



2012 Rivers Institute Reflection Paper Details and Rubric

Description

- Reflection papers provide a mechanism to explore ideas that are not necessarily covered in class or that you may be hesitant to share in the less structured discussion forums. They allow you to apply what you are learning to your personal life experiences and to your practice.
- Reflection papers develop complex insights and theories, and allow you to speculate about the future. Most significantly, reflection papers allow you to engage in the process of experiencing the harmony or dissonance between perspectives experienced in the course and your own. Reflection papers value experience and the vivid articulation of that experience.
- Reflection papers should explore the underlying value implications of the concepts explored in class sessions and relate them to your own personal experience, observations and beliefs.
- You may want explore any dissonance between your practice and the new perspectives you have experienced in the course; to challenge the value of new practices; to make analogies to other things that you have learned; or to critically interrogate the priorities being set by some aspect of the class sessions.

Schematic Features

A reflection paper contains the following elements. These elements need not be written in this sequence, but *your reflection should demonstrate these features*:

- **Orientation**- Orient the reader by giving background on the experience on which you are reflecting, including the context of the experience.
- **Connections**- Identify and articulate the most meaningful connections you had to the experience. Describe any connections you made between your recent experience and previous experiences you have had, between new ideas and previously held thinking, between your experience and your teaching practice. How was this experience like or unlike something else you have done?
- **Insights and Impacts**- Describe the new understandings or insights you have gained through your experience. What do you understand now that you didn't before your experience? What do you now know as a result of making connections? What new ideas or perspectives have you constructed as a result of your experience? What impacts might these insights make on your practice?
- **Conclusions**- How will you use what you have learned? In what ways have your beliefs or practices changed as a result of your experience? In what ways might you change?

Format and Details

- 2-3 pages, double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1" margins
- No cover page necessary, page numbers in upper right corner
- First line of paper reads: *Reflection Paper – First and Last Name, Date Submitted* (Example: *Reflection Paper – Cara Rieckenberg, June 30, 2012*)
- Document saved as: *Last Name Reflection Paper* (Example: *Rieckenberg Reflection Paper*)
- Document sent as attachment in email to Cara Rieckenberg (crieckenberg01@hamline.edu) before one month from last date of Institute. Subject line of email should read Last Name – Reflection.

Reflection Paper Rubric

ORGANIZATION		
5	3	1
<p><i>The organization enhances and showcases the central idea or theme. The order, structure, or presentation of information is compelling and moves the reader through the text.</i></p>	<p><i>The organizational structure is strong enough to move the reader through the text without too much confusion.</i></p>	<p><i>The writing lacks a clear sense of direction. Ideas, details, or events seem strung together in a loose or random fashion; there is no identifiable internal structure. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:</i></p>
<p>An inviting introduction draws the reader in; a satisfying conclusion leaves the reader with a sense of closure and resolution.</p> <p>Thoughtful transitions clearly show how ideas connect.</p> <p>Details seem to fit where they're placed; sequencing is logical and effective.</p> <p>Pacing is well controlled; the writer knows when to slow down and elaborate, and when to pick up the pace and move on.</p>	<p>The paper has a recognizable introduction and conclusion. The introduction may not create a strong sense of anticipation; the conclusion may not tie-up all loose ends.</p> <p>Transitions sometimes work; at other times, connections between ideas are unclear.</p> <p>Sequencing shows some logic, but not under control enough that it consistently supports the development of ideas. The structure may be predictable and taking attention away from the content.</p> <p>Pacing is fairly well controlled, though the writer sometimes lunges ahead too quickly or spends too much time on details that do not matter.</p>	<p>There is no real lead to set-up what follows, no real conclusion to wrap things up.</p> <p>Connections between ideas are confusing or absent.</p> <p>Sequencing is random and needs lots of work.</p> <p>Pacing feels awkward; the writer slows to a crawl when the reader wants to move on, and vice versa.</p> <p>No subheadings are present or, if present, do not reflect the content.</p> <p>Problems with organization make it hard for the reader to understand the main point or story line, with little or no attempt at paragraph breaks.</p>

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IDEAS AND CONTENT (DEVELOPMENT)

