# ENGAGING ALL PARTNERS IN REFLECTION: Designing and Implementing Integrative Reflection Opportunities

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# On Reflection...

# Reflection is "...the 'hyphen' between service-learning." -Dwight Giles and Janet Eyler, <u>Where is the Learning in Service-</u> <u>Learning?</u>

Reflection is a process of seeking clarity about truth...truth in experience, thought, beliefs, instincts and relationships. Reflection can be accomplished independently or as a collective endeavor. Yet, however done, reflection demands consideration of one's internal state (beliefs, feelings, assumptions) and external circumstances (actions, relationships, power dynamics, obstacles). Reflection also demands a self-honesty and humility that will hold its own against affront from any quarter.

# --Tony Chambers, Associate Vice President, University of Toronto, and the Kellogg Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good

Reflection can provide an opportunity for transformative learning to emerge from experience. "*Transformative learning is a process of getting beyond mere knowledge acquisition to becoming changed in some meaningful way by what you have learned*." The reflective process provides opportunities to integrate what might be disparate experiences into preparation for life.

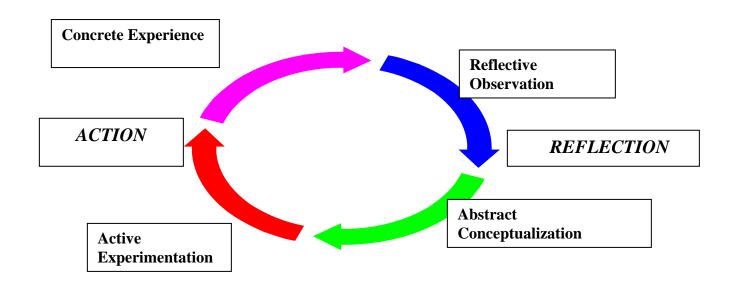
# -Glenn A. Bowen, Director of Service Learning, Western Carolina University, <u>Reflection Methods and Activities for Service Learning</u>

# On Personal Change...

Each of us guards a gate of change that can only be unlocked from the inside. We cannot open the gate of another, either by argument or by emotional appeal."

-- Marilyn Ferguson, Educator and Writer

# Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning



Paulo Freire advocated for praxis, or "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it...Reflection without action is verbalism, action without reflection is activism." -Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970).

## **BENEFITS OF REFLECTION IN COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING**

# Well-integrated and constructed reflection can result in the following benefits to students, faculty and community partners:

- Deeper, more sustainable learning of curricular and/or co-curricular content
- Increased consciousness of what is learned
- Expanded capacity to notice and understanding feelings
- Skill development
- Increased understanding of self, others, community and planet
- Increased capacity for authentic relationships
- Increased quality of community contributions
- Deeper recognition of assets, interests, and needs of self, others and community
- Increased capacity to listen to self and others in new ways
- Ability to hold selves accountable for mistakes
- Forgiveness of self and others for mistakes
- Celebration of successes
- Capacity to see all partners in the process more holistically
- Community teaching is shared with the educational institution
- Faculty teaching is shared with the community
- Curriculum is more relevant
- Deeper capacity for action that results in social justice and personal transformation
- Power can be redistributed when all partners reflect, teach and learn together
- Other benefits:
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## **EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR FOSTERING REFLECTION** EYLER AND GILES 4 C'S OF REFLECTION (1999)

