



COLLEGE OF
Human Sciences

**Extension and
Engagement**

SERVICE-LEARNING REFLECTION
HANDBOOK

Introduction

Service-learning (SL) courses combine traditional, in-class instruction and learning objectives with structured opportunities for students to apply course concepts in real-world settings. A large body of research has found evidence that this process is uniquely beneficial for students when it includes structured reflection activities that link service experiences and course content (e.g., Eyler, Giles, and Schmiede 1996). These studies indicate that when part of a larger SL experience, structured reflection activities can help students improve their attitudes toward and support of their peers, school, and communities (e.g., Furco et al. 2016; Astin et al. 2000). In some cases, SL courses may also foster improved academic performance, although these data are less conclusive (Novak, Markey, and Allen 2007; Celio, Durlak, and Dymnicki 2011). In each case, however, structured reflection activities are considered key to students realizing potential benefits. More broadly, Ash and Clayton (2009) argue that reflection activities can generate learning (articulating questions, confronting causality, contrasting theory with practice), deepen learning (challenging assumptions, inviting alternative perspectives), and document learning (producing expressions of applied understanding).

To achieve these goals, however, reflection processes must be carefully and intentionally designed. Welch argues that instructors cannot simply tell students “it is now time to reflect” and expect to see meaningful results (1999, p 1). Though successful reflection strategies may be simple, they must be purposeful and strategic (Eyler, Giles, and Schmiede 1996). This is due in part to the fact that many students are unfamiliar with “learning through reflection on experience, they need a structure and guidance to help them derive meaningful learning when they are outside the traditional classroom setting, otherwise reflection tends to be little more than descriptive accounts of experiences or venting of personal feelings” (Ash and Clayton 2009).

Additionally, instructors must be aware that relatively few reflection activities have been rigorously evaluated (see Molee et al. (2010) for an exception). Indeed, Harvey et al. (2010) note that while most reflection activities described in the published literature are well-grounded in accepted theory, their efficacy in the classroom to foster, evaluate, and document academic, personal, and civic growth cannot always be assured. Eyler (2002) argues, however, that existing studies in multiple disciplines have documented a number of the components of high quality reflection assignments. She contends that instructors may therefore construct useful reflection assignments from basic principles and strategies.

Ultimately, then, meaningful reflection activities can take many forms depending on, among other things, the nature of a course’s content, assignments, schedule, instruction style, and service experience. This packet therefore provides an introduction to some of the most common existing models of reflection as well

as strategies for creating reflection assignments that will meet the needs and goals of a given course. A variety of different kinds of reflection activities are also provided. These activities should be considered examples of types of structured reflection assignments that an instructor may draw from as they create their own assignments.

To discuss reflection assignments and how they can be adapted to your course, please contact College Global & Community Engagement Coordinator, Dave Lassen at dlassen@okstate.edu or 405.744.6288.

Models of Reflection

Many models of reflection exist. Many emphasize different aspects or goals of the reflection experience, but the overall objective in each is similar: help students who have engaged in an off-campus, mutually beneficial service experience link that experience to course content and personal development. In other words, to facilitate “the intentional consideration of an experience in light of particular learning objectives.”¹ Molee et al. (2010) note that reflection is meant to foster and assess academic growth in a framework that encourages personal development and increased civic responsibility. Similarly, Rogers (2001) found that the most common element of existing reflection models is that they allow the learner to “integrate the understanding gained into one’s experience in order to enable better choices or actions in the future as well as enhance one’s overall effectiveness” (p 41).

The following section introduces five of the most widely used models of reflection in the current literature on SL. Each is based on published research and is well grounded in accepted theoretical frameworks of learning. Each may be used to inform and construct both formative (i.e., ongoing feedback to monitor and stimulate student learning) and summative (i.e., evaluation of student learning at the end of a term or instructional unit) assignments.

