

REFLECTION WRITING GUIDE

The student should reference this document as a loose guide to writing the required activity reflections. Reflections must be submitted for each of the following requirements: Lectures (2), Volunteer/Internship (2), Multicultural Interactions(2), Competition (1), and Celebrations/Festivals(1). *Please consult the Program Description Manual and/or contact the WAC with questions regarding reflections.*

GCCP reflections are an opportunity for the student to describe his or her work or attended events and how these activities' personal, academical, emotional, intellectual, etc. impacts. Not only do these reflections help ensure the credibility of the student's successful completion of the requirements in addition to the other provided evidence, but these reflections also encourage the student to think deeply and personally about his or her growth with newly acquired skills and knowledge.

BASIC FORMAT

The reflection must be between **300-700 words** (~1-2 pages double-spaced), and some activities will warrant longer reflections than others. Reflections that are deemed to be too short, lack substance, or contain inappropriate language/themes will not be accepted. The student will not be discounted for spelling and grammar mistakes. (See SAMPLE REFLECTIONS below for examples)

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

The following questions may aid the student in writing his or her reflection:

- *What did this experience involve? Why did the student choose this particular activity?*
- *Would the student participate again? What would he or she do differently?*
- *Was it difficult or easy? Was it a success?*
- *What sorts of emotions, thoughts, or feelings did the experience invoke?*
- *What lessons did the student learn? Did the student grow from this experience? How?*
- *How has this experience changed the student's perspective about the surrounding world?*

The student need not feel obligated to answer all, or any, of these questions. As long as the student's reflection can demonstrates that he or she truly participated in the activity and took time to think about the experience, the student may write about any aspects of the activity on which he or she would like to reflect.

MULTIPLE-REFLECTION REQUIREMENTS

Some GCCP requirements call for two reflections while others call only for one or none at all. The activities that require two reflections are those that represent longer-term commitments. It is recommended that a student complete these reflections at different times in the experience to reflect on the student's growth over the course of the activity. For example, the student could complete one reflection each at the beginning and end of an internship, and the student could submit one reflection after the first two lectures and another after four or more lectures.

TIPS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR REFLECTION-WRITING

The student should...

- **...write the reflection as soon as possible.** The best time to reflect is within a few days of the event or requirement so that the experience is fresh in the student's mind and able to be recalled more clearly.
- **...keep notes about the experiences *as they occur*.** It may be helpful to have a separate journal or document for notes to be referenced when writing the reflection or logging hours for a longer-term requirement.
- **...take the reflections seriously.** Reflection is an important life and career skill that will help the student grow personally and professionally. As such, it requires practice and patience. Sincere student reflection will help the student truly understand the impact of all of his or her hard work.
- **...be creative and thoughtful.** This is the *student's* time to reflect. Only the student, the supervisor, and the WAC Approval Committee will have access to the reflection, so the student should feel free to be personally expressive!

SAMPLE REFLECTIONS

Wilbur A. Council

GCCP Reflection: Lectures #1

10 June 2017

Today I went to a speaker event held by the World Affairs Council as part of my lecture requirement for the GCCP. It was the very first event I have gone to for my certificate program and I was a little bit nervous walking into the hall. There were a lot of professionals and journalists there, so it was intimidating at first, but I found other students in the program to sit with and felt more relaxed. We talked for a little bit about ideas for our Capstones and their projects sound so cool!

Then we grabbed some snacks and listened to the former ambassador Margaret Scobey talk about diplomacy. Honestly, I wasn't that sure what diplomacy meant before this talk. I had heard it said on TV and in a couple of my classes, but I had certainly never met or heard a diplomat speak in real life. She was like any other person, but she had so many stories to tell. Everything she said seemed calculated and rational, and I could imagine her speaking to high-level officials in China or Russia with the same tone of voice. She even answered some questions that were pretty political and I was impressed with how she seemed not to alienate anyone in the room with her answers.

She talked a lot about understanding cultural differences, and I remembered hearing the volunteer coordinators at my refugee tutoring agency say the same thing. You never really know what other people are coming from culturally or personally, so you have to be conscious of your differences. That made a lot of sense, especially in her work I think. If she

makes a mistake, it could mean something-maybe not war exactly but something.

Overall, this talk made me really excited for my next lecture and the rest of this program. I never thought I would say that I am excited for a lecture, but this type of talk was not the boring one I was expecting. She was honest and interesting. She made me want to learn more about maybe becoming a diplomat myself someday.

SAMPLE REFLECTIONS

Wilbur A. Council

GCCP Reflection: Interactions #2

10 June 2017

Today was my last scheduled week of tutoring a refugee student for my volunteer requirement. She is a sixth grader from Nepal and probably the sweetest child I have ever met. I can't believe I've already met with her for 40 hours! I liked tutoring and mentoring her so much that I am going to continue meeting with her over the summer so she can get ahead for next year. After all this time, I don't even think I could stop tutoring her if I wanted to because it would be like losing a best friend.

In a way, that is surprising to me because we were both so shy at first. The first few weeks, I never thought we would get anywhere. I was so afraid she wouldn't understand me because I only had a little experience tutoring and I felt such a large pressure to help her do well. I think she could tell I was nervous so she was too. But then, I sort of realized I was missing the point. It didn't really matter so much if she did well in her classes with good grades because of me as it did helping her become confident as a student.

Finally, she told me a few weeks in that she played music with her cousins sometimes and from then on, her eyes would light up whenever we talked about music. That was so important later on when we really frustrating days where neither of us wanted to work, especially with math. If I could find a way to explain problems with guitars in the examples or by making it more active, she would get it!

Some days, after we would talk about what she had done at school that week and

done her homework together, when we had a little extra time, I would let her ask me questions about what it was like to be in high school or we would talk about her dreams. We even made a “dream board” together with pictures and in it she put that she wanted to be a teacher someday—just like me. In that moment, almost in tears, I felt and still feel so lucky to have gotten to watch her grow and, more importantly, to have grown with her. This has definitely been my favorite part of the GCCP so far and probably high school overall.

I will be so sad to leave my student when I go to college, but I think I’m going to reach out to a younger student in the GCCP to take over my tutoring position when I leave. At least then I’ll know my friend is in good hands and I can help someone else have this incredible experience teaching too. I really feel like I have gotten more confident in myself and my abilities to help other people understand difficult concepts and I really feel like I have made an impact. I am convinced there is no better feeling in the world, and I am grateful to carry that feeling with me wherever I go from here.