First Dossier Review conducted in March of 2009 with Prof. Elizabeth Boling (EXB) and Dr. Anne Ottenbreit-Leftwich (AOL) in review of Tiffany Roman (TR).

EXB: I have six comments on your portfolio.

1) One thing that was noted was needing links to the specific evidence. And I noticed in one little place, it wasn’t in your statement, it was in your lit review (your qualitative study) you note that you've been reading these people (people, people, people - site, site, site). And in the paragraphs, there are ideas that I know are coming from those individuals, but those should be linked right after they are said. They rolled up into the same piece of advice, which is to get in the habit of putting citations into things, or in your own statement, putting the link that says “you can see this here” right next to the place that you’ve said it.

2) I saw your general statement, but I didn’t see a road map for each general section, so went I into each section, I would expect to statement, but I only saw the documents. (AOL chimes in - that was added later).

EXB - Make sure you are citing your work, even if it’s kind of "I have this idea" or supporting your own ideas. For example, you state that it’s important to be reflective along those lines.

*Conversation noted that visual logo was a nice reflection of my interest in design.*

3) You had a reflection on your teaching, but it was placed in other evidence. Why is it there?

TR- The expectations listed in the dossier note you need to include your teaching expectations, your course, your syllabi, your student feedback. I can definitely move it. They were earlier reflections that were compiled a couple of years ago. It never addresses self-reflection. (Not in the guidelines currently).

EXB - Show us what is relevant rather than was it on the list. I found it [the reflection] to be very interesting. I thought that it belonged in the teaching evidence and if you haven’t done so in the statement, which I didn’t see, that you would want to address it. When I looked through that self-reflection, which you did some time ago, what I took away from it was, it seemed that over and over again, you were stating that you wanted to do better on the detailed management of your course. The background things that either you wanted to do or were required to do that sort of helped you or the course come along. And I was wondering how you felt about that nowadays?

TR - That is not a concern of mine now. Particularly, in those very first years, I wanted the perfect classroom. I was learning that the failures of the students weren’t necessarily a failure on me. I really took personally if the students were failing, then it had to be my fault. If I’ve done everything in my capability, then, it’s not necessarily my fault.
So how does that relate to, "I didn't keep these kind of records, I didn't keep up my gradebook, etc."

Right, I think in terms of learning to balancing it better. I think the first two years in teaching [elementary], I was overwhelmed. Even to this day, I value a good lesson plan, so that the time the students spend with me is engaging. And, grading to me is so important because practice and feedback are so important and timely feedback. I still feel that I would prefer to have a lesson plan designed over [returning] grading back.

EXB - So the other option would be to leave it out. The main rule is that in addition to the few things that we say you have to have, everything that is included should be evidence of something. So maybe the question that is evidence of what?

TR - Of reflective practice as that is part of the work I'm doing is part of what I am, especially in the early years. I really appreciate and value evaluations (and my own self-evaluations). I think that it shows my research interests, but I know it

EXB - Because it stands out because it is that one piece all by itself, and because that's the case, I read it without much context. So I’d put it back into teaching, if you wish to show it. And, in your statement, you may want to add something like, "I've come a long way" - Whenever you sum it up -- When you do a reflective statement in W200, then that would make a nice pair, so that is an organizational thing.

EXB - And was it just my computer, when you had these portfolio items that twirl around, I had to right click on a document to get it to show me the document. Is that right?

TR - I have a Mac, so I just click one button. I put everything in a portfolio in one place [referencing Adobe Acrobat Pro] that related to one topic so that you can see a flow and progression would be better than having separate documents, so that is a new feature in Acrobat, which allows this little portfolio view.

EXB - It seemed to me that it was in teaching.

TR - Yeah, so the graphic design syllabus [and supporting documents], they give you the ability to write a little intro to it. Then if you click on it, it will open it.

EXB - Fine. I liked it a lot. Actually, we had it happened (some people weren't able to see two-thirds of the documents)

TR - One thing I can do is add in the introduction is an explanation on how to open the documents.

EXB - (has trouble opening the PDF). Want to explain that - Don't want external reviewers go, "Those documents were far too hard to read"
EXB - And one thing I'm really going to suggest here is that you are using one color for zero up to a certain point. You were using Red and Orange [referencing the qualitative component of the teaching evaluation]. Here's what I am going to suggest. You are going to be better off with values of one color; probably something the computer references green or blue. Something that the computer can render different values instead of different hues. Then you’ll be able to say fewer responses (lighter value) more responses (darker value). I think that will be more congruent with what you are trying to explain. I thought it was a good device to make that summary.

