

Preceptorship Reflective Journal Guidelines

- **Reflective** -- thoughtful, given to meditation, characterized by deep careful thought.
- **Journal** -- a written daily record of personal experiences. Often provide insight on the social and cultural climate.

Oxford Dictionary

Journal Purpose and Benefits

Clinical experience is powerful and provides a unique and reliable source of knowledge. Some experiences in this setting may evoke strong emotional responses. Reflection can be generated from any experience - an ordinary, everyday event, an incident that went well or a negative experience. What makes the experience different is the meaning that you attach to it. If you reflect on something it means it is important to you.

Reflection allows you to revisit, and learn from experiences while making connections between theory to practice; readings and experience; thoughts and feelings; beliefs and behaviors; concepts and observations; and between old knowledge and new knowledge. Learning occurs when you take in information, think about it, make sense of it, and fit it in with what you already know or reject the new information, confirming our knowing about the older knowledge. Learning also requires that you see how to apply new information and where to apply it. This necessitates careful consideration before action. Writing about what we do and what we have learned disciplines us to become more thoughtful, reflective and analytic.

The main purpose of keeping a journal is to give you the chance to reflect on your experiences and allow for documentation of those experiences. Journaling provides you with the time and opportunity to think about what you saw, what it all may mean, and how you felt about a specific incident or the experience as a whole. In addition, cognitive activities stimulated by this type of journal include observation, speculation, doubt, questioning, self-awareness, problem stating and problem solving, emoting (display of heightened emotions), and ideation (to form an idea).

The outcome of this deliberate reflection will result in growth, sharper analytical skills, and empowerment. Analyzing critical or significant incidents therefore facilitates future professional development and identifies and justifies changes in clinical practice.

Guidelines for your (Reflective) Journal

There is no one right way to organize a reflective journal. It might be a good idea to follow a singular format for all entries to help the reader follow your thinking and understand what you are trying to convey through the entries.

Your journal should be double spaced, with 12 point Times New Roman font and 1" margin around (**change the default found in file; page setup**), at least 5 pages in length (no longer than 7 pages).

Please add your name and page number in the header (*found in the 'view' tab*), right side. **Do not** put any read-only limitations on your paper.

Be as specific and reflective as possible; it is important, however, that you write in your journal as soon as possible after returning from your observation to capture what you've seen and your feelings and thoughts about it. Previous students' examples can be found at

<http://www.science.oregonstate.edu/node/203>

Please submit your journal entries as attachments to Arielle Wolf in an **ELECTRONIC** format (ariella.wolf@oregonstate.edu). When you send your journal, please state in the subject of the email: "journal for add your name". *Journal entries are due on week 3 and week 7 by Friday, 12pm and complete final journal is due by Wednesday, 5 pm of week 10.* Please insert a line between each submitted entry in order for me to know where to start reading your next assignment.

At the end of your journal, please add a short paragraph stating your evaluation of the class. I would like to hear about the positive and the negative. Without your input we do not know what needs to be changed or improved.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE ABOVE INSTRUCTIONS WILL RESULT IN N/P GRADE.

Ideas to get you started:

- What is the most important thing I have learned about my observation?
- How does this connect with my education?
- What insights have I gained?
- What was the most important point of information I learned during this session?
- What does this learning make me think about?
- How does this learning connect to other learning or things in my life?
- How did I feel about what I did? Why?
- What additional information would be useful?
- What were the important elements of the event?
- What did I do well?
- What am I confused about?
- What do I need help with?
- What part was the most difficult?
- What do I want to learn more about?
- What part in this session would I like reviewed next time?
- What has using this journal confirmed that I already know about my learning and how I effect that?
- What do I need to do to improve the quality of what I do?
- What might I do instead of what I do now?
- What professional development activities should I be seeking?

**DO NOT LEAVE YOUR WRITING UNTIL THE DAY BEFORE IT IS DUE
FOR SUBMISSION!**