Core Element	LES 4 C'S OF REFLECTION (1999) Definition
Continuous	The reflective process is implemented and maintained continuously before, during and after the service-learning experience. Reflection
	happens in many locations, in solitude and with others
	The learning outcomes of the reflection activities are directly
Connected Challenging	connected to the learning outcomes of the course or activity.
	Reflection activities allow for "synthesizing action and thought."
	Learners are challenged to move from surface learning to deeper,
	critical thinking through the use of thought provoking strategies by
	the instructor, advisor, student leader, or community facilitator.
	Reflection is contextualized when it "corresponds" to the course
	content, topics and experience in a meaningful way. <i>Reflection</i>
Contextualized	activities recognize the often short-term context in which students
Contextualized	are working, and does not ask them to develop pre-mature solutions
	to complex community challenges.
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	Service learning partners/co-educators agree on the content and
Mutually	process of reflection activities and assignments. They create
Beneficial	reflection activities that mutually benefit the student, the community
	partner and the faculty member.
Quality and the	Reflection activities draw on multiple ways of knowing, learning and
Culturally	expression. Learning from the head, heart, gut, hands, and body are
Relevant/	honored. Students are asked to examine issues on multiple levels:
Multi-Leveled	personal, relationship, group/cultural, institutional/societal.
	Since service learning partners may encounter uncomfortable
	feelings, it is important that they feel they are in a supportive and
Supportive	mutually respectful atmosphere where they can express their
Supportive	opinions, ideas and thoughts, become more aware of the impact of
	their perspectives on others, hear others' opinions, and be open to
	challenging their own perspectives.
Modeled by All	Faculty, community partners, students model, participate in and
Partners	benefit from the reflection process.
	Partners reflect on their own cultural identities in relation to on each
Internally Focused	other and the impact of those identities have on their service
	experiences and their perspectives. Participants reflect on the impact
	of their experience on their view of themselves as community
	members and as collaborative leaders in creating social change.
Clear Feedback-Rich	Clear instructions, expectations, guidelines, and criteria for
	assessment and evaluation are provided.
	Peers, community partners, faculty provide thoughtful, on-going
	feedback that supports and challenges.

# **REFLECTION QUESTION MODELS**

These frameworks can be used as guides for developing reflection questions that can be used in written, oral or artistic/creative activities.

OBJECTIVE	WHAT, GUT	<b>ORID</b> (Institute	DIGA Source?	QUESTIONS
	MODEL (NYLC)	for Cultural Affairs)		
COGNITIVE DESCRIPTION	What?	Objective	Describe	What happened? What did you see, hear, smell, touch, say
AFFECTIVE EXPRESSION	Gut?	Reflective	Interpret	What range of feelings came up for you during the experience? When were you surprised? Frustrated? Pleased? Affirmed? Disappointed? Angry?
ANALYSIS	So What?	Interpretive	Generalize	What are you learning from this? What difference does that make to you, to the community? What do you understand differently now? When have you seen something similar before? How does this relate to larger contexts, theories, ideas? What is important about what you have learned?
APPLICATION	Now What?	Decisional	Apply	Now what will you do with what you have learned? How does it inform your work in community? What has our group/class learned? What are the implications of what we have done together?

## Sample Reflection Questions Related to Core Learning Outcomes

#### Linking Course Content and Community Service Experience

From your experience in the community, what course concepts have you seen in action? Where have you seen x theory in action at your community site? What are some examples where x theory(ies) don't seem to apply at your community site?

#### Self Awareness

What has surprised you? What assumptions of your own, perhaps ones you didn't know you had, have you become aware of? How has your experience reinforced or challenges those assumptions or beliefs? What skills of yours, perhaps ones you didn't realize you had, have been an asset in the community?

#### **Civically Engaged Person**

What thoughts do you have about the kind of community member you want to be? Has anything from your experience in this course impacted those thoughts? What does a civically minded person in your chosen field do, for example, what would a socially responsible biologist look like?

#### Social Justice/Social Change

From what you have learned, why do you think there is a desire and need for the service you provided? What conditions of inequity make the service necessary? What next steps do you think you could take to better understand these underlying inequities? What role do you see you can take in creating more equity?

# FOCUSED CONVERSATION FOLLOWING AN INTENSE EXPERIENCE

My sense is we have all experienced some intense events today (last week...). It's important that we take time to reflect on and share what's happened, so we can find meaning from our experience, learn some critical lessons, and increase our capacity to contribute in the future. I'm going to ask some questions that will help us gradually process what happened. I ask that we give each other an opportunity to share their own responses without judgment.

## **Objective Questions**

- Imagine you were a video camera recording what you saw happening that day. What actions, words, phrases, objects, and scenes are recorded on your tape? Let's get everything out so we all have a full picture of what happened.
- What has happened since?

## **Reflective Questions**

- What shocked you?
- What was most frightening?
- What made you want to escape?
- How else did you find yourself reacting? Were you disappointed? Angry? Sad?
- Any place you wanted to cheer?

## **Interpretive Questions**

- What are all the things you think lead up to this event?
- What might have been some other contributing factors?
- What impact does it have on you?
- How are you different now?
- How might we be different a year from now?
- What can we learn from this?

