



Guidelines for Co-Curricular and Service Reflection

Reflection is an important component of your work in Honors. Good reflection gives you an opportunity to think about what you've experienced *and* how it applies to your outlook. Mere restatement of events is insufficient (and, frankly, hardly worth your time). To make the task or reflection worthwhile, it should be more about you than about the event.

The DEAL Model of Reflective Writing (Ash & Clayton 2009) is what we use in Honors to help achieve strong, purposive reflections on service and co-curricular activities. Follow these steps:

1. **Describe** the experience objectively: What? Where? Who? When? Why?
2. **Examine** the experience in light of concepts learned in coursework
3. **Articulate Learning**: What did you learn? How did you learn it? Why is it important? What will you do because of it?

It's often tough to figure out how to start a reflection. Ash and Clayton suggest that you choose a single aspect of your experience – a specific defining moment – that, to you, helps further your thinking on the topic covered/art form witnessed/service performed and your own path. Describe the moment objectively (who, what, where, when, why), then examine connections between the moment and the concepts you've gleaned from your coursework.

Finally, articulate how your personal outlook has changed as a result of the experience you chose to discuss. For you, what action steps might this changed outlook translate into? Please keep in mind that critical reflection is not stream-of-consciousness diary-keeping, a summary of activities, or mere venting of personal feelings. Instead, it uses experiences, feelings, and reference to readings to arrive at a more fulfilling understanding of lessons learned, and how those lessons might influence your life. It should use proper academic grammar and tone, and be written in a clear, concise style. Most Honors reflections should be 1-2 typed, double-spaced pages in length (see syllabus or co-curricular guidelines document for more details), though more is fine.

Note that these reflections differ from your end-of-term Activities Reflection Paper. That assignment is noted on your course syllabus.