Health and Society Internship Reflection Prompts

To get major credit for your internship, you are required to keep a reflective journal. This journal guides your learning on the internship, provides a way for your academic advisor to track what you are doing, and enables you to integrate experience and academic learning. You will be evaluated for your internship.

Before you start:

a) Describe the organization you work for. Research the organization’s website—what can you find out about the organization? What is the mission? What did your supervisor tell you about the organization and what you’ll be doing?

b) Think about your personal goals. What do you want to learn from this internship? How do you see this internship fitting into your academic plan at Beloit? What skills and knowledge do you have that can be useful to the organization? What skills and knowledge do you hope to gain? What assumptions do you bring to this experience (about the organization, the [effectiveness of] work it does, etc)?

c) How do you define health (this can be broad or in the context of your internship)? What factors influence an individual’s health? A community’s?

Week 1:
Describe your first days at work: What is your role? How is the site organized? Who do you work with and what have you learned about the work of the organization?

Week 2:
One of the greatest challenges is finding a project that contributes to the organization. How have you and your supervisor defined your project? Do you have a plan? How is it structured for the time of your work?

Week 3:
Look over the Suggested Bibliography. Choose a model, theory or framework that explains what you see at your internship. How can this theory be applied to your internship? If you can’t find a model that fits, suggest another and explain.

Week 4:
Start to develop your paper: find three journal articles that demonstrate the effectiveness of your program or similar programs (or are otherwise related to your organization and your project). Briefly summarize each of these articles. How was the issue framed? Is this consistent with what you see on site? Do you think the methodology is effective?

Week 5:
Read your first two journal entries. Have your assumptions about the organization changed? How so? Why do you think this is?
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Week 6:
Revisit your pre-internship definition of health. Has it changed? How does your organization define health? How does the community they serve define health?

Week 7:
Continue to work on your paper. Briefly state your main findings and how your internship experience has shaped your interest in the topic and your research. Has your research influenced the way you are thinking about your internship?

Week 8:
Read from the Asset Based Community Development Institute website (http://www.abcdinstitute.org/). Read the introduction to Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets (1993) by John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight [download at http://www.abcdinstitute.org/publications/basicmanual/]. “Map” the assets in the community that you work with. Be sure to include individual assets, organizational assets, private and non-profit organizations, public institutions, and physical resources.

Week 9:
Write yourself an “elevator speech”. In two minutes or less, how would you explain your internship — what did you do and what did you learn?

Week 10:
How has this internship changed the way you think about health? About your Health and Society major? Use this journal entry for your two-page reflection paper. This paper should discuss your internship experience: what you gained, what you expected and what actually happened, how this fits into your major, your academic goals, and your professional or long term goals.