Reflecting on Your Project Experience

Reflection is an evaluative process that invites exploration of the meaning and significance of an experience and requires more than a retelling of events; it is a “thoughtful and thought-provoking process that seeks to consciously connect learning with experience” while encouraging increased self-awareness and a sense of empowerment that should impact future decision-making and action. All Journey Grant projects must include a reflective component.

COMPLETING THE REFLECTION COMPONENT

The reflective component of your Journey Grant project will include the on-line Journey Grant Reflection Form to be completed within three weeks of your project end date, and a reflection activity of your choosing (unless a specific activity is required as part of a Jewell-sponsored activity/program) to be completed by the end of the semester that follows the term in which you complete your Journey Grant project.

- May 1 for fall semester and interim break projects.
- December 1 for spring semester and summer projects.

ON-LINE REFLECTION FORM

The first requirement for completing the Journey Grant reflection component is completion of the on-line Journey Grant Reflection Form. The on-line Reflection Form includes three questions designed to help you examine what you learned and how that learning benefits yourself, your education, and your future plans. Your answers to these questions are intended as foundational for the reflection activity. Before answering these questions, you may want to review the Reflection Process section below.

1. To what extent did your experience contribute to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas? 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much
   a. Learn effectively on your own
   b. Understanding yourself
   c. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds
   d. Solving complex real-world problems
   e. Developing a personal code of values and ethics
   f. Contributing to the welfare of your society
   g. Improved your ability to understand someone else’s views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective
   h. Learned something that changed the way you understood an issue or concept

2. What did you learn from this experience that you might not have learned in a more traditional academic setting?

3. What impact will this experience have on your future, including your personal behavior and professional outlook?

REFLECTION ACTIVITIES

The second requirement for completing the Journey Grant reflection component is completion of a reflection activity. Reflection activities can take various forms, such as writing exercises, discussions, artistic projects, public presentations or multi-media endeavors. Unless a specific reflection activity is required as part of a Jewell-sponsored activity/program,

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students should choose the form of reflection that will be most meaningful for them. Below are a few suggestions for possible reflection activities.

- **Journals/Blogs**: Journaling is a valuable way to document the thoughts, feelings, challenges, peak experiences, and insights learned while completing your project. If you elect to keep a reflective journal, please keep the following in mind:
  - A reflective journal is not a daily log of your activities. While you may record daily events, you should also analyze, interpret, and explore the meaning and significance of these events and of your experience as a whole.
  - A reflective journal is not a private diary. Though journal writing can and should foster deep personal exploration, the purpose of the reflective journal is to communicate what you have learned to others.

- **Reflective Essays**: Submit a paper at the end of your project.

- **Multi-media Presentations**: Create a video or photo documentary about your project experience and host a public screening.

- **Group Discussions/Panel Presentations**: Present highlights of your project and lead a public discussion about a subject you explored while completing your project.

- **Newspaper Article/Letter to an Editor**: Write an article about your experience or a letter to an editor that highlights a critical issue raised by your project experience.

**REFLECTION PROCESS**

Whatever the reflection activity, students completing the reflective component of their Journey Grant project should utilize the conceptual framework “What?/So What?/Now What?” outlined by David Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle. The “What?/So What?/Now What?” approach is a basic way to promote reflection that begins with reviewing the details of the experience and moves toward critical analysis, interpretation, and application. Below are examples of reflection questions for each stage of the Experiential Learning Cycle.

- **What?** Descriptive. Report the facts and events of an experience, objectively.
  - What happened?
  - What did you observe?

- **So What?** Analyze and interpret the experience.
  - Did you learn a new skill or clarify an interest?
  - Did you hear, smell, or feel anything that surprised you?
  - How is your experience different from what you expected?
  - What past experiences or bias impact the way you view the experience?
  - What did you like/dislike about the experience?
  - What personal strengths/weaknesses did the experience reveal?

- **Now What?** Contextualize and consider the future impact of the experience.
  - How can you apply new knowledge/skills in the future?
  - What would you like to learn more about, related to this project?
  - If you could do the project again, what would you do differently?

As you define, analyze and contextualize your Journey Grant project experience, you should contemplate the personal reactions and emotional/intellectual growth you experienced as a part of the project. Your completed reflection activity should demonstrate your efforts to honestly engage this learning cycle.