Using Reflection for Service Learning and Community Engagement Activities

Objectives

- Outline decisions and options for using reflection

- Offer examples of reflection strategies

- Provide resources you can use as you think about adding reflection to courses and student experiences

What Do We Mean By Reflection?

"Intentional consideration of an experience in light of particular learning objectives" (Hatcher and Bringle, 1997)

"[A]process designed to promote interpretation of experience and promotion of cognitive and affective learning. (Elon University Academic Service Learning Faculty Handbook*)

*http://www.elon.edu/docs/e-web/students/servicelearning/ASL%20Faculty%20Handbook%20fall%2011.pdf

What Reflection Is Not

- "Reflection *is not* a didactic retelling of the events at a service site...

- "Reflection *is not* simply an emotional outlet for feeling good about doing service, or for feeling guilty about not doing more...

- "Reflection *is not* a time for soap-boxing...

- "Reflection *is not* a tidy exercise that closes an experience; reflection is ongoing, often messy, and provides more openings than closings."

From: http://www.usf.edu/egagement/documents/reflection-in-he-sl-fs-short-sept08.pdf

Reasons for Reflection
(From http://www.learningtogive.org/doc/how2guide.doc)

Academic Learning
- Improved basic skills
- Better learning of subject matter
- Higher level thinking and problem solving
- Learning to learn from experience

Personal Development
- Awareness of changes in oneself
- Taking charge of life

Program Improvement
- Improved service
- Improved program

More Reasons for Reflection
(From Reflection, http://psl.oditech.com/pages/reflection/purpose_of_reflections.pdf)

- On-going education and learning experiences
- Discussion, exploration, and resolution of difficult or challenging circumstances
- Understanding the larger scope of issues and impact of service
- Self-examination and thoughtfulness
- Thinking about the future
- Problem-solving with peers
- Team and community building
- Reality checks on inaccurate assumptions and biases

Reflection
Some initial considerations. . .

Reflection Can Take Many Shapes

- Individual
- Small group/large group
- With community partners
- Class-based/other group
- Written/oral
- Activity-based
- Single event/ongoing

Reflection Can Operate at Varying Levels

Mirror:
Reflection about one's self as an individual and as part of a team

Microscope:
Reflection about the service project itself and its value to the agency and community members

Binoculars:
Reflection about opportunities for student development and for consideration of social issues

https://cce.wsu.edu/about/reflection/
http://psl.oditech.com/pages/reflection/purpose_of_reflections.pdf

Reflection Can Use Varying Media

Writing	Speaking & Listening	Performing & Creative Arts	Multimedia & Technology
Journals	Panel/ group discussion	Role playing/ acting	Tri-fold storyboard
Essays	Presentations	Interviewing classmates	Scrapbook
Publications	Scenarios for discussion	Mock trial	Video/photo essays
Reports		Teaching collage	Chat room
		Drawing	Webpage design
			Twitter/blog

Source:
http://www.towson.edu/studentaffairs/civicengagement/servicelearning/faculty/reflection.asp

Some Examples of Reflective Activities

Reflection Can Occur At Various Points

- Beginning

- Middle

- End

Some Questions Before Service

- What role do you want to have? (self)
- What preconceived notions do you have about the project and the people involved? (self)
- What do you need to do in order to prepare and implement the project? (self, microscope)
- What in the community needs to be done? (microscope)
- What do you anticipate will happen? (microscope)
- Why does this problem exist? (binoculars)

Reflection, http://psl.oditech.com/pages/reflection/purpose_of_reflections.pdf

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The FACE Assessment
–To PREPARE ONESELF TO ENTER A NEW SERVICE COMMUNITY–

Facts WHAT YOU KNOW (location, people, success level, etc.)	Assumptions WHAT YOU THINK YOU ARE GETTING INTO (stereotypes, rumors, previous experiences, etc.)	Challenges WHAT YOU WORRY ABOUT ENCOUNTERING (language, confusion, interaction with the community, etc.)	Expectations WHAT YOU HOPE TO GET FROM THE EXPERIENCE (people you will meet, type of service you will do, etc.)

https://www.usfca.edu/uploadedFiles/Destinations/Institutes_and_Centers/OSL/docs/FACE%20chart.pdf

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Some Questions During Service

- What role are you taking? (self)
- Is this role what you anticipated? (self)
- Is the project unfolding the way you thought it would? (self, microscope)
- What's happening? (microscope)
- What issues have arisen, and what are some ways of addressing them? (microscope)
- Does the project need to be changed? Why? (microscope)
- How is the project connecting with what's happening in the classroom? (microscope, binoculars)
- Is your view of the problem changing? How? (binoculars)

Reflection, http://psl.oditech.com/pages/reflection/purpose_of_reflections.pdf

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This exercise is intended to gather your current thoughts/feelings related to your service experience.

