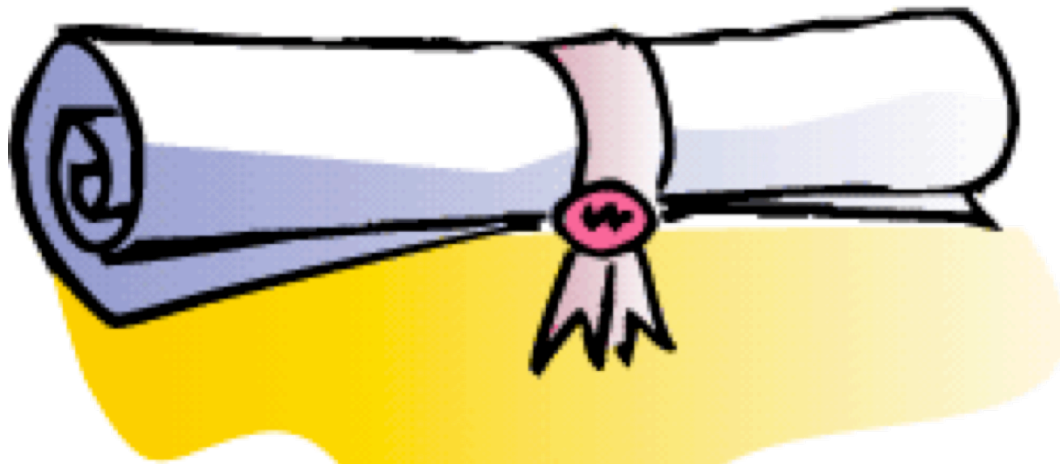


# Assessment of Learning

Your final grade will be assessed through these seven achievements from September through April



## 1. Critical Reflections on Out-of-Classroom Learning

**Your combined reflections are worth 24 percent of your final grade. If one reflection is missing, late or incomplete, you will have the opportunity to submit another at the end of each term.**

**Y**ou will engage in eight to ten Out-of-Classroom Learning Opportunities (OOCLOs) over the course that will introduce you to various aspects of community life, history, and social issues in St. Catharines/ Niagara. Every two-week interval, you will prepare a short (800-1000 word) reflection based on describing and examining the OOCLO in relation to course themes. Your reflection should be in short essay format, following a simple template for describing an experience, connecting it to academic concepts or theories, and articulating what you have learned.

Your series of reflections is the basis for a portfolio of your community engagement over the year. You are encouraged to create multi-

media documentation of your experiences and expressions of learning. Consider creating photographs, collage, video, cartoons, sketches, or other forms of visual art, poetry, creative writing and so on, to accompany your written scholarly reflections. Aim to integrate these creative elements into your portfolio.

OOCLO reflections must be submitted on Sakai. Each reflection is due before midnight of the Tuesday preceding a lecture. Feedback on your critical thinking and writing will be provided on Sakai.

**See pages 5 to 9, 12 and 13 for reflection guidelines and evaluation criteria.**



### 3. Lecture Quizzes

**Quizzes are worth 10 percent of your final grade.**

Each of the 11 lectures will end with a quiz, which will be conducted through Top Hat Monocle, a classroom response system. The quiz question(s) will relate to core concepts of the readings and/or lecture. Being absent from lecture results in a quiz grade of zero for that week. No 'make-up' quizzes will be scheduled. Your lowest quiz grade will not count towards your final grade. You do not have to answer the quiz independently; you may discuss the answers with others. However, you alone are responsible for the answer you submit. Your quiz grade is based on a combination of correctness and participation. You have the option to write a paper and pencil quiz.

## 2. Seminar Participation

**Seminars are fantastic sites of learning when everyone is present and contributing. Seminar participation is worth 10 percent of your grade.**

Half of your seminar participation marks (5 marks) will be given just for attendance. You will receive the full 5 marks if you attend at least 10 of the 11 scheduled seminars. Sorry, there is no bonus mark for those who attend all 11, but your contributions will be rewarded in your participation grade. The 'grace week' for attendance recognizes that missing class is almost unavoidable at times. After the first missed seminar, which does not require an explanation, only documented excusable absences will prevent you losing marks (see policy). After the 'grace week,' one mark will be deducted for each subsequent absence. For example, missing two of the 11 seminars results in a mark of 4/5. Missing three seminars results in 3/5, and so on.

