

MSU Application

Goal Statement

Clarence Cooper, one of my Northwood University instructors whom I hold in high regard, instilled in me a deep ambition to obtain a Master's Degree -- to align myself with the small percentage of persons achieving a graduate degree. This goal, coupled with my long time passion for learning and using new technologies, are why I am applying to the Master of Arts in Education Technology program at Michigan State University.

Pausing my MSU undergraduate degree at the end of 1983 due in part to my impending wedding, I continued to hold a strong desire to complete a bachelor's degree. In 2001, I turned my attention back to this goal, through the pursuit of a Business Administration degree at Northwood University. My focus was not on merely completing enough classes to earn a degree, but to excel in every class that I took. Earning President's and Dean's List awards each semester I was eligible to do so, I graduated with highest honors in June 2003.

My working career has involved the continued analysis and integration of various technologies to aid in accomplishing business objectives, and to simplify business functions for end users. I have always strived to identify and use innovative ways to train and communicate to the end users that I support. As a technical writer for over fifteen years, I authored software release documents and instruction manuals for end users. I also created interactive theme-based PC learning tutorials where users could practice on new screens and processes before new software was released to them. Currently as an MSU employee, I coordinate software testing and create/review software support documentation for the Enterprise Business Systems project. Throughout these years "teaching" end users about the correct use of business software, I always strive to provide understandable instruction to a varying range of end user technical skill sets, and look for ways to improve my communications. I am also considering becoming a part-time instructor at the college level, to pass on the experiences I have acquired over the course of my career. A graduate degree in Education Technology would be an ideal program to hone my instructional skills.

I plan to pursue the Learning, Design and Technology concentration for this degree program. Class focus will be to:

1. Strengthen my understanding on the different ways people learn/acquire information
2. Use different technical delivery methods to effectively communicate information to end users
3. Identify best practices to analyze the success or failure of my communication methods, and continually improve on my interaction with my end users/students

As I researched different options, it was very clear that MSU offers one of the country's best Education programs, and the MAET degree is led by highly learned instructors (with mostly Doctorate degrees). The range and scope of offered classes that support my degree focus are vast and impressive, starting

with the three certificate classes and continuing on with CEP 815, 816 and 817. It would be a great honor to participate and graduate from an educational program that is awarded and recognized as frequently as MSU is, and then pass on what I learn to many others.

I have effectively learned at higher education institutions in classes delivered in different delivery formats: face-to-face, online and hybrid. I am aware of both the benefits and negative aspects that each provide. I feel my strong technical background, established education prowess and long time task of training end users on hardware and software instruction would make me an ideal and successful student in the Master of Arts in Educational Technology degree program. I thank you for your review and consideration to this matter.

Regards,

Brian K. Jenks

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