons.

Aside from the monotony of the class, my cooperating teacher said that I did well for my first day and I am satisfied with this positive review. It was my first day, and I am only going to continue to grow as an educator. This is a stepping stone towards where I want to end up.
First quiz –

What I thought was going to be an easier quiz for the students turned into a nightmare. Nancy informed me that she usually likes for the quizzes to be no longer than 20 minutes so, when I was developing my first quiz, this is the time I was aiming for. But, wait – how many questions and to what depth would constitute 20 minutes of class time? This is what I was left to figure out.

I don’t think that anyone can really tell you how many questions or what types of questions will make up an appropriate quiz or test. Guidance can be provided, but ultimately I think that trial and error is the best method to really know for sure. I made a quiz, reviewed it with Nancy, got the ok to make copies, everything seemed to be fine. Of course, things didn’t turn out that way or otherwise I wouldn’t be writing this reflection. The quiz took students half an hour to complete, and even this time didn’t seem to be enough time for the students as I was practically ripping it out of some of their hands when I said that time was up. After I collected the papers, the look on their faces wasn’t one of students who knew the information, it was one of uneasiness. I continued on with what I had planned for class, but couldn’t wait to see how the students did. Was it a matter of them doing ok, but thinking they didn’t do ok because I have a different style of testing then my cooperating teacher? Or was it an instance where I really made a horrible quiz and the students really did that poorly?

The results were mixed, the students that I had come to find out did well with Ms. Woods, also did well with me. Those students that were struggling with her were also struggling with me. I guess that the quiz, while it did run over the time I had expected it to take, wasn’t that poorly constructed after all. I agree that some questions could have been clearer and that the scope of the quiz was too long, but I would consider them to be minor. After reviewing the quiz and the students’ responses, it appears that not one question was answered incorrectly by all students; therefore, the test questions were a valid measure of the information covered in class. What I do believe the true reason for the uneasy looks on the students’ faces is that it was slightly different from the quizzes they are used to with Ms. Woods. A learning opportunity exists for both me and my students. They have to get used to another teacher with a different personality and assessment strategy and I have to learn more about my students and their academic abilities. This experience will be helpful when constructing assessment tools in future units.
Kim Dallas
Journal # 3
March 17, 2006

Points –

Points and grades, grades and points; students are so grade conscious. I know that I was a student that was overly consumed with my grades; however, I never really realize the full effect of this until I saw this issue in a totally different light, the light that shines from the teacher who assigns grades onto students who constantly complain or question the reason for their given grade. For my Accelerated students, grades are a major point of contention between teacher and student. I’m reminded of a paper that I wrote for Philosophy of Education in which I discussed whether or not learning would stop if grades weren’t given. If I took only my student teaching experience as evidence, I would absolutely, without a doubt conclude that grades are a motivating factor with which students are totally obsessive about. Learning to them equals getting a good grade.

I bring this point up because I am taking issue with points and students questioning my cooperating teacher over me as to why they lost points. The deduction of points seems to be a real issue and one that I need my cooperating teacher to be on my side for. At this present time, there is not a seamless unity that exists in the classroom. I feel at times that Nancy says one thing to me and tells a student another, despite the conferences I had with her regarding this matter. To continue with the larger issue, I took off points because in my key I assigned a certain amount of points to certain items, and therefore, on the quiz points were deducted accordingly. Upon receiving the quizzes back the student literally stormed Ms. Woods with complaints. It made me upset because she responded to them by saying that “I wouldn’t have taken points off for that, go ask Ms. Dallas.” The students then came to me saying, well Ms. Woods wouldn’t have taken points off, so why did you? I feel as if my cooperating teacher’s actions really diminished my authority in the classroom. It made me seem like some figure that was just there, but that had no real control over teaching or grade assigning. I also felt like I was in a corner, I wanted to stand firm by my decision to give the students the appropriate grades; however, with Nancy telling the students she wouldn’t have taken points off and with the students coming to me with this backing from their real teacher, I felt lost. I didn’t know what to do. I was able to muster up a meek argument for why the score will remain; however, the students were unhappy. I know that it isn’t my role to make all students happy, but I feel like the real issue was not how well they did on the test, but it was the fact that if Ms. Woods were still their teacher, they would have received a better score. Was I being fair? Should I have changed the score because Nancy said she wouldn’t have deducted points for that? Ultimately, I feel like the decision had to stand because if I am going to represent myself as an authority figure, I can not back down and change my decision just because my cooperating teacher disagreed. Could this be the wrong attitude to take, maybe, but for better or worse, I have to take some stance on the issue.
PSSA testing –