The other half of your seminar participation grade is based on the quality of your participation. High quality participation is not reflected in how much or how often you talk. Active listening is just as important. Besides having

an attitude of interest, openness and respect for others, the most important factor in seminar participation is being prepared by having done the required readings. For the purpose of assessment, a 'good' seminar participant is well prepared; able to draw insightfully on readings as well as experience; offers thoughtful, constructive comments; contributes to an atmosphere of learning in the seminar; and asks questions when appropriate. An 'excellent' participant fits this description and, in addition, makes comments that significantly advance the discussion; displays intense intellectual curiosity; and contributes in ways that generate a vibrant atmosphere of learning.

Seminar grades will be assigned at the end of the year but you are welcome to discuss participation with your TA or Professor Raddon at any time and work on strategies for improvement.

## 4. Discussion Forum

**Participation in the Sakai Forum is worth 20 percent of your final grade. Your participation will be assessed every other week.**

You will express yourself and learn from other students by discussing readings in an interactive forum on Sakai. You are expected to post approximately one commentary for each assigned reading or web resource, according to online instructions. Your postings may summarize the readings and state your views, but to be

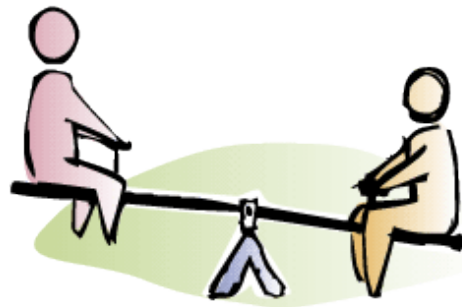
most effective they should be part of a conversation. You are encouraged to either initiate a thread or respond to other members' writings. All kinds of commentary are appropriate for the discussion forum—reflections, personal narratives, well-crafted arguments, searching questions, responses to others and follow-up responses—provided your commentary relates to the topics of the reading.

The objectives of the on-line discussion are:

- To improve your understanding of the course content.
- To exercise your writing and critical thinking skills.
- To gain experience with open dialogue.
- To learn from other students' contributions.

You will be evaluated on the timely completion of the assigned postings. Unlike many other writing assignments, here you will *not* be evaluated for the academic quality of your

writing or the length of your comments, nor are you expected to conform to a particular style of writing. However, your efforts to reflect on the substance of readings, to communicate your ideas clearly, and to dialogue thoughtfully with others in the Forum will greatly improve the quality of your OOCLO reflections, seminar participation and the meta-reflections that you will include in your portfolio (see p. 4.).



## Guidelines for Posting to the Forum

Take some time to thoroughly familiarize yourself with the Discussion Forums on Sakai. Feel free to send “test” messages, and don’t worry about making mistakes. We are all learning this technology and we all make typos and bloopers occasionally. Here are some additional guidelines:

- Respond to each other’s postings without making negative judgments. Expect a diversity of perspectives; we do not all have to think alike. Consider the discussion as an exchange of views rather than a test or contest. Avoid public labeling or name-calling. If you find a message offensive, send a note to Professor Raddon or your TA.
- Take intellectual risks. For example, if you have an opinion, risk stating it and support it with logic and evidence. If you are not sure about something, risk explaining your confusion. If you have questions, risk asking them.
- Web exchanges can be volatile because emotional expression and some types of humour (e.g. sarcasm) are difficult to interpret. Be respectful and appreciative of others as fellow learners. Resist any temptation to fuel a “flame war.”
- Focus on course content, but feel free to bring personal stories, news reports or examples from other courses into your reflections. Explain their significance to the ongoing discussion. Compare ideas. Explore evidence and logic that contradicts your assumptions.
- Without a doubt, contributing to the Forum is hard work. It is not always easy to express yourself in writing and some people will find the Forum very intimidating. However, serious participants will be rewarded. If you have made a number of thoughtful postings, your meta-reflections at the end of each term will be easier to write (see next page), your seminar experience will be greatly enhanced, and you will find it easier to demonstrate your learning at the Showcase.



## Meta-Reflections

### On your Contributions to the Discussion Forum

A meta-reflection is a *reflection on a reflection*. In a meta-reflection, you re-examine what you learned, how you learned it, and what you need to do as a learner going forward.

As you prepare your portfolio at the end of each term, identify three threads from the discussion forum in which you made your best contributions. Copy and paste these three postings into your portfolio. You may select postings in which you initiated discussion or responded to others' messages.

Give each posting a title that corresponds to the topic of the forum or your own message. Include the date of your original postings. Display the postings in a distinctive font or colour (e.g. italics).