EXB - So this is a summary of all of them? [Student responses in GD for qualitative component]

TR - Of three semesters.

EXB - So what I’m seeing is an average across three semesters? (Yes). I would also put a key down at the bottom. And I think that’s going to be good, but on other courses, I think you have what I call selective (teaching evaluations from middle school - is that from every student?)

TR - They are from administrators.

EXB: So Sample A and Sample B, how were they selected?

TR - That’s a good question. They were selected in order to show a range of breadth that was both positive and negative. In terms of responses, [I selected] individuals that offered more feedback that weren't as limiting in terms of their words but I could describe how I selected them.

EXB - Yes, you should. That is really the number one mistake and common one is that people say, "Surely, they don't want to see all of this stuff." and then go through and pick, yeah.

TR - I can include all of them, but to scan them in... I even reduced them.

EXB - I don't think you have to, but particularly in the electronic format, you're going to get something where you are scrolling through, I would state, "I chose them this way. In sample A there are this many, in sample B there are this many. I think you should forecast it for what people are going to see.

EXB - And then, what is design education in K-12? What do you feel that that consists of?

TR - To me, it’s in 9-12 I would define it as courses or contents that are specific to design (e.g. engineering, visual design courses, etc.) or it may just be a lecture based course. It’s meant to explore what's being done. It’s tends to be more integrated. In K-5, it tends to be integrated within projects in the classroom. I don't think that it's ever going to be taught
separately at the K-8 level (note - I mention Kennon’s information about the Chicago architecture course).

EXB - So when it's integrated into subjects like that, um, talk about how you see design education developing people into designers:

TR - For me, the recent pilot study that I conducted, I asked the students when you were in high school, what design courses were offered? What design courses did you take? And, of how many students that I interviewed, how many of those students were influenced to enter into design curriculum. I was looking at the form and function class, which is a wide range of majors, because it could be apparel merchandising or some other facet throughout the university. There was a (granted I only conducted 9 interviews), at least half said their high school class influenced them to pursue a design degree in college. One girl mentioned a design engineering class that she had in high school that influenced her decision to pursue that career in college. Other students have had design interests since elementary school. Some know in grade school or high school, whereas others come to design after finishing their college program (e.g. psychology is too stressful). It varies according to different individuals. I am interested in the courses in high school that would cause students to pursue a degree in design.

EXB - I got mixed up between the notion of developing designerly thinking in K-12 education in the same way that educators talk about developing inquiry skills and an inquiry approach to all learning vs. you know these little bitty buds who are on their way to being a job who’s title is designer and not quite sure where you are coming down on that in terms of your scholarship. I think there is not a right or wrong answer, but this is what a lot of people (1st review, I assume) get at this point: focus, focus, focus, focus, focus, focus.

TR - The inquiry approach is part of the whole debate with 21st century skills that suggests that we need to have more creative thinking, problem solving, etc., which are not new skills, but in order to meet the job challenges, they need certain skills and those skills are taking precedent over the content. I am interested in that area, as a lot of those qualities are a natural part of a designer, but my own personal interest (to narrow it down) for further research and further study are looking at secondary programs. That would probably be more of my interest and how technology is used in those courses, as that was looking at, in my pilot study, for example, I asked the students, "How comfortable do you feel with technology?" "I feel pretty comfortable with technology", "Why do you feel that way?" "Looking back to the high school courses, I was interested in whether the technology/content/or both are stressed. I don’t know what’s out there in terms of courses at the secondary level. Curriculums are typically designed by the instructors themselves. AOL - That is really my question, actually. Can you talk about, I heard you mention graphic design, engineering, interior design, what are the other 9-12 classes that you would see having this focus?

TR - Computer graphic courses, technology based courses, web design, fashion design, interior design. There are mini-college courses that exist (e.g. graphic, fashion, tech, engineering, theater, costume).
EXB - If you want to be employed you have to have at least one semester,

AOL - It sounds like a lot of art focuses, um, again, forgive me because I'm not really well read in this area. It seems like a lot of art focuses in this area.

TR - A lot of electives do fall into art/music/technology --

EXB - as a scholar you have to be very precise as fine arts are not the same thing as design.

