

Team B  
College of General Studies  
Spring 2011  
Coffman, Pierce, Pines, Porten, and Rafferty

### Freshman End-of-Year Reflection

During your four semesters of study in Rhetoric, Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences at CGS you will develop critical skills in seven major areas. You will develop 1) the ability to communicate in writing and orally, 2) the skills needed to gather, analyze, document, and integrate information (research skills), 3) a detailed understanding of historical processes, literary and aesthetic movements, and specific cultural contexts, 4) an awareness of rhetorical and aesthetic conventions, 5) the ability to examine questions from a range of viewpoints and engage in perspective-taking, 6) the ability to integrate knowledge and modes of thinking drawn from two or more disciplines to produce an interdisciplinary understanding of complex problems, and 7) the ability to use quantitative methods in the natural and social sciences. (Consult the attached rubric for a more detailed description of the types of work associated with each of these categories.)

As you survey the work in your e-portfolio, think about your progress in each of these areas and how it may be documented in the samples you have collected. Where have you been able to demonstrate your knowledge of literary movements or historical contexts? Where can the reader see evidence of your writing and research skills and your ability to reason quantitatively? How have you taken account of different approaches to knowledge in the courses you have been taking, and what connections have you been able to make between and among your courses? What has your interdisciplinary experience meant to you?

Write a brief but detailed reflective essay guiding the reader through your accomplishments over the past year. Wherever possible, use specific examples and detail taken from the work in your portfolio to support your claims about progress and skills you have gained (be sure to draw upon samples taken from each of your CGS courses). Finally, consider your goals for next year. If possible, identify specific areas where you would like to make additional progress. When you are finished, post your essay to the “Interdisciplinary Reflections” section of your portfolio.

Finished essays should be posted no later than Friday, April 29, 2011. While this is not a graded assignment, you will need to complete it to receive full credit for your eportfolio work this semester.

Use the following description of “Level 4” or highest mastery of each CGS skill area as a guide to each category as you consider your work and your progress over the past year. Keep in mind that you may find evidence of more than one skill area in a single sample from your portfolio.

Skill	level 4: Excellent Mastery
Written and oral communication	Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task (including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices); uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free
Gathering, analyzing, and documenting information	Synthesizes in-depth information from a range of high-quality, credible, relevant sources that are appropriate for the discipline and genre to develop ideas and documents these sources fully using MLA or Chicago style.
Awareness of specific historical, literary, and cultural contexts	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content and sufficient detail to illustrate mastery of the subject, including historical, literary, and cultural contexts.
Rhetorical and aesthetic conventions	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, purpose. Makes skillful rhetorical choices and shows deep appreciation for literary and aesthetic conventions and their effects.
Critical Thinking and perspective-taking	Questions are examined from a range of viewpoints, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Conclusions and related outcomes are logical and reflect the student’s informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.
Integrative and applied learning	Makes insightful connections across disciplines and perspectives. Draws conclusions by combining examples, facts, theories or methodologies from more than one field of study to arrive at a sophisticated interdisciplinary understanding.
Quantitative methods	Uses quantitative analysis of data as the basis for deep and thoughtful judgments, drawing insightful and carefully-qualified conclusions from this work.