For each posting, write a meta-reflection (approx. 250 words) explaining how your message contributed to the discussion. Your meta-reflections should continue to relate your postings to course themes or readings.

The purpose of meta-reflection is not simply to defend what you wrote. Avoid merely saying why you think your posting was great.

Here are some suggestions for your meta-reflections on your postings:

- What were you attempting to say in your posting?
- Why was this important to you?
- What prompted you to write this?
- Has your thinking changed since you wrote your posting? If so, how?
- Specifically, did something that occurred later in the course help you see your message in a new light? Did something affirm your original thinking?
- What else might you say to clarify your message or improve its logic?
- How did other people respond to your message? Did they seem to understand what you were trying to say? What did you learn from their responses?
- If no one commented on your message, can you think of an alternative perspective that would challenge your argument? How could you further address the complexity of the issue?
- What further questions arise from your posting or the responses of others?

You do not have to answer each of the above questions for each posting. Be guided by what is important to you.

## Ways to Structure and Stimulate Critical Reflection

[This section refers to models of service-learning reflection presented in:

Ash, S. L., & Clayton, P. H. (2009). Generating, deepening, and documenting learning: the power of critical reflection in applied learning. *Journal of Applied Learning in Higher Education*, 1(Fall), 25-48.

Ash, S. L., & Clayton, P. H. (2004). The articulated learning: an approach to guided reflection and assessment. *Innovative Higher Education*, 29(2), 137-154. See also: <<http://assessment.aas.duke.edu/documents/HandoutonCriticalReflectionsinServiceLearning.pdf>>]

Reflection can be a process of accelerating deep, lasting learning. As you compile your portfolio of reflections on out-of-classroom learning and meta-reflections, you are not simply documenting experiences or creating a scrapbook, you are actively generating insight and synthesizing what you know.

But the type of reflection that catapults you to new levels of self-awareness and sophistication of thought is not automatic: it takes practice, it requires that you make time to think and write, and it demands that you challenge yourself beyond your habitual patterns of expression.

The reflections required in your other courses may not have a specified format or content. You may understand their open-endedness as an invitation to creativity. However, in this course, you will use a standard format and set of guiding questions for reflections on your OOCLOs. Such formats and questions may appear constraining at first, but when used with rigour, they result in high quality reflections that are rewarding to write. Surprisingly, structured reflections also facilitate creativity.

A common, basic model for reflections follows three simple questions:

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>What?</b>     | Observe: Summarize the event/ situation/ experience. Refrain from making judgments.   |
| <b>So what?</b>  | Analyze: Examine the significance of the event/situation/experience in light of the learning objectives and key ideas of the course.                                |
| <b>Now what?</b> | Evaluate: Consider what has changed for you in terms of your thinking or future actions as a result of what you have learned from the event/ situation/ experience. |

In this course you will use a more complex model for reflection known as **DEAL**.

DEAL is a helpful acronym for organizing reflections in three phases. First, you **D**escribe the event/situation/experience in specific terms. Your description may focus on one significant aspect or it may provide an overview. In any case, your summary should create a precise, detailed picture.

Your second task is to **E**xamine the event/situation/experience in relation to a key concept, theory or perspective of one of the readings.

Your third step is to **A**rticulate **L**earning, noting specifically what you have learned and why this learning matters from the perspective of your new knowledge, personal growth or sense of social responsibility. Finally, you will state what you might do differently in the future in light of what you have learned.

## D.E.A.L. Questions

Use the questions in the following tables selectively to stimulate your reflection on the learning experience. Your reflection should focus on something you learned in relation to course content. The questions you choose should be relevant to this focus. The D.E.A.L. questions are not to be used as a checklist, but as prompts to help get you thinking.

For some students, it might help to begin your reflection by thinking about what you learned from the experience (articulate learning). For others, telling the story of what you did might help you identify your key learning (describe). For others, the best starting point might be to relate the experience to a course concept (examine). You may need to write a second draft of your reflection in order to clarify your focus.

**Table 1: Questions to Help You Describe Service-Learning Experiences**

Where was I? When did this experience take place?

Who else was there? Who was not there?

What was said? What did I/we say or otherwise communicate nonverbally?

When did I/others not speak?

Did I/others express feelings? What did the expression of feelings look like?

Were these feelings understood by others?

What did I/others do? Specifically, what actions did I/we take? How did I/we know what to do?

What did I not do that I might have? What did others not do?

