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Guide to Critical Ignatian Reflection

This guide is meant to help educators utilize and deepen reflection in their courses. It is in no way exhaustive and rather meant to assist with deepening pedagogy and encourage further curiosity into both Ignatian Pedagogy and the scholarship of reflection in teaching and learning. It is meant as a practical tool for instructors and to begin a conversation of what an application of Ignatian Pedagogy to Critical Reflection practices could look like.

It includes key concepts and frameworks along with some tangible suggestions of reflection activities to implement. Much of the guide will be devoted to establishing a shared definition of terms, something that is especially important given the wide range of opinions and interpretations of what reflection should look like in the classroom. This guide is not meant to establish a “gold standard” or claim that other approaches to reflection are not valid.

This guide is also intended to be used across disciplines and class formats. While critical reflection is especially necessary in community-based learning courses, Ignatian Pedagogy is firm that reflection needs to be both a hallmark and bulwark of education. We hope that this introductory guide sparks creativity in your teaching, more practical applications of Ignatian Pedagogy and Critical Reflection, and a thirst for more information on both topics!

Critical Reflection

Critical Reflection is a thinking and reasoning process that makes meaning of an experience. Critical reflection is descriptive, thoughtful, analytical, and critical. It is articulated in a number of ways such as in written, orally, or artistic expression. In short, this process adds depth and breadth to an experience and builds connections between course content and experience. Without reflection, experience alone might lead to “reinforce stereotypes..., offer simplistic solutions to complex problems and generalize inaccurately based on limited data.”¹

It is helpful to understand what critical reflection is NOT. It is not simply an activity summary and it is not an emotional outlet without elements of analysis. Critical reflection is prepared, carefully designed by the instructor, and generates and documents student learning before, during, and after the experience.

¹ Ash, S.L., & Clayton, P. H. (2009). Generating, deepening, and documenting learning: The power of critical reflection in applied learning. *Journal of Applied Learning in Higher Education*, 1(1), 25-48.

Ignatian Reflection

Jesuit education has a rich tradition of reflection. It comes with its own specific characteristics.

Personal - Much of Ignatian Reflection takes its roots from Ignatian Spirituality and in particular, St. Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises*. While these are religious texts and exercises rather than academic ones, they establish a specific worldview on how we create meaning and can understand our own experience. At the core, there is an emphasis on the importance of personal experience as a way to create and access knowledge. What a person experiences in their life is a locus for learning and insight, thus any information needs to be put in personal conversation with the subject. What does this mean to me and for me? How is my viewpoint influencing how I understand this? Where am I being invited to change my perspective?

Affective - Bridging from the emphasis on the personal, affective responses are important signposts for insight and knowledge. The emotions a student feels when they read something, their physical responses of nervousness when being in a new neighborhood, and the galvanizing feeling created by a successful experiment in the lab are all important elements of reflection. They should be noted and examined rather than filed away as a simple emotional response. This stance reminds us that we bring the fullness of human experience into learning and the classroom, not just our intellectual activity.

Ethical/Moral - The Jesuit motto of *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*, or "All for the greater glory of God" shapes the Ignatian approach to education. The ultimate aim of Jesuit education is that full growth of the person leads to action. It sees knowledge as both an outcome and a formative tool. This results in an educational process of formation that calls for a striving to excel that encompasses the academic and the personal. Through the Ignatian lens, there is no value neutral knowledge. It is taught for the purpose of either forming the student towards a life of virtue and excellence in service or as a skill that, when mastered, can be used to create the greater good. It leads to the future oriented questions of "What do I do with this knowledge?" or "What does this information mean for me?" It is from this standpoint that Jesuit education builds its emphasis on social justice.

Critical Reflection & Ignatian Reflection

These approaches complement and enhance one another. Both emphasize a depth of attention to our experiences in their capacity to help us learn and make meaning. Both ask that we pay attention to what we are doing rather than remain detached. Ignatian Reflection features a focus on the affective responses of students that allow them to be better leveraged as learning. Critical Reflection is explicit in its connections back to academic material and the need to articulate what you have learned at the end of the reflection process.

Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm

The Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm is the articulation of how Jesuit education has evolved over the centuries. It is founded on the belief that education is more than mere transmission of information but should instead be a transformational experience that affects the students on the cognitive, emotional, and ethical level. Jesuit education seeks to change how people look at themselves and others, social systems and structures, and the global community. "If truly successful, Jesuit education results ultimately in a radical transformation not only of the way in which people habitually think and act, but of the very way in which they live in the world, as [people] of competence, conscience and compassion, seeking the greater good (the magis)."²



The Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm is an ongoing cycle that has five parts, each asking an essential question

Context: What needs to be known about learners (their environment, background, community, and potential) and the subject matter to teach well?

Experience: How do you engage learners as whole persons in the learning process?

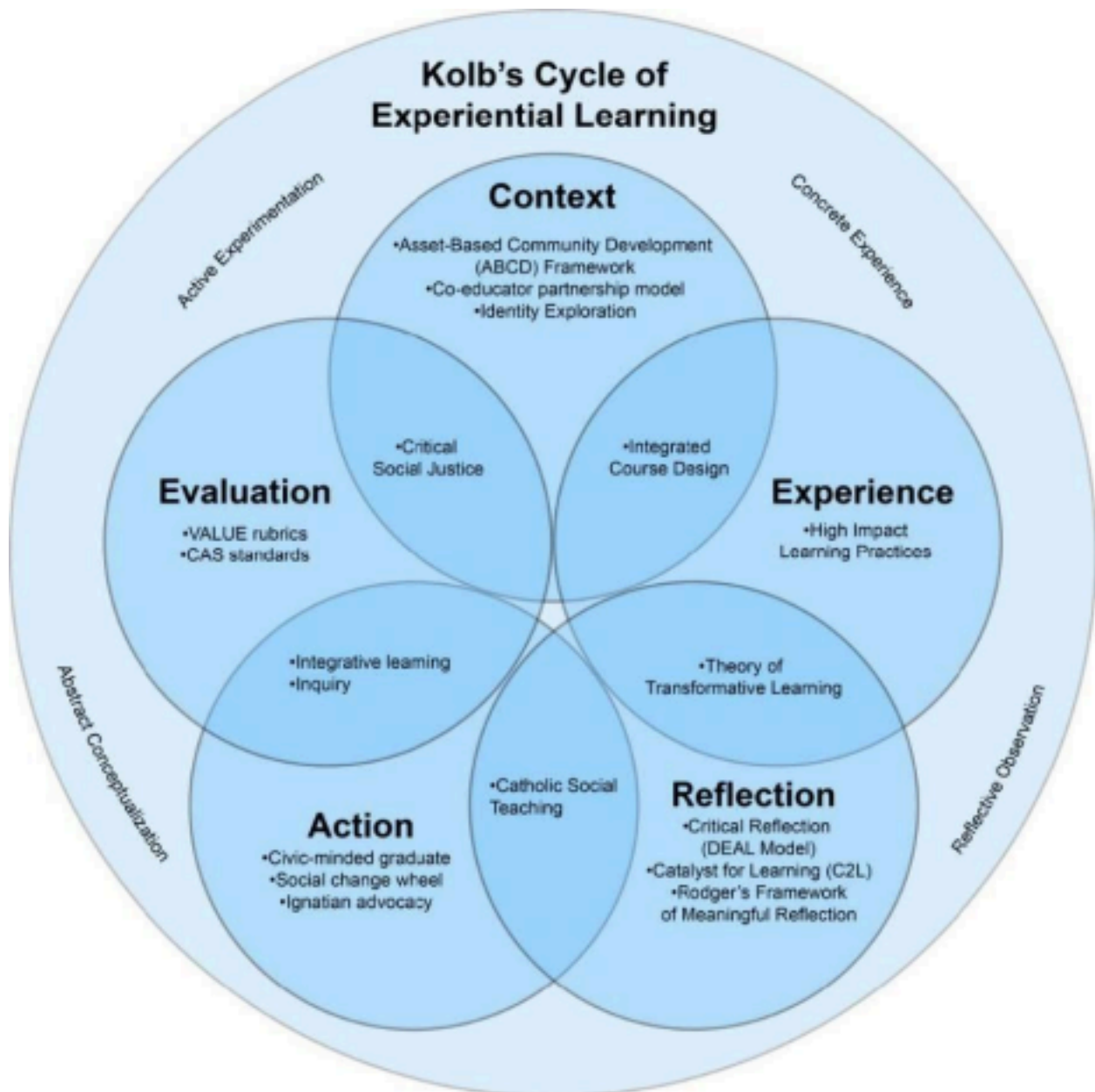
Reflection: How may learners become more reflective so they more deeply understand what they have learned? How does what they are learning dialogue with their deeply held values?

