

Reflective Journal

The Assignment

Each week you'll enter into your journal critically reflective commentary on the assigned readings or presentations by guest speakers. Sometimes the focus of the entries will be determined by you; sometimes I'll identify the focus of an entry.

This assignment, then, differs from a diary or a response paper because it's based on intellectual engagement with the reading, not on personal opinion or emotional reaction. You may certainly take a position on an issue, but your comments should *always reference the readings directly* (via quotation, paraphrase, or engaging an idea specific to the reading). This means that your entries need to be *critical in nature and evidence-based*, even if you're reflecting on something a guest speaker has said.

The following suggests (but does not exhaust) ways to engage the readings critically: elaborate on a point made in class by you or someone else, identify and flesh out a connection between past and current readings, develop a significant question suggested by the readings on a given topic, explain how the readings change your understanding of an aspect of medicine/the medical profession/vocation.

This kind of critical engagement with assigned readings will help you process crucial ideas and themes that emerge during the semester, and will also be useful in your preparation of the critical essay on medical vocation assigned for the course.

Journal Format & Specs

- Length of each entry: minimum of 300 words; maximum of 575 words (roughly equivalent to one page of single-spaced, 11-point font).
- Format:
 - Electronic, but ***back up your file with a hard copy***. I'll most likely be collecting the hard copies, so you might consider keeping your printed copy in a manila folder or a notebook. Binder clips are fine, too. No loose pages, please.
 - Font size: 11- or 12-point.
 - Margins: 1" on all sides (NB: WORD default for left & right margins is 1.25" so you'll have to reset these margins.)
 - Include on each page a header or footer with your name.
 - There may be more than one entry on a page; no need to begin a new page each time you write a new entry.
- You'll have a total of 25 entries by the end of the semester. Each entry is worth a maximum of 4 points.

Please hand in print copies. If you don't turn in your journal to me personally in class, then please place it in my Departmental mailbox in 507 Holland Hall (mailboxes are along the wall on the left as you enter the 507 door off the main hallway). DO NOT turn in any assignment via campus mail.

Here’s a list of benchmarks for your entries. The number of entries/week aren’t distributed equally across the semester because of a late start and because of Spring Break. The first three benchmarks are skewed because of the need to complete the first round of review of your entries by Spring Break. ***Future prompts TBA.***

BY these dates in MARCH:	
Friday the 7 th (all)	Total of 4 entries, of which 2 are my prompts
Tuesday the 18 th	Total: 7
Thursday the 20 th	Total: 8
BY these dates in APRIL:	
Thursday the 10 th	Total: 14
Thursday the 17 th	Total: 17
Thursday the 24 th	Total: 20
BY these dates in May:	
Tuesday the 6 th	Total: 23
Wednesday the 14 th	Total: 25

Evaluation

- Everyone’s journal will be collected at least twice during the semester, although I may not collect everyone’s at the same time. You’ll always have advanced notification of at least one class session.
- Criteria for evaluation include the following: the quality of your understanding of the reading you comment upon; the quality of your thought and writing; the degree to which your commentary engages the readings, the degree to which your journal satisfies the requirements listed under “Journal Format & Specs.”
- The Reflective Journal counts toward 25% of your final grade.

GROUP 1

- Members:
- Dates for Journal collection: 7 March, 10 April, 9 & 14 May

GROUP 2

- Members:
- Dates for Journal collection: 18 March, 17 April, 9 & 14 May

GROUP 3

- Members:
- Dates for Journal collection: 20 March, 24 April, 14 May