What did I/others hear, see, smell, taste, touch? (consider as well animals, weather, surroundings, etc.)

Why were we there? Why did the situation occur? Was this a public gathering, a pre-arranged meeting, a special event, a recurring activity? Other?

## Table 2: Questions to Help You Examine Service-Learning Experiences from the Perspective of Academic Content

What specific *academic content* relates to this experience? Select *one* concept, theory or perspective from a particular reading to examine in your reflection.

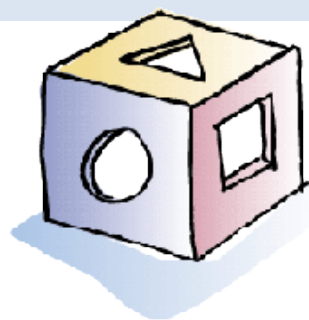
For example, the readings for September 12 introduce the *concept* of moral purpose (Coles, 2001), describe a *theory* of service-learning, which contrasts charity and change (Kahne & Westheimer, 1996), and present a *perspective* on the importance of Generation Y in this critical decade of change (Mahoney, 2012).

How were you able to *see* or *observe* aspects of this concept, theory or perspective in the experience that you had? Did you *do* or *say* something based on your knowledge of these ideas?

Consider the perspective on the situation suggested by the academic material you chose. Compare this perspective to the situation as it in fact unfolded. How well does the academic material describe the situation? What are the possible reasons for any differences? For example, were there possible assumptions on the part of the author or on your part? Would you modify the concept, theory or perspective in light of the experience?

How does this experience *enhance* your knowledge of a specific reading, theory or concept? Does it *challenge* your understanding or the reading? Does it *reinforce* your understanding or the reading? In what ways?

What *questions* should you ask to better examine the academic material? What *additional information* or *further experience* would help you examine these ideas?



Tables adapted from Bender, C.J.G., Daniels, P., Lazarus, J., Naude, L. and Sattar, K. (2006). *Service-Learning in the Curriculum: A Resource for Higher Education Institutions*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education and JET/CHESP. pp 58-81.  
 Accessed at:  
<http://web.up.ac.za/sitefiles/file/1/85/Structured%20Reflection%20in%20Academic%20Service%20Learning.pdf>

## Table 3: Questions for Articulating Learning (Include the italicized words in your reflection)

What did I learn?

*I have learned that...*

How, specifically, did I learn it?

*I learned this when...*

Why does this learning matter, or why is it significant?

*This learning matters because...*

In what ways will I use this learning – i.e. what further goals or outcomes shall I set in accordance with what I have learned in order to improve myself and/or the quality of my learning and/or the quality of my future experiences or community engagement?

*In light of this learning...*



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## 5. Good writing (really) matters!

**Completion of a pre-quiz before October 10 is worth 1 percent of your final grade. A final writing test (Essay-Zone and Advanced Grammar post-quiz) is worth 3 percent.**

Develop your writing skills through the many resources available at [www.academic-zone.com](http://www.academic-zone.com) and the Student Development Centre. The pre-quiz will help you to identify writing skills that need improvement. Workshops and the on-line Essay Zone and Advanced Grammar tutorials can help.

You may take the Academic-Zone post-quiz on Sakai any time before December 12. If you are not satisfied with your score the first time, you may re-take the quiz once more. Do not attempt to duplicate your first multiple-choice answers or those of another

student. The position of the correct answer changes with each new test. You will have a time limit of 75 minutes. Your most recent test score counts.

If your grade is below 60 percent the first time, get help and study based on your needs.

You must score at least 60 percent on the test in order to receive any grade.



## How to write and submit reflections

Use the reflection template provided under Resources on Sakai to organize your reflections (see template on pages 12 and 13). Submit your reflection as an attachment using the Assignments tool on Sakai. Detailed instructions are provided on Sakai.

Reflections are a form of scholarly writing that uses first person grammar. You are encouraged to use a personal vocabulary that reveals your own perspective, especially as you explain why the experience matters to you. Avoid clichés and generic language.

Your reflections will be evaluated mainly for completeness and integration of course material according to a rubric provided on Sakai. You will receive feedback on how to revise your work. At the end of term, you will copy your revised reflections to your portfolio. These will be re-evaluated according to the standards for critical thinking provided in the table on page 9.