5	3	1
<p><i>This paper is clear and focused. It holds the reader's attention. Relevant anecdotes and details enrich the central theme or storyline. This paper ties experience, knowledge and practice together</i></p>	<p><i>The writer is beginning to define the topic, even though development is still basic or general. The writer is beginning to explore connection between self and experience even though development is still basic or general.</i></p>	<p><i>As yet, the paper has no clear sense of purpose or central theme. To extract meaning from the text, the reader must make inferences based on sketchy details. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:</i></p>
<p>Ideas are fresh and original. The text clearly ties personal experience, knowledge and professional practice together in a way that clearly demonstrates the writer's new insights and understanding.</p> <p>The writer seems to be writing from knowledge or experience and shows insight: an understanding of life and a knack for picking out what is significant.</p> <p>Relevant, telling, quality details give the reader important information that goes beyond the obvious or predictable to explore connections to other concepts and understanding. New insights are clearly articulated.</p> <p>The writer develops the topic in an enlightening, purposeful way that makes a point or tells a story. The paper demonstrates that the writer fully understands and has applied concepts learned in the course</p> <p>Every piece adds something to the whole.</p>	<p>It is pretty easy to see connections between personal experience, knowledge and professional practice, though there may be gaps or unexamined connections, requiring the reader to "fill in the blanks."</p> <p>The writer seems to be drawing on knowledge or experience, but has difficulty going from general observations to specifics.</p> <p>Ideas are reasonably clear, though they may not go beyond the obvious or be detailed, personalized, or connect strongly enough to other concepts discussed in class sessions to show in-depth understanding or a strong sense of purpose. The writer has attempted to articulate new insights.</p> <p>Details often blend the original with the predictable.</p> <p>The text is more a collection of pieces than a coherent whole.</p>	<p>The writer is still not sure how to connect personal experience, knowledge and professional practice. There are gaps, or connections left unexamined.</p> <p>Information is very limited or unclear.</p> <p>The text may be repetitious, or may read like a collection of disconnected, random thoughts.</p> <p>Ideas are obvious, or lack specific examples that give the text focus. The writer has not attempted to articulate new insights. . Ideas are weakly supported with citations from the literature.</p> <p>Everything seems as important as everything else; the reader has a hard time sifting out what's critical.</p>

Reflection Paper Rubric

VOICE		
<p>5</p> <p><i>The writer speaks directly to the reader in a way that is individualistic, expressive and engaging. Clearly, the writer is involved in the text, is sensitive to the needs of an audience, and is writing to be read.</i></p>	<p>3</p> <p><i>The writer seems sincere, but not fully engaged or involved. The result is pleasant or even personable, but not compelling.</i></p>	<p>1</p> <p><i>The writer seems indifferent, uninvolved or distanced from the topic and/or the audience. As a result, the writing is lifeless or mechanical; depending on the topic, it may be overly technical or jargonistic. The paper reflects more than one of the following problems:</i></p>
<p>The reader feels a strong interaction with the writer, sensing the person behind the words.</p> <p>The tone and voice give flavor to the message and seem appropriate for the purpose and audience.</p> <p>Narrative writing seems honest, appealing, and written from the heart.</p> <p>Expository or persuasive writing reflects a strong commitment to the topic, and an effort to bring the topic to life by anticipating the reader's questions, and showing why the reader should care or want to know more.</p>	<p>The writing communicates in an earnest, pleasing manner. Moments here and there surprise, amuse or move the reader.</p> <p>Voice may emerge strongly on occasion, then retreat behind general, dispassionate language.</p> <p>The writing hides as much of the writer as it reveals.</p> <p>The writer seems aware of an audience, but often to weigh words carefully or discard personal insights in favor of safe generalities.</p>	<p>It is hard to sense the writer behind the words. The writer does not seem to reach out to an audience, or to anticipate their interests and questions.</p> <p>The writer speaks in a kind of monotone that flattens all potential highs or lows of the message.</p> <p>The writing may communicate on a functional level, but it does not move or involve the reader.</p> <p>The writer does not seem sufficiently at home with the topic to take risks, share personal insights or make the topic/story personal and real for the reader.</p>