I am bothered by the school policy during PSSA testing. Upper Darby must do well on the tests to make progress according to both state and national governmental standards of achievement in high school. Due to this must get better, must improve mentality, much focus has been placed on testing, moving the focus away from the classroom. In English and Math classrooms, while much focus is placed on teaching English and Math concepts for the test, at least those subjects are still being covered in some shape. Chemistry is a different story. As direct instruction from the school to all teachers of juniors, no quizzes or tests are to be given during PSSA testing days and minimal class work is to be assigned or covered; more or less, the indirect message is not to do much in class on those days. My cooperating teacher decided that class as usual would not be taking place. Rather, I made a packet that would serve as a self study guide that the student would read and answer appropriate questions in given sections. The packet was to be completed by the end of the week, but the students could use class time to either do the packet or to talk.

I understand the schools policy to take it easy on the juniors for a few days, and if I had a class that was totally juniors, I would be a little more understanding of the policy. However, I have mixed classes, both juniors and seniors make up all three blocks that I was teaching. The students loved these three days because they were allowed to do what they wanted, they could talk instead of doing chemistry for three days. I on the other hand was not as happy. I feel as though I am doing an injustice to the students by allowing them to talk for three straight days, while I sit there, not teaching. Is it right for the administrators to permit unproductive class days because they want to improve the scores on national tests? I am to be teaching chemistry to my students, but instead time is being wasted that could be used productively. While the material in the distributed packets was the material that was to be taught next, the students weren’t actually going to learn that information during those three days because they weren’t being held accountable, we allowed them to talk and waste time. Ironically, the issue of accountability presents itself in a different light. I just don’t see the impact that this relaxed environment has on test scores. It seems to me that placing more emphasis on one test negates the effectiveness of learning chemistry in class.

So to end this on a sad note, no real learning took place this week. The students had a unit test on Monday, PSSA testing Tuesday through Thursday, and Friday, but even though the students had off all week they were unmotivated to learn on Friday because well, it was Friday.
Kim Dallas
Journal # 5
April 5, 2006

What I need to work on –

Nancy and I had a serious heart to heart today. It was much needed though because I’ve been struggling with my role as an educator lately. My planning on paper appears to be effective, but implementation is a problem.

The first unit I taught, Nancy was very much involved in the planning process. For this second unit, I have been doing more of the objective setting and pedagogical planning on my own. Every morning during our first block prep period, Nancy and I sit down to discuss my lesson. When I tell her how I have planned class, she says that things look fine and that I should continue with class as planned. In my opinion, the reason that she says things look fine on paper is because while she is not telling me what to do as much, I am still following suit with her method of teaching and her layout for class. The implementation of the lesson gets a bit fuzzy because I am not quite the same person as she is. Ultimately, we have different personalities and different teaching styles; what works for her in class, doesn’t have quite the same effect for me. I am torn because I want to develop my own style, but when I try to do something different and it doesn’t go perfectly, she will say that it was a bad lesson. I am trying to be her, but it is not working because I am my own person and I am inevitably going to be a different teacher then she is. But, just because I’m different doesn’t mean that I am doing a bad job, I am just not doing the exact job that she would be doing. Bottom line, the plan on paper looks good, but I need to be more effective in implementing the plan in the classroom. I feel like Alex Karefe on the TV show *Grey’s Anatomy*. He is a struggling surgical intern who is trying to figure out his place in the hospital, all while making some mistakes along they way. This is me, I was well prepared to be a teacher, but I’m just struggling to find my comfort level in the classroom.