TR - RIGHT! EXB - They do not employ the same combination of skills and thinking. Although, I think the distinctions are not very clear. Certainly, in K-12 education, I suspect, those areas have probably warped together.

AOL - So creative vs. design (to me) says very systematic, you know, you go through things step-by-step, which I know is counter to the things that you point out here. It's more of a creative process.

EXB - The primary distinction is usually between, um, there being external constraints on the design space, which means, clients, outcomes, regulations (in the case of architecture), vs. the sort of internal exploration that the fine arts is sort of centered around.

AOL - So this is starting to come out, and it makes sense to me, the notion of being in an authentic context. It seems like it's something that is really important to design education. You have to be in an authentic context. You have to know what your constraints are, what your clients want. It seems to be much more real world, much more like what they will be experiencing when they get out into it. I think that's something important that you will need to pull out as you define design-based education. Then I think it will help to define more what you discuss in here. When you talk about your teaching that it's important to be in authentic context, but then I think where is this coming from and why is it necessary to your story to support what you are interest in. If that is something that design based education is focused on, then that is something you draw out and say "Hey, here's the relationship and here's why" this contributes to the bigger picture.

TR - And so I think in these traditional classroom settings you are not going to get a school to change their ways, necessarily. You are still going to have your desks and teacher up at the front of the room, but designing the instruction, this goes back to the instructional design aspect, how can you create a curriculum that is going to allow for those kinds of experiences for students to have, those authentic experience.

EXB - You know that is going to be interesting because my perception is that there is a big component of design education, which is quasi-vocational. In fact, just going to Indianapolis and looking at the schools that have real video production studios, the students that are taking those courses are students who expect to graduate from high school and go into a job in video production or go to a vocational college or go to a tech program for another two years, and that is probably not the same for design engineering, per se. Going to the
shop class in Brown County, you know they have drafting tables and they don’t try to teach those things in the same classroom setup as everyone else. Now I’m sure that isn’t consistent everywhere either. But when you say they kind of have a picture of what is happening, I would say that might be a lit review even, if it’s possible even to find this out. The people that produce the textbook that Kennon showed us may have information about it. So yes, not just for your second review, but for your job talk, and on into the future, there is this question of writing in such a way that you don’t assume that people know some of the distinctions that you are making or how it is you are zeroing in on one aspect of a thing, even here right within the department, it’s not something that the department is entirely familiar with, so it won’t hurt your own view with what you are doing with your own research either. It’s not effort you are making just because other people persist in requiring "dossier".

EXB - So I know we keep asking this question prematurely, so we know there isn’t going to be a focused answer yet, but have you thought about yourself at the dinner where they are congratulating you for what you accomplished in the field? What do you think it’s going to sound like? What contribution will your scholarship have made?

TR - I think it would be in two ways. Um, probably instructional design strategies when it comes to technology integration and then defining design education and the merits of design education (or the negatives and what they entail) at the secondary level and the implications of those at the higher ed level. I would like to think that [I would be able] to provide more description, if I can get to that point in my career to actually compare programs, see what people are doing better than others. They would have to have some guidelines that they would be going off of. What that has implications for students and where they go. I would love to do longitudinal studies to look at where these students go (the students that take these courses) and what happens to them in their careers. I don’t know if this group of students -- Here they are in college. Where is that going to take them later on in life, if they are the careers that are needed in the industry?

EXB - So I’m the speaker introducing you and I’m going to say, "In the era when, um, design was moving to the fore as it’s own tradition of knowing and practice, this scholar was instrumental in reshaping design education prior to college for a generation of students. Took design education from the backwater of high schools in this country and moved it to the fore, similar to in the 50s when we realized we needed all these scientists and engineers." Sound good?

TR: Yes, but it’s a big bubble. You probably want me to pare it down a bit.

EXB - NO. If you can nurture that view, the view of your tribute dinner, I think you can work backwards from there to say, "Here are the studies that I need to be doing now." Some of them will be more exciting, some of them less. But that is a program of research. And as you’ve seen in the second review, even by then people are starting to ask, when they ask how does it hang together, the implication of that question is what kind of program is this building into? And it allows you to say, "If I were going to do that, what questions need to be answered?" And I didn’t make it up out of whole cloth, something of things you are
saying, if you are interested in how do students get from these elementary experiences to high school experiences to college experiences and do they actually end up designing. Do they hit college with some courses and some interest, but no habits of thought that are going to stand them in good stead? What does that imply? Can you take high school student who got nothing in the way of design experiences until 9th grade and suddenly try to nurture them into a design mentality? And that may not be where you are going either, but that’s kind of what I thought I heard you say.

