

Healing & Indigenous Education Final Reflective Essay & Self-Assessment * Trimble

The word *reflection* means careful, ongoing consideration of a subject; thus a **reflective essay** is understood as a kind of essay with the explicit aim of understanding *yourself* participating in the process of understanding. Duncan Carter and Sherrie Gradin describe the process of reflection this way: “Notice the metaphor in the word, reflection. Think of your subject as the reflective surface—a kind of mirror—and yourself (complete with your experiences and your culture) as the light source. When you examine the subject in your own light, what do you see? And how do you see yourself in the reflection? So, in general, to reflect on something would be to focus your attention on it, to play around with it in your mind, perhaps to analyze it, to think about its significance or how it connects to the things you have read or experienced. To be self-reflective is to examine yourself, your ideas, your assumptions, your experiences, and so on” (Writing as Reflective Action, 2).

This assignment asks you to reflect on your experience this term and write a self-assessment explaining what grade you believe you’ve earned in the class. To prepare, carefully re-read the Course Description, particularly the areas of participation, attendance and grading. Then, review all of your reading responses since the start of the term and note any new perspectives you might include if you were to add to those early reflections.

After reviewing these materials, write a 4-6 page essay (not including works cited), incorporating reflection on *all* of the below questions:

- What do you feel you’ve learned from this Capstone class? What did you find most challenging? Most rewarding or surprising? Why?
- Which texts (including films and podcasts) did you find most helpful to your learning? Be specific (quote, paraphrase, summarize, cite.)
- How might you apply your learning in this class to future professional or personal environments? In other words, what actions might you implement in the future, based on your experience with our texts, discussions, and service work?
- Which of the four University Studies goals do you think best reflects your experience in this Capstone? (Refer to the syllabus, or the University Studies website, for an overview of the goals.)
- What suggestions/advice do you have regarding service for future students? For NAYA and Anmarie?
- Based on the criteria in the Course Description, what grade do you think you’ve earned in this class? (Please discuss each specific component of the grading criteria—e.g. refer specifically to attendance and participation policies, and you can use the “incontrovertible A” list as a guide.

These questions are meant to foster thinking and are not intended to dictate structure, so write this in essay form, to address any interlocking issues with depth (no bulleted lists). This should be an example of your best writing (so proofread, etc.), and should also consider a broader audience that includes future Capstones and your colleagues at NAYA. Do not assume they have experience with our texts or discussions, so be detailed in your reflection—provide examples of specific connections to readings, experiences you had during your service to NAYA or in class, concepts, etc. to articulate what you’ve experienced and learned.

This essay is key in my understanding any personal learning you experienced in this Capstone, and it also shapes recommendations for the next time this course is offered (what I might need do differently, what recommendations you may have for NAYA to support training and orientation, etc.).