

SECTION 3: REFLECTION ACTIVITIES

The following strategies are based on Julie Hatcher and Robert Bringle's "Reflection Activities for the College Classroom" (1996, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis) as well as examples from community college faculty around the country. The activities presented here have been adapted by Diane Sloan, Miami-Dade College, and Toni Hartsfield, formerly of Bellevue Community College.

CLASS DISCUSSIONS (STRUCTURED)

This is a technique where faculty create questions to guide group discussion in the classroom. Use structured reflection sessions during regular class time and throughout the course, if all students are involved in service, or modify class discussions if some students are not in service. Students can learn about the diversity of services and populations, see connections between different populations and agencies, collectively share successes and problem-solve challenges at their sites, and learn about societal patterns. For sample reflection questions, see section 2.

CLASS PRESENTATIONS

Class presentations are an effective technique to use during the middle and at the end of a course, and can be designed for individuals or groups. Faculty should have clear and well-defined expectations and criteria for these projects, so students will understand how faculty will evaluate their learning and the quality of the presentations, with emphasis on the former. Students share their learning with peers through a video, slide show, bulletin board, PowerPoint, Web page, panel discussion, or a persuasive speech. This is an opportunity for students to synthesize and summarize their learning over the entire course and connect the classroom knowledge and out-of-classroom learning. It gives students a chance to practice their presentation skills and 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.

COMMUNITY MURAL

Creating a mural is a more nontraditional approach to student reflection. This technique enables students to express feelings and learning from the service experience and also allows for a creative collective statement about aspects of an issue facing a community. Murals are excellent final projects for the end of a course, and can be developed in concept and final product over the entire length of the course. Students can use various sources (magazines, newspapers, other art materials) to build their mural. Faculty can use class time or out-of-class time for this work. Faculty need to define well the criteria for evaluation of content, yet allow freedom for means of expression. Display final projects at a community site or on campus. In addition, students may want to create a community mural that can be permanently displayed at an agency or community site.

CONTRACTS AND LOGS

Service learning contracts and logs formalize the learning and service objectives for the course and may be used from the beginning to the end of the coursework. In concert with the faculty and agency supervisor, the student creates a contract that outlines learning and service objectives and identifies the range of tasks to be completed during the service experience, as well as the goals to be achieved and skills to be learned and/or refined. A service log is a continuous summary of specific activities completed and progress towards accomplishing the service learning goals. Students can use the contract and the log to assess their progress toward meeting the identified objectives and reflect on how the experience affected their ability to complete tasks and achieve their goals and objectives. Students could also submit these items as part of a service learning portfolio.

DIRECTED READINGS

Directed readings are additional readings outside of the traditional course textbooks that provide a broader or local context of social responsibility and civic literacy that can be used throughout the course. These readings are a means of enhancing a systemic understanding of societal concerns of students engaged in service. Faculty can use directed readings to challenge students to apply their current

knowledge within a discipline to current social needs and current events. Directed readings take all literary forms (newspaper articles, short stories, novels, poetry, essay, etc.) and can become the basis for class discussions or directed writings. Faculty can also allow students to create their own list of directed readings through web searches for key words, such as citizenship, service learning, civic responsibility, individual rights and responsibilities, etc.

DIRECTED WRITINGS

Faculty can use directed writings throughout a course to prompt students to reflect on their service experiences within the framework of course content. The instructor identifies a section from the textbook or class readings (i.e., quotes, statistics, concepts) and structures a question for students to answer (see Sample Reflection Questions in Section 2). Faculty can provide a list of directed writings at the beginning of the course, or distribute it to students as the course progresses. Faculty can also ask students to create their own lists of directed readings/questions based on the course textbooks or materials. Directed writings allow students to analyze course content critically and apply it to current problems and issues.