TR - Yeah, I’m kind of intrigued by schools such as Stanford, which has a Masters of Design Thinking degree. And so looking at what they are doing with their students is part of my research because I am looking at many different levels knowing that it’s not like you go through high school and then all is great. You could enter into it [design] at any given point but looking at who comes out being better designers than others and why and what experiences are those.

EXB - It’s really interesting in that we assume, but perhaps do not know, you can take someone in at the Master’s level and produce a great designer. If you said that over in the music school, they would laugh you out of the place. If you said it over at the dance department, they would say, "What are you nuts?" Okay, so if you didn’t start when you were this big, you can definitely be a professional, but you are never going to be great. Maybe you aren’t interested in who is going to be great, but one of things you do as a scholar is you don’t assume that the way things are are the way things have to be or the way things should be. I don’t know if this is going to be helpful or not.

AOL - Along those lines, what is design based thinking? What does it look like, from an opposite angle? Those that are really good at what they do, I mean a lot of people do this kind of research in terms of "expert" thinking. Um expert vs. novice. Looking at how do they think? What is the way in which they do make decisions, design-based decisions, and what experiences brought them to where they are? You can go ahead and survey to see all the different things that are out there, but it sounds like what you really want to do is figure out what is the best way to prepare someone?

TR - I just don't want to bring my normative baggage [to my research].

Laughter ensues.

AOL - As long as you acknowledge your own biases when you go in, um, I am interviewing this person and seeing what kind of experiences they have what made them become an outstanding designer and think like this. From my perspective, it sounds like that’s really what you are interested in. Maybe not so much everything that is out there doesn’t really matter, you just want to know what is good, what’s actually working, what is effective.

EXB - And since you are studying design within a larger context that I would call design, I suspect that you’ll have a more fruitful path if you're not looking for the one best way, but for the best opportunities and there’s where it feels to me that technology integration comes in that it's kind of a fruitless enterprise to say, "If you don’t have this machine with
this software at this grade . . ." Right? But if you have a limited set of resources and you are trying to do the best with the students that you have, this is the quality of technology or this is the character of the technological experiences that you need to strive to provide.

AOL - Another thing that I think that you are going to have to fight against is people have talked about problem based learning in general and problem solving skills and critical thinking skills (a lot of the things that you already mentioned), and how people that say those skills can transfer across disciplines that argument is kind of cut short. Near transfer is the only thing that supposedly works with context, and I think that you mention that in here, but it sounds like the way you are talking about, say graphic design or industrial designers, engineers, that there is one common set of skills within those individuals. And I think that you're going to be, in terms of looking at the literature, that's going to be huge. I mean, you are going to have to find mounds and mounds and mounds of evidence to support that notion can be utilized across different contexts.

EXB - And I don't think that you are going to find it. I think that you are going to find that in, in the U.K. where there is actually design education as it's own thing, that design education lays down a foundation much like you might say science education lays down a foundation, and then people quickly differentiate into domain specific. The other thing that I think you are going to have to be careful about is people don't assume that you aren't talking about problem-based learning or problem solving or critical thinking or any other names that are/have cousin relationships to design thinking, but aren't really the same thing.

TR - I think in my heart of hearts, I hate to admit to it, but I’m really interested in curriculum and instruction, the actual designing of the course, the designing based on this particular curriculum.

EXB- So, here's my advice. Don't mash down what you are really interested in because you think that something else sounds more scholarly or important or anything else. If you want the tribute dinner to say, "Here's the person that set down the basic curriculum. Here’s the Bauhaus of the 21st century." You'll probably going to have to lay the same paving stones in your program of study that you would have had to anyway. SO, Maybe it's a big conceptual model, but maybe it's to say here’s the C&I box that you open up and you adapt to your circumstances.

TR - "Because I think part of it is so contextual, where you have students that may have had [design in high school]. One [undergraduate] girl that I met, she enjoyed her [HS] fashion [design] courses, but she described it as being too cut throat. She didn't want to try to fight that battle, which is why she chose to go into interior design. (EXB laughs slightly). I let her roll with it.

EXB - Because they don’t compete at all, right?

