**The DEAL Model for Critical Reflection – Describe, Examine, and Articulate Learning**

**Describe Experience(s) Objectively**

* Overview of “big picture” – what have I done in the research lab?
* Focus on 2 or 3 key experiences for the reflection - What were the most significant or reflection-worthy experiences? At least one should be academic in nature.
	+ Where was I?
	+ Who else was there?
	+ When did this experience take place?
	+ What was said?
	+ What did I/others do?
	+ Why were we there?

**Assess Progress**

* What were my goals as articulated in my research lab contract?
* What specific steps did I take in order to attain these goals?
* What obstacles—internal and external—hindered me? What factors made me more effective?
* In what ways did my attempts to attain goals (or to enact or test conclusions) proceed as expected, based on my initial understanding, and in what ways was I surprised?
* What do my attempts to enact or test previous conclusions tell me about the validity of those conclusions? In what specific ways has my understanding of those conclusions changed? Essentially, what have you learned about the process this specific semester/year based on the project(s) you have been working on?
* How did I change my behavior or mentality in order to make better progress toward my goals? What specific steps do I need to take in order to continue refining my understanding of the process and skills?

**Examine Experience from a Personal Perspective**

* How did this research experience make me ***feel*** (positively and/or negatively)? How did I handle my emotional reactions? Do I believe I should have felt differently than I did?
* What ***assumptions or expectations*** did I bring to the situation (including my assumptions about other persons involved – lab members, my research mentor) and how did they affect my actions? To what extent did they prove true? If they did not prove true, why was there a discrepancy?
* How have ***past experiences*** influenced the manner in which I acted or responded to this situation? Am I comfortable with the influence past experiences have had on me in the lab situation?
* What personal ***strengths / weaknesses*** of mine did being in the lab reveal? In what ways did they affect the experience, positively and negatively? What might I do to build on my strengths/ overcome weaknesses?
* Why did I, or did I not, experience ***difficulty working/interacting with other people in the lab***? What might I do differently next time to minimize any such difficulties?
* What personal ***skills*** did I draw on in handling my research responsibilities? What personal skills would I like to have had in order to have handled them better and how might I develop them?
* How did the research experience reveal my own ***attitudes or biases***, toward other people, toward the department, the College? Do I need to make any changes? Do they?

**Examine Experience from a Civic Perspective**

* What was I / we ***trying to accomplish with our research***? In other words, why was I conducting this research? What is its value to the field, the community, the department, the College, the broader world?
* What ***roles*** did others play in helping me be successful? Did I / other individuals act ***unilaterally or collaboratively*** and why? Should I / they have worked with others in a different way?
* If I had to explain the value of my research to someone I met in the elevator (<60 seconds), what would I say? What is the take-home point?
* What ***agendas*** did I and others bring to our research? Are these agendas appropriate? Are they understandable? Are they shared? How are these agendas related to larger social or cultural issues? In thinking about this, what did I / we do to make sure that our research was sound?
* Did ***power differentials*** emerge in my experience? What are the sources of power in this situation and who benefits and is harmed? In what ways might any dependencies be eliminated?
* What ***privilege*** did I/others bring to the lab? What are the sources of such privilege? How am I, or others, disempowered by lack of privilege?
* How did ***leadership*** emerge in the lab, on my part and/or on the part of others?
* What ***changes*** does this experience suggest are needed: within the lab, within the department, within our college, within society more generally? How can these changes best be accomplished?
* How does this experience help me to better understand the department’s

**Examine Experience from an Academic Perspective**

* What specific ***elements of departmental courses*** relate to the lab experience? Did other experiences or courses at RC help?
* How was I able to ***apply*** a skill, perspective, or concept related to our academic material in lab? Give examples.
* What ***similarities and differences*** are there between the perspective on research offered by our academic material, and the research process as it in fact unfolded?
* How did this experience ***enhance my knowledge*** of a specific reading, theory, or concept? Does it ***challenge*** or ***reinforce*** my prior understanding?
* Based on analysis of the experience in light of course material, is the ***material (or my prior understanding of it) adequate***? What reasons might there be for any differences or inadequacies? What questions should I ask to put myself in a better position to judge the adequacy of the material?

**Articulate Learning**

* ***What did I learn about the research process, working in a research lab, and the content of my research that I find compelling and useful moving forward?***
* How, specifically, did I learn it?
* Why does this learning matter; why is it important?
* In what ways will I use this learning, what goals shall I set in accordance with what I have learned in order to improve myself and / or the quality of my learning and / or the quality of my future?

**Consent Statement**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, give consent to the Psychology Department to paraphrase and/or quote passages from my reflection paper on the Psychology Department blog, Facebook, website, and in other materials.

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Signature

*The DEAL model was developed by Dr. Patti Clayton of North Carolina State University http://www.ncsu.edu/cece/resources/deal\_model.php. Dr. Clayton references Kiser’s Integrative Processing Model in the original document.*

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