



PREP 1300 – Learning Journals (x2 sets @ 10% each = 20%) Instructions and Rubric

❖ Assignment Rationale:

A Learning Journal's purpose is to track and analyze one's own learning behaviours. It provides insight into one's own emotional and cognitive rhythms as a learner. Ideally, this type of reflection allows one to make on-going changes in study habits as the journals help identify learning gaps. Ultimately, it becomes clearer how one may go about organizing their learning, what kinds of learning tasks one is drawn to, what teaching styles one finds most congenial, what tasks one resists and seeks to avoid, what conditions encourage risk-taking with learning, what warning signs are signaling an emotional low, and what factors keep one going through the "quitting times" of low morale, unhappiness, and loss of confidence.

Research shows that a "learning journal has good potential to increase student interest in and engagement with course material, to encourage and empower students to take more responsibility for their own learning, to be more reflective in their study, and to allow them to have a voice and provide valuable feedback to the teacher." Moreover, "students who actively engage with what they are studying tend to understand more, learn more, remember more, enjoy it more and be more able to appreciate the relevance of what they have learned, than students who passively receive" lessons. (Chris Park, "Engaging Students in the Learning Process: the Learning Journal," *J. of Geography in Higher Education*, 2003. Also see Jennifer Moon, *Learning Journals: A Handbook for Reflective Practice and Professional Development*, Routledge, 2006.)

❖ Instructions:

1. You are invited to keep **four** journal entries over the duration of the semester. Two entries will be submitted for grading via DC Connect's assignment submission folder in Week 06 (see assignment folder on DC Connect for exact time and date of submission). The remaining two entries will be submitted for grading via DC Connect's assignment submission folder in Week 12 (see assignment folder on DC Connect for exact time and date of submission).
 - a. What this means in practical terms is that you can choose any two weeks of PREP 1300 to reflect on between Weeks 01 and 06 for your first two entries and any two weeks of PREP 1300 to reflect on between Weeks 07 and 12 for your last two entries. For example, for your first

- submission, one entry may focus on the lessons learned in Week 03 and the other may focus on the lessons learned in Week 05. Together, those two reflections make up one set that is due in Week 06.
2. Each journal entry should be approximately 500+ words in length, which is about 1½ to 2 double-spaced page per entry, which means about 4(ish) double-spaced pages for one set.
 3. As noted above, a Learning Journal will allow you to chart and analyze your learning behaviours. With that in mind, you have considerable freedom to reflect on whatever you wish as it relates to your student experience in this course and at the college.
 - a. Please ensure each entry is firmly based in PREP 1300 and then expand from there.
 - b. Be specific – cite specific examples from PREP.
 - c. You may use the first-person personal pronoun “I.”
 4. If it helps to get you started for each entry, then you may wish but are not required to answer some of the following questions (perhaps 1-2 questions per entry would suffice):
 - a. What has this week’s PREP 1300 class/topic(s) taught me about myself as a learner?
 - b. What were the highest and lowest emotional moments in my learning activities this week (in PREP 1300 and in my other courses)?
 - c. What PREP 1300 tasks or topics resonated with me and which ones didn’t and why? How does this week’s PREP 1300 class/topic(s) connect to my other courses?
 - d. What do I feel proudest about and what do I feel dissatisfied with regarding my learning activities this week?
 - e. How will I apply the lessons from PREP 1300 to my own growing academic skillsets as well as other courses this semester and beyond?
 5. Please save each batch of entries as .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf. Please do NOT save it as a .pages document as I cannot access those.

6. Your first two entries and your second two entries will be graded using the rubric on the following page. Each set will receive a mark out of 20 and will then be reduced to a percentage point out of 10.

❖ Rubric:

This rubric will be used to evaluate your assignment.

Criteria	Meets All Expectations 4 pts.	Meets Most of the Expectations 3 pts.	Meets Some of the Expectations 2 pts.	Does Not Meet Expectations 1 pt.
Self-Reflection	The entries demonstrate the ability of the student to engage in genuine and appreciable self-reflection. Exhibits a high level of insight and self-reflection.	The entries demonstrate the willingness of the student to engage in self-reflection, but the insights could be more thorough. Exhibits a fair level of insight and self-reflection overall.	The entries demonstrate little willingness on the part of the student to engage in self-reflection. There is room to elaborate and some insights are unfulfilled.	Exhibits a poor level of insight and little wherewithal for self-reflection.
Content	An extensive understanding and outstanding ability to analyse, synthesize, and evaluate. Contextualizes the discussions. Responses are well thought through.	A fair to good understanding and reasonable ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate. Reasonably contextualizes the discussions. Responses are reasonably thought through.	A fair understanding and a satisfactory ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate. Some context is given to the broader discussion. Entries require some elaboration.	A poor to adequate understanding; a less than satisfactory effort to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate. Little to no context is provided. Entries are poorly executed.
Specificity	Supports observations with well-detailed, specific, and relevant examples drawn from class. Demonstrates ability to put insights in dialogue with real-world cases. Avoids generalities altogether.	Supports observations with relevant examples drawn from class. Demonstrates some ability to put insights in dialogue with real-world cases. Some examples or entries may be general rather than specific.	Observations are only satisfactorily supported with examples drawn from class, some of which may not be wholly relevant. A satisfactory effort is made to put insights in dialogue with real-world cases. Entries are overall general.	Observations are not supported with relevant examples from class. Demonstrates little to no ability to put insights in dialogue with real-world cases. A lack of specificity overall; too general.

Presentation & Organization	Writing/presentation is logical, persuasive, and coherent. A variety of thoughtful transitions are used; they clearly show how ideas are connected.	Writing/presentation is mostly logical, persuasive, and coherent. Transitions show how ideas are connected, but there is little variety. It is mostly clear how ideas are connected.	Writing/presentation is somewhat logical, persuasive, and coherent. Some transitions work well, but some connections between ideas are fuzzy.	Writing/presentation is illogical, not persuasive, or incoherent. The transitions between ideas are unclear or nonexistent.
Sentence Structure, Grammar, & Spelling.	All sentences are well-constructed with varied structure. Student makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distracts the grader from the content. Student makes no errors in capitalization or punctuation, so the entries are exceptionally easy to read.	Most sentences are well-constructed and there is some varied sentence structure. Student makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the grader from the content. Student makes 1-2 errors in capitalization or punctuation, but the entries are still easy to read.	Most sentences are well constructed, but there is no variation in structure. Student makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the grader from the content. Student makes a few errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the grader's attention and interrupt the flow.	Most sentences are not well-constructed or varied. Student makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distracts the grader from the content. Student makes several errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the grader's attention and interrupt the flow.