

Inclusive and Equity-Minded Learning Through Self-Reflection Journaling

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Summary

Journaling, in the context of higher education, allows students to use introspection, problem solving skills, and share personal examples (Hyers, 2018). In the medical field, journaling and reflecting have been used to recall field experiences and to process and contextualize experiences in the past (Ortlipp, 2008). To date, there is a lack of research in communication using journaling and self-reflection as a means of evaluation and growth of student knowledge. I applied equity minded pedagogy to challenge traditional methods of white cultural standards in writing through self-reflection journals in multiple Cross-Cultural Communication courses. Students will respond to open-ended questions on their experiences in journaling at the end of the semester and complete a final self-reflection paper explaining how they believe they developed cross-cultural communication competency through self-reflection via writing in their journals.



Inclusivity in Journaling / Equity-Minded SOTL

- Journaling allows for critical self reflection by using your own words.
- Removes white standards for academic writing.
- Entries are not graded on spelling, grammar, or writing styles.
- Uses open-ended questions without one specific answer.
- Builds a brave space to share thoughts.
- Supports international student voices.
- Creates a safe space for LGBTQ+ students and students of colors.

What is one word that comes to mind when you think of inclusive and equity-minded learning?

Journals

- Two cross-cultural communication classes are using journals: one online, the other face-to-face.
- The online class is submitting journals online weekly while the face-to-face class is submitting handwritten hard copy journals after every 3-4 journal entries.
- A total of 10 journal prompts are provided over the course of the semester relating back to the material covered from the readings that week.
- Journal prompts are provided that include a concept and opportunity for self-reflection on how it applies (or applied) directly to the student.
- Students must write a minimum of 250 words for each journal entry, but no APA, citations, or direct quotes are used, and are not graded on spelling, grammar or APA

Benefits of Journaling

- Allows students to set goals
- Provides an opportunity for self-reflection
- Delivers psychological benefits
- Can learn to cope with challenges
- Able to summarize key concepts
- Identifies areas for improvement regarding application of key concepts
- Creates awareness of personal biases
- Involves putting theories into practice
- Enhances mental well-being
- Promotes self-awareness



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Sample Journal Prompt:

What is culture? What is cross-cultural communication from what you understand so far? How does the concept of culture and / or cross-cultural communication apply to you? What is an example of culture that you have experienced at some point in your life (recently or in the past) from your perspective? Why is this important to you?