Action: How do we compel learners to move beyond knowledge to action? **Evaluation:** How do we assess learners' growth in mind, heart, and spirit? How does this deepen our practice?

² International Commission on the Apostolates of Jesuit Education (ICAGE), *Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach* (Rome: International Center for Jesuit Education, 1993).

Center for Engaged Learning, Teaching, and Scholarship's Theoretical Framework

Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning complements the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm with the overlapping emphases on experience, reflection, action, and evaluation. The cyclic nature of each model demonstrates how they are in dialogue, positioning experience and reflection as essential sources of new learning. These sources, along with other theories make up the theoretical framework CELTS uses to approach its work.



Context

Ignatian pedagogy begins with context, an emphasis that distinguishes it from other educational models. Since human experience (always the starting point in a Jesuit education) never occurs in a vacuum, educators must know as much as possible about the actual context within which teaching and learning take place.

Cura personalis - “Care for the whole person”

Cura personalis is a hallmark of Jesuit education and recognizes that students bring the totality of their lives into the classroom and that reality has a direct effect on the learning process. A student’s social location, experiences, and worldview affect how they encounter the material. If the teaching experience is going to be productive, the instructor needs to let that experience be shaped by the individuality and complexity of the learners and their social setting. Additionally, as students bring the totality of themselves into the classroom, not just their minds are affected.³

Dee Fink emphasizes that situational factors of our students affect our teaching and should be accounted for in our courses. It can be helpful to review these questions while thinking about your class and your students.

Characteristics of the Learners

- Life situations of students (ft/pt, family or work commitments)
- Student professional goals
- Reason for enrolling
- Prior related experience, knowledge, skill
- Student learning styles

Specific Context of the Teaching and Learning Situation

- Class size
- Fresh/Soph/Junior/Senior/Grad
- Class Length and Frequency
- Classroom type (online, in person, immersion)

³ Fink, L. D. (2013). *Creating significant learning experiences: An integrated approach to designing college courses*. John Wiley & Sons.

Reflection Strategy - Cajitas

Created by educational scholar Laura Rendon, students are asked to create a "cajita" or "sacred box" (literally "small box") to represent aspects of their identity and cultural heritage and how **they** dialogue with the course material.⁴ The cajita is not restricted to being a box but may have taken any shape the creator (or instructor) feels appropriate, including electronic portfolio, etc. With the lectures, readings and their own knowledge, students can deepen their understanding of culture.

Context of the Material and the Instructor

Just as the learner's context is an essential factor to be considered in Ignatian Pedagogy, so too is the context of the instructor and the material itself. Each has their own situational factors to consider that affect the course. Disciplinary realities are important to consider while developing courses as well. Because Jesuit education is rooted in the idea that education ultimately serves the greater good, the development and current issues of the field must be represented in its teaching.

Characteristics of the Instructor

- Prior experience, knowledge, skill
- First time or specialist in this subject
- Competence and confidence in effective teaching models or strategies

Nature of Learning the Subject

- Convergent or Divergent
- Skills needed (cognitive, performance, physical)
- Previous courses needed to be successful

Nature of the Field

- Major turning points
- Stability of field (rapid change, challenging interpretations)
- Effect of technology on the field

⁴ Rendón, L. I. (2012). *Sentipensante (sensing/thinking) pedagogy: Educating for wholeness, social justice and liberation*. Stylus Publishing, LLC.

Reflection Strategy - Primary Narrative / Snapshots of Reality

Using primary sources such as photos, articles, or narratives, students are given a window into the historical reality of what they are studying and asked to discuss what differences they see, what commonalities, and what they think about the “progress” made.

This can be used across disciplines. Humanities courses can utilize primary narratives or images to highlight the perspectives that may not be represented in traditional curriculum or canon of a subject matter. Science courses can use images or narratives from previous experimentation to highlight the development of a concept or advancements in research. Examples of case studies around famous experimentation with potential ethical concerns can be exceptionally helpful (i.e. The Stanford Prison Experiment and human testing or Marie Curie’s death from cancer as a result of her discovery of and intense exposure to radiation).

