The Importance of Reflective Pedagogy within Experiential Learning

BECKY WAI-LING PACKARD
PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION
MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE

CHANCELLOR’S LEADERSHIP FELLOW-IN-RESIDENCE
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
Session Outline

- Framing Comments
- Small Group Discussions
- Closing Round
Experiential Learning

Global Learning/Study Abroad

Internship / Work

Research

Community Engagement
Why Reflect?
Why Reflect?

• To Support Learning  - Harvey et al. (2016)
  • Transformative learning
  • Higher-order cognitive processes (e.g., self-regulation, metacognition)
  • Engage multiple ways of knowing

• “the purpose of reflection is to learn from experiences...struggles, dilemmas, uncertainties, or breakthroughs”  – Amulya (2004)
Reflection informs future behavior

- What I learned
- Why it matters
- What’s next

➡️ What, So What, Now What?


See also: University of Arizona’s Leadership Program: leadership.arizona.edu
What is reflective practice?

• “the practice of periodically stepping back to ponder the meaning of what has recently transpired to ourselves and to others in our immediate environment”


Reflection: continuous and connected
(Eyler et al.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuous → Connected</th>
<th>Before EL Project</th>
<th>During EL Project</th>
<th>After EL Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Letter of Commitment Assigned Reading</td>
<td>Weekly Meetings with Instructor, Mid-term Evaluation</td>
<td>Final Evaluation Individual Reflection Oral Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Project Charter Work Breakdown Task Allocation</td>
<td>Record of Communication with Community Partner Assigned Reading</td>
<td>Final Project Report, Photo Collage Reflection by Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Community Partner</td>
<td>Project Timeline Project Contract Action Plan.</td>
<td>E-mails to and from Partner and Instructor</td>
<td>Presentation to community group Assessment by Community Partner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Reflection Map and Activities

Challenges in Reflection
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• Authenticity
• Fatigue
• Intentionality
Authenticity

Sometimes we are writing things that we do not know. When I’m filling-out reflection forms, I’m really not me—I’m someone else...I didn’t give them my experience: I gave them what they wanted me to experience in their imagination.
Fatigue

Every week is usually the same thing.... The fact that we do the same things, the same activities every week, so there isn’t really much to write in terms of changing from month to month. Like you could write a good reflection on the first month, and it’s difficult to maintain the same quality of writing throughout the duration of the activity.
Leverage multiple formats

Summary of Barriers:
- Required nature, repetitiveness, constraints of format, unclear purpose of activity, lack of guidance/feedback, process is overly solitary

Using multiple formats helps:
- Oral, written, audio/photo/videos, writing, online presentations, or group discussions

Tapping multiple ways of knowing

**Cognitive reflection—new knowledge and skills**
- Were the goals and objectives of the experiential activity accomplished? Describe your experiential activity relating it to its goals and objectives.
- How has your experiential activity related to the readings, discussions, and lectures in your courses? Provide specific examples of related course concepts and describe the context in which the concepts related to your experiential learning activity.
- Did your understanding of course material/concepts you have studied improve as a result of your participation in this experiential activity? Provide examples. What complexities do you now see in the concept that you were not aware of before?

**Affective reflection** looks at what students feel
- What values, opinions, beliefs have changed for you?
- Has this experience changed you? If yes, how?

**Process reflection** considers what students learn from the process itself
- What would you like to change about your experience?
- What were the most difficult parts of the experiential activity? Why?
- How do you see you role with this experiential activity? How does that compare with how others may see your role?
Intentionality: are you leveraging all of your time points?
Are you leveraging the individual **and** collective?

- Written Application and Written Reflection
- Launch/Preparation Event and/or Return Event
- On-line modules
- Course format to process the internship
- Conference format to share lessons
- Preparation and/or concurrent engagement course

- What is the role of the partner/host?
What roles can assessment and your dept/institutional colleagues play?

Does it make sense to leverage (some of) the reflections for assessment?
• What is the guiding question or goal of that assessment?
• What indicators are you looking to examine?

Who will read the reflections (aside from the instructor or primary office)?
• Could collective reading provide more meaning for the reflections?

Could a Value Rubric help you?
◦ Integrative Learning? Ethical Reasoning? Problem-Solving?
Examples to spark small-group discussions

• Students conduct research on a local community issue, create public blogs on health care or health professional issues requiring a change, and they participate in interprofessional team-based learning activities based on health care advocacy initiatives. Legislators participate in all projects and advocacy events. Results are disseminated through professional posters and published policy briefs. (James Madison University, https://www.aacu.org/peerreview/2017/Fall/JMU)

• A post-internship course where students work in panels/teams to reflect on their learning. Culminates in a day-long conference where newer students attend to gain advising about their internship process. (Mount Holyoke College, https://www.aacu.org/peerreview/2014-2015/fall-winter/townsley)

• The global learning program leverages a living-learning community. These relationships foster more frequent and authentic reflection over the duration and upon return (Virginia Commonwealth University, https://www.aacu.org/peerreview/2018/Winter/VCU)
Ways to push reflection

• Mode of Reflection- written, focus groups, presentations, blogs, podcasts
• Individual vs. Collective – conferences and similar
• Timing: are you leveraging all of the points in time?
• What role does your partners play (community partner/internship partner/study abroad hosts/research sites)?