

Reflecting on your Internship: Preparatory Questions and Essay Prompts

Overview

The purpose of these essays is threefold:

- to create a record of your internship experience from which you can draw in the future (to create resumés, personal statements, cover letters for future employers; to complete the Student Final Report for Transcript Notation and/or the reflective essay required for the writing minor, etc.)
- to give your faculty leader and CAPA staff insight into how your internship is working for you and for the UCD Sydney program as a whole
- to help you make sense of your internship experience as it unfolds

Due dates:

Due dates are given at the beginning of each Reflective Essay expanded description. The first three reflective responses are due in the first 3 weeks of the program (Sept 30, Oct 10, 17), one is due midterm (Oct 31), and the last two are due in the last two weeks (Nov 21 and 28). While the due dates usually fall on Mondays, note that the first reflective essay is due on a Friday.

For each reflective essay, you are given a series of short preparatory questions and then a group of questions to prompt your reflection. Your prep question answers do not have to be written in complete sentences: they can be notes or bullet points. Your reflective essays should consist of full sentences organized into coherent paragraphs.

These responses will not be graded but completing them is necessary for you to receive your internship units, whether UWP 192 or EAP 192. Your essays will be read by your faculty leader and CAPA staff within the week that you turn them in.

Length: Each essay should be 200-300 words.

Submitting:

Submit in a single document your answers to the preparatory questions and the essay that you write in response to the prompt. Submit to either the UWP 192 or EAP 192 SmartSite assignments folder, depending on your enrollment.

If you have Internet issues, let me know so that we can work out other submission arrangements.

Transcript Notation

The documents you will need to submit for Transcript Notation are:

- Transcript Notation Proposal Parts 1 and 2, to be completed in the first two weeks of your internship--by October 7 at the latest.
- Time Sheet. Update each week. Due to site supervisor on last day of internship. CAPA will send it to ICC along with your site supervisor evaluation. If you do not turn in your timesheet, you will not receive a Pass for your 192 units.
- Student Final Report for Transcript Notation is due December 9. If you miss that deadline, you won't receive notation.

Due dates and steps are included in the schedule and instructions that follow.

Friday, September 30:

Reflective Essay 1: Your hopes and expectations

Preparatory questions:

What about the internship portion of the program led you to apply for the Sydney Writing and Internship Quarter Abroad?

What are your learning objectives for this internship?

What career plans do you have going into your internship?

What insights do you hope to gain about your aspirations?

What do you hope to find out about working outside of the U.S.?

What skills and abilities do you hope to acquire?

What kinds of experiences do you hope to have?

What do you hope to find out about yourself?

What do you know so far about your internship responsibilities and duties?

Did you have a Skype interview before you departed? When?

What did you find out during the interview about the internship duties that led you to believe the position would meet your goals?

The reflective essay prompt:

What aspects of your internship, even in the first few days you've been there, do you think could lead to some fulfillment of your hopes and expectations?

In the week of October 3-7:

--Submit Transcript Notation Proposal to Aggie Job Link; send an e-mail to icclab@ucdavis.edu telling them that you that you have done so.

Monday, October 10

Reflective Essay 2: The internship experience unfolding

Preparatory questions:

Refer back to your answer to the last question of the first reflective essay prompt. How have the aspects of the internship you named in that essay continued to develop over the first week?

What are the kinds of tasks that you have been given to do? (daily duties, projects, meetings, trainings?)

What have you learned about your on-site supervisor's expectations?

For now: How is what you expected starting to come about?

Your CAPA learning agreement says that it is your "responsibility to maximize every opportunity to develop and improve [your] knowledge of the field in which [you] are placed." What does "maximize opportunity" mean? In what specific ways have you done that?

For future weeks: How can you bring about the fulfillment of your expectations?

Your CAPA learning agreement also says that you are expected "to demonstrate an acceptable degree of competency and initiative before graduating on to more meaningful tasks." What have you discovered to be your competencies? What specific additional skills and abilities do you think you will develop doing the work that you are currently doing? What kinds of activities do you see others in the organization doing?

What "competencies" are those employees drawing on? What do you think you might do to develop similar skills and abilities and competencies?

The reflective essay prompt:

Do you see avenues for bringing about what you hoped for/aspired to/expected? Describe a scenario in which you bring about what you would like to have happen. For example, you might identify who you might talk to and write an imaginary dialogue in which you make your request. For another example, you might identify another worker at your internship site doing work that you would like to try and what his or her qualifications are in comparison to yours. What work could you request that would provide a stepping stone to the kinds of things you'd like to have the chance to do?