Like I mentioned earlier, my cooperating teacher and I did have a conversation today in which she asked me whether I was having fun in the classroom, my answer to which was no, not really. She told me that I needed to find the place where I could have fun, a comfort level which would enable me to enjoy teaching. I needed to be me. I was struggling for so long to be like her that I forgot who I was as a teacher. This conversation leaves me with a lot to think about over spring break. Who am I? What do I want to accomplish in my teaching of chemistry? How am I going to make the students want to learn chemistry? I am happy for this conversation because it really provided me with the fuel to dig deep within myself to make myself a better teacher.
Change in me as a teacher –

It has been a really good week, I have come back from spring break a different teacher and even my cooperating teacher has noticed and given me positive feedback. I have come back and been myself in class. I’m not as nervous, more accepting that things will not always go according to the way I’ve planned my lesson (and re-written in my trusted steno notepad). In addition, I’ve made a successful leap from the heavy focus I’ve been placing on the actual chemistry content and am now able to do more in terms of relating the chemistry to my students. I just have a more positive feeling. I have had a fun week of teaching and I’m so excited about the transition that I was able to make.

The students have made notice of this change. They have adjusted to the way that I teach and the way that the classroom is run now that I’m student teaching. A relationship is beginning to build and I hope to foster this throughout the rest of my placement.

I can’t quite put my finger on what happened to make this transition possible, but I think it has something to do with an increased confidence in myself. My professors, family and friends have been telling me that I can do it, that teaching is the right fit for me, that I am smart, knowledgeable and capable of planning and handling the responsibilities that go along with educating students, but while all of this praise and positive energy was coming at me, I wasn’t listening. I think that finally, I opened my eyes to my true potential and finally embraced the qualities that I truly have to offer to this profession. I fully realize why I love chemistry and why I want to be teaching it. It was this culmination of all positive things that lead me to realize that I am going to be the teacher I’m going to be. I can’t be someone else. I must have the utmost confidence in my abilities and go from there; as the saying goes, let the chips fall where they may. This is exactly the mentality I embraced and it worked. I became me in the classroom and this was a good feeling. While I still have much more room for improvement, I made a much needed step in the right direction toward becoming the teacher that I envision myself being. This is a very good feeling; I’m riding on a cloud!
Conflict with student regarding grade and missing work –

Today was the first time where I really felt frustrated with a student. At the end of my last block a student expressed concern over his failing grade. I simply explained to him that the reason he was failing was because of the week of class he missed prior to the week of spring break. Additionally, the week when school resumed after spring break, this student made the decision to leave once again on a band trip and missed an additional two days of school. This was not something that my cooperating teacher or I would have advised had the student conferred with either one of us. This student had already missed a lot of school and was missing a lot of assignments. Simple logic would have told the student that missing more school would not be in his best interest. The student made a grown up decision to attend the band trip. As I write this, keep in mind that this journal is written when the conflict over missing work arose. The three days that this student was in school (after spring break and before leaving for the band trip) I stayed after school two of those days to help him one-on-one to catch him up with material covered in class on the days he was missing. I advised him to say after school on the third day to take a test that he missed before spring break, but on that day he was busy. Thus leaving an old test to make up and an upcoming test all in the week he gets back after the band trip.

The conflict occurred, I say conflict, but it was a mere discussion that was an endless battle of excuses and blame placed on me. I told this student, under the direction of my cooperating teacher that he would still be responsible for the current material and the test on Thursday, but upon hearing this he said that he doesn’t know this material and that I spent after school time with him reviewing material from the old unit. In which case I responded, I advised you that you should have taken the unit 4 test before you left for the band trip, but that you made excuses for why you wouldn’t be ready to take it then. Nothing was working in this argument and I soon became frustrated because the student was blaming his failing grade on me and the fact that I didn’t help him. But, I did help him, I stayed after school for two days, and offered more days if needed. He didn’t take me up on the offer for additional help after school past the two days that I already spent with him. If I helped, how can I be getting blamed for this? Isn’t it partially the students’ responsibility to get caught up on missing work? I am supposed to be preparing my students for life in the real world, but how am I doing this if students aren’t accepting their responsibilities? School is like a job for students and therefore, work is the product that is performed and expected in the work environment. If you don't abide by deadlines in the office place, shouldn’t you expect to get fired? I would think yes. Relating this back to school being these students work, why should they expect high grades if no effort is put in on their part? Ultimately, what bothered me most was the fact that I was the one being blamed. Should it be my fault?
Just me and a sub –