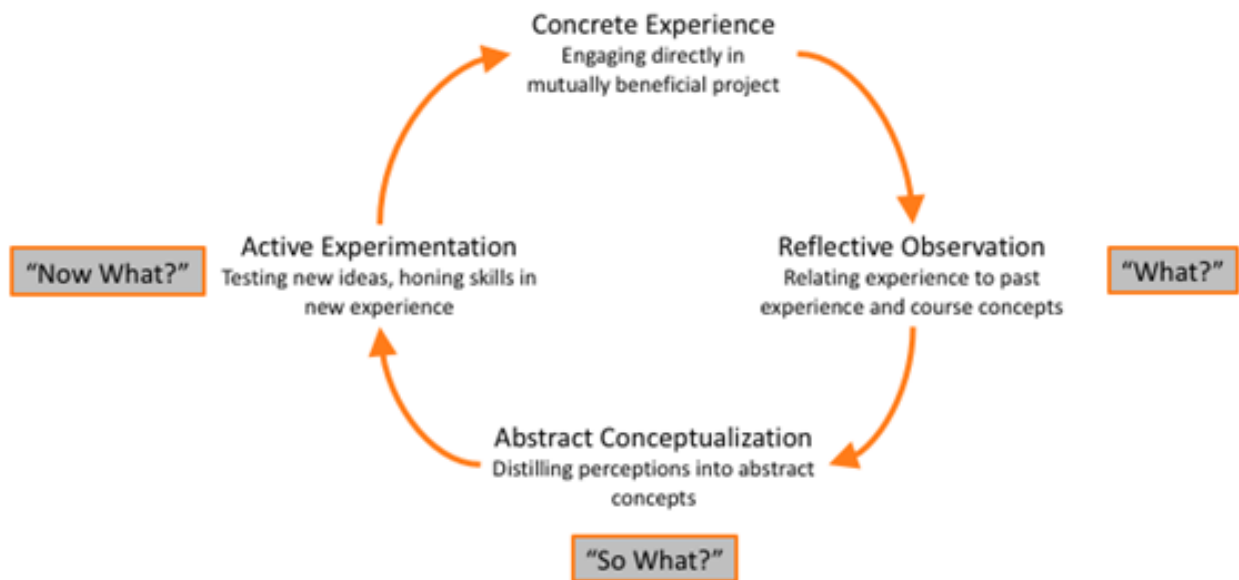
¹ “Reflection in Service Learning.” Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning. Available at: <https://citl.indiana.edu/teaching-resources/teaching-strategies/reflection-service-learning/> (accessed March 23, 2017).

1. *Experiential Learning Cycle*

One of the most frequently cited models of reflection, the Experiential Learning Cycle is based on the work of John Dewey (1938) and David Kolb (1984). The model includes four steps:

1. Concrete Experience – students experience a mutually beneficial, off-campus project
2. Reflective Observation – students relate their experience to previous experiences and course concepts
3. Abstract Conceptualization – students think critically, distilling their perceptions and experience into abstract concepts that they can relate to course content and personal choices
4. Active Experimentation – students test new ideas and hone skills gained from the off-campus experiences

In 1995, the Virginia Campus Outreach Opportunity League suggested further developing the model by focusing reflective activities on three questions: “What?”, “So What?”, and “Now What?” The following figure combines these elements.



ADAPTED FROM: Kolb (1984)

2. ABC Model

The ABC Model of Reflection focuses students on three potential ways to reflect on service activities. Ideally, students will incorporate all three types of reflection in each activity:

- Affective
 - Students express their thoughts and emotions, putting them in the context of their service experience.
- Behavioral
 - Students examine their actions through the context of their service experience.
- Cognitive
 - Students connect their service experience back to course concepts and content, specifically identifying relevant theories and/or readings.

ADAPTED FROM: Welch (1999)

3. Bradley's Levels of Reflection

Bringle and Hatcher (1999) present a model of reflection that guides students through reflective levels that combine service activities and course content successively more closely.

1. Level One – Egocentric Reflection

- a. Common statements include: “I did...” and “I learned...”

2. Level Two – Limited Recognition of Alternative Viewpoints

- a. Common statements include: “I began to see...” and “I realized that not everyone...”

3. Level Three – Broad, Effortful Recognition and Incorporation of Alternative Viewpoints

ADAPTED FROM: Bringle and Hatcher (1999)

4. The 4 C's of Reflection

Others argue that effective reflection is characterized by the following four distinct characteristics:

1. **Continuous** – Reflection is used throughout the service-learning experience. Thus, reflection should take place before, during, and after students' service experience.
2. **Connection** – Reflection combines theoretical concepts and real-world service experience, in part to enhance understanding of course content.
3. **Challenging** – Reflection should push students to consider new viewpoints and question their perceptions.
4. **Contextualized** – Reflection should meaningfully connect with course concepts.

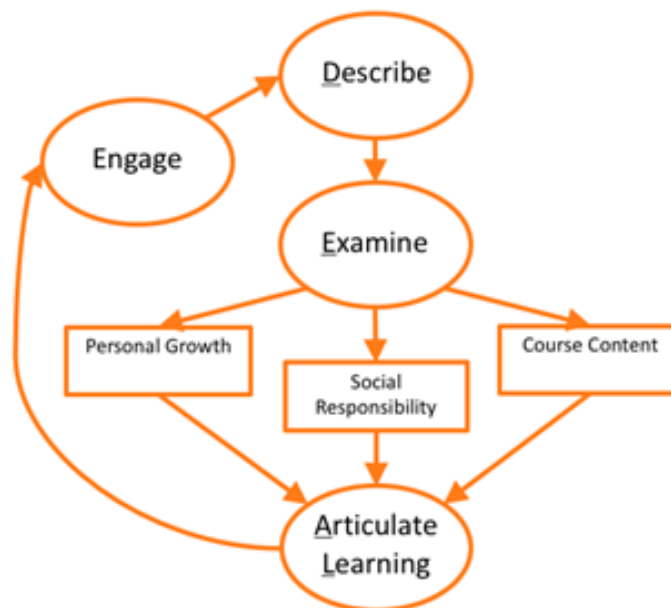
ADAPTED FROM: Eyler, Giles, and Schmeide (1996)