## **Decisional Questions**

- What can we do to prevent this from happening again?
- Who else do you need to see or talk with?
- What can we do to help each other now?
- What can we do to symbolize how we changed or what we have learned?

From Institute for Cultural Affairs

## FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN DESIGNING COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING REFLECTION ACTIVITIES

FACTORS	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
Who are you?	<ul> <li>What are your strengths, challenges, skills, and comfort level for facilitating reflection?</li> <li>What is your knowledge of the curricular or co-curricular content you want students to learn?</li> <li>What is your understanding of the community context and experience students are having?</li> <li>How does social conditioning related to your cultural identities (age, class, disabilities, gender, language, race, religious affiliation, sexual identity) influence your teaching, facilitation and reflection styles?</li> <li>What is your paradigm of the faculty/student affairs professional role (as knower, as learner, teacher, student/lifelong learner, partner)?</li> <li>What do YOU want to learn from the reflection process (about</li> </ul>
	students, about the community, about yourself?)?
Nature of Community Partnership	<ul> <li>Are students in your class working with the same community partner or different partners?</li> <li>What is the nature of the students' work with the community (what are they doing, how much time are they working with the organization)?</li> <li>What stage are they in with their partnership (e.g. Forming, Norming, Storming, Performing)?</li> <li>Is anything in particular happening at the site, on campus, in the neighborhood, state, nation, world</li> </ul>
Learning Outcomes	• How can reflection help students reach course learning
Goals for Each Reflection Activity	<ul> <li>outcomes?</li> <li>What do you want to accomplish with a reflection activity? For example, do you want them to: <ul> <li>identify lessons learned from past experience that they can draw from as they prepare for this community experience?</li> <li>explore how their community experience illuminates or challenges curricular or co-curricular content?</li> <li>build skills (e.g. communication, analysis, questioning)?</li> <li>describe how they applied academic concepts o their work in the community?</li> <li>examine civic, social justice, leadership, or social responsibility applications for their community work?</li> <li>increase their awareness of their own perspectives and world view?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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Who are the	• What are their individual and collective strengths and	
students?	challenges?	
	• Where are they developmentally (cognitive, identity, moral	
	development, etc.)?	
	• What are their learning styles?	
	• Who are they as cultural beings (age, class, disability status, ethnicity, gender, language, national identity, race, sexual	
	identity, etc.), and where are they in their identity development?	
	<ul> <li>How do they feel about the service experience? What is their</li> </ul>	
	past experience with service, service learning, or community	
	engagement?	
	• What kinds of activities do they have the capacity to engage in?	
Timing	• Would this reflection activity be used before, during, or after	
	engaging in service?	
	• How much time can you devote to the activity?	
Methods	<ul> <li>Verbal/Small Group/Large Group Discussion</li> </ul>	
	Artistic/Creative	
	• Written	
	Structured/Unstructured	
	• Simulations	
	Case Studies	
	<ul> <li>see Reflection Methods/Strategies page for more methods!</li> </ul>	
Location	• In the classroom	
	• In the community	
	• In the student's home	
	Other locations	
With whom?	• Alone	
	• In pairs, in small groups	
	<ul> <li>Large group/Full class/Full student organization</li> </ul>	
	• With peers, community partners, with faculty?	
Assessment Strategy	• Who assesses (self, peer, community partner/community	
	member, faculty, student affairs professional) the learning the	
	students demonstrate through reflection?	
	• What are the criteria?	
	• What role does grading play?	
	• How will you provide feedback to the student that both	
	supports and challenges them?	

## **REFLECTION-RELATED SERVICE LEARNING COURSE OUTCOMES**

Community engagement learning outcomes often fall into four categories:

- Curricular and/or co-curricular content
- Personal, professional, and leadership development
- Social justice/social change
- Civic engagement/community participation

The following learning outcomes demonstrate how educators can incorporate reflective learning into service learning outcomes.

## **Composition Course**

- Students will demonstrate their ability to synthesize ideas and respond to grant guidelines by writing a grant proposal in collaboration with a peer and members of the local community.
- Students will demonstrate improved skill in articulating their reflective thinking in writing.