TR - I think with fashion [design] in particular, you see these fashion shows, "What not to wear" and "Project Runway", you see kind of that aspect whereas HGGT.
EXB - What I will give you is that I bet fashion design is vastly more personality driven for the designer than an interior designer.

TR - The only reason that I bring her up is a lot of what she mentioned that a lot of what she learned in those courses in high school, that the terminology, although it's being used in a different way, that she it's not completely unfamiliar to her when they are discussing certain principles of design and that's a huge thing that you bring up. Just because you learn something, doesn't mean that it's going to transfer that you can automatically do it because you've been taught.

EXB - It's very interesting in the transfer literature, you know, I haven't read huge amounts of it, so I don't know if people out there are doing anything except near vs. far. Kind of middle transfer. For instance, you see, when they had the print making studio here, they would bring in painters, and they would bring them in for a month because the painter would have to get familiar with the medium of print making and really crappy prints that they would burn. Then in the second two weeks, they would be doing amazing really wonderful stuff. And you see architects design dishes. Some of that works out great and some of it doesn't, but more of it works out great that you would think. So it's not that I haven't seen there is step-wise transfer and there are modes of thinking in which transfer can happen more easily than in some other kind of modes, not to get you off-track. Even there I wouldn't assume that everything that everybody thinks they know translates into design thinking without trying it out and seriously asking these questions.

AOL - When you start with this whole notion of instructional design, as like the first element that you are looking at for design-based education, it seems to go really well with - - My big question that I kept asking is that as you are going through your teaching part of it, you know you keep saying W200 you can’t do anything with it really because it's not necessarily related to your area. You've got to find ways to integrate it. BUT I saw it as overlapping quite a bit because these are teachers who making instructional decisions. How are they going to design it? Granted, it's not going through the entire design process because we give them a situation, a case that they have to solve. But they still are designers. They are still designing instruction.

TR - That is very true because they are going to be designing instruction. There are many ways that they can do it. Using SNOWY [standards, needs of context, options to consider, what design is selected, why design was selected] defending their actions for why they chose to do a lesson this way as opposed to --

EXB - What kind of precedent do they get? What kind of access do they have when they are doing this project?

TR - They have access to (and it's hard because we have such a limited amount of time with them) pretty much what Doug [the lecturer] is able to cover, what I am able to introduce them to, plus their own background experience, and knowing how to find additional resources. Having the capability to look at teacher networks, go into their RSS feeds, type in their Google searches, just kind of do the footwork that anyone else would have to do and
try to build up a database of resources. And I try to help them and saying, "Here are
different options that are available." I think what is fascinating to me about the course is
that I'm still -- I learn so much when teaching the course that I didn't know before. And
knowing for them it's going to change in five years, so their going to have to I think feel
comfortable and confident enough to see what is out there knowing that they may not be
mastering but at least be willing to see what is out there. And to think about the ways they
can integrate technology into the things that they are teaching.

EXB - The reason I ask is because I'm working right now looking at the summer studio class
in instructional illustration and seeing that unless there are environmental components
that support designerly thinking, it's very hard to get it to happen. You know one of things
that students say when they finish that class they say that, "This is really exciting because if
I had done some of the things that you told us to do in this class, I would have felt like I was
cheating. You know, tracing other people's stuff. Looking at a diagram and saying, "Here's
the underlying structure of that diagram. I'll just apply my own [design]." And so when we
say, designing a course is a form of design, and I think all of us here believe that is true, it
really raises questions about which designerly activities do allow students to engage in
verses ones that you don't because the bigger organization identifies those as unacceptable.
I am getting off-track, I know.

AOL - Well, I just keep thinking about what kind of emphasis do you want? Thirty years
down the road, you can talk about far transfer and near transfer and it can be expanded to
more into what design education really is, but it seems like with your background as a
teacher, maybe with your interest in technology integration, it seems like instructional
design might be --

EXB - So you are saying that W200 is a form of design education?

AOL - I think so. I think we're teaching them how to design instruction. My notion of design
is obviously--

TR - It's definitely looking at a design related case, constraints, what the teacher is trying to
achieve, so they have their objectives, and they have limited resources and the resources
are provided for them. So they have to say if I were teacher in this situation, how would I
grapple with this particular standard? How would I go about teaching it? Knowing that it's
not the perfect lesson plan or activities with your students, but making a decision between
ways to integrate technology if you know that the technology is going to be a big
component of what you need. Yeah, so they totally have to make choices. Are they
cognizant of the fact that they are doing design thinking? I doubt it.