5. DEAL Model

More recently, the DEAL model of reflection has become popular. This model requires that students participate in the following three step sequence after completing some portion of an off-campus service experience:

- Describe
 - Students begin the DEAL model by noting the specific details of their experience.
 - Example questions include: What occurred during your experience? Where was your experience located? Who participated? Who was the beneficiary of the work done during the project? When did it occur? What was the motivation behind the project?
- Examine
 - Using reflection prompts, students are then asked to consider the ways their service experience affected their
 - personal growth,
 - sense of social responsibility, and
 - understanding of course content.
 - Example Questions: What strengths/weaknesses emerged? What are we trying to accomplish? What systemic change needs to occur? What academic concepts apply? Does my service experience support or challenge my understanding of these concepts?
- Articulate Learning
 - Finally, students must articulate the learning that took place related to course learning objectives.
 - Example questions include: What did I learn? How did I learn? Why is what I did important? What else should be done?

The DEAL Model can be represented graphically in this manner:



ADAPTED FROM: Ash and Clayton (2009)

Constructing Reflection Activities

The reflection models described in previous sections suggest the following set of best practices that instructors should refer to when constructing reflection assignments. The best reflection activities should be:

- Integrated into course content
- Structured (e.g., through prompts, questions)
- Related to student experience and course content
- Transparent, including related instructions, expectations, and assessment
- Ongoing, part of a cycle of repeated reflection and instructor feedback
- Objective, avoiding student self-reports

These points can also be phrased as a series of questions to guide instructors through the process of creating a reflection assignment:

1. Who are my students creating/writing for?

The product of student reflection assignments can carry value for multiple audiences beyond an instructor's evaluation to assign a grade. A reflective essay, for example, may have important implications for a community partner's policies and procedures. Students' perspectives can provide valuable insight for local organizations, especially when grounded in academic concepts. Instructors may therefore consider designing one or more reflection assignments to provide value for additional populations.

2. Who are my students creating/writing with?

Reflection activities can involve one or more students or additional authors. A variety of the example activities offered in this handbook are group activities where students collectively discuss their service experiences and course content. Students may also be asked to collaborate with community partners, potentially creating resources of the type discussed in Question 1 above.

3. What form of reflection fits my course?

Reflection activities can take many forms, not all of which may fit well with the topic or style of a specific course. Fully integrating a reflection assignment with course content may therefore make some types of reflection more useful than others. Students in a math or engineering course, for example, may resist a creative or arts-based assignment, while a reflective essay with a research component may seem out of place in an acting class. Instructors will likely find more success with assignments that are similar in style and scope to the other components of their course and teaching style.

4. How will I ensure students understand the purpose and design of each reflection activity?

One of the most challenging aspects of reflection activities for students can be how foreign they are. Before enrolling in a service-learning class, it is unlikely that a student will have been asked to engage in reflection of the type described here. Instructors should therefore take great care to precisely and fully describe each reflective assignment, including how it will be graded. As part of this process, be sure that students understand why you are asking them to engage in reflection and the benefits they will likely receive if they participate in the process in good faith. During the class, provide as much feedback on students' reflective activities as possible, refining their understanding of the process and improving the benefits they are likely to receive.

5. When will students engage in reflection?

Existing research suggests that students are most successful in their reflective activity when they reflect multiple times during the course of a semester. These reflections may take place before, during, and/or after they have completed their off-campus service activity. Significant value can be found in reflection in each period. Eyler (2002) refers to reflection activities that students undertake before completing their service activity, for example, as "preflection." Preflection assignments can help students gain more from subsequent service by foregrounding otherwise subconscious cognitive models that may then be enhanced by off-campus experiences.

6. What is the purpose of each assignment?

Because reflection assignments may take many forms and include multiple elements, they may be designed for a variety of purposes. Two major goals of reflective activities are to either motivate learning or to assess learning. Assignments that motivate learning are generally formative assessments that are relatively more frequent efforts to monitor student learning during a course. Assignments of this type can also motivate learning by making plain the limitations of a student's existing mental models of the world. Assignments that more fully evaluate a student's mastery of course concepts are generally summative assessments. Summative assignments are generally completed less frequently than formative assignments, often at the end of a term or instructional unit.

Example Reflection Activities

This section offers a variety of example reflection assignments that instructors may use in whole or part when creating a SL course. These activities should be considered examples of types of reflection. As such, they require students to engage a diverse array of concepts and features of a service experience. A number of the following assignments therefore require some form of expressive creation, while others invite students to consider their emotional state during service, and still others focus on traditional research writing and analysis. Instructors should therefore consider which aspect(s) of the following activities are most appropriate and useful for their class.