## **African American Literature**

- Students will demonstrate their ability to design a project that will reduce the cultural and linguistic distance between teachers and students.
- Students will demonstrate their capacity to reflect on their own linguistic experiences in school and identify how societal privilege and/or marginalization impacted their experience.

## Anthropology

• Students will increase their capacity to describe what they observe without evaluation or judgment.

## Leadership Course

• Students will demonstrate their ability to describe experiences, name their feelings, interpret their experience in relation to leadership theory, and apply their learning to their own development as a leader.

## **Alternative Spring Break**

• Students will articulate their learning about some of the root causes of homelessness, and their personal relationship to the issue of homelessness.

SKILLS	<b>GUIDING QUESTION</b>	DESCRIPTION
Knowledge	What do I know?	"Facts" about the site and its programs, the larger
		social issues, data, the who/what/where/when
Comprehension	What do I understand?	Why does community address issues in the way
<b>F</b>		they do? Compare/contrast, summarize, explain
Analysis	How can theory help me	Examining my experience in relation to
<b>J</b>	understand what I see	curricular/co-curricular content. How do my
	and experience?	experience and the theory, data, etc. inform each
	-	other? How are they contradictory? What
		patterns am I noticing? What are the root causes
		of the "need" for this service? What inequities
		are at play?
Application	How can I use this	How does this issue impact my life? How does
	knowledge?	my life impact this issue? How will I concretely
		use what I have learned?
Synthesis	How do the pieces fit	Generalizing. Connecting knowledge from
	together?	several areas. Looking at issues on the
		individual, relationship, group and
		societal/institutional levels
Evaluation	How well did I do it?	Of my own capacity to contribute. What would I
	What can I do now?	do differently next time? If students are asked to
		identify recommendations for a site, agreement
		with community partners on this is important.
		Encourage students to recognize the often
		limited experience they have had in framing their
Demoniation		recommendations
Description	What do I see and hear?	Separating skills in description from skills in
Critical	How do Lougation what L	analysis and application.
Thinking	How do I question what I think I have learned, and	Building the capacity to look at issues from multiple perspectives, and to question. Moving
Tilliking	what others say about	from dichotomous thinking to more complex
	this issue?	thinking.
Naming	What am I feeling and	Recognizing, acknowledging, naming feelings as
Feelings	how does it impact my	a compass for learning.
	perspective?	a compussion reasoning.
Career	How does this experience	Examining the role of community in careers.
Development	shape my career goals?	How do these skills transfer to a profession?
Personal	How am I changing as a	Exploring how I am different after this
Growth	person?	experience. How are my relationships different?
Identity	How am I becoming	How have I become more aware of my values,
Development	clearer about who I am?	perspectives, cultural identities?
Leadership	How can I make a	What leadership skills have I learned and
_	difference?	developed?
Social Change	How can I affect change?	What knowledge and tools do I now have to
		contribute to change?

# SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

# **REFLECTION METHODS/STRATEGIES**

<b>Μ/DITTE</b> N			
<ul> <li>WRITTEN</li> <li>Journals (not the same as a log) <ul> <li>Free form or structured/directed</li> <li>Individual or team</li> <li>Critical Incident (event that changed your perspective, describe, analyze, explain your role and impact on you)</li> <li>Key-phrase</li> <li>Double entry (Description and feelings/interpretations/links to readings)</li> <li>3 Part (Description, Analysis, Application)</li> <li>Highlighted entries (highlight course related content)</li> <li>Dialogue (student-faculty; student-community partner; student-student, uses prompts)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Letters</li> <li>Editorials</li> <li>Diagrams</li> <li>Personal Web pages/Blogs</li> <li>Powerpoint/CD's/Short Movies</li> <li>Guide for future service learners</li> <li>Essays</li> <li>Free-write/1 minute papers</li> <li>Electronic reflection/Discussion boards</li> <li>Student-written questions</li> <li>Reflective Narratives</li> <li>Create a legacy for service learners who come after you</li> <li>Case studies</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>ORAL</li> <li>Directed and non-directed discussion</li> <li>Bring in a quote from a reading on a card, exchange, read and respond</li> <li>Fictitious journal entry that helps students identify how to make journals effective</li> <li>Pair sharing</li> <li>Small groups</li> <li>Case studies</li> <li>Audio Recordings</li> <li>Storytelling/self in third person</li> <li>Book Clubs</li> <li>Peer Interviews</li> <li>Focus Groups</li> <li>Poetry Slam</li> <li>Fish Bowls (2 concentric circles – inside circle discusses an issue, outside circle replaces someone on inside to join conversation or outside circle can be given different topic to discuss when they are on the inside).</li> <li>Presentations</li> <li>Mini-teach sessions/Directed Reading – show how class content relates to community experience</li> <li>Conference with faculty</li> <li>Teach content to peers or others</li> <li>Group brainstorm (e.g. community assets, then identify categories or themes)</li> <li>Role plays (recommendation is to have student play themselves, not take on someone else's role as stereotypes can, often unintentionally, shape the role they play)</li> </ul>		
CREA			
*Draw/Paint *Sculpture (paper, clay)			
*Video *Music *Dance/Movement *Group Skits			
*Scrapbooks *Create a game show *Web pages, computer generated images			
*Thought and feeling "bubbles" (like in a comic strip, to give voice to thoughts and feelings)			