Experience

Experience includes learning rooted in previous experience and the result of new learning experiences. Within Jesuit education, students are meant to do more than absorb the facts surrounding what’s in front of them; they are meant to engage the material in a way that fully involves them. This means both cognitive and emotional involvement.

Ignatian Pedagogy as World Affirming & Identity Affirming

Jesuit education is world-affirming, recognizing the radical goodness and possibility of the world. It seeks to inculcate a sense of wonder and awe in how the world around and within us functions. Because this sense of wonder does not just occur on an intellectual level, affective responses become essential fuel for the learning experience as well. Contact with the world through experience via direct activities and vicarious activities, can create learning experiences that encourage both responses. “Affective as well as cognitive dimensions of the human person are involved, because without internal feeling joined to intellectual grasp, learning will not move a person to action.”⁵ Learning rooted in experience also promotes the use of imagination to connect abstract concepts or knowledge with the current reality and produce new alternatives and innovations.

Concretizing Concepts with Care and Intentionality

Balancing the line between pragmatism and idealism, Ignatian pedagogy asks the learner and teacher to constantly ask the questions, “What does this mean for the world?” and “What does this mean for me?” When students connect concepts to context, significant learning occurs.⁷

Probably the single most powerful change most teachers can make in their courses is to expand the experiential dimension of student learning. . . . As a result, I find the concept of rich learning

⁵ International Commission on the Apostolates of Jesuit Education (ICAGE), *Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach* (Rome: International Center for Jesuit Education, 1993).

experiences to be useful here. These learning experiences are rich because they enable students to achieve multiple kinds of significant learning all at the same time.”⁶

Direct and Vicarious Experiences

Direct Experience - in an academic setting usually occurs in interpersonal experiences such as conversations or discussions, laboratory investigations, community-based learning, participatory research, etc. It avoids simple cognitive processing, that can distance from the human dimensions of the knowledge they are gaining.

Vicarious Experience - in an academic setting can include simulations, role playing, use of audio visual materials, direct observation, case studies, etc. They promote a more human level to the learning experience. These can stimulate students' imagination and use of the senses precisely so that learners can enter the reality studied more fully. Historical settings, assumptions of the times, cultural, social, political and economic factors affecting the lives of people at the time of what is being studied need to be clarified.

	Getting Information & Ideas	Experience		Reflective Dialogue	
		Doing	Observing	Self	Others
Direct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary data • Primary sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Real doing” in authentic settings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective thinking • Journaling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue (in or out of class)
Indirect, Vicarious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary data and sources • Lectures, textbooks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies • Gaming, simulations • Role play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stories (via film, oral history, literature, etc.) 		
Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course website • Internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher can assign students to experience • Students can engage in “indirect” experience online 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students can reflect and then engage in dialogue online 	

⁶ Fink, L. D. (2013). *Creating significant learning experiences: An integrated approach to designing college courses*. John Wiley & Sons

Reflection Strategy - Utilizing the News Then and Now

This can be done across discipline and involves taking a current and past news article that touches upon the issue being engaged in class. Students read both and reflect on the commonalities and differences in both. What assumptions persist? Does it reflect a change in societal attitude? What factual information or resources exist now that did know previously?

For Example:

- Students in a toxicology class could read and compare the coverage of the lead levels in water in Flint to coverage of the Love Canal, paying special attention to how “proof” of the toxins is established and how seriously it is taken.
- Students in a history class could compare coverage of the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville to the coverage of 1939 Nazi Rally in Madison Square Gardens - Students in a literature class looking at concepts of gender in literature could look at advice columns for women in publications targeted at women across a time period.

Reflection

Critical reflection is often defined as a “reasoning process to make meaning of experience.” Yet Ignatian Pedagogy broadens reflection beyond reasoning quite significantly. Memory, understanding, imagination and feelings are used to capture the meaning and essential value of what is being studied. This reflection is a formative and liberating process. It forms the conscience of learners (their beliefs and their paradigms) in such a manner that they are led to move beyond knowing and to undertake action. Reflection is the process by which meaning surfaces in human experience.