EXB - That would be my next comment. Are they? I mean in design classes, even the ones
where you come in and they say, "Ok, pick up a piece of junk on your way into class," and
you bring your little piece of junk and they say, "Ok, now you have to make a composition
out of that." Well, they don't say to you, "I'm instructing you in design methods," but that is
what they are doing. Of course, they have four years to sort of build that up in an implicit
way. You've got 16 weeks and probably make -- the ways you have to probably tackle such
a situation more explicit. So, how, what do they get? What methods do they get for tackling a design space?

TR - I think that what I see them doing, going back to Schön, [is] knowing the potentials and the options. When they [the students] are speaking with me, when they email me or come to me and say, "I'm having a really hard time understanding the situation." Giving them some ideas, "Here are some potential options that you can consider. What are some others that you can think of collaborating together?" And making sure that they understand what they've picked and why they've picked it. So I give them really detailed feedback, which I really should stop doing. [Laughter]

EXB - I run into this with R521 in a different kind of way. I finally decided that I feel so guilty when a team sits with me and we're trying to move from A to D to D to I and I'm going, "Well, stop trying to do that! These six year olds? What do you know about six year olds?" "We don't know anything about six year olds." "Find a six year old!" I don't care about what step you are supposed to be on. Sometime I come and I can think of maybe three ways to go with that and I tell them and I feel really good because I understand I feel more like I did when I was in art school where what someone was modeling for me what putting together things that I know in the environment or experienced in the environment with the thing that I'm trying to do right now. So, on one hand I feel guilty because in this context and the instructional design context that I walk into, I'm giving answers that I should give or I'm doing too much of their work. In a design context, I'm modeling for them how the designer might actually put things. I think what we have to do is get more intentional and I agree with you that I don't see why W200 wouldn't be a fertile ground for that.

TR - I was really cute, the other day. I have all of my students sitting in clusters of the age groups that they are going to teach. I walked over to the early childhood group and they had a multiplication template open. I said, "You realize that multiplication is usually taught in the 3rd grade." And I walk over to my high school math teacher and he has a multiplication table template open. I said, "If they don't know multiplication by high school, there's a big problem." In terms of making sure that they know what is relevant for their group.

EXB - So here's a question. In architecture education, whether people memorize them all or not, there are legal standards that have to be maintained. There is a book of them [legal standards] right there in the classroom, but now, probably online. Do the W200 students have the [IN State] standards right there?

TR - Oh, they know, but do they reference when given a case? They have the standard right there, but that doesn't mean -- there was one student who was having her students in a class period write a full book, including the script, an appendix, and a glossary with chapters.

EXB - And her little intro paragraph ended with, "And have fun!"
TR - I mean it's a great idea, but --

EXB - No it ended with, "Be creative!"

TR - But that comes with the practical experience of going and leading a lesson and realizing, "This is so not going to fit into a day."

EXB - The high school students would probably finish the multiplication thing in five minutes.

AOL - But this goes back to the whole notion of design and graphic design and things along those lines. What are things prior to that particular education that may have influenced them? You know maybe they saw a graphic, or whatever it may have been, and they had their house redecorated and the loved what the interior designer got to do and that influenced their own understanding or their own development. So it's the same thing with K-12 teachers that they've had K-12 experience as students, so now they bring in that notion with them, as designers and as teachers. So, I don't know if that kind of goes into that, again, the whole design-based education. Where is it coming from? Why are they making the decisions that they are?

TR - Yeah, that is a huge part of something I'm really I'm always, that is part of my philosophy, is understanding where your students are, you have to ask them what they've done. You're not going to know everything, but you really should grasp on assessing. I'm really interested in seeing where people are before you can teach them and then designing instruction to meet them where their needs are.

TR - SO I know we're running out of time, but I wanted to know if there were any final things that you wanted me to do before [my 2nd dossier].

EXB - What we didn't talk about and you didn't say if you think there are maybe deficits, but I think we try to go over and say are there just going to be gaps or holes when you get to your second review. When you get there, you will have completed two independent research studies and be at the point where you can talk about them, which I think is one of the big things that we've seen thus far is that if you get to your second review without that. All of our rambling conversation means that you need to take the next step in defining and focusing where you are going. I really would suggest that if you could bring up where you might be if things went really well, that helps you figure out what the focus is that you want to take right now. I think I hear us saying that you need to, as much as you can expand to say what it is that I think I'm going to accomplish, you also then have to narrow a bit for the next couple of years. So if what I'm going to be looking at is undergrad in interior design and undergrads in W200 and students I'm teaching in a high school class online, what connects all of them? And then probably, get a little more precise about definitions about the big constructs that you are working with.