Select 2-8 words from the list at the right (or select words of your own) and **enter them on the lines** inside the segments of the circle.

Then **add a brief explanation** and **identify a step you can take to enhance or diminish** the feeling. e.g., *(I Am) Excited to learn more about . . . . I plan to . . . .*

- Annoyed
- Awed
- Comfortable
- Concerned
- Confident
- Curious
- Delighted
- Disappointed
- Doubtful
- Encouraged
- Energized
- Excited
- Frustrated
- Happy
- Hopeful
- Interested
- Lost
- Nervous
- Optimistic
- Pleased
- Proud
- Relieved
- Satisfied
- Stressed
- Surprised
- Uncertain
- Wishing
- Wondering
- Worried

Or other descriptor of your choice!

One-Minute Mirror :

Students are given four "mirrors"-- goals, a concern of the day, a success for today, and my #1 responsibility--and a topic . Students select one mirror and then reflect for 30 seconds, writing sentences, lists, or key words or sketching a drawing related to their reflections.

Some Questions After Service

- What did you learn? (self, microscope)
- What did you learn about yourself? Your peers? The community? (self, microscope)
- Where can you apply this knowledge in other parts of your life? (self)
- Did things turn out the way you anticipated? (self, microscope)
- What was different and why? (self, microscope)
- Would you do anything differently? (self, microscope)
- What happened during the project? (microscope)
- What difference have you really made? (microscope)
- What are your views on the subject/issue now? How have they changed? (binoculars)

Reflection, http://psl.oditech.com/pages/reflection/purpose_of_reflections.pdf

HEARTS:
Confirmed something for you.
(I knew it in my heart . . .)

CLUBS:
What a surprise!
(It just hit me!)

SPADES:
I want to learn more.
(Dig into it!)

DIAMONDS:
This was useful.
(Definitely valuable!)

Postcards:

Get a variety of picture postcards (or picture/words that depict, e.g., a variety of emotions, taken from magazines and glued on sheets of paper or 3x5 cards) and lay them out so the group can look them over. Pose a question (E.g., "what was it like for you having to trust the other group members in this experience?") and ask participants to choose a postcard that represents their answer.

RODEO DRIVE
LOS ANGELES

Varying Reflection Activities throughout the Semester

Type	Before Service/Introducing Service	During Service/Connecting to Objectives, Deepening Analysis	End of Semester, Post Service Culminating, Celebrating, Synthesis and Final Evaluation
Reading	Articles or books about service. Oral Histories related to social context	Articles or books about service; Oral Histories related to social context; contrasting viewpoints	Public readings of student reflections; read and respond to community feedback;
Writing	Personal goals (academic, civic, personal) for the class: DEAL Model	Group Journals, response journals, stories, poems, research paper, letters to the editor, brochure, poems; essay questions on tests	Thank you notes, analysis and synthesis of all other written reflections; culminating research project
Discussion	Examining current ideas about service, social contexts of content areas: Whole, small group discussions; pair-shares related to a specific prompt (questions, photos, community partner presentation)	Examining new learning and connections to service, social contexts: Whole, small group discussions; pair-shares related to a specific prompt linking content and service; responding to others presentations about service site.	Culminating discussions and sharing on written products. DEAL model or a re-read of an article on service used at the beginning of a semester
Doing	Rating beliefs about service, charity-change paradigm, visit to service site with prepared questions, etc.	Create a panel of partners and viewpoints; role plays; collage; mural; photo essay; create products for the site; create a video; debate; present to outside groups	Present products from mid-semester (video, brochure, photo essay) and explain process including use by community. Invite community to final reflection and reflect together;

http://servicelearning.duke.edu/uploads/media_items/types-of-reflection-activities-and-possible-timing.original.pdf

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Journals,
Essays,
and
Final Papers

Today I got to the nursing home at 2:00. Talked to some ladies. Passed out popcorn at the movie. Went home at 4:00.

