

End of the 1st Quarter

Dan Basom

As a coach, I tend to view aspects of life in basketball terms. Therefore, as I look ahead to my future as a learner I do not see my graduate degree being the final buzzer in my education, but rather another step in a lifelong journey. At the conclusion of this semester, I will have fulfilled a personal and career goal of obtaining a masters' degree before having children. Although I plan on taking a break from my coursework in the coming years to enjoy raising a family with my wife, I do feel that continuing my education is a necessary step in becoming a well-rounded educator. If I preach the importance of learning to my students and players, then I need to model this behavior.

At the outset of my time in the Master of Arts in Education (MAED) program I felt that this would be the final degree I would obtain. I have no interest in pursuing an educational specialist or doctoral degree; however, I am contemplating the idea of beginning work on a second master's degree. Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would be interested in obtaining multiple graduate degrees; yet the Kinesiology courses I took as part of the MAED program and my emphasis in Sports Leadership and Coaching have had a profound impact on the way I work with the students and players I interact with on a daily basis. I feel that continuing this education will help me become a better educator.

After researching various universities across the country, I have settled on a plan that I think is best for me to earn a second master's degree, which will build upon the knowledge I gained through the MAED program. My plan is to enroll in the Coaching Education Graduate Program offered by Ohio University. To obtain my degree I will need a total of 51 credits to be completed by taking 12 courses. This program is almost entirely online, with one brief seminar course that takes place on campus. With my experience in the online format in the MAED program I feel well prepared to tackle another online curriculum. It will take me approximately two years to complete the program with Ohio University. Although I will be taking a break from my studies, meeting with an academic adviser from Ohio University will be one of the first steps in continuing my education.

Through the online format in the MAED program I have become more aware of the impact technology has on the lives of both educators and students. I work in a school with a 1:1 student laptop initiative and it seems as though my colleagues and I are finding more new tools to use with our students each day. As part of my future learning I would like to take advantage of professional development opportunities that will help me find new ways to engage my students in the curriculum via technology. Several of my colleagues attended the Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning (MACUL) conference in March. After hearing about the new ideas that they received from the conference I am planning to attend next year and for the foreseeable future.

Along with attending the MACUL conference in the years to come I would like to take more courses that discuss ways to use technology in teaching. As I look at

the ways my colleagues are using technology to better help today's learners, I am envious of the new concepts they have absorbed. Through using the content learned in technology courses, I will be better prepared to develop lessons that engage learners of the twenty-first century.

When I began the MAED program nearly two years ago I was fearful of taking courses in an online format. I had one previous experience with learning online and although I earned a suitable grade in the course, I did not feel as though I learned much information. As I conclude my journey in the MAED program I am no longer apprehensive about online learning. I learned a great deal without having any problems in the online format. I also found the scheduling (on my own time) to be preferred to that of a traditional classroom setting, not to mention the money I have saved in gas by not driving to and from the university. It is difficult for me to imagine taking traditional courses in the near future, because I feel online courses that can be done on my own timeline will be more conducive to my busy lifestyle. A new requirement set forth by the state of Michigan necessitates that graduating high school students must take virtual classes. I feel the lessons I have learned will help me in assisting my students in their own online learning. Taking more online courses is definitely a part of my future as a lifelong learner.

The state of Michigan requires that teachers earn six college credits every five years after the probationary teaching period. It is my intention to focus this lifelong education in the fields of coaching and technology. For me, coaching has been the most beneficial way for me to have a profound impact on the lives of young people. With greater knowledge of technology, I will feel more prepared to stay

current with new ways in which the younger generations interact with one another.

Regardless of the state of Michigan having a requirement for continuing education, I

view furthering my knowledge as an essential step in my career as an educator.