AOL - And theories that are going to work with that. For example, for your prospectus, you'll need some sort of an epistemological framework, whether it's going to be
constructivist, critical, you know, think of what epistemology best aligns with what you are going for here. Again, making sure that you are supporting everything in terms of theory, like, with your methods and this particular one, like what kind of paradigm are you operating under. Is it going to be constructivist or post-positivist because I know that is going to be a question that Dr. Pershing may ask you. What is the theory or the framework that you are operating under? And then making sure to define what research designs you’re using, whether it is ethnography, phenomenology, etc. It’s never just interviews and observations.

EXB - Right, so I think that is one transition I’ve seen from a number of people coming into the program, depending on what you’ve dealt with most, where you’ve come from. You just have to use the language that people are expecting to see. Sometimes it may feel a little stilted, as if you are telling people what they already know, but at this point if you don’t say it in those words, then people aren’t convinced that you know it.

TR - I think that is one of the hard things is that I don’t like labels, but I was brought up with constructivist thinking, at least that is where my values are rooted, but I also understand behaviors, principles, and classroom management.

EXB - But you are planning to be a scholar. You can do research on very loose and generative kinds of situations, but as a scholar, you need to be very precise about what you're doing and why you are doing it. So the fact that you are using that language doesn't necessarily lock other people into ironclad categories, unless as a researcher, you take a perspective that you do that to them.

TR - I think of David Jonassen, he'll say "I'm a cognitivist" - You know what perspective he is coming from and that’s fine. I guess, because I see merits in different things, I don't want to necessarily label myself, but I understand you have to explain to people where you are coming from, under what perspective you are analyzing this.

EXB - If you feel you are coming from part here and part there, you have to say why am I doing that, [and] how is it valid that I can do that? What part of what I'm doing am I approaching this way verses that way? That level of precision is not a label. It's craft in scholarship. So you're not going to say that I want to produce this particular object, since I really hate to label my tools, I'll just pick something up and use it.

AOL - I like the tool analogy. With the tools, you're going to have a particular tool and use it to do things, so one of the way in which you view construction of a your deck, you might just jump right in and start doing it, whereas others have everything planned. So there is, whether you want to acknowledge it or not, you -- Same thing with me. I believe in all types of learning theories. I believe each one has its purpose, but the way that I approach research, my epistemological view, I feel like I do have a combined approach of constructivist because I believe that people, you know, knowledge is created based on other people's experience. The other notion there is critical, because from a defensive point of view, I want to advocate for teachers. So, my epistemology is combination of those two, I have a great chapter that you can read that speaks to the epistemology.
TR - And I think that is where, and I mention it, that just feeling more comfortable with theory in my work, I'm just now getting there. I feel like I've kind of been on the coat tails of other projects and now I'm starting on independent projects now and being able to stand on my own two feet, not only feel comfortable with it, but be able to defend it.

EXB - I think it's a transition that a lot of people have to make working with people across campus, some of those meetings are frustrating because you get to a point that would be a very valid research point but everybody is redesigning their classes, which is way fun and makes a great conversation when you get to the end, but no one has done any research. I'm there saying, "Now wait. The thing we're talking about here as a school idea. Here's this person who actually described that thing and has given it a name that we can now all use to talk it. It's not that I want to attribute it to that other person, but when it has taken on that kind of focus, then I can refer to it, do something different, and refer to what I'm doing in light of this other thing. It just gives me more options than I had before than narrowing down my options.

AOL - It fits somewhere in the knowledge base as opposed to establishing something completely different.

EXB - The way I think about it is in art school where you can piddle around until your heart is content. And then they come in and say, ok, well place yourself and everybody wants to say I'm not within those traditions. Even now I look back at some of the stuff, and say, "Absolutely. We were formed by those traditions whether we knew it or not. Sometimes it's better not knowing. That can be, for a scholar, a real problem, "I think this, I think this." And someone comes in and says, "Heidegger" and you say, "Hidewho?"

EXB - I think you have a strong start on your portfolio and I don't think you are in a bad spot for your second review for the kinds of things that you collected. It shows the kinds of statements you are giving.