Imagination and Reflection

Learning rooted in experience also promotes the use of imagination to connect abstract concepts or knowledge with the current reality and produce new alternatives and innovations. Ignatian spirituality has long pointed to imagination as a tool used to deepen understanding through the process of dynamic revisioning. In St. Ignatius’ *Spiritual Exercises*, participants are told repeatedly to imagine what it would be like to be in a conversation with Jesus, with the intention of bringing their experiences and emotions into dialogue with spiritual wisdom for growth and movement.

Rooted in the Ignatian understanding, imagination is a creative process that goes to the depth of reality and begins recreating it. Ignatian contemplation is a very powerful tool, and it shifts from the left side of the brain to the right. But it is essential to understand that imagination is not the same as fantasy. Fantasy is a flight from reality to a world where we create images for the sake of a diversity of images. Imagination grasps reality.⁷

⁷ Adolfo Nicolás, S. J. (2010). Depth, Universality, and Learned Ministry: Challenges to Jesuit Higher Education Today. *Shaping the Future: Networking Jesuit Higher Education for a Globalizing World*.¹⁰
Fettes, M. (2013). Imagination and experience: *Democracy and Education*, 21(1), 4.

Lev Vygotsky called imagination a higher psychological function connecting emotion to intellectual activity. John Dewey connects imagination to the growth of democracy and education because the reality rooted possibilities created by this imaginative reflection lead to subsequent action. Reflection is not just a thoughtful summary of what has been learned, but rather another learning process by which students can begin to construct possible ways forward to utilize their knowledge. It helps to ask the question of what potential pathways have not been taken, what connections have not been made, and what course of actions has been considered impossible when it is instead simply uncommon.

DEAL Model

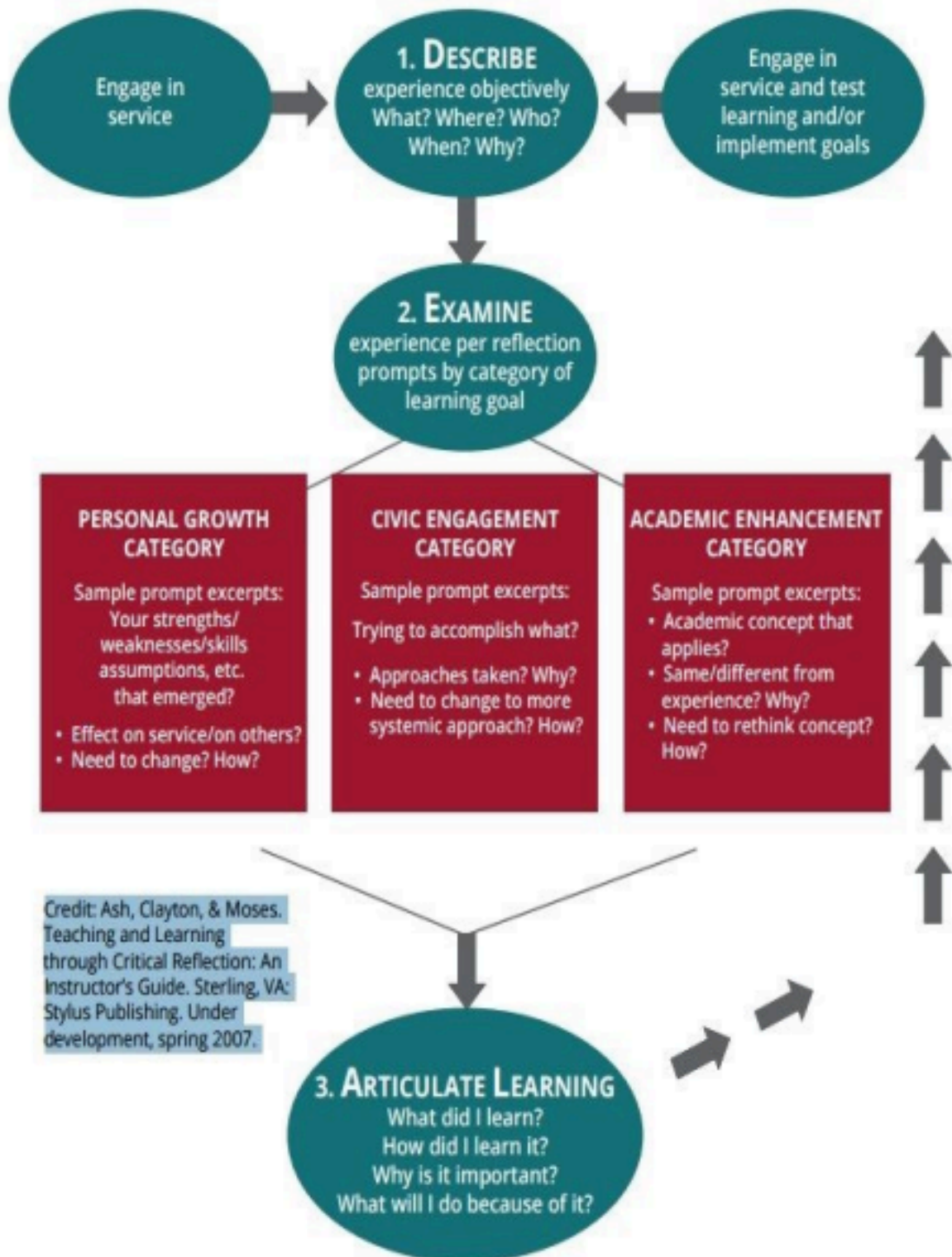
The Center for Engaged Learning, Teaching, and Scholarship relies heavily on Patti Clayton's DEAL model of Critical Reflection as a helpful scaffold for designing Critical Reflection activities. DEAL stands for **D**escribe, **E**xamine, and **A**rticulate **L**earning.