E-MAIL DISCUSSION GROUPS

Through e-mail, students can create a dialogue with the instructor and peers involved in service projects. This dialogue can be ongoing (weekly) or directed at certain times throughout the course. Students write 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. Students are able to connect with other students about issues at their sites, help each other solve problems, identify patterns in their service learning, and have open discussions about societal issues. Faculty may not want to grade content from these discussion groups, but provide incentives for all students to participate.

ESSAYS

Reflective essays are a more formal example of journal entries, and are created via essay questions provided at the beginning of the course. Students are expected to submit a specific number of essays (usually two to three) during the term. Reflective essays can focus on personal development, academic connections to course content, or ideas and recommendations for future action. As with any essay, faculty should clearly state the criteria for development and evaluation of these essays. (Chris Koliba, Georgetown University)

ETHICAL CASE STUDIES

Faculty can require students to create a case study based on their experiences at their service site, and use these case studies in the middle or at the end of a course. The case study should include a description of the context, the individuals involved (respecting confidentiality), and the controversy or event that created an ethical dilemma. Students present their case study to the class, and the class then discusses the situation, identifies the issues, discusses how they would respond to the situation, and gives reasons for their responses. Ethical case studies allow students to analyze a situation, practice ethical decision making as they choose a course of action, and explore and clarify values. (David Lisman, Community College of Aurora)

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 the service site and analyzes that experience within the broader context in order to make recommendations for change. Mid-semester, faculty ask students to identify an underlying social issue they have encountered at the service site. Students then research the social issue and read three to five articles on the topic. Based on their experience and library research, students make recommendations for future action. This reflection activity is useful in interdisciplinary courses and provides students flexibility within their disciplinary interests and expertise to pursue issues experienced at the service site. Class presentations of the experiential research paper can culminate semester work. (Julie Hatcher, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis)

FREE ASSOCIATION BRAINSTORMING

This reflection session takes place right after the end of the first third of the service experience. Students have 10-20 "post-it" notes or cards and write down all of the feelings they had when they first heard about their service learning requirement. Third, they write down all of the feelings they had when they experienced their first "field encounter." Finally, they write down all of the feelings they are having "right now". Encourage them to write down as many different brainstormed thoughts as possible (one thought/word for each card). Students then distribute their post-it cards across three different sheets of newsprint paper posted around the classroom: one sheet with a large happy face, one with a sad face, and one with a bewildered face. Students should place their cards on the newsprint sheet that matches most closely with their feelings. Then have them stand next to the newsprint in which they posted most of their feelings. Faculty may ask students the reasons why they are standing where they are and what they expect for the remainder of their service experience. This exercise is non-threatening, involves both writing and speaking, and allows for both public and private reflection. (Diane Sloan, Miami-Dade College)

GROUP EXERCISES

Faculty can use the following group exercises throughout their courses, and can create their own variations in order to draw out from students the cognitive and emotional reactions to course content and the service experience.

Fish Bowl - Faculty asks for volunteers (5-7) to be in a circle in the middle of the room. The remaining student form a large circle outside of the inner circle. In essence, students form a set of concentric circles. Faculty provides the inner circle with open-ended questions about content in the class and their service experiences, and encourages students to maintain a discussion. If a student from the outer circle has something to add to the discussion, that student joins the circle and replaces an inner circle student. Important to this reflection technique is a clear set of ground rules (all ideas are respected, replacing a student happens after he or she is done speaking, and there is no talking from the outer circle). This activity allows for students to speak freely about sensitive topics and allows for both internal and external processing, public and private reflection. Faculty may also enlist help from all students in the class for questions to ask the inner circle.