Note that because of the expressive nature of many of the following activities, grading may only be appropriate based on students' good faith efforts to complete the exercise. Instructors should also keep in mind the total weight activities of this type should have on students' course grades. Reflection activities that do not directly assess course learning objectives are often a relatively minor part of a student's final grade.

The following reflection activities are among some of the most frequently used in colleges and universities across the United States. Again, however, this is not an exhaustive list; many other reflection activities exist. Instructors should also consider designing their own assignments (potentially with elements from one or more of the following examples) to better fit the content, style, and goals of their course.

The activities in this section are generally organized by the type of reflection they entail and the amount of time students typically take to complete them. Activities are divided into three major sections:

- Journaling, Reading, and Research Essays
- Creative and Interactive
- Student and Group Portfolios/Presentations

² Adapted from "Reflection Activities: Service-Learning's Not-So-Secret Weapon" at <https://sites.duke.edu/responsibleengagement/files/2015/04/Reflection-Activities-for-All-Classrooms.pdf>.

Journaling, Reading, and Research Essays

1. *Personal Journal:*

Individual journaling is one of the most common ways for students to reflect on a service experience. Journals are an easy way for students to regularly review their time out of the classroom and its implications for their understanding of course concepts. Students can be asked to journal about a range of different aspects of service-learning and course content, but should always be encouraged to avoid making entries simple reports of activities. Journals should not be a simple log of events. Journaling is most effective when students are required to explore the thoughts, observations, and feelings that are stirred by a service experience.

Most often, students are asked to complete weekly journal entries. These journals may then be submitted to the instructor for feedback. Because most students are unfamiliar with the type of reflection practiced in service-learning classes, instructor feedback can be a key resource to connect their service experiences and course learning objectives. Journals can also be additive. Instructors may ask their students to compile their entries at the end of a term as a starting point for a final, reflective essay. The DEAL Model presented earlier in this handbook often uses student journal entries in this regard.

Note also that several of the following styles of journal assignment may be combined in a single reflective assignment. A student tasked with completing weekly journal entries, for example, may be asked to complete one week's entry as a Highlighted Journal, the next as a Key Phrase Journal, and the next as a Double Entry Journal.

ADAPTED FROM: Hatcher and Bringle (1997)

2. *Dialogue Journal:*

Instructors can formalize a student feedback mechanism by assigning Dialogue Journals that are structured as a conversation between a student and the instructor. In each entry, both students and their instructor are encouraged to both respond directly to what the other has most recently written as well as explore new ideas, questions, or experiences. Dialogue Journals can therefore be an excellent resource in a service-learning class where the connection between course concepts and service experiences may be relatively more difficult to identify. Additionally, because this type of reflection activity is unusually labor intensive for the instructor, many instructors require entries be submitted at most bi-weekly.

ADAPTED FROM: Goldsmith (1995)

3. *Highlighted Journal:*

At designated points during the term, students completing a Highlighted Journal reread their entries and mark sections that directly relate to concepts discussed in class texts or discussion. In this way, instructors can quickly identify if students are adequately integrating their in-class and out-of-class experiences. This activity also ensures that students reflect on previous experiences in light of additional course content.

ADAPTED FROM: Gary Hesser, Augsburg College

4. *Key Phrase Journal:*

Key Phrase Journals require students to integrate key terms and phrases from course content within their journal entries. An instructor may provide a list of terms or may require students to identify their own from readings and lectures. In either case, students are required to write using the perspective and language of course concepts. Journal entries thereby become evidence of how well students are identifying course concepts in applied settings.

ADAPTED FROM: Hatcher and Bringle (1999)

5. *Double Entry Journal:*

This type of journal is both a compilation of personal observation and a summary of course content in preparation of a more formal assessment (reflection assignment or otherwise) at the end of the semester.

- Step 1: Students completing a Double Entry Journal are asked to write two one-page entries each week.
- Step 2: The first entry each week focuses on the student's thoughts and personal reactions to their service experience.
- Step 3: The second entry each week identifies and explores key issues from class discussions or readings that relate to the content of that week's first entry.
- Step 4: Students then indicate the passages in each entry that relate to one another.

ADAPTED FROM: Angelo and Cross (1993)

6. *Three-Part Journal:*

Three-Part Journals help guide students through elements of the most useful reflection.

- Step 1: Students divide each journal entry into three equal parts.
- Step 2: In the first section, students describe their most recent service experience.
- Step 3: In the middle section, students analyze how course content relates to the service experience they related in the top section.
- Step 4: In the last section, students explore how their service experience can be applied to their personal or professional life.

ADAPTED FROM: Bringle and Hatcher (1997)

7. *Reflection Essays:*

Reflective essays are a more formal, systematic example of journal entries. Students are provided with writing prompts at the beginning of the term and are asked to submit two to three essays at specified points during the class. Reflective essays can focus on personal development, academic connections to the course content, or ideas and recommendations for future action. As with any essay, criteria can be clearly stated to guide the work of the students.