Describe: This both jogs a student's memory of what they experienced and creates mindfulness and attentiveness in future experiences. Students recall the salient elements of what they experienced or observed. Repeated description activities, when put into dialogue with the rest of the DEAL model, help students realize blind spots in their own observations or encourage greater attentiveness during an experience.

Examine: Reflection questions lead students to examine their experience and allows them to make meaning out of it by identifying the links between the learning objectives and their personal experience. The DEAL model uses the categories of **Personal Growth, Academic Enhancement, and Civic Engagement**. This tripartite focus encourages personalization and insight, a focus towards the larger public, and a deepening of academic understanding.

Articulate Learning: The final step enables students to capture and articulate their learning in order to act on it. They are not simply restating what occurred or answering a question with a "desired" response, but rather putting into words what they have learned from this experience and what it will mean for them going forward.

SCHEMATIC OVERVIEW OF THE DEAL MODEL FOR CRITICAL REFLECTION



Credit: Ash, Clayton, & Moses. Teaching and Learning through Critical Reflection: An Instructor's Guide. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing. Under development, spring 2007.

Within the Examine step, questions are broken down into three critical categories: **Personal Values, Academic Enhancement, and Civic Engagement**. We would like to expand upon these three categories and give examples of other resources we've used to augment our application of them.

