Purdue Journal of Service-Learning and International Engagement (PJSL)

**Student Author, Writing Mentor and Reviewer Guidelines for Submission Type:**

**REFLECTIVE ESSAY**

**This guideline is intended to:**

1. Direct the student author(s) and writing mentor(s) through the writing process.
2. Assist the assigned reviewers in assessing content and providing feedback to the author(s).

**Description of Submission Type**

*Reflective Essay* is an approximate 3500-word composition, authored by one or more undergraduate, graduate, or professional program students, that describes and critically reflects on the student’s service-learning or community engagement experience.

**Abstract Proposal Submission**

The first step in the process is to submit an abstract proposal to the PJSL website at <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/pjsl/>. The abstract proposal is used to determine if your content meets the journal’s aim (to advance civic engagement through scholarly work) and falls within the journal’s scope (real-world experiences that meet community needs). It is a concise synopsis of your article and should be no longer than 300 words. Include 1-2 sentences in the following areas: 1) introduction to the topic and/or the community need addressed by your service, 2) description of your service or project, 3) community and student impact, and 4) conclusion. You will be notified within 2 weeks as to whether your abstract proposal was accepted.

**Primary Content Areas of Article**

Your article should contain the following content areas. Address the statements in the *Writing Guidelines* (found below) when composing content on the *PJSL Writing Template.*

1. Title Page
2. Abstract with Student Bio Sketch
3. Body of Article with Section Headers
4. Introduction
5. Description
6. Community impact
7. Student – Author impact
8. Conclusion
9. References
10. Acknowledgements

**Submission**

Article submission

* Use the *Writing Template* when submitting your first complete draft to the PJSL website. The template is located on the PJSL website.
* Indicate where your photos with captions, figures and/or tables are to be placed within the article.
* Submit using the same article number assigned to your abstract.
* Your first complete draft is sent to reviewers within 2 weeks of submission.
* Reviewers are generally provided two weeks to provide feedback and request revisions.
* Authors are generally given 7 days to complete any revisions and resubmit.

Photo guidelines

* Photos should be at least 300 dpi, a minimum of 4 X 6 inches in size, and in JPEG or PNG format.
* Upload photos to the PJSL website as “Additional Files” with captions typed in the “Description” area.
* The author(s) declares whether they own the photos on the PJSL website. If the photo belongs to someone else, the *Photo Permission Form* OR e-mail permission from the photo owner must be submitted as an “Additional file”.

**Writing Process Checklist**

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| **SECTIONS** | **CRITERIA** |
| Introduction | * Provides an introduction and background describing the community need/problem that your project or service addresses. Statistics are appropriate here. [E.g., Twenty million people in the US suffer from diabetes (reference)]. * If describing a course, give course name and number, content description, and how it relates to experience * Describe any other coursework or past experiences that paved the way for this experience. * Describes relevant literature and its outcomes pertinent to your project/service. * Describes your motivation for participation (e.g. required course, study abroad opportunity, community volunteerism opportunity, internship). * Identifies the primary objective of your project. |
| Description | * Describes the community partner, including their location, background information and mission/purpose. * Provides a demographic description of the clients served. * Describes the various community partner’s and/or clients’ needs at this site. * Describes how/by whom specific project or service opportunities are generated (community partner, faculty mentor, and/or student). * Describes project or service opportunities for students at this site. * Describes your specific project or service in sufficient detail such that others could reproduce your efforts. * Describes the setting where you completed the experience (if not completed at the organization already described). * Explains whether this opportunity is available to students on a regular basis (or if it was a unique experience). |
| Community Impact | * Describes how you measured project/service success and include your tangible and intangible outcomes. * Describes any results (e.g., quantitative and/or qualitative) from your project/service, if applicable. * Presents any graphics (e.g., charts, images, tables) to enhance understanding, if applicable. * Explains whether the organization and/or clients were adequately prepared to work with students, and how this could be improved. * Describes challenges/barriers encountered with the organization. * Describes challenges/barriers encountered with the clients. * Describes if/how the project or activities will be sustained (if students leave). |
| Student/Author Impact | * Reflects on how the experience relates to your academic training. * Explains whether you were adequately prepared for the experience, or how preparation could be improved. * Describes new knowledge learned from the experience. * Describes other personal/professional successes/gains from the experience. * Describes challenges/barriers encountered with the organization and/or clients, and how they were addressed. * Describes any other challenges/barriers encountered during your experience, and how they were addressed. * Explains what you might do differently to improve the experience. * Explains any plans to continue working with the community partner. * Explains if/how this experience might impact future career plans or community service. |
| Conclusion | * Explains continued needs and opportunities for further student involvement. Gives any advice to students about this experience. * Describes how reciprocity could be enhanced (mutual benefits to the community partner and the student). * Explains why you wrote this article. How does your experience/ knowledge inform your readers? |
| Additional Requirements | * References are presented both in the text and in a reference list at the end of the article using APA format. * Acknowledgement is provided at the end of the article to those who supported the work, e.g., writing mentor, faculty project supervisor, project peers. * Article is written using the PJSL template * Grammar and punctuation are appropriate * Sections flow well from paragraph to paragraph (i.e., tells a story). * Placement of photos, tables and/or figures are indicated within the text. (ex. *Insert Figure 1: caption)* * Photos have captions. (ex. *Figure 1: caption)* * Figures and tables are titled and numbered. (ex. *Figure 1, Table 1, etc.)* |