## Critical Thinking Standards for Reflections

Critical Thinking Standard	Description	Associated Questions to Check your Thinking
Integration	OOCLO experience clearly related to learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Have I clearly shown the connection between my experience and my learning?</li> </ul>
Clarity	Expands on ideas, expresses ideas in another way, provides examples or illustrations where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Did I give an example?</li> <li>▫ Is it clear what I mean by this?</li> <li>▫ Could I elaborate further?</li> </ul>
Accuracy	All statements are factually correct and/or supported with evidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ How do I know this?</li> <li>▫ Is this true?</li> <li>▫ How could I check on this or verify it?</li> </ul>
Precision	Statements contain specific information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Can I be more specific?</li> <li>▫ Have I provided sufficient detail?</li> </ul>
Relevance	All statements are relevant to the question at hand; all statements connect to the central point.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ How does this relate to the issue being discussed?</li> <li>▫ How does this help us/me deal with the issue being discussed?</li> </ul>
Depth	Explains the reasons behind conclusions and anticipates and answers the questions that the reasoning raises and/or acknowledges the complexity of the issue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Why is this so?</li> <li>▫ What are some of the complexities here?</li> <li>▫ What would it take for this to happen?</li> <li>▫ Would this be easy to do?</li> </ul>
Breadth	Considers alternative points of view or how someone else might have interpreted the situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Would this look the same from the perspective of...?</li> <li>▫ Is there another way to interpret what this means?</li> </ul>
Logic	The line of reasoning makes sense and follows from the facts and/or what has been said.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Does what I said at the beginning fit with what I concluded at the end?</li> <li>▫ Do my conclusions match the evidence that I have presented?</li> </ul>
Significance	The conclusions or goals represent a (the) major issue raised by the reflection on experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Is this the most important issue to focus on?</li> <li>▫ Is this the most significant problem to consider?</li> </ul>
Fairness	Other points of view are represented with integrity (without bias or distortion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Have I represented this viewpoint in such a way that the person who holds it would agree with my characterization?</li> </ul>

Adapted from Ash & Clayton (2009). Original source: Paul, R.P. & Elder, L. 2001. *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking*. The Foundation for Critical Thinking. Santa Rosa, CA. [www.criticalthinking.org](http://www.criticalthinking.org)

## 6. Create Your Own Portfolio

**You will document your thinking and experience about community engagement in a portfolio of reflections and other creative artifacts. Your mid-term portfolio is worth 10 percent of your final grade. Your final portfolio is worth an additional 20 percent.**

Using Blogger or another online blogging site, you will create a portfolio to document what and how you have learned over the weeks. The mid-term portfolio should include the following elements:

1. An index or outline of the components of your portfolio
2. A self-introduction (approx. 100-150 words)
3. Four revised reflections on OOCLOs that demonstrate good writing and critical thinking (see page 9).
4. Three of your best postings from the Sakai Forum with meta-reflections about each (see page 4).
5. A mid-term meta-reflection that addresses these questions:

*Thinking over the entire course so far, what experiences have been the best sources of learning? What practices have been the best vehicles of learning? What knowledge gaps or personal difficulties were revealed to you in the first term? What do you need to do to deepen your learning in the second term? How might this be difficult? How might it be enjoyable or satisfying?*



Your final portfolio will build on the mid-term portfolio by adding 4 more revised reflections, and three more postings from the Forum accompanied by meta-reflections. In addition, your final portfolio will also feature:

6. An icon (image) to represent your own learning, accompanied by an explanation of why this image was chosen and what it means to you (see Showcase, p. 11).

*Your icon may relate to how you intend to participate in community life in future, a personal principle or philosophy of service, your goals for community service, or an issue you care about.*

7. A story about a critical moment of learning or a significant change that came about as a result of this course (see Showcase, p. 11).
8. A reflection about the Showcase held during the final lecture period. This final reflection (of approximately 250 words) should discuss:

*Three memorable insights of other students based on conversation about their stories or icons, and three valuable comments or questions others put to you about your story or icon.*

## 7. Service-Learning Showcase and Course Celebration

**Your contributions to this event are worth 2 percent of your final grade.**

In the last lecture period, the class will gather in Pond Inlet along with invited guests to showcase and celebrate what you have achieved in this course. To prepare for the Showcase, write a story about your learning in this course.

Option 1: Write about a critical moment during the course when you experienced a sense of strength, satisfaction or success.

Option 2: Write about a significant positive change that has come about for you as a result of this course.

Create a poster of your story on a single page for display at the Showcase.

Find an icon (a physical object or picture) that represents your learning. Write a title and short (half page) interpretation of what the icon means to you. Print your interpretation (with your name) and bring it to the Showcase to display with your icon.