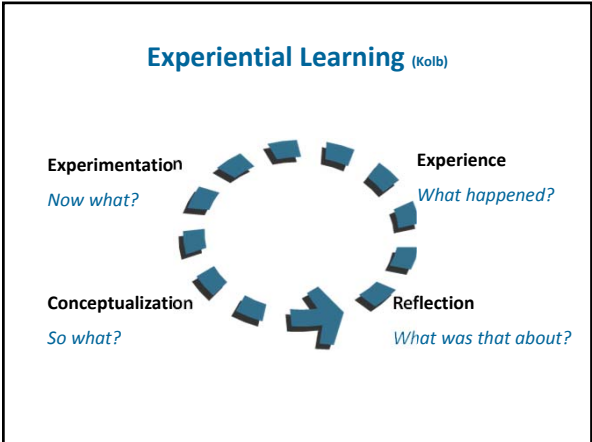*From a student's journal*

Some Types of Reflection Journals

- Personal Journal
- Dialogue Journal
- Highlighted Journal
- Key Phrase Journal
- Double-entry Journal
- Critical Incident Journal
- Three-Part Journal

Reflection Activities: Tried and True Teaching Methods to Enhance Students' Service Learning Experience,
http://www.usf.edu/engagement/documents/s-l-reflection-activities.pdf

Other Types of Written Work

- Reflective essays
- Directed writings
- Experiential research paper

Whatever the format of the assignment,
what is it that we hope to see?

Experiential Learning (Kolb)

Experimentation
Now what?

Experience
What happened?

Conceptualization
So what?

Reflection
What was that about?

Other Models

DEAL

Describe->**E**xamine->**A**rticulate **L**earning.
What did you learn? How did you learn it? Why is it important? What will you do because of it?

ORID

Objective, **R**eflective, **I**nterpretive, and **D**ecisional

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Assessing Reflective Responses
(From *Reflection*, http://psl.oditech.com/pages/reflection/purpose_of_reflections.pdf)

- **Content (factual/inferential)**
  - general observations
  - specific examples
  - criteria comparisons
  - positive/negative observations
  - problem-solving

- **Reasoning (analytic/evaluative)**
  - meaning/usefulness
  - adjustments for future
  - comparisons to prior work
  - reasons for decisions, choices
  - generalized meaning

- **Generative (creative/productive)**
  - new methods
  - new topics
  - new treatments
  - new skills
  - new meaning

- **Expression (language control)**
  - vocabulary
  - fluency
  - mechanics

Levels of Reflection (Bradley, 1995)

Level One
1. Gives examples of observed behaviors or characteristics of the client or setting, but provides not insight into reasons behind the observation . . .
2. Tends to focus on just one aspect of the situation.

(Continued)

Level 2
1. Observations are fairly thorough and nuanced although they tend not to be placed in a broader context. . .
3. Used both unsupported belief and evidence but is beginning to be able to differentiate between them.

(Continued)

Level 3
1. Views things from multiple perspectives . . .
2. Perceived conflicting goals within and among individuals involved . . .

(Continued)

Rubrics for Reflection

RUBRIC TO ASSESS ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING REFLECTION PAPERS
Adapted by Dr. Barrett Brenton from Rubric Developed by Campus Compact
http://www.stjohns.edu/sites/default/files/documents/adminoffices/asl-rubric-grading.doc

Graded	Dimensions of Quality (Criteria)	NOVICE [Grade Range F – D]	APPRENTICE [Grade Range C]	PROFICIENT [Grade Range B]	DISTINGUISHED [Grade Range A]
Yes	AWARENESS OF PURPOSE OF SERVICE	Student demonstrates limited awareness of the purpose of service and obtaining AS-L credit	Student expresses awareness of the purpose of service and a one-on-one connection with the experience, but it is not applied	Student expresses empathy and/or awareness of personal role in service and applies it to a connection with solutions and the bigger picture	Student expresses and acts out personal role in service and applies the experience to developing solutions
Yes	CRITICAL THINKING	Student accepts things at face value, as if all opinions were created equal. Opinions are stated without argument	Student accepts most things at face value, as if most opinions were created equal. Opinions are stated with limited argument	Student begins to argue for conclusions based on objective evidence that express concrete arguments	Student expresses an abstract level of responding which requires objective evidence. They demonstrate awareness of different perspectives, and weigh evidence to successfully argue for a conclusion/opinion
Yes	APPLYING THE AS-L EXPERIENCE TO THE ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE BASE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE	Student does not apply the academic knowledge base and objectives of the course to the service experience	Student expresses some connection between the academic knowledge base and objectives of the course and the service experience	Student develops a perspective built upon the academic knowledge base and objectives of the course that is linked to the service experience beyond the curriculum	Student creates their own academic perspective infused with the knowledge base and objectives of the course and applies it to the service experience beyond the curriculum
Optional	RESPONSIBILITY TO COMMUNITY	Student demonstrates a limited awareness of personal responsibility to community	Student expresses insight into community issues pertinent to the service project and integrates a personal sense of responsibility to participating in a solution but does not apply that knowledge	Student acknowledges a responsibility to community regarding issues pertinent to the service and expresses a commitment to working towards specific solutions	Student acknowledges a responsibility to community regarding issues pertinent to the service and expresses a commitment to working towards specific solutions. In addition, student gets others involved
Optional	IMPACT ON STUDENT'S PERSONAL LIFE	Student expresses very limited or no connection between service and self	Student expresses a connection between service and self	Student expresses how they could change as a result of the service	Student expresses change(s) in self because of the service
Optional	VINCENTIAN VALUES AND CHARISM	Student demonstrates a limited connectedness of the service experience to the Vincentian charism	Student expresses some connection between Vincentian values and service	Student expresses empathy and awareness of personal role in service to the poor through a Vincentian lens	Student fully incorporates the Vincentian spirit through application of reflection on the service experience and creates their own perspective based on both theory and experience