It's My Bag - Students find a bag at home (any bag) and fill it with one (or two, depending on time) item(s) that remind them of how they feel about their service learning project. Students bring the filled bag to the reflection session, and explain their item(s) to the rest of the class. The item(s) that they bring usually turn out to be inspiring visual aids that bring out excellent comments. Students are given a chance to think metaphorically about their experience and connect the abstract with the concrete. (James Wolf, Miami-Dade College)

It's Your Thing/Express Yourself - This reflection exercise is a variation on a class presentation and might take a significant time (several weeks) for students to prepare. Thus, this is a good technique to use as a final project, with checkpoints throughout the course. Students can create the final project as an individual or with a group. If faculty are limited on class time, this works best as small group projects. By using poetry, visual art (paintings, drawings, sculptures), music, individually created games or puzzles, or any other creative outlet, students reflect on their reactions and learning from their service experience. At the end of the course, students "perform" their final work. This exercise allows for the development of creativity, group skills, and challenges students to communicate in nontraditional ways. (Michael and Donna Lenaghan, Miami-Dade College)

Small Group Week - This is a simple alternative to full-class reflection sessions when faculty want students to have a maximum amount of time to talk individually. Divide the class into groups of no more than 10-12 students, and then assign each group to a different day for group reflection. Groups not attending a reflection section can work on out-of-class assignments. Students will feel more comfortable sharing more significant material in smaller groups in a circle, and faculty will glean more substantive content during each session. Students will need a significant amount of time for self-expression as a reaction to faculty-guided questions, and will experience a greater connection between course content and their service experience. (Dave Johnson, Miami-Dade College)

Truth Is Stranger than Fiction - Best used toward the middle and end of a course, this exercise has students divided into groups of no more than three. Faculty ask students to write the most unusual story that happened to them during their service learning experience and to be prepared to share it with their small group at the next class session. At the next class session, have students share their stories in

small groups and then come together as a class. Ask representative group members to share some of the stories and what it meant to group members. Open up the discussion to the rest of the class. Faculty should be prepared to prompt students if needed. Students learn valuable writing skills, group communications skills, and have the chance to explore what situations/knowledge affects them. With student permission, faculty can collect stories and "publish" copies for all class members and/or share stories with campus service learning programs to use for community publications and other future needs. (Diane Sloan, Miami-Dade College)

Values Continuum - Faculty can use this exercise to assist students in clarifying their values and exploring the knowledge base for student opinions. This exercise can be used anytime during the course. Name each corner of the classroom as follows: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree. Name the middle of the room as Neutral. Instruct students to go to the place in the room for which they most identify after you read certain statements. Faculty can create questions based on classroom content and/or the service experience. For example, faculty may say, "I believe that individual rights are more important than the rights of the larger community," or "I believe that service to a community is the responsibility of all citizens," or "I believe our government has the responsibility to solve world problems." Once students have gone to their respective places, allow time for students to discuss with other group members their reasons for standing where they are. Have each group report back their reasons for why they believe what they do, and then allow others to "switch" to a different group if they have changed their minds. Continue discussion, and then repeat the process for as long as time allows.

JOURNALS

A common tendency is for journal entries to become a mere log of events rather than a reflective activity in which students consider the service experience in the context of learning objectives. Faculty should guide students to help them link their personal learning with course content. See section 2, Sample Reflection Questions, and section 4, Student and Community Reflections.

Personal Journal - Students write freely about their experience, usually done weekly. Students submit personal journals periodically to faculty, or keep as a reference to use at the end of the experience when putting together an academic essay reflecting their experience. (Julie Hatcher, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis)

Dialogue Journal - Students submit loose-leaf pages from a dialogue journal bi-weekly (or otherwise at appropriate intervals) for the faculty to read and comment on. While labor intensive for the instructor, this can provide continual feedback to students and prompt new questions for students to consider throughout the course. (Suzanne Goldsmith, 1995)

Highlighted Journal - Before students submit the reflective journal, they reread personal entries and, using a highlighter, mark sections of the journal that directly relate to concepts discussed in the text or in class. This makes it easier for the instructor to identify how the student is reflecting on his or her experience in light of course content. (Gary Hesser, Augsburg College)