ADAPTED FROM: Chris Koliba, Georgetown University

8. *Directed Writings:*

Directed writings ask students to consider their service experience within the framework of course content. Students are given a writing prompt based on a class content (e.g., excerpt from a reading, quote, statistic, etc.). For example: “William Gray has identified five stages of a mentor-protégé relationship. At what stage is your mentoring relationship with your protégé at this point in the semester? What evidence do you have to support this statement? In the following weeks, what specific action can you take to facilitate the development of your mentoring relationship to the next stage on Gray’s continuum?” Instructors may provide students a list of prompts at the beginning of the semester, or may distribute them as the semester progresses. Directed writings provide opportunity for application and critical analysis of the course content.

ADAPTED FROM: Diane Sloan, Miami Dade College

9. *Experiential Research Paper:*

An experiential research paper, based on Kolb’s experiential learning cycle, is a formal paper that asks students to identify a particular experience at their service site and analyze it within the broader context of course content in order to make recommendations for change. Experiential Research Paper assignments are generally (but not always) structured in the following way:

- Step 1: Mid-term, students are asked to identify a social issue they have encountered at their service site.
- Step 2: Students research the issue they have identified, reading the relevant peer-reviewed literature on the topic.
- Step 3: Based on their experience, course content, and literature review, students are assigned to write a paper on the issue, including one or more recommendations for future action by nonprofit organizations, city government, or other organization.

This reflection activity is useful in interdisciplinary courses and provides students with flexibility within their disciplinary interests and expertise to pursue issues experienced at the service site. Instructors may require students to present their papers to the class.

ADAPTED FROM: Julie Hatcher, IUPUI

10. *Directed Readings:*

Directed Readings are a way to prompt students to consider their service experience within a broader context of social responsibility and civic literacy. Since many textbooks rarely challenge students to consider how knowledge within a discipline can be applied to current social needs, instructors should consider assigning one or more readings that center on social change and/or community engagement. Directed readings can be used as the basis for class discussion or a directed writing.

ADAPTED FROM: Diane Sloan, Miami Dade College

11. *Ethical Case Studies:*

Ethical case studies give students the opportunity to analyze a situation and gain practice in ethical decision making as they choose a course of action. This reflection activity can foster student exploration and clarification of their personal values.

- Step 1: Students identify an ethical dilemma that they have confronted at their service site.
- Step 2: Students write a case study of the dilemma they identify, including a description of the context, the individuals involved, and the controversy or event that created an ethical dilemma.
- Step 3: Students conclude their paper by recommending one or more changes in policy at their service site to prevent ethical dilemmas of this type from occurring again in the future.
- Step 4: Students present their case studies in class, discussing other potential responses to the situation.

ADAPTED FROM: David Lisman, Colorado College

12. *Critical Incident Journal:*

This type of journal entry focuses students on analysis of a recent service experience. By answering a prompt like one of the following, students are asked to consider their thoughts and reactions and articulate the action they plan to take in the future. Sharing these in class after students complete the assignment can be a useful learning experience for all students.

- Prompt 1: Describe a significant event that occurred as a part of your service-learning experience. Why was it significant to you? What underlying issues (e.g., societal, interpersonal) surfaced as a result of the experience? How will this incident influence your future behavior?
- Prompt 2: Describe an incident or situation that created a dilemma for you in terms of what to say or do. What is the first thing you thought of to say or do? List three other actions you might have taken. Which of the above seems best to you now and why do you think this is best response?

ADAPTED FROM: Brookfield (1990)

Creative and Interactive

1. Structured Class Discussions:

Structured reflection sessions can be facilitated during regular class time if all students are involved in a service experience. It can be helpful for students to hear experiences and success stories from one another. Students can also offer each other advice and collaborate to identify solutions to problems encountered at the service site. The following exercise is an example of structured reflection discussion:

- Step 1: Ask students to list phrases that describe their actions at their service site.
- Step 2: Ask students to list phrases that describe their thoughts at their service site.
- Step 3: Ask students to identify contradictions between their thoughts and their actions at the service site.
- Step 4: Ask students to identify connections between their service and course content.

ADAPTED FROM: Nadinne Cruz, Stanford University

2. E-Mail Discussion Groups:

Through e-mail, students can create a dialogue with the instructor and peers involved in service projects. Students write weekly summaries and identify critical incidents that occurred at the service site. Students can rotate as a moderator of the discussion every two weeks. Instructors can post questions for consideration and topics for directed writings. A log can be printed to provide data about group learnings that occurred from the service experience.

ADAPTED FROM: Diane Sloan, Miami Dade College

3. Professional Goals:

Ask students to respond to one of the following prompts:

Think about the work you are doing for your Service-Learning experience. What are your future professional goals? What are you doing in this experience right now that you think will be important for your professional life after graduation?

