

When I applied to Michigan State University for my masters, my goal was simple. Integrate technology into the classroom and come up with fresh and creative ways to deliver the content. As a history teacher, a common expression from students is that “history is boring”. While my strengths include the ability to connect with those students, that doesn’t always mean the ability to create connections between my students and the content. One way to help make those connections comes from creative delivery, finding ideas that will engage my students, getting them hooked and reeling them in from there. The reason I was drawn to teaching social studies was the simulations created for me as a student in government class. Those are the types of things I want to be doing in my own classroom.

Technology can be one way to improve the delivery of historical content. Whether that is flipping the classroom, using online resources or assessing students by having them create their own representations of the content we have covered in class. In this day in age, I really have no excuse to not be integrating technology into my lessons on a daily basis, even if it is in small ways. But just like with creative lesson plans, I wanted to find creative ways to use technology. I was not content to use technology, just for technology's sake.

Currently, my goals have, for the most part, remained the same. I still want to find creative ways to deliver historical content, and I am still looking for ways to integrate technology. If there is any change, it is simply that after taking a few classes at MSU surrounding these ideas, I have goals surrounding implementation. So, for example, I feel I have more experience in how to create creative lesson plans but I have to actively apply what I have learned to my lesson plans. It is so easy to fall into a rut, use the same materials year after year. I have to be intentional in applying what I've learned to what I am doing.

The reason my goals are so similar after four semesters of Masters classes is simple. Teaching is constantly evolving, as is technology, as well as our own philosophies and our students. Teachers who have been educating for 25+ years are still looking for fresh ways to deliver content. Teachers who are pros at blending technology and content are still looking for new ways in which to do this. As a profession, we are never going to truly be experts. There are always going to be things we can learn, things we can do better. At times, this can seem overwhelming, to know we are always going to be improving our craft. But at the same time, isn't that a great way for us to empathize with our students who can sometimes view learning as a temporary idea?