# **REFLECTION STATIONS ACTIVITY**

Provide instructions and supplies at each station. Students spend about 10 minutes at each station then rotate. Another option is to give them a set amount of time and invite them to visit as many or as few stations as they want/can. Ask them to share the reflections they want to, in small groups (important they know they can keep some reflections private if they choose). If the class or group is small, you can invite students to share one reflection with the whole class if they wish.

### **CREATIVE ASSETS STATION**

Station Supplies: art supplies such as clay, felt, scissors, glue, color pencils or markers, stickers.

Identify one asset your service experience helped you discover you have. Draw or make a sculpture to symbolize this asset and its value to your community. OR for pre-service reflection – identify one strength you hope to offer to the community, create something that represents that strength.

## MOVIES, BOOKS, MUSIC STATION

Station Supplies: Paper, pens, laptop with internet access and I-Tunes to people can look up lyrics, song titles, etc.

Identify a movie, song, or book title that you think describes thing you are learning from the community. Write a description of why that represents your learning.

## **METAPHORS OF CHANGE STATION**

Station Supplies: A pile of objects such as office supplies, kitchen utensils, etc., paper and pens.

Choose one item from this pile of objects that represents a turning point for you in your community experience where you were different afterwards. Write a description of the turning point, your role in the experience, and how you were different as a result.

## POST CARD STATION

Station Supplies: Post cards of inspiration such as those from syracuseculturalworkers.com/.

Choose a post card and write to someone at your community site who has taught you something valuable. Describe what they taught you, how that has impacted you, and how you will use what you learned. It is your choice whether you mail the post card or just write it for this reflection activity.

### LEARNING FLOW CHART

Station Supplies: Paper, pens, paper cuts outs of various shapes such as circles, squares, arrows, etc.

Design a flow chart that links key things you learned from the classroom, to key experiences you had in the community and vice versa.

### **LETTER WRITING STATION**

Station Supplies: Paper, pens.

Reflecting on some of the root causes you became aware of this semester, are there some things you think someone needs to be more aware of? Who would you like to make a strategic request of? Is there a governmental official, funder, community member, or campus administrator you want to make a request of? What do you more people need to be aware of, how has your experience taught you this, and why from the perspective of the person you are writing to, could it be in their best interest to address this issue? Draft a letter you may or may not eventually send.

#### **GRAFFITI WALL**

Station Supplies: Sticky wall, dry erase board or wall with chart paper taped up, markers with different areas identified "I'd like to see more of..." "I'd like to see less of..."

What is one thing you would like to see more of in your community? What is one thing you would like to see less of?

## **CREATIVE QUOTABLE QUOTES**

Station Supplies: art supplies such as clay, felt, scissors, glue, color pencils or markers, stickers.

Identify 1-3 key thoughts, experiences, or feelings from this course you want to hold onto. Recall phrases or quotes from things you have read, or things you or others have said. Use the arts and crafts supplies to create something to keep as a reminder of those key learnings you want to retain.

### PHOTOGRAPH AND GREETING CARD ACTIVITY

Station Supplies: Assortment of diverse photographs and cards. Paper and pens.

Select a picture or greeting card that reflects the core or essence of the work you are doing with the community and why you are doing it. Jot some of your thoughts and feelings down about your work and how this picture reflects them. Bring the card and your reflective writing back to the group.