Monday, October 17

Reflective Essay 3: Seeing the whole as one of the parts

This question relates to how your organization functions and your place in it.

Preparatory questions:

Start with some basics about where you are interning:

The name of the organization.

What does that name say about what the organization wants the world to know about it?

What does the organization produce or provide?

Does the organization have a 'mission statement'?

If so, what is it? What is your part in fulfilling that mission?

What is the cultural makeup of your work site? What is Sydney's diversity? How does that impact what your organization produces or provides?

Describe the lines of accountability as you understand them so far:

Who makes what kinds of decisions?

Name your supervisor, who he or she reports to, who that person reports to, etc.; that is, describe how work tasks move from person to person.

The reflective essay prompt:

a) What would be an apt metaphor for the way your organization works? (Is it a machine with cogs and wheels, a body with different parts, or a ship with captain and crew?) Consider mechanical images like clockwork or factory production, organic images like the body or the solar system or agriculture, processes like photography or photosynthesis, relational images like family or community. To come up with a metaphor, you'll have to think about the ways the parts relate to each other and to the whole, what creates action, what circulates and how, etc.

b) Once you have come up with an apt metaphor, describe your place in the system.

c) Then discuss how the work that you are doing for the organization is enabling you to understand how it works.

Monday, October 31

Reflective Essay 4: midpoint review

As the CAPA learning agreement says, your site supervisor is the person who “serve[s] as your point of contact and advise[s] you during your internship.” Essay 4 depends on you and your site supervisor meeting for a midterm progress review. Start trying to schedule that meeting in the week of October 12-16. Let your supervisor know that the meeting is an academic requirement. Schedule the meeting in the week of October 26-30 so that you can complete the reflective essay by the start of the following week.

Preparatory questions:

Describe your midterm progress review.

What was your experience of asking for and scheduling the interview?

What was discussed? How did you feel talking with a supervisor about your performance?

Describe the work you have been doing.

What are the kinds of tasks that you have been given to do since you last reported on them in Reflective Essay 2 on October 12? (new daily duties, projects, meetings, trainings?)

What skills are you finding you already have that you are applying to your internship tasks?

Consider what you have learned about US and Australian culture

Where does your organization fit into Australian society? Would this be different in the US?

The reflective essay prompt:

Look back to your October 10 essay (Reflective Essay 2) and to the things you were doing at the outset of your internship. How have you progressed? Include your thoughts on what has made progression possible and how your actions and attitudes have hindered or helped your progress. In other words, what are you starting to understand about yourself as a contributor to a professional organization?

Monday, November 21

Reflective Essay 5: Finding out what's missing is a positive outcome.

Preparatory questions:

Of what you see going on around you in your internship organization, what would you like to do more of in the future?

What kinds of additional training/knowledge would you have to acquire to be qualified?

What have you found out about skills and abilities you have and don't have?

What have you found out that you *don't* know that you need to know?

What aspects of the field in which you have been placed do you like, and what don't you like?

Reflective essay prompt: What do you think is the impact of your internship experience so far on your academic and career plans?

Monday, November 28

Reflective Essay 6: Final assessments

Preparatory questions:

What were your supervisor's expectations?

At what point did you feel you understood them?

At what point did you begin to meet them?

What were the intercultural challenges you faced? What did you learn from these?

What were your expectations of yourself?

Did you meet them?

What did you have to do to meet them?

What did you learn about your capacity

a) to know what you wanted and

b) to bring about that kind of experience you wanted?

Look back to your October 10 and October 31 essays, where you recorded the tasks you were doing at the outset and the midpoint of your internship.

What additional tasks did you do in the second half of your internship?

What new skills did you acquire?

What practical experience did you gain?

What did you learn about your organization and about your intended profession?

What did you dislike about your internship? How has this helped you to grow?

What global skills have I gained that would help me work with people from any background?

The reflective essay prompt:

Read back over all 5 preceding reflective essays. What kinds of progress did you make as a result of this internship? Include both professional and personal growth. Review the threefold purpose of the essays. Be candid about your internship site and experience and be honest with yourself.

Week of November 28-December 2: Last day of your internship: Submit your completed Time Sheet to your site supervisor. CAPA will collect signed time sheets and supervisor evaluations and send them to ICC and UC Davis Study Abroad to use for grading and Transcript Notation.

After QA Australia is over you still have one more deadline:

By Friday, December 9

Submit Transcript Notation Student Final Report; e-mail icclab@ucdavis.edu

Draw on all 6 sets of preparatory questions and reflective essays to write your Final Report.

Winter Quarter:

Transcript Notation will be posted 10 weeks from when you have met all requirements.