

PIDP: 3260

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Instruct

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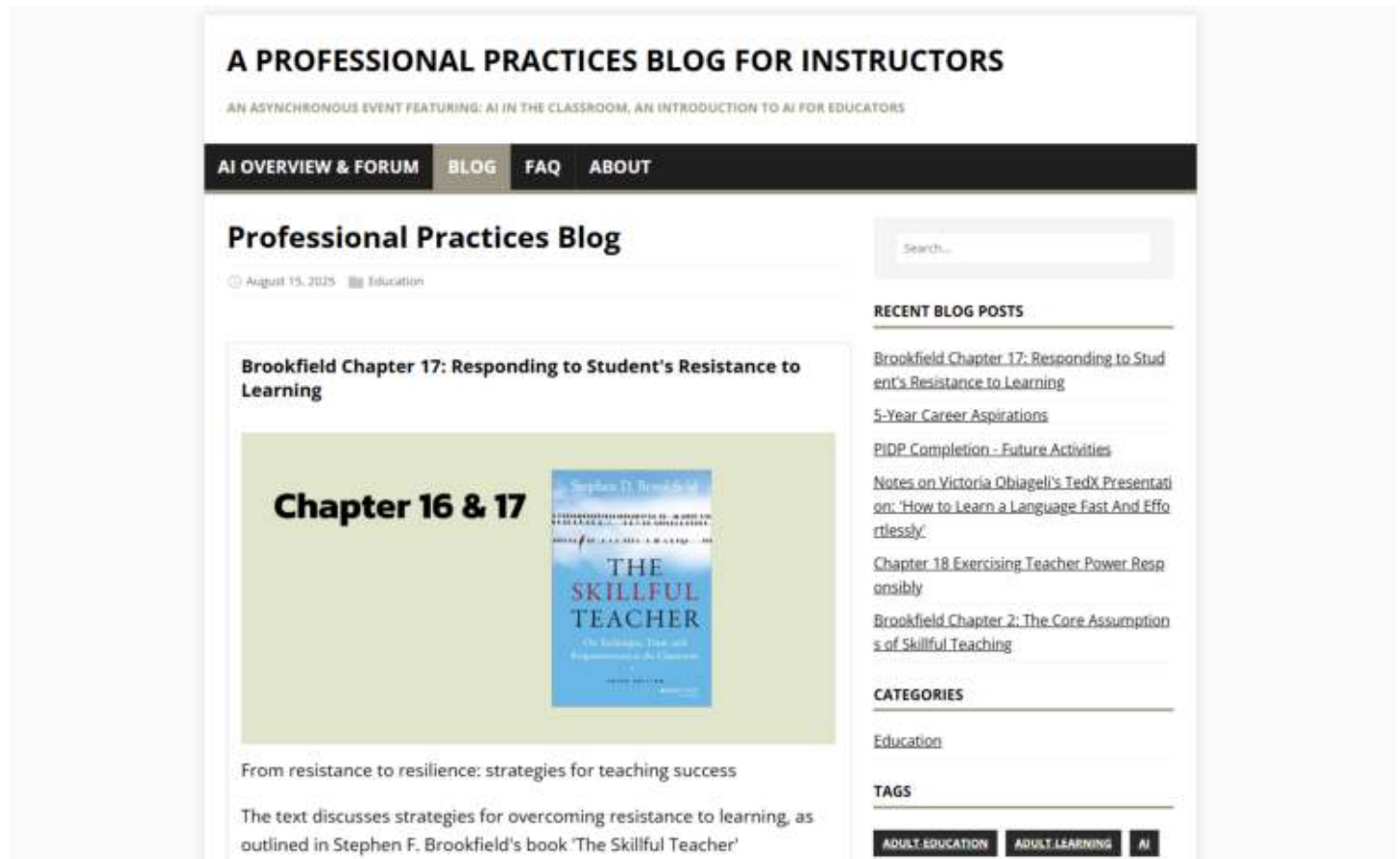


Blog Self-Assessment

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Self-assessment is a crucial component of professional development, allowing for critical reflection on one's work and identification of areas for growth. This assessment details my experience creating a series of blog posts as part of instructor training, outlining lessons learned, strengths, weaknesses, and a final evaluation.

The blog itself can be found here:



[Source: https://xyz-abc-show-and-tell.github.io/pidp/ai_for_educators/docs/professional-practices-blog/]

1. What did you learn about creating blogs?

In this assignment I exercised HTML/CSS templates and media responsiveness skills. I customized a website I built earlier with the static site generator Hugo. In particular, I enhanced the design and functionality.

Modifying the "Mainroad" theme to add borders to blog summaries, and optimizing video sizing, demonstrated the importance of small, iterative design choices to improve user experience.