Key Phrase Journal - In this type of journal, students must integrate terms and key phrases within their journal entries. The instructor can provide a list of terms at the beginning of the semester or for a certain portion of the text. Students could also create their own list of key phrases to include. Journal entries are written within the framework of the course content and become an observation of how course content is evident in the service experience. (Julie Hatcher, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis)

Double-entry Journal - When using a double-entry journal, students write one-page entries each week: Students describe their personal thoughts and reactions to the service experience on the left page of the journal, and write about key issues from class discussions or readings on the right page of the journal. Students then draw arrows indicating relationships between their personal experiences and course content. This type of journal is a compilation of personal data and a summary of course content in preparation for a more formal reflection paper at the end of the semester. (Cross and Angelo, 1993)

Critical Incident Journal - In this journal, students analyze a particular event that occurred during the week. By answering one of the following sets of prompts, students are asked to consider their thoughts and reactions and articulate the action they plan to take in the future: Describe a significant event that occurred as a part of the service learning experience. Why was this significant to you? What underlying issues (societal, interpersonal) surfaced as a result of this experience? How will this incident influence

your future behavior? Another set of questions for a critical incident journal includes the following prompts: 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 the best response? (Julie Hatcher, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis)

Three-part Journal – Students write 3-4 mini-papers, 4 pages each, during the semester. Then they use those mini-papers to write a 12-15 final paper at the end of the semester.

1. **Description** (1 page): This section is a narrative of events, interactions, decisions, successes, problems, and plans that occurred during your service. It can include not only a descriptive account of events, but also your thoughts and feelings about these events.

2. **Analysis** (1 page). The analysis section includes connections between your service experience and material from the B104 textbook and recitations. In this section, you should cite theories, theorists, concepts and research findings that you find useful in analyzing and understanding the events at your service site. HINT: Go through the glossary, and page through the text and study guide, and you will discover connections that can be made.

3. **Articulated Learning** (2 pages). *Articulating* learning is a vehicle through which students express and continue exploring important learnings that have surfaced through (a) community service activities, (b) course readings and lectures, and (c) discussions regarding the content of the course (academic), their or others' participation in collective change-oriented processes (civic), and their personal strengths, weaknesses, assumptions, skills (personal).

1. What did I learn?
2. How, specifically, did I learn it?
3. Why does this learning matter, or why is it significant?
4. In what ways will I use this learning, or what goals shall I set in accordance with what I have learned in order to improve myself, the quality of my learning, or the quality of my future experiences or service?

(Robert Bringle & Patti Clayton, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis)

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

Students can construct a personal account of their experience by writing in a narrative form. This allows for students to be creative in telling a story and finding their voice. Faculty could experiment with allowing students to use first or third person and assign a particular audience to whom the students address their comments. Faculty can assign this as an ongoing, midterm, or final project for the course.

PHOTO ESSAY

This is an alternative approach to reflection, which allows students to use their figurative and literal “lenses” to view their service experience and how it relates to the classroom. This is a good final project/presentation technique. Students use photographs to reflect on their service experience and can weave a main theme or concept learned in class to actual photo documents. These projects are also excellent ones to share with the campus community, the service sites, for year-end celebrations, or college and other local publications.

PORTFOLIOS

This type of documentation has become a vital way for students to keep records and learn organizational skills throughout the course, with the submission of the portfolio as a final product at the end of the course. Student portfolios could contain any of the following: service learning contract, weekly log, personal journal, directed writings, and photo essay. Also, any products completed during the service experience (i.e., agency brochures, lesson plans, advocacy letters) should be submitted for review. Finally, students can include a written evaluation essay providing a self-assessment of how effectively they met their learning objectives. Faculty should instruct students to keep content and format professional, as their portfolios are something they can use in job applications and interviews. Students gain organizational skills, a broad list of their skills and abilities, and a final product to use in their life planning and career search.

PUBLICATIONS

Faculty or community partners can assign students to create publications for their service sites, in order to market the agency's services and express the value of service to a community. This technique may be used mid-course or for a final project. Publications can include Web sites, brochures, newsletters, press releases, newspaper articles, etc.