Assessment Rubric for Student Reflections

Levels	Criteria
Reflective practitioner	Clarity: The language is clear and expressive. The reader can create a mental picture of the situation being described. Abstract concepts are explained accurately. Explanation of concepts makes sense to an uninformed reader. Relevance: The learning experience being reflected upon is relevant and meaningful to student and course learning goals. Analysis: The reflection moves beyond simple description of the experience to an analysis of how the experience contributed to student understanding of self, others, and/or course concepts. Interconnections: The reflection demonstrates connections between the experience and material from other courses; past experience; and/or personal goals. Self-criticism: The reflection demonstrates ability of the student to question their own biases, stereotypes, preconceptions, and/or assumptions and define new modes of thinking as a result.
Aware practitioner	Clarity: Minor, infrequent lapses in clarity and accuracy. Relevance: The learning experience being reflected upon is relevant and meaningful to student and course learning goals. Analysis: The reflection demonstrates student attempts to analyze the experience but analysis lacks depth. Interconnections: The reflection demonstrates connections between the experience and material from other courses; past experience; and/or personal goals. Self-criticism: The reflection demonstrates ability of the student to question their own biases, stereotypes, preconceptions.
Reflection novice	Clarity: There are frequent lapses in clarity and accuracy. Relevance: Student makes attempts to demonstrate relevance, but the relevance is unclear to the reader. Analysis: Student makes attempts at applying the learning experience to understanding of self, others, and/or course concepts but fails to demonstrate depth of analysis. Interconnections: There is little to no attempt to demonstrate connections between the learning experience and previous other personal and/or learning experiences. Self-criticism: There is some attempt at self-criticism, but the self-reflection fails to demonstrate a new awareness of personal biases, etc.
Unacceptable	Clarity: Language is unclear and confusing throughout. Concepts are either not discussed or are presented inaccurately. Relevance: Most of the reflection is irrelevant to student and/or course learning goals. Analysis: Reflection does not move beyond description of the learning experience(s). Interconnection: No attempt to demonstrate connections to previous learning or experience. Self-criticism: Not attempt at self-criticism.

http://www.cetla.howard.edu/teaching_strategies/service_learning/docs/Assessment%20Rubric%20for%20Student%20Reflections.doc

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Planning for Reflection

Getting Started
From http://www.compact.org/disciplines/reflection/structuring/decisions.html

- Learning outcomes
- Frequency and timing of reflection
- Form of reflection
- Degree of structure
- Small group/large group
- Communication with community partners
- Feedback/grading

Factors in Planning for Reflection
From *Facilitating Reflection; A Manual for Leaders and Educators*
http://www.uvm.edu/~dewey/reflection_manual/

- **Setting Goals:** Reflection has many possible outcomes, including increased awareness of social issues, values clarification, and even program evaluation. Before initiating reflection the facilitator must consider which outcomes are possible and desirable. . .

- **Knowing Your Audience:** Consider who will be participating in the reflection. Are they new to service? If not, what is the extent of their previous experience? How long have they been at college? What academic subjects are they most interested in? What strengths do they bring to the reflection sessions? What might be potential tension points . . .

- **Making Time:** The reflection component should be built into the service experience, rather than being an "extra" or "add-on" activity. . . .

- **Choosing a Method:** The form of reflection that you choose will depend not only on the goals and issue previously identified, but also on the location and time for the session and the number for people involved.

Selected Resources

Bradley, J. (1995). A model for evaluating student learning in academically based service. In M. Troppe (Ed.), *Connecting cognition and action: Evaluation of student performance in service learning courses*. Denver: Education Commission of the States/Campus Compact.

Hatcher, J.A., & Bringle, R. G. (1997). Reflections: Bridging the gap between service and learning. *Journal of College Teaching*, 45, 153-158.

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development.* New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Lucker, J. L., & Nadler, R. S. (1997). *Processing the experience: Enhancing and generalizing learning.* IA: Kendall/Hunt.

Thoughts, questions, comments?

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