Additionally, integrating media (e.g., embedding and scaling videos) highlighted technical and aesthetic balance.

While I have plenty of prior experience with blogs, revisiting Hugo reminded me of the efficiency of lightweight frameworks for content-focused sites and their seamless compatibility with text editors like Emacs, which streamlines workflows.

2. Which classmates' blogs did you like and why?

As a web developer, I tend to be picky when evaluating personal blogs. I don't like most over-the-counter, vendor-locked, 'insta-blog' products, like Squarespace, Blogspot, and Tumblr. I'm even tired of WordPress websites. However, I understand, people want to get their stuff out there, and they want to do it without spending weeks at a computer. People can also be guarded when it comes to disclosing their proficiency with web development technologies, and this may be the reason most people seem to prefer the DIY approach.

However, setting aside my seasoned industry-specific preferences and browsing some of my classmates' blogs was not just entertaining, but also warming.

I enjoyed <https://www.jenhphotos.ca/blog-pidp-jhillman> because the color palette was tasteful, the images had a clean look to them, and they had been decorated with some photo editing.

I also liked <https://cherylmaramda.wordpress.com/> because the design was simple and clean, there was plenty of white-space, and the images were calming and uplifting.

I found the 'Vista White' background of <https://pidpramz.wordpress.com/> easy to view -- also called 'Bianca', 'Alabaster', 'Floral White', and 'Snow Drift' -- and I liked the content @ <https://pdavy.org/2024/11/12/the-art-of-connection/>

The design at <https://nategen4.wordpress.com/> had an 'administrative' feel to it, which I found aesthetically pleasing.

I didn't audit the blogs for performance or evaluate them against any criteria because personal blogs are typically not put to use at a scale where performance or SEO matters.

3. Strengths and weaknesses of your blog:

Strengths:

- **Easy to work on:** Hugo's structure allowed rapid updates (e.g., theme adjustments) and integration with Emacs, adhering to efficient workflows.
- **Professional design:** The clean layout, typographic consistency, and media styling reflect criterion 6.
- **Lightweight:** Only essential media and CSS are included, optimizing load times.
- **Editor integration:** Seamless editing via Emacs eliminated distractions, supporting productivity.

Weaknesses:

- **Lack of a cohesive home page:** The list of summaries appears standalone, blurring the distinction between the homepage and archive pages (criterion 3 indirectly affected).
- **Navigation ambiguity:** Threads/categorizations are sparse, potentially confusing readers. Addressing this would enhance adherence to the rubric's emphasis on demonstrating depth in course content (criterion 1 & 2)

4. Self-Assessment Mark: [4.5/5]

Rubric Alignment:

- **Criterion 1 & 2:** Blog demonstrates depth in course topics (e.g., AI ethics, workflow optimization) with additional personal insights, fulfilling both points.
- **Criterion 3:** Contributions were completed hastily, missing the reflective pacing of weekly engagement. This deduction of ~0.5 (criterion not fully met) accounts for my mark.
- **Criterion 4:** Videos and images are embedded effectively, aligning with media diversity expectations.

- **Criterion 5 & 6:** Writing quality is polished (criterion 5), and the blog's aesthetic meets professional standards (criterion 6).
- **Criterion 7:** A copyright statement is visible on each page.

Rationale:

The blog excels in technical execution, design, and content quality (criteria 1, 2, 4–7), but the rushed timeline and navigation shortcomings detract slightly.

Improving the timing of the posts could be important in the context of appealing to users (building interest over time). Being conscious of that helps to ensure alignment with my inference of the rubric's intent.

The mark of 4.5/5 acknowledges strong performance while recognizing room for improvement in pacing the posts (criterion 3).

Conclusion

This project reinforced the interconnectedness of technical skill, design principles, and instructional considerations in digital content creation.

While I am pleased with the blog's technical execution and overall aesthetic, the self-assessment highlights the importance of prioritizing a consistent, thoughtfully paced publication schedule and importance of intuitive navigation.

The assignment helped keep focus on the importance of balancing stylistic refinement with a deliberate approach to content delivery, ensuring a more engaging and accessible experience for readers.

It's important to acknowledge that the iterative process of creation, reflection, and refinement is central to effective instruction and continuous professional learning.

AI Models Used In This Report: The ideas, structure, writing, and editing in this paper were performed by the author. Various AI models were used to research, collect, and verify data, format arguments, and grammatically structure content. Models used include: Qwen 2.5 235b a22b. Meta Llama 3.1 405b Instruct. MistralAI Devstral Small 2505, GPT-5, GPT-Image-1, Google Gemma 3 27b