QUOTES IN PRINT

Faculty can use quotes throughout the course as a means to initiate student reflection. Assign students a page of quotes and ask them to pick one that represents their experience with service learning. Students can then explain why they chose a particular quote. Faculty can assign this as a one-minute paper in class (for reading aloud to the rest of the class upon completion) or as an out-of-class assignment. For examples of relevant quotes see *A Practical Guide for Integrating Civic Responsibility into the Curriculum* (Gottlieb and Robinson, 2002). Additional quotes may be found at <http://kirtland.cc.mi.us/~service/quotes/quotes.html> and <http://www.anselm.edu/volunteer>.

QUOTES IN SONGS

Faculty can use this variation on quotes throughout the course. Students find a song in which the singer uses lyrics that describe their thoughts about the service experience. Students may find a whole song or only partial lyrics. If students have access to the song, have them play it at the end of a reflection session, after students have explained why these lyrics relate to their service experience. If students prefer to write their own lyrics for a song, allow this as an option. The class session in which these songs are "performed" usually has a festive atmosphere. Faculty may want to provide "concert souvenirs" or don concert wear to contribute to the spirit of the sessions. (Gwen Stewart, Miami-Dade College)

Final Papers

Purpose

The final paper is an opportunity to reflect on your experiences at your school. Although it will be based on the mini-papers that you have written, I expect that you will also (a) revise those thoughts and offer new thoughts that were not contained in the mini-papers, and (b) reflect on your mini-papers (e.g., write about how your perspective changed as you re-read each of the mini-papers, particularly the first mini-paper).

Contents

The syllabus contains directions about the contents of the 15-page final paper. You may follow that format: description (5 pages), analysis (5 pages), articulated learning (5 pages).

You may want to consider incorporating some other components in your final paper. Any one of following components could be a part of the final paper; however, any one of these components should be 1 page maximum. You may include more than one of these in your final papers. Here are some ideas:

- How have you changed as a student, a learner, a helper, and a person as a result of your experience at your school?
- Write a letter to students in next year's PSY B104 class about what to expect from their visits at your school.
- Write an essay "Orientation to School XX" that would help future students understand the nature of your school (e.g., rule, procedures, organization).
- What is the role of community service and involvement in your life now and in the future? What future goals do you have for levels and types of community service? Why?
- Develop a case study of a child with whom you worked or an event that occurred at your school. Discuss it in terms of concepts in the course, how it might be interpreted from different perspectives, and what recommendations you would make.
- Write a memo to Superintendent Pritchett that contains a policy recommendation based on your experience at your school. Defend your recommendation (if appropriate, with material from PSY B104).
- Reflections on assumptions: What assumptions (attitudes, stereotypes, beliefs) did you have at the beginning of the semester about your school (e.g., teachers, students, learning)? Which assumptions were supported and which were refuted by your experience?

Stress and Health Flow Chart

The Event

What is the event? **First day at George Washington Community School** →*stressor*

Your first day tutoring at Washington Community School.

Yes - major life event No - daily hassle

Are there two or more **competing options**? Y N →*conflict*
What are the options?

Type: Is this (circle one) approach-approach app-avo avoidance-avoidance double app-avo ?

What are the **expectations**? Are they high? What are your **resources**? Are they adequate?
Do the expectations outweigh the resources? Y N →*pressure*

Expectations: High Medium Low
Resources: Hi Med Low
Pressure: Hi Med Low

What, if anything, has **interfered** with the goal/expectation
→*frustration*

The Perception

What is the **your view** of the situation? *Challenge or threat?* Y N →*primary appraisal*

Did you **examine your resources** to deal with the situation? Y N →*secondary appraisal*

How has your **personality** influenced your perception of the event? Y N

Were you impatient, hostile, competitive? Y N →*Type A*

Were you relaxed, easy-going, patient? Y N →*Type B*

Did you believe that the outcome of the event would be good? Y N →*optimism*

Do you seem *committed* to your goals, willing to view it as a *challenge*, and have a sense of *control* over the event? Y N →*hardiness*

On whom or what do **you rely for support**? →*social support*
Type: Is this support (circle all that apply) emotional advice time information goods ?