## **Sample Critical Reflection Activities**

### **Pair Share**

At the end of a class or discussion, pair with a partner and share one highlight, one question, one place where you have a different perspective.

## **Question Circle**

Ask a question of the group. The first person in the circle doesn't necessarily answer it, but speaks to what the question brings up for them. Finish by asking a question for next person in the circle.

#### THE FOLLOWING SECTION WAS DEVELOPED BY JENNIFER M. PIGZA, jpigza@stmarys-ca.edu

#### **Gallery Experience**

The gallery experience poses a series of questions/statements around the room related to a topic of interest. Ideally the questions work together to bridge theory and practice and allow for musings about what is known and unknown. Participants are invited to take a place in front of a posted question and are given a period of time to respond. The facilitator then instructs the group to move around the room to answer another question. This round-robin continues until all people have the opportunity to respond to all questions. The facilitator asks one person to read the responses on each paper. The group then steps back and discusses the questions and responses of most interest. The gallery questions for our exercise were:

- Words that come to mind when I think about critical reflection
- Resources that I turn to for assistance in teaching
- Reflection activities that I know about and/or have tried
- Exciting aspects of incorporating service-learning into my course
- What I wish I understood better about my students and their learning

In addition to opening discussions, a gallery experience can be used to reveal information and assumptions about justice and equality. Adams, Bell and Griffin<sup>1</sup> suggest a gallery activity that addresses structural policies and practices as well as cultural norms related to institutional heterosexism and heterosexual privilege.

#### **Artistic Reflection<sup>2</sup>**

In this workshop we engaged in an artistic reflection of what it means to facilitate reflection. This process challenged us to think metaphorically, conceptually, visually, and through color and line about these activities. While artistic expression may be challenging for some students, it does allow different learning styles a place in intellectual pursuit. Other examples of artistic reflection include poetry, murals, music, and photography.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See the chapter on Heterosexism Curriculum Design in—Adams, Bell & Griffin. (1997). Teaching for diversity and social justice: A sourcebook. New York: Routledge.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Adapted from Eyler, Giles & Schmeide as previously cited.

#### **Misconception/Preconception Check<sup>3</sup>**

A Misconception/Preconception Check is a great way to begin to understand what students know and don't know about the issue, people, or environment that will be explored in a course's entirety or in the service-learning component of the course. An instructor whose course includes service-learning in local high schools might develop a quiz about Prince George's County, education and income levels, racial/ethnic demographics, and other items of particular interest including students' attitudes or experiences in the area. The use of the quiz is not to identify who is ahead or behind of the curve in knowledge or development. Rather, the quiz helps the instructor understand what information and attitudes to explore more deeply and can provide a resource for introductory research assignments. This type of Check is a pre-reflection activity.

#### **Oral History**<sup>4</sup>

Engaging in an oral history project is a way for students to foster relationships with community members in a way that honors their wisdom and experience by formalizing the student's role as listener. A course that studies issues of aging—physiology, policy, history of twentieth century, elder-care—could use a oral history project to understand theories, policies and facts from first-hand accounts. A community-based research project that involves violence reduction might include a series of oral histories as part of examining residents' experiences and perceptions about violence.

#### Student-Generated Test or Journal Questions<sup>5</sup>

Engaging students in creating test and journal questions highlights for the instructor what the students deem the most critical elements of the course or experiences, their perception of what is "fair" in terms of complexity, and their ability to respond to the questions they pose. In a service-learning course, student-generated questions might provide an avenue for the instructor to see how well the students integrate the service-learning experience with the other course content. In this technique, students not only generate questions, but they also provide sample examples that they deem of "A" quality. An adaptation of this exercise would engage students in generating journal questions which they swap with their peers. The following week, students could review each others journals and discuss strengths and weaknesses. This can help increase quality of future work and, again, highlights what the instructor might want to review.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Misconception/Preconception exercise comes from—Angelo & Cross. (1993). Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers. SanFrancisco: Jossey-Bass. The Classism Quiz comes from—Adams, Bell & Griffin as previously cited.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Adapted from Eyler, Giles & Schmeide as previously cited.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Adapted from Angelo & Cross. (1993). Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers. SanFrancisco: Jossey-Bass.

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