Today was the first time that Nancy was gone for the day and I was left with a sub. My cooperating teacher and I made sure that the agenda for the class was set before she left and she reassured me that I would be fine with the substitute. I teach relatively well behaved kids that enjoy learning and the presence of a sub shouldn’t be that detrimental to the productivity of the day. Besides this, Nancy has been given me greater flexibility in the classroom. She has been remaining in the room less or less as my abilities in teaching continues to grow and strengthen. She has more confidence in me and knows that I am doing an acceptable job in the classroom. Students’ progress and abilities in chemistry are growing. By now they are well adjusted to me and referring to me over concerns of absences, missed work, or misunderstanding in certain topics. I truly feel confident in front of the classroom, confident in my role to both a teacher and as a student that is continually growing from each experience that is new to me. I think it will be fine, I have no concerns and am comfortable with my lesson.

Things did go really well in the classroom. Nancy left me her keys, so I felt like a real teacher. I was able to come in when I wanted in the morning (I like to be there earlier then Nancy, but often I have to wait to be let into the science resource room). I made efficient use of my planning period to make copies and prepare myself for class. And then it was time, time for class essentially on my own. I walked into class with an excited feeling. The sub had not yet gotten to class, so I was left with the students alone during the opening activity. There were some comments questioning where Ms. Woods was and I politely said that the sub will be joining us momentarily. I thought it was funny because a few students asked why a sub was needed when I had been teaching them for so long now. I explained to them that for legal reasons, I need someone that is certified to be in class. This was a fine enough explanation for them and class proceeded as normal. There were no conflicts and there was no more chatter than usual. I had to do the usual calming down in between activities, and the normal name dropping of those students that needed to be refocused, but overall class went really well. I was happy with my ability to lead the class without letting the substitute be a distraction. My level of confidence has been elevated because I felt as though I wasn’t just sharing the classroom with my teacher, but that it was my own classroom.
Corrections and improvements on planning for lab –

When asked two weeks ago at our last student teaching seminar what we still wanted to improve upon with regards to our teaching, I had mentioned that I felt my planning and implementation of lab was still a bit shaky. When I plan for labs it occurred to me that I was not thinking through all possible scenarios with respect to the students. Rather then thinking about the students in my classes, I was envisioning my college lab students or even myself as a student in the chemistry lab. I was not taking into account the inexperience or perhaps, a level of immaturity that exists with high school students in all situations, but most importantly in the lab setting. There were far too many assumptions made and not enough thought placed upon the exact tone and introduction of the experiment that would be given to the students. This partial lack of thought resulted in haphazard introductions to the specifics of the lab. The general message was presented, but I left myself confronted with confused students who needed additional guidance. Those students who are more self-reliant and independent were able to follow and implement the procedures from their lab notebooks; however, other students needed additional help and clarification. The uneven nature of student preparedness that arose from holes in my planning needed to be rectified.

After leaving that seminar, I reflected yet again as to what was missing in previous labs and what would be needed to create fluidity in the lab room. I was fortunate to have one last experiment scheduled for the semester and this was an opportunity for me to improve on my greatest identified area of weakness. To rectify the lack of planning from my first, true, solo-flight at introducing, implementing and concluding the experiment, I first started by taking a step back. While the students are required to write the procedures into their lab notebooks, this was all they were doing. These assignments were mere exercises in transcription, only words on a page. I came to the realization that I could not assume that my students would fully understand how to successfully implement the experiment that was described. More guidance was necessary on my part to fully explain the exact procedure. As a change from the last experiment, I decided to use visuals to aid in the description of the experiment. I used newsprint to draw diagrams of the lab equipment with the appropriate set-up and also to indicate the location of the chemicals in the lab. Additionally, I described and assigned what role each partner would be responsible for in the experiment. I combined the detailed newsprint with a thorough explanation, including a demo, of how to prepare the desired solution to be titrated. Unlike my first attempt at completely leading the experiment, I left no details to the wind; I considered everything to be an important detail.