The Reaction

How have you **reacted** to the event?

Is this reaction (circle all that apply) physiological emotional behavioral psychological ?

For how **long** did your stress persist? _____

General adaptation syndrome: Which of the following did you experience?

alarm resistance exhaustion

How do you know? _____

How did the stress **affect your performance**?
→*Yerkes-Dodson Law*

The Coping Method

What did you do in order to cope with the stress? _____

Physiological: Did the coping method involve
progressive muscular relaxation? Y N
biofeedback? Y N

Psychological: Did you
Changing your emotional response? Y N →*emotion-oriented*
Using a *defense mechanisms*? Y N

Behavioral: Did you
exercise? Y N
engage in problem-solving to reduce the stressor? Y N →*task-oriented*
become *aggressive*? Y N
believe you had no control over events and give up? Y N →*learned helplessness*
avoid the stressor? Y N →*avoidance-oriented*
dramatically increase a certain behavior (shopping, eating, smoking, etc.)? Y N
→*overindulgence*

Social Psychology

How might teachers at School 44 explain your reasons (or a student who is enrolled in a service learning class) for helping?

- Are these reasons primarily external or internal attributions?

Internal or External

How would the students at School 44 explain your reasons (a college student's reasons) for helping?

- Are these reasons primarily external or internal attributions?

Internal or External

Identify two beliefs you have about the academic performance of students at School 44:

1.

2.

- Does either of these beliefs reflect the Fundamental Attribution Error?

#1: Yes or no

#2: Yes or no

Identify two beliefs that the general public has about the academic performance of students at School 44:

1.

2.

- Does either of these beliefs reflect the Fundamental Attribution Error?

#1: Yes or no

#2: Yes or no

Identify two feelings you have about the children at School 44:

1.

2.

“The children at School 44 have difficulty in academic work because they can't learn.”

Is this statement a stereotype, prejudice, or discrimination?

What kind of attribution is this? Internal or external

What are the implications of this attribution?

In what ways does this statement create an “implied disability” for a student at School 44?

How does this produce prejudice and discrimination?

How might this statement influence a new volunteer helper at School 44?

According to the principles for changing attitudes, how might you attempt to change this person's attitude about students at School 44?

Jim is a freshman engineering student who doesn't particularly enjoy elementary school children. As part of a service learning component in a PSY B104 course, Jim tutors students at School 44.

Jim is under which kind of conformity influence?

Compliance: Yes No

Obedience: Yes No

Conversion: Yes No

Is Jim experiencing dissonance? Yes No

If yes, Jim is experiencing dissonance between:

1.

2.

How can Jim reduce the dissonance?
(Hint: it might be related to conversion)

Jim likes the teacher he is helping. The students in the class dislike the teacher.
Is this a balanced or imbalanced situation according to Heider's analysis (draw a triangle to represent Jim, the children, and the teacher and put a + or a – sign on each side of the triangle)?

The language of **charity** drives a wedge between self-interest and altruism, leading students to believe that service is a matter of sacrificing private interests to moral virtue, [whereas] the language of **citizenship** suggests that self-interest are always embedded in communities of action and that in serving neighbors one also serves oneself (Barber).

Industrial/Organizational Psychology

List three performance criteria that you think would be appropriate for evaluating how good a job a teacher at School 44 is doing:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Put a “C” or an “A” beside the three to correspond to conceptual and actual.

Rank the following from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important) according to how useful each theory is for explaining the motivation of teachers in IPS:

- _____ Reinforcement theory
 _____ Maslow's need hierarchy
 _____ [Most teachers are at the _____ level of motivation]
 _____ Expectancy theory
 _____ Equity theory
 _____ Goal setting theory

School 44 gets a new principal who decides to engage in organizational development by implementing Total Quality Management (TQM).

