

STEP 1: Describe an Experiential Learning Related Experience

NOTE: This first step is to allow the student to provide an overview of their experience i.e. the big picture. The reflection should be described objectively and in some detail. Students can reflect on two or four key experiences to help focus the reflection on significant or reflection-worthy experiences.

Use these questions to assist in the reflection discussion:

- x When did the experience take place?
- x Where did it take place?
- x What did I do?
- x Why did you do it?
- x What did others do?
- x Who else was there?
- x Who wasn't there?
- x What actions did others take?
- x What did I/others say or otherwise communicate?
- x Who didn't speak or act?
- x What else happened that might be important (i.e. equipment failure, weather-related issues, etc.)

Step 1A: Assess Progress since last Reflection

NOTE: This step can be effective in assessing whether a student has met the learning objectives.

Use these questions to assist in the reflection discourse

- x What were my goals as described at the end of the previous reflection session and/or in my learning from the previous reflection session?
 - o What specific conclusions did I want to reach based on my learnings?
- x What specific steps did I take in order to attain these goals?
- x What obstacles (internal and external) hindered me?
 - o What factors made me more effective?
- x In what ways did my attempts to attain goals or test conclusions follow through as expected, based on my earlier understanding, and in what ways was I surprised?
- x What do my attempts to attain or test previous conclusions tell me about the validity of those conclusions?
 - o In what specific ways is my understanding of those conclusions changing yet again?
- x How can I change my behaviour or mentality in order to make better progress toward my goals?
 - o What specific steps do I need to take in order to continue refining my understanding?

Step 2C: Examine Experience from a Civic Engagement Perspective

NOTE: This section is to identify the experience from the student perspective based on how people act as part of a larger process to generate change in the world around them, and how this impacted the student and what they might be able to do/not do to facilitate this change.

Use these questions to assist in the reflection discussion:

- x What was I/or someone else trying to accomplish?
 - o In taking the actions I/or they did, was the focus on symptoms of problems or causes of problems?
 - o Was the focus (symptom or cause) appropriate to the situation?
 - o How might I/they focus more on underlying causes in the future?
- x What roles did I play?

- x What changes does this experience suggest are needed: within my group, within the organization, within our society more generally?
 - o How can these changes be accomplished: with individual action or collective action/working within the system or challenging the system/etc.?
- x How does this experience help me to better understand the organization's vision, mission, and goals?
 - o What does it reveal to me about the relationship between the organization and those it serves?
 - o What does it suggest about how this relationship might be improved?

STEP 3: Articulate Learning

NOTE Students are to use their responses to Steps 1 & 2 of this reflection exercise to respond to the following questions where they should articulate what was learned from the experience as a whole. This can be provided as a final essay/paper or in the format the Critical Reflection was originally designed (i.e. journal, portfolio, blog, etc.)

Use these questions to assist in the reflection discussion:

“I learned that...”

- x Express an important learning, not just a statement of fact
- x Provide a clear and correct explanation of the concept(s) in question so that someone outside of the course can understand
- x Explain your enhanced understanding of the concept(s), as a result of reflection on the experience
- x Express in general terms, not just in the context of the experience in order to apply this learning more broadly to other experiences

“I learned this when...”

- x Connect the learning to specific activities making it clear what happened in the context of that experience so that someone who wasn't there could easily understand it

“This learning matters because...”

- x Consider how the learning has value, both in terms of this situation and in broader terms, such as other organizations, communities, activities, issues, professional goals, courses, etc.

“In light of this learning...”

- x Set specific and assessable goals, consider the benefits and challenges involved in fulfilling them

- x Tie your learning back to your original goals

Future directions...

- x 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