I felt my method was more successful than last time as it was more appealing to both verbal and visual learners. Those students who have typically been more self-sufficient benefited from a continued reiteration and those students who typically need more help were given the greater explanation they needed. I thought of all possible questions and problems that could arise in the performance of the experiment before they happened. Covering all ends of the experiment was definitely helpful because this experiment was considerably better then the last. The students were more independent, more productive in the lab, less wasteful of class time, more familiar and comfortable with what they were doing, and ultimately, the level of confused chatter was
greatly reduced. All of these positives can be attributed directly to the planning I did before beginning the experiment. Rather than constantly answering the same question, I was able to walk around the room more, observe my students lab technique more closely, and make more suggestions regarding their handling of equipment and chemicals. This was all at a minimum before because I was constantly running around the room to answer the same procedural-type questions from different students.

This time around, the lab atmosphere was one of production and not confusion. I definitely learned the importance of effective planning from the students’ perspective. Prior to this occurrence, I was thinking more about my part in the lab, from the perspective of someone who feels comfortable around chemistry directions, equipment and the chemicals themselves. I put less focus on the students and I now completely realize that this must not be neglected, rather, the most important part is making the lab approachable and doable for those who will perform and ultimately be graded on the results of the experiment. As I end my student teaching experience and look forward to teaching on my own next year, I have learned a valuable lesson with respect to labs: do not make any assumptions and plan for all outcomes; the obvious to me might just be that which is least obvious to my students.
Kim Dallas  
Journal # 10  
May 31, 2006

Friendships in the classroom –

I’ve created a monster. Up until this point my relationship with my students has been very professional. I was the student teacher and they were my students. The students are aware that I am close to their age; being 11th and 12th graders they all but figured out this. After all, how hard can it be when you have the title student attached to your teaching status? Pair that with the fact that I look young and you have a no brainier as to my general age. Occasionally, I would mention things about Villanova and I would also talk to the students about their academic plans after graduation. To the seniors, I was very much interested in the schools they would be attending in the fall and so this would make up some of the before and after class talking. I see no problem in this because any educator would be interested in their students’ furthered academic endeavors. Up until this point our relationship was cut and dry, I am the teacher you are my students. There was a line that was drawn and that was respected. I can’t argue that the students were not respectful, they really were all along. They respected my decisions even when they felt they were right.

Slowly I let this line slip away from me and to my detriment I am starting to become, in their eyes, a friend. I am their pal, someone to joke around with. I have let this happen because I have loosened up too much, become too friendly and down to earth. Thankfully, it is the end of the year, but this is definitely a learning experience for me. Through my relinquished control I am able to learn and observe a very important lesson taking place; once control is relinquished it is hard to get it back. Also, once it goes, it goes fast. Much to my avail, the students walk into class saying “yo Dallas, what’s up?,” “hi Dal,” or my favorite, “hey hon.” The way students have begun to address me is evidence alone that I have let this happen, I have been too relaxed in the classroom and I have created an environment of friendship more so than of authority. While this is happening, there is still some respect that exists; I can see this when they question their grades. When I explain the reasoning behind taking points off, they realize their mistakes and own up to the fact. The students never try to persuade me to change their grade or think that they deserve that grade because they view me as their friend. I am still their teacher and they respect my decisions.

I definitely have to change my approach next year. I want my students to enjoy coming to class and to like me as their teacher, but without some sense of authority nothing will get done in the classroom. If I am viewed not as a teacher, but as a friend I will lose control of the classroom. In a way, I’m glad this happened to me. Teachers that I know are always telling me that you shouldn’t share too much information with your students, that they should only know the you that exists at school because for them to know too much means that they will think that they can be your friend. Problems can only come from this relationship. I saw first hand, and luckily it was at the end of the year, what a “friendship dynamic” can do the overall learning environment.
End of the year motivational blues –

There was a mutiny in my block 5 class today. This has been the rowdier group of students throughout my student teaching, but it all came to ahead today. I felt like the last man standing on my side of the battle field, holding up my teaching flag.