Pretend that you're in an interview and your potential employer asks you what you learned during your Service-Learning experience. How would you respond? (Instructors may want to remind students that their service experience provides an opportunity to practice soft-skills as well as reinforcing course content.)

ADAPTED FROM: Katie Halcrow, Inver Hills Community College

4. *Prelection & Postlection:*

- Step 1: Before students begin their service-learning experience, pass out one notecard to each student.
- Step 2: Ask students to write their fears, anticipations, and questions related to their upcoming service experience. They should NOT put their names.
- Step 3: Throughout the service-learning experience, use notecards to help guide class discussion.
- Step 4: At the conclusion of the service project, bring out the notecards and pass them around, at random, to students. Discuss the growth students experienced over the semester.

5. *Free Association Brainstorming:*

- Step 1: Give each student 10–20 medium sized sticky notes (e.g., Post-it Notes) and ask them to write down all the feelings and thoughts they had when they first heard about their service-learning requirement (one feeling or thought on each note). Clearly explain to the students that you will be asking them to share their feelings and thoughts with their peers. Encourage them to be as honest and open as possible, but remind them that they should only share the things they are comfortable having other people know. Tell students to not write their name on their sticky notes.
- Step 2: Next, ask them to write down all of the feelings and thoughts they had when they experienced their first “field encounter” (again, one on each note).
- Step 3: Next, ask them to write down all of the feelings and thoughts they are having “right now” regarding their service-learning experience.
- Step 4: Attach three, large pieces of paper to the walls around the classroom. Have one with a happy face, one with a sad face, and one with a bewildered/confused face. Ask the students to now place their words on the paper that best fits each of the feelings and thoughts they recorded.
- Step 5: Have students stand next to the paper where they posted the majority of their sticky notes.

This exercise involves both writing and speaking and can be a non-threatening way to get students to explore the personal aspects of service-learning in a group setting.

NOTE: This activity should take place no earlier than the end of the first 1/3 of the project experience.

ADAPTED FROM: Bowen (2007)

6. *Think, Pair, Share:*

- Step 1: Ask students a question related to their service experience.
- Step 2: Give students time to think about the question on their own.
- Step 3: Ask students to discuss the question and their thoughts about it with a partner.
- Step 4: Ask each discussion pair to share their thoughts with the class.
- Step 5: After all pairs have reported back, discuss the questions and reports as a class.

Example questions:

- Beginning of Semester Questions:
 - What is the identified problem/community need?
 - How is your community partner site addressing that need?
 - Why are you needed?
 - What are some of your perceptions or beliefs about the population you will be serving?
 - What fear, if any, do you have about working in the community?
 - What do you hope to gain from this experience?
- During the Semester Questions:
 - How does your service learning experience relate to the learning objectives of the course?
 - What did you do at your site since the last reflection discussion?
 - What did you observe?
 - What did you learn?
 - What has worked? What hasn't?
 - What do you think is (will be) the most valuable service you can offer at your site?
 - Is there something more you could do to contribute to the solution?
- End of Semester Questions:
 - What have you learned about yourself?
 - What have you learned about your community?
 - What have you contributed to the community site?
 - What values, opinions, beliefs have changed?
 - What was the most important lesson learned?
 - How have you been challenged?
 - What should others do about this issue?
 - What impact did you have on the community?

ADAPTED FROM: Center for Community Engagement, California State University Channel Islands

7. *Graffiti:*

- Step 1: Hang several pieces of poster paper in different places around the room. Set out markers for students to write with.
- Step 2: On top of each piece of paper, write a topic that relates to students' service-learning experiences. The topic can be a course concept, emotion, thought, question, quote, etc.
- Step 3: Give students 10 minutes to walk around the room and write at least 2-3 thoughts/feelings/experiences on the papers. Students should do so anonymously.
- Step 4: As a class discuss the responses (again, without identifying the author of any comment) on each paper. Identify major themes and discuss the implications those themes have for students' experiences as well as the relative success of each community partner.

8. *Snowball Fight:*

Similar to the exercise above, this provides students an anonymous way to answer a question, ask a question, or bring up some concern they have about the experience.

- Step 1: Give each student a piece of paper and ask them to write down a question, thought, or feeling related to their off-campus experience. Be sure that students do not write their name on their paper.
- Step 2: Have students crumple up their paper and have a 2-3 minute “snowball fight” with their peers, throwing as many crumpled papers as they like.
- Step 3: After the throwing, have students each pick up a piece of paper and read it. Use this to start a discussion either as a class or in small groups.

