

Scoring Rubric for Reflection Papers
(Compiled by California Polytechnic State University Service-Learning Program)

Retrieved March 14, 2007 from <http://www.ccccd.edu/servicelearning/faculty-ref-paper-rubric.html>

- Excellent Paper -

Civic Awareness and Responsibility

The paper demonstrates that the student:

- understands the complex nature of social problems and has identified several of the causes leading to the social problem addressed by the agency;
- understands that there are forces in action which may cause misfortune over which individuals have no control. (i.e. realizes that individuals are not always solely to blame when they are faced with misfortunes; that it's not just a matter of "pulling yourself up by the bootstraps;")
- sees a relationship between the work of grass roots service agencies and local, state and national government;
- can explain in great detail the programs and services provided by the agency;
- is committed to continued involvement in the community and/or in political processes while in school or after graduation (OR makes a thoughtful argument against or questioning such involvement);
- has identified ways in which he/she can contribute to the community, including both skills and knowledge;
- grasps the concept of social justice;
- made commitments to the agency that exceeded those required by the class and fulfilled all of them.

Critical Thinking

The paper shows that the author:

- views situations from multiple perspectives; able to observe multiple aspects of the situation and place them in context;
- perceives conflicting goals within and among the individuals involved in a situation and recognizes that the differences can be evaluated;
- recognizes that actions must be situationally dependent and understands many of the factors which affect their choice;
- makes appropriate judgments based on reasoning and evidence;
- has reasonable assessment of the importance of the decisions facing clients and his or her responsibility as a part of the clients' lives;
- began to think in new ways; about the clients served, society and social problems in general, him/herself as a person;
- not only understands the purpose(s) and programs of the agency selected but uses critical thinking skills to evaluate its effectiveness and to develop recommendations for improvement;
- realizes that he/she can learn outside the classroom because he/she has accessed information from a variety of sources in the field (i.e. observation, interview, reading materials, etc.) thereby demonstrating capacity for self-guided, life-long learning activities;

- able to use many sources of information within a social environment;
- sees how and where skills and information gained through service involvement can be applied to other situations;
- reflects on and can articulate the meaning of a "real life" experience.

Personal Development

The paper indicates that the student:

- realizes how much he or she can learn from others, including those considered to be "underprivileged;"
- appreciates people whose values, lifestyles or cultures are different from his or her own;
- has examined his own beliefs in light of the experience;
- sees evidence that the author continues in the process of developing a philosophy of life;
- sees how service involvement could impact his personal career development;
- understands some of the factors that make the people who are served and/or agency staff different from him/herself.

- Proficient Paper -

Civic Awareness and Responsibility

The paper demonstrates that the student:

- is likely to continue his interest in his issue area;
- appreciates the complex nature of the social issue addressed by the agency and names at least two causes;
- understands that there are forces in action which may cause misfortune over which individuals have no control. (i.e. realizes that individuals are not always solely to blame when they are faced with misfortunes; that it's not just a matter of "pulling yourself up by the bootstraps");
- has fulfilled all commitments made to the agency including eight hours of service;
- has a sense of the contributions that he/she can make in terms of his/her skills and knowledge;
- is committed to working with the same or a similar agency at some point in his or her future (OR provides a well thought out argument against or questioning such involvement).

Critical Thinking

The paper shows that the author:

- not only understands the purpose(s) and programs of the agency selected but uses critical thinking skills to evaluate its effectiveness and to develop at least two recommendations for improvement;
- sees how and where skills and information gained through service involvement can be applied to other situations;
- has accessed information from a variety of sources in the field (e.g. observation, interview, reading related materials, discussion groups), thereby demonstrating a capacity for applying "learn by doing" in the community as a method for life-long learning;
- observations are fairly thorough and nuanced although they tend not to be placed in a broader context;
- provides a cogent critique from one perspective, but fails to see the broader system in which the aspect is embedded and other factors which may change;

- uses both unsupported, personal belief and evidence but is beginning to be able to differentiate between them;
- perceives legitimate differences of view point;
- demonstrates a beginning ability to interpret.

Personal Development

The paper indicates that the student:

- realizes that he/she can learn from people whose values, lifestyles or cultures are different from his/her own;
- understands some of the factors that make the people served and/or agency staff different from him/herself;
- sees how service involvement could impact his/her personal and career development.

- Acceptable Paper -

Civic Awareness and Responsibility

The paper demonstrates that the student:

- is aware at a general level of social problems and their complex nature;
- recognizes a need for people to get involved;
- demonstrates some idea of how and where his/her skills and knowledge can be used for community betterment.

Critical Thinking

The paper shows that the author:

- understands the purpose(s) and programs of the agency selected and provides at least one idea of how its services might be improved;
- has accessed information from a variety of sources in the field (i.e. observation, interview, reading related materials, discussion groups);
- gives examples of observed behaviors or characteristics of the client or setting, but provides no insight into reasons behind the observation;
- observations tend to be one-dimensional and conventional or unassimilated repetitions of what has been heard;
- tends to focus on just one aspect of the situation;
- uses unsupported personal beliefs frequently as "hard" evidence;
- may acknowledge differences of perspective but does not discriminate effectively among them.

Personal Development

The paper indicates that the student:

- realizes that he or she can learn from others, including those considered to be "underprivileged;"
- is tolerant of people whose values, lifestyles or cultures are different from his or her own.

- Unacceptable Paper -

Civic Awareness and Responsibility

The paper demonstrates that the student:

- lacks information about social problems and/or interest in addressing them;
- demonstrates no personal commitment to helping find a solution for community problems;
- has not fulfilled his/her commitments to the agency.

Critical Thinking

The paper shows that the author:

- does not see how skills and information gained through service involvement can be applied to other situations.

Personal Development

The paper indicates that the student:

- believes he or she has little to learn from others, including those considered to be "underprivileged;"
- is not tolerant of individual differences and continues to rely on traditional stereotypes to describe and deal with people who are different from him/herself;
- has undergone no examination of his/her own beliefs in light of the service experience.