The students have all but had it with school. There is very little motivation on their parts and that makes teaching them hard for me. I still have a job to do, but all the students can see is the end of the year, that graduation, for some, is just around the corner. Preparing the students for the last unit of the semester was a big challenge, but one that I was successfully able to do by implementing varied teaching strategies and incorporating a few more labs then usual. We were able to get through it together, thankfully.

Today was a different story. It was time to review for the final and it was the last thing that most of them wanted to do. My cooperating teacher took over block 2 because she wanted me to be familiar with how she finds the review process to work best. I observed her and took down some notes to prepare myself for blocks 4 and 5. Even with her teaching, the students were just not into things. They talked with other students, and overall were just a lack luster bunch of kids. Nancy made a comment to me after class, “good luck with the other blocks, it’s frustrating and un-motivational to be up front trying to prepare them for the final when they themselves are not interested.” I headed into lunch thinking about her comment. It’s June 2nd, there is still one more day of review on Monday, and 5 days until the end of school. Is it really possible to continue to motivate students? Can you be a motivational factor enough or does it just really depend on the students in your class? I remember those last few weeks before summer vacation and everyone is just ready to be done, ready to not have to worry or think about school. While I can be accepting of the fact that students are ready to be done with school when the time is near, I worry that the time when students are ready to check out is becoming sooner and sooner. It seemed to me that after Memorial Day they were done, out, finished with learning, yet at that point almost three weeks of school still remained. How will I motivate my students next year, and in years to come? These are the questions that I am still unsure of and will most likely think long and hard about with each passing year.

To get back to rebellion, block 4 were compliant as usual, but in block 5 there was a battle and I all but lost. I structured class like the others, but about half way through the block the student had it, they more or less joined together to say that they were done with review, they didn’t want to do. I tried to mount a defense, but I lacked the support that was needed to win the war. Thankfully I had mentioned in the beginning of class that after review we would be working on a word web together and all they wanted to do was this. Maybe it wasn’t exactly how I planned things to run, but I rolled with the punches and moved onto the word web. Through this I was able to still parallel on reviewing and the class was able to learn. I was able to mount somewhat of a counter attack and this filled up all but 10 minutes of class time. If a similar experience should happen to me again, I think that I would be more forceful with the fact that reviewing for the final is important and that I am trying to be of help to their studies. Changing the pace of the class was absolutely essential though because it gave me some leverage to still talk and review, but just in a different format. I have learned the importance of being flexible with different classes of students. What works for one group is not always going to work for another.
Kim Dallas  
Journal # 12  
June 8, 2006  

My last day –

Today was my last day at Upper Darby because we didn’t have any finals to give tomorrow. It was a sad yet rewarding day. I was happy to be finished, proud of my success, but at the same time sad that it was all over; my days as a student teacher were over.

Looking back and reflecting on my experience I can see the growth that I have made as an educator. I came in shy and timid, unsure of my abilities, but truly believe that I am leaving a changed person. I am a more confident teacher, one who knows how to effectively plan and manage a classroom which such a diverse group of students. I have developed better communication skills and according to my students I am much better at explaining things and getting my point across than I was when I first started. I have been able to stay true to my philosophy of teaching chemistry and while I have not fully immersed myself in what I intend to do there were parting rays through a cloudy sky. I was able to release my inhibitions about being a teacher. I was able to become Kim Dallas, a fun loving person, who enjoys being positive and allowing this positive energy to flow freely from myself to my students. I had fun teaching chemistry because I truly do enjoy this subject, and I think that my students could see this. I know they saw a change in me because many wrote of this transformation in a summative assessment that they wrote of me and my abilities as a teacher. I have definitely grown as both a person and as a teacher from this experience. There is a newfound confidence that exuberates from me in the classroom.

This experience has been a good one because Nancy has provided for me the best experience, that of being by myself in the classroom. She had confidence in me and in turn this increased the confidence I had in myself. There is always room for growth in any teacher and I am no different. I have grown a lot in the last 12 weeks of student teacher and I look forward to the places I have yet to go with my career. I have truly found what I am supposed to do with my life. I love chemistry and I love teaching and I can’t wait for all the students I will get to teach in the years to come.