ADAPTED FROM: Stan Rothrock, Inver Hills Community College

9. *Quotes:*

Brief quotes from well-known figures can be a useful way to initiate reflection. Select quotes that both speak to a certain topic or issue related to your students’ service-learning experience and are likely to capture your students’ attention. Examples include:

- “If we do not act, we shall surely be dragged down the long, dark and shameful corridors of time reserved for those who possess power without compassion, might without morality, and strength without insight.” (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.)
- “A different world cannot be built by indifferent people.” (Horace Mann)
- “I believe that serving and being served are reciprocal and that one cannot really be one without the other.” (Robert Greenleaf, Educator and Writer)
- “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” (Margaret Mead)
- “Unless you choose to do great things with it, it makes no difference how much you are rewarded, or how much power you have.” (Oprah Winfrey)

Quotes may be used in a variety of ways. You might give each student a page of quotes and ask them to pick one that fits their feeling about their service-learning project. Then you could ask them to explain why this quote represents their feelings. The best results often occur when students are given time outside of class to prepare their reflective responses. This gives students time to put their thoughts together and explore the implications of each quote as well as how it speaks to their service experience. You may consider requiring students to complete short papers that they then share with the class.

ADAPTED FROM: Diane Sloan, Miami Dade College

10. *Small Group Week:*

- Step 1: In an effort to maximize the time students have to speak with their peers and instructor about their service experience, schedule a series of small group (no more than 8-10 students if possible) activities during a given week. These activities can take the place or supplement regularly scheduled class periods.
- Step 2: Have an interactive discussion with each small group, encouraging each student to speak up early and often. Ask questions directly related to students' service experience.

ADAPTED FROM: Prof. Dave Johnson, Miami Dade College

11. *Four-Part Table:*

Hand each student a piece of paper divided equally into sections as shown to the right (or ask students to divide a blank piece of paper in this manner). Instruct students to identify a recent event at their service placement and fill in each section as it relates to that event. Doing so can help students:

- Differentiate between thought and feeling
- Construct new knowledge
- Ask questions about their experience
- Think critically for the development of analytical essays.

What happened?	How do I feel?
Ideas	Questions

This table can also be adapted using different figures/concepts within each box.

ADAPTED FROM: Lake and Jones (2008)

12. *Truth is Stranger than Fiction:*

This is an exercise that is best used toward the middle or end of a student's experience.

- Step 1: Have students break into groups of two or three.
- Step 2: Ask students to share with their group members the most unusual experience of their service-learning placement. Caution students to protect the privacy and life of those they are working with by avoiding too many personal details. Encourage students to share something, even if they are hesitant or have a difficult time doing so. Students need not share their own story, but should share something from their service-learning experience.
- Step 3: After all students have shared in their small group, invite each group to share their stories with the class. This will help students feel ownership of their experience and forge stronger connections with their classmates.

If you happen to have a class that's filled with interesting stories, you might want to save these stories and submit them to the service-learning program for future use.

ADAPTED FROM: Diane Sloan, Miami Dade College

13. Thought Progression:

Ask students to respond to one or more of the following prompts.

New Eyes:

- Step 1: Choose a picture that relates to students' service experience.
- Step 2: Instruct students to look at the picture and write what they see.
- Step 3: Have students look at the picture again and find something they had not seen before.
- Step 4: Finally, have students look again and find something they didn't see the first two times.
- Step 5: Ask students to review their responses to steps 2-4 and ask them to respond to the following questions: What had they missed at first? Why? How does this relate to what they're learning in their service experience?

Times Change:

- Step 1: Ask students to respond to the following prompt – "Think about the first day of your service-learning experience. What was your biggest challenge? What was your biggest challenge mid-way through the semester?"
- Step 2: Ask students to respond to the following additional prompt – "Now, at this point in your experience/at the end of your experience, what is your biggest challenge? Explain."

ADAPTED FROM: Katie Halcrow, Inver Hills Community College

14. Empathy Work

Journal:

- Have students write a journal entry from the point of view of one or more client they are working with off-campus. The journal entry can be about a specific topic that concerns the client, about the client's experience working with students (in a service-learning capacity), or just about a day in the life of that individual.

Story the Experience:

This is a guided writing assignment that helps students challenge their own subconscious biases and assumptions.

- Step 1: Ask students to remember someone they observed during their most recent service-learning activity.
- Step 2: Ask students to write a story about the experience.
- Step 3: As students write, give them periodic instructions (about once a minute), to add a component to their story such as a color, sound, weather element, emotion, question, short sentence, element of dialogue, or specific word.
- Step 4: After students finish writing, ask them what they learned about their own perceptions through their writing. What thoughts/feelings about their service-learning experience did they have?

ADAPTED FROM: Katie Halcrow, Inver Hills Community College

15. *Short-Takes:*

Give your students one or more of the following discussion/writing prompts and ask them to respond.

Sports Analogies:

- Baseball, Volleyball, and Soccer each have their own set of rules of the game. What's one rule of your Service-Learning experience? What would happen if someone broke this rule? (Write a rulebook of your Service-Learning experience. Include penalties/consequences.)
- Each of those sports also has a playbook. What's the best play you've seen while participating in this Service-Learning experience? Why? (Write a playbook of at least five "plays" that are (1) sure to help you/your group perform well in your Service-Learning experience OR (2) important to know for the profession.)