Bring a clip board (or something to write on) to the Showcase.

Your grade for the Showcase will be based on peer evaluations of your story and icon. In turn, you will conduct peer evaluations for other students.

Include your story and an image of your icon (with interpretation), in your final portfolio.

### Ways to Ask Questions:



- See Professor Raddon during office hours on Mondays, 9:30 – 11 a.m. in AS401A, or after lecture, or by appointment.
- Send a message to the Forum or Chat room in Sakai (public for all students).
- Ask your TA during seminar or through a message on Sakai.
- Ask your Seminar Rep to ask someone on your behalf.
- Ask the Service-Learning Coordinator about OOCLOs (contact details TBA)
- For urgent or confidential matters, email Professor Raddon, [mraddon@brocku.ca](mailto:mraddon@brocku.ca)
- Raise your hand during the lecture.

**SOCI 2F60 Foundations for Community Engagement**  
**Reflection [#]**  
**[Insert Title]**

**Description (or *What I did*)**

[Insert one or two substantial paragraphs describing an event or situation that has catalyzed learning. State when and where the event or situation occurred. Make it clear that you are describing this event or situation from your own point of view. As much as possible, limit yourself to observation in this section. That is, describe only what you saw, heard, smelled, touched or tasted. Try to avoid making inferences. In other words, avoid interpreting or judging aspects of the event or situation. Simply describe. This is more difficult than you might think.

For example, rather than say, “I met a beggar on the street,” describe what happened in more precise detail: “Half a block from the café on St. Paul Street which was my destination, a thin-framed woman in a faded green parka sat on a piece of cardboard on the sidewalk. As I walked past, she raised a wrinkled palm and muttered, ‘Spare some change?’”

Again, make your description relevant to a moment of learning that you have chosen to examine for this reflection. You do not have to describe everything about your OOCLO. For example, if a significant conversation occurred that you wish to examine and learn from, describe the context of the conversation (where, when, with whom), and the words that were spoken. If you wish to examine a longer, more complex event, that is fine too. Just make sure that your description is exact, vivid and relevant to your learning focus. See Table 1 on page 6 of the Assessment Guide.]

**Examination (or *What I have been asking myself*)**

[Insert paragraphs in which you relate the event or situation you have described above to a single concept, theory or perspective in a reading (or video or web site) on the syllabus. Specify the concept/theory/perspective by paraphrasing or quoting the author.

In the body of your reflection, use APA style to cite the author’s name and the date of the publication, in addition to page numbers when appropriate. Provide a full bibliographical reference at the end of your reflection (copy these details from the syllabus).

Once you have identified the academic content that your experience brings to mind, examine it through one or more of the questions in Table 2 on page 7 of the assessment guide. Explore only those questions that help you to examine both your experience and academic content meaningfully. Choosing questions at random will result in a fragmentary, contrived or illogical reflection. Re-read and edit what you have written to achieve a coherent flow of ideas.]

## **Articulation of Learning (or *What I have learned*)**

[Insert four substantial paragraphs conforming to the outline in Table 3 on page 7 of the assessment guide. Each paragraph should start with the phrase in italics.

*I have learned that...*

*I learned this when...*

*This learning matters because...*

*In light of this learning...*

Models of articulated learning from students of another course will be available on Sakai. However, each student will articulate learning differently. You are encouraged to come to your own conclusions, large or small, and express them in your own manner within this framework.]

## **Reference**

[Provide a full bibliographical reference to the reading (or online resource) at the end of your reflection (see syllabus for bibliographical details and APA format).]

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## **Criteria for Evaluating Reflections**

The reflection that was submitted on Assignments:

- includes the author's full name and seminar number, the number of the reflection (1 to 8) and a title
- describes a situation or event associated with an OOCLO
- examines that situation or event in relation to a single concept, theory or perspective of a course reading (or video or web site listed in the syllabus)
- stays focused on what was learned by relating the experience to the academic content (concept/ theory/perspective). All parts of the reflection are relevant to this learning.
- properly cites the relevant course reading by quoting or paraphrasing the author
- demonstrates comprehension of the academic content
- articulates learning (what was learned, how the learning came about, the significance of what was learned and how the author might act upon what was learned)
- meets the expectations for length (800-1,000 words)
- is free of gross errors in grammar, spelling and mechanics

Reflections that are submitted on time and meet all of these criteria will receive full marks (3/3). Part marks will be awarded if one or more criteria are not met.