

Credit Internship - Journal Prompts For Credit-Bearing Internships

To receive credit for an internship, students must keep a journal, and use those reflections to craft a Final Reflective Essay.

Please use the following prompts to guide your weekly journal entries during your internship. Each week, respond to 2-3 from the list below. Think deeply and critically about the work you are doing at your internship, your overall experience as an intern, and the intersections of your academic work and internship experience.

The journal reflection will serve as a platform for ongoing reflection on your experience and inform your end-of-internship **Final Reflective Essay**, which will be shared with your Faculty Adviser at the end of your internship. You do not need to submit your journal; it is purely to give you a structure through which to reflect on your experience.

Beginning of your internship (weeks 1-2)

- How have you and the organization navigated work being done remotely? What have the challenges been? How will you structure your time to ensure your work will get done at home?
- How was your first week at your internship?
- Who were some of the staff you “met” and their roles at the organization?
- How has the organization structured its orientation and training for you? How will you and your supervisor meet for project feedback and guidance while working remotely?
- What has surprised you about the culture of your workplace? How do staff members seem to be holding up given the pandemic?
- What is one insight or highlight you’ve had so far regarding your internship and what to expect going forward?
- What projects or assignments are you most excited to jump into?
- What questions, concerns, or curiosities do you have now that you’ve been there a little while?
- Sometimes the start of an internship can be slow. What are ways you can take initiative to show you are ready to take on projects?
- Which of your course(s) or academic project(s) do you anticipate will have the most relevance to your work as an intern?
- On a scale of 5 (high excitement and motivation) to 1 (little or no excitement or motivation), how do feel about your internship? Why did you choose that rating?

Middle of your internship

- What are the primary tasks you’ve worked on so far at your internship?
- What feedback have you received on the draft or completed work you have submitted?

- What challenges have you faced during your internship so far? What steps did you take to resolve those challenges, and what was the outcome?
- How has your relationship with your supervisor evolved? What has worked well? What could be improved? How has it been to work with your supervisor remotely?
- What projects have been the most rewarding to you so far? What has made that work so satisfying?
- How would you describe the pace of the work at your internship?
- What have you observed about the way staff at your internship site communicate with each other and with you since they and you are working remotely?
- Have you observed disagreements among staff members at your internship site? If yes, what was the nature of one of those disagreements, and how did the staff members navigate that situation?
- What are 2-3 examples of ways you have applied knowledge or skills gained through your Smith coursework while at your internship?

Final 1-2 weeks of your internship

- Describe ways in which your skills and/or knowledge of the field have grown since you began this internship. What do you know now that you didn't before?
- Review your learning contract (created at the start of this internship) and summarize your progress toward fulfilling your learning objectives.
- What aspects (if any) of your internship experience have most surprised you?
- What opportunities have you had to observe or interact with the people or businesses your organization serves? What have the challenges been working remotely?
- What were the biggest learning moments for you during your internship, and what made them so? What do you know now about yourself that you didn't before?
- In what ways has this internship experience influenced or clarified your academic plans for the coming semester?
- What (if anything) would you do differently in your next internship or job experience?
- How have your notions about "work" shifted or changed through your internship?

The following poem, "To be of use", is by Marge Piercy. What, if anything, resonates with you about it? As you near the end of your internship, how has your notion of "work" evolved, changed, and/or been challenged?

The people I love the best
 jump into work head first
 without dallying in the shallows
 and swim off with sure strokes almost out of sight.
 They seem to become natives of that element,
 the black sleek heads of seals
 bouncing like half-submerged balls.

I love people who harness themselves, an ox to a heavy cart,
 who pull like water buffalo, with massive patience,
 who strain in the mud and the muck to move things forward,
 who do what has to be done, again and again.

I want to be with people who submerge
in the task, who go into the fields to harvest
and work in a row and pass the bags along,
who are not parlor generals and field deserters
but move in a common rhythm
when the food must come in or the fire be put out.

The work of the world is common as mud.
Botched, it smears the hands, crumbles to dust.
But the thing worth doing well done
has a shape that satisfies, clean and evident.
Greek amphoras for wine or oil,
Hopi vases that held corn, are put in museums
but you know they were made to be used.
The pitcher cries for water to carry
and a person for work that is real.

Marge Piercy, "To be of use" from *Circles on the Water*. Copyright © 1982 by Marge Piercy. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Random House LLC. All rights reserved.
Source: *Circles on the Water: Selected Poems of Marge Piercy* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1982)