

Critical Reflection Assignments

The purpose of critical reflection is to examine how a given critical framework (in our case, course readings) informs an experience, while also considering how your experience might lead you to revise the critical framework. Consider the following questions:

- How did the reading/critical framework influence your experience?
- How did your experience deepen or perhaps challenge your understanding of the reading/critical framework?
- What new knowledge or understanding have you gained as a result of your efforts to integrate the ideas presented in the reading with your own experience?

To learn more about reflective writing, review the [“What-So What-What Now” model of reflective writing](#). In this model, writers: a) introduce WHAT experience they are reflecting on; b) explain WHY this experience is relevant or significant to the critical framework that is under discussion—in other words, SO WHAT?; and c) consider the question of NOW WHAT? How will this experience and subsequent reflection influence your thinking or behaviour in the future?

A successful critical reflection is **specific to you and your experiences**, and is also **focused on the process of learning** in addition to the outcomes. Avoid offering generalized or vague statements about what you learned by supporting your points with a specific example and detailed analysis of the learning process. In other words, **don't just tell me WHAT you learned, also share HOW you learned it.** (e.g. What specific part of your experience shaped your understanding? Was there a specific passage from the reading that was particularly useful?) For more guidance, review the rubric for critical reflection assignments on the next page.

There are a few things to keep in mind as you write this assignment:

- Though this isn't a formal essay, I expect students to revise and edit their writing and to submit polished, well-organized assignments. DO use sentences, paragraphs, and topic sentences.
- Essays MUST engage with the course reading. In-text citations should reference specific page numbers.

Rubric for Critical Reflections

	Needs Improvement	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Writing Clarity (25%)	Writing is unclear and disorganized. Thoughts ramble and make little sense. There are numerous spelling, grammar, or syntax errors throughout the response.	Writing is unclear and/or disorganized. Thoughts are not expressed in a logical manner. There are spelling, grammar, or syntax errors throughout the response, interrupting the flow of the writing.	Writing is mostly clear, concise, and well organized with good sentence/paragraph construction. Thoughts are expressed in a coherent and logical manner. Writing flows naturally, though there are some spelling, grammar, or syntax errors that need attention.	Writing is clear, concise, and well organized with excellent sentence/paragraph construction. Thoughts are expressed in a coherent and logical manner. Writing is polished and flows naturally, with very few spelling, grammar, or syntax errors.
Relevance (25%)	Most of the reflection is irrelevant to student and/or course learning goals.	Attempts to demonstrate relevance, but the relevance is unclear to the reader. (For example, relevance might be stated but not demonstrated.)	The learning experience being reflected upon is relevant to the course learning goals and engages with course materials.	The learning experience being reflected upon is relevant to the course learning goals and demonstrates thorough and thoughtful engagement with course materials.
Analysis (50%)	Reflection does not move beyond describing the learning experience or does not move beyond summarizing course materials.	The reflection brings together the learning experience with course materials.	The reflection demonstrates a specific connection between the learning experience and course materials	The reflection demonstrates a specific connection between the learning experience and course materials, while including details that enrich the analysis and demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the learning experience and course materials.

Adapted from Jones, S. (n.d.) Using reflection for assessment. Office of Service Learning, IUPUI.