Bumper Sticker: Create a bumper sticker that captures what you learned and/or speaks to the community need you saw in your experience. (Create an ad campaign that addresses this community need.)

Dinner Guest: If you could have one person from your Service-Learning experience over for dinner, who would you invite and what would you serve? Why? (Depending on the assignment, this could be a short or long response).

ADAPTED FROM: Katie Halcrow, Inver Hills Community College

16. *It's Your Thing/Express Yourself:*

Tell students that they will have the opportunity to express their feelings and ideas about their service-learning project in the form that most makes sense for them. Instruct them that while the content of the creation must be linked to course content, the form does not. Instead, encourage students to select a mode of expression that best allows them to fully express themselves.

Service-learning experiences can stir difficult and confusing thoughts and emotions with students. This activity can allow them to more fully process and better understand what they are experiencing. This activity also allows an instructor to signal to students their understanding of the complex nature of each student's service experience. Clearly allow students to explore their own form of expression, potentially including one of the following:

- Draw/paint/sculpt the most important person/place/object of your experience. Include an artist's statement.
- Create a photo album (with captions) of your experience.
- Create a collage that captures the various emotions you felt and work you did during your service-learning experience.
- Write a haiku (or series of poems) that captures your experience and/or describes the community need and/or describes someone with whom you had meaningful contact during your experience.

- Make a music video or write a song/rap that captures your experience.
- Write a short script and/or create a play that captures your experience.
- Write about your experience in the form of a business memo/email correspondence.
- Create a blog that shows your experience and what you learned.

ADAPTED FROM: Michael and Donna Lenaghan, Miami Dade College

17. Quotes in Songs:

- Step 1: Ask each student to find a song where the singer uses lyrics that describe the student's thoughts and feelings about their service-learning project. Emphasize that the student can focus on a portion of a lyric and need not discuss an entire song.
- Step 2: Next, if they have access to the song, tell them to bring it to play at the end of the reflection session. Even if they do not have the song, ask them to share the lyric that describes their feelings.

Given the right set of students, this can be a fun way to explore the service-learning experience in a casual atmosphere that can foster a bond among class members. Playing and producing music together can create a celebratory atmosphere. You might consider building on the festive spirit by sharing food.

ADAPTED FROM: Dr. Gwen Stewart, Miami Dade College

18. Creative Questions:

Consider asking your students to more fully explore their service experience by asking them to describe it in unexpected ways. Surprising your students with these kinds of questions can get them to think abstractly, critically, and/or creatively about their service experience – especially about the emotions they may be experiencing and the implications of those feelings for themselves and others. It is therefore critical that you ask follow-up questions to ensure that students are fully exploring the implications of the thoughts, emotions, and/or understanding they discover in this process. Example questions to start with include:

- What is the weather of your experience? Sunny skies? Cloudy? Thunderstorms? Explain.
- What is the color of your service-learning experience? Explain.
- Look at this chart of faces at this website (http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_TT9hGUvIsCA/TNsmPtdQFAI/AAAAAAAAAB8/Asi5sBy louk/s1600/howfeel.GIF). What is the face of YOUR Service-Learning experience? Why?
- Put yourself anywhere in nature that you like to go. What in that visual connects with _____? (Insert part of the Service-Learning experience.)
- Based on your Service-Learning experience, choose the one community concern you think is most important. Which superhero and/or cartoon character is most up to the job of fixing this issue? (Afterward: Who are real-world people that can help?)

ADAPTED FROM: Katie Halcrow, Inver Hills Community College

Student and Group Portfolios / Presentations

1. Student Portfolios:

This type of documentation has become a vital way for students to keep records and learn organizational skills. Encourage them to take photographs of themselves doing their project, short explanations (like business reports), time logs, evaluations by supervisors or any other appropriate “proof” which could be used in an interview. Require them to make this professional. Keep reminding them that submitting it at the end of the term is only one reason for doing this. “The real reason is to have documentation to present at future interviews. This could be a major factor in distinguishing them from other candidates.” Student portfolios could contain any of the following: service-learning contract, weekly log, personal journal, impact statement, directed writings, photo essay. Also, any products completed during the service experience (i.e., agency brochures, lesson plans, advocacy letters) should be submitted for review. Finally, a written evaluation essay providing a self-assessment of how effectively they meet the learning objectives of the course is suggested for the portfolio.

ADAPTED FROM: Diane Sloan, Miami Dade College

2. Class Presentations:

A way for students to share their service-learning experience with peers is to make a class presentation through a video, slide show, bulletin board, panel discussion, or a persuasive speech. This is an opportunity for students to display their work in a public format. A similar presentation can be offered to the community agency as a final recognition of the students’ involvement.

ADAPTED FROM: Diane Sloan, Miami Dade College

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