

# Student Experience Fund Reflection Paper Guidelines

As part of receiving funds from the Student Experience Fund (SEF), you must submit a reflection paper. This reflection will give you an opportunity to think and write about what you have learned through your experience, what that learning has meant to you and your academic journey, and where this learning may take you in the future.

## What is reflection and why is it important?

You will have learned much through writing your proposal and participating in your experience but you can enrich that learning tremendously by stepping back and reflecting on your experience.

Reflection gives you an opportunity to observe your own experience, comment on it and make links to other learning or experiences. It ensures that you take the time to examine your experience and ask critical questions.

Reflection is a critical part of what and how you learn while completing your experience. This is why it is included as a requirement in the written agreement you sign when accepting funds from the SEF.

## What are the submission requirements for my reflection?

Your reflection paper must be submitted to Ruthanne Talbot within two weeks after the completion of your experience, by the date listed on your SEF Agreement

The reflection paper should be approximately 2-3 pages, single- spaced.

## What should I include in my reflection?

Remember that this paper is for your learning but is also intended to let us know what you learned, not just through the experience, but through thinking about and reflecting on the experience.

A good starting point is to look back at the learning plan you submitted at the beginning of this experience to see if and how your learning goals were achieved. You should also look at your experience more broadly and outside the context of your learning plan.

An easy way to reflect is to answer these broad questions – What? So what? Now what?

### *What?*

In this section you can *describe* clearly what you did and what you accomplished.

This sets the context for the reader and reminds you of what you did, where, when and with whom. As well as describing your experience you might also want to note some highlights, challenges and accomplishments.

### *So What?*

This is the section where you will *reflect* on your experiences.

This is often the most difficult section for students but it is the most important piece of your paper. We want to know what you learned from the experience but also why it was important to you. What surprised you? What connections did you make between your learning and your own development, your studies/academic interests, and the world around you? How are you a different person now than when you started the experience.

### *Now What?*

In this section, let us know how you will take this experience and learning and *integrate* it into your studies, future career and life goals.

*\*Students should only briefly address the "what?" section and spend the majority of the reflection addressing "so what?" and "now what?"*

### **How do I know that I've written a good reflection?**

A good reflection is written in the first person and will be well written, clear, concise and with attention given to proper spelling and grammar.

You will have described your experience so that the reader has a clear picture of what you have done (What), what you have learned from the experience (So What) and how your experiences will impact your (career and education) life in the future (Now What). It is important to be specific and provide examples.

Your reflection will be thoughtful and it will be obvious that you have taken the time and care to really think about your experience.