- What would be the implications of this approach for teachers?
- What would be the implications of this approach for students?
- What would be the implications of this approach for parents?

To what extent do you feel the following apply to teachers at School 44?

(1 = not at all, 2 = somewhat, 3 = moderately, 4 = strongly, 5 = absolutely)

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | born leaders (trait approach) |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | task-centered leaders |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | person-centered leaders |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | supportive leaders |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | directive leaders |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | participative leaders |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | achievement leaders |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | transformational leaders |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | satisfied with their jobs |

Experiential Research Paper Prospectus

Bring completed to Individual Conference (Nov 15/Nov 18/Nov 22/or Nov 23)

(Review syllabus for details on the ERP prior to your meeting. Annotated bibliography due on Tuesday Nov 30th, ERP due Dec 10th, by 5:00 pm)

1. Describe “an experience” that you have had at your service site that caused you to be perplexed, confused, concerned, curious, and caused you to wonder “Why is this happening?” “What policy/law/system/social service needs to be changed in order for this issue to be addressed in the future?”. OR... it could be “an experience” that you have had that has caused you to appreciate “Why is this working so well in this organization?”

2. Identify 2 underlying social issues or topics that could likely be researched to provide you with a better understanding of this experience.

3. What are 2 research questions that could be asked that relate to the experience and the underlying social issue or topic selected?

4. Is there someone you could interview who can provide more information on these questions? Is there information that you could gather from your Site Supervisor?

5. What questions do you have about the Experiential Research Paper?

Experiential Research Paper

This paper is intended to place your service experience within a larger social context. Based on the work of John Dewey (1918, 1933), learning theorist David Kolb (1981) identified reflection to be an essential component of the cycle of learning. Reflection is the intentional consideration of an experience, and reflection is both retrospective (thinking about the past) and prospective (planning action for the future). This 5-6 page experiential research paper will have four parts.

Section 1- Concrete Experience (5%): Describe the context and identify “an experience” you bumped up against or “an observation” you made during your service experience that caused you to be perplexed, curious, or confused as to why things are the way they are at the service site.

Section 2- Reflective Observation (5%): Reflect upon the experience, and describe your initial thoughts, feelings, frustrations and/or reactions.

Section 3- Social Policy Issue (60%): Determine a broader social issue (e.g., eating disorders among early adolescents, health care strategies for the homeless, issues in non-profit management) that provides a theoretical context and framework for understanding your experience. The main part of the paper should focus on research you have gathered on the social issue. Use and cite a total of five resources, with at least 3 scholarly journal articles. Include all resources in an annotated bibliography that will be due one week prior to the due date.

Section 4- Applications/Recommendations (30%): Apply research findings into specific recommendations for new action to be taken, for policy changes, or for program redesign based upon your knowledge and experience. Identify and provide recommendations and advice to community agency personnel who could applying the information you have gathered, to future volunteers who may encounter a similar experience, or to legislators to inform social policy.

Sources for key-word searches that may be helpful include ERIC, Educational Abstracts, Psychological Abstracts, Social Science Index, Business Index. Librarians at the reference desk and Philanthropic Studies Library can be of assistance. Annotated Bibliography of sources due Tuesday Nov. 30th.

Grading for Experiential Research Paper (100 pts)
Due Friday Dec 10th (by 5:00 pm).

	Strong	Adequate	Weak
Description of experience and reflection (5 pts)			
Research on topic (60 pts) . introduction to the topic . demonstrated understanding of the social issue/topic from multiple perspectives . use of citations to demonstrate research			
Application/recommendations for new action (20 pts) . creativity . recommendations for change . supported by information/citations			
Quality of writing (15 pts) . paragraph structure . Annotated bibliography (at least 5 sources, variety of sources, form) . coherent paper			