Personal Values

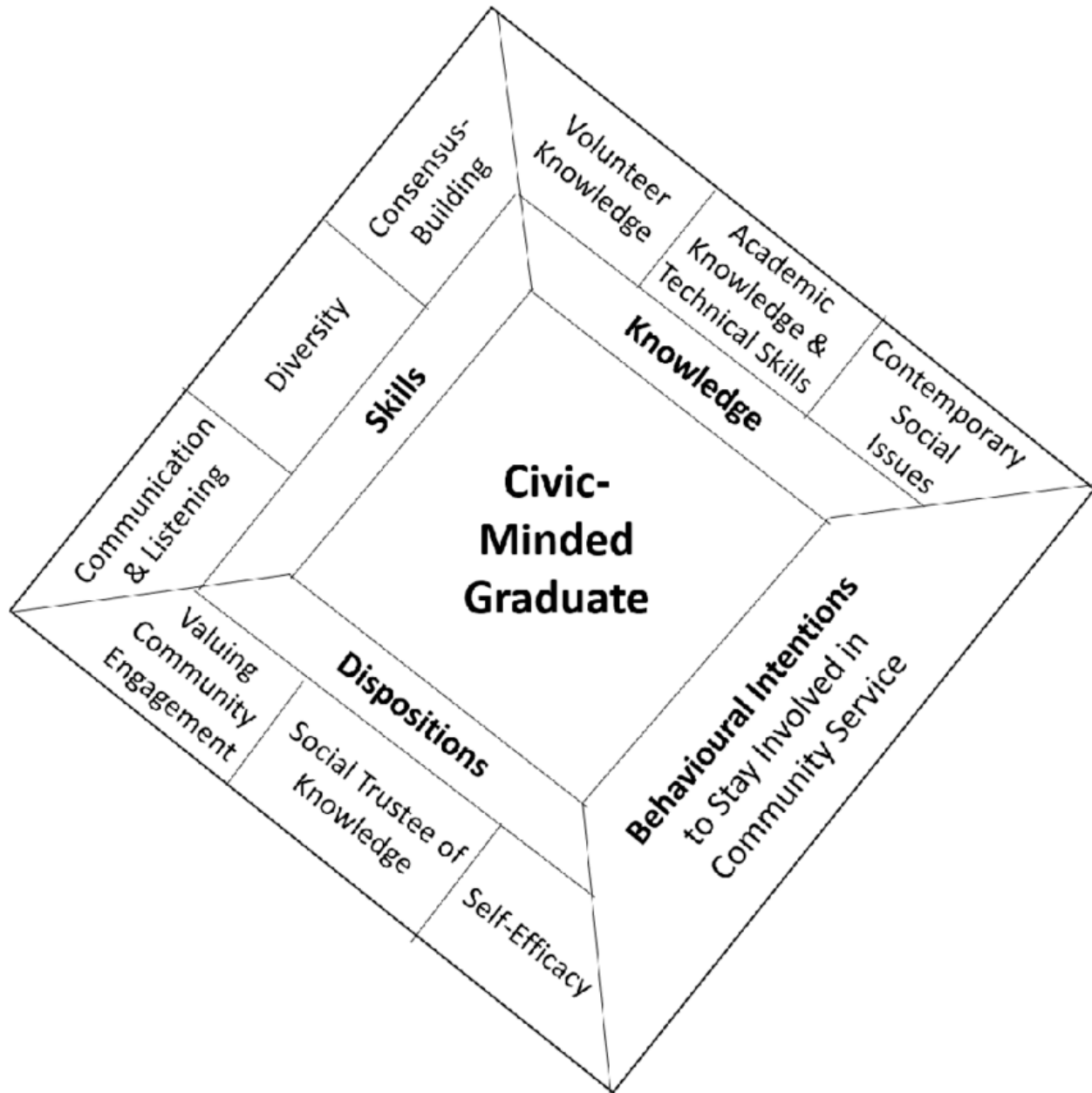
Asking students to think about how their experiences and what they are learning engages with their deeply held values can help them personalize their learning in a new way. Often students will struggle to verbalize their beliefs as they are still being formed. **Catholic Social Teaching** is a body of ethical principles that stem from Christian scriptures, tradition, philosophy, and ethics. They are at the core of Loyola's commitment to social justice and the principles overlap with many other religious and philosophical traditions. The CEL has used the language of Catholic Social Teaching as a "common vocabulary" that has helped students articulate their own deeply held values. This language can often help students organize their thoughts and speak about where their beliefs are being challenged or confirmed.

10 Major Themes from Catholic Social Teaching

- Dignity of the Human Person
- Common Good and Community
- Preferential Option for the Marginalized
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Role of Government and Subsidiarity
- Economic Justice
- Stewardship of Creation
- Promotion of Peace and Disarmament
- Participation
- Global Solidarity and Responsible Development

Civic Engagement

Jesuit education seeks to "educate the whole person of solidarity for the real world"¹² and form 13 people "for and with others". These individuals receive their education and are intended to use it to participate in larger society in an ethical way with an eye towards contributing to the common good. The term **civic professionalism** has been used to mark the intersection of formal knowledge, vocational exploration/development, and a commitment to the common good. A **civic-minded graduate** is "a person who has completed a course of study and has the capacity and desire to work with others to achieve the common good." The [Civic-Minded Graduate \(CMG\)](#) rubric was originally created by staff at Indiana University Purdue University-Indianapolis. The goal was to create a practical tool for faculty and staff to use when assessing either a large, broad civic learning goal or assessing a certain aspect of being civic-minded as it relates to a specific learning experience, initiative, pedagogy or program (empathy, curiosity, depth of community engagement, etc.). The categories named in the rubric aid both in assessment of how students are developing as people for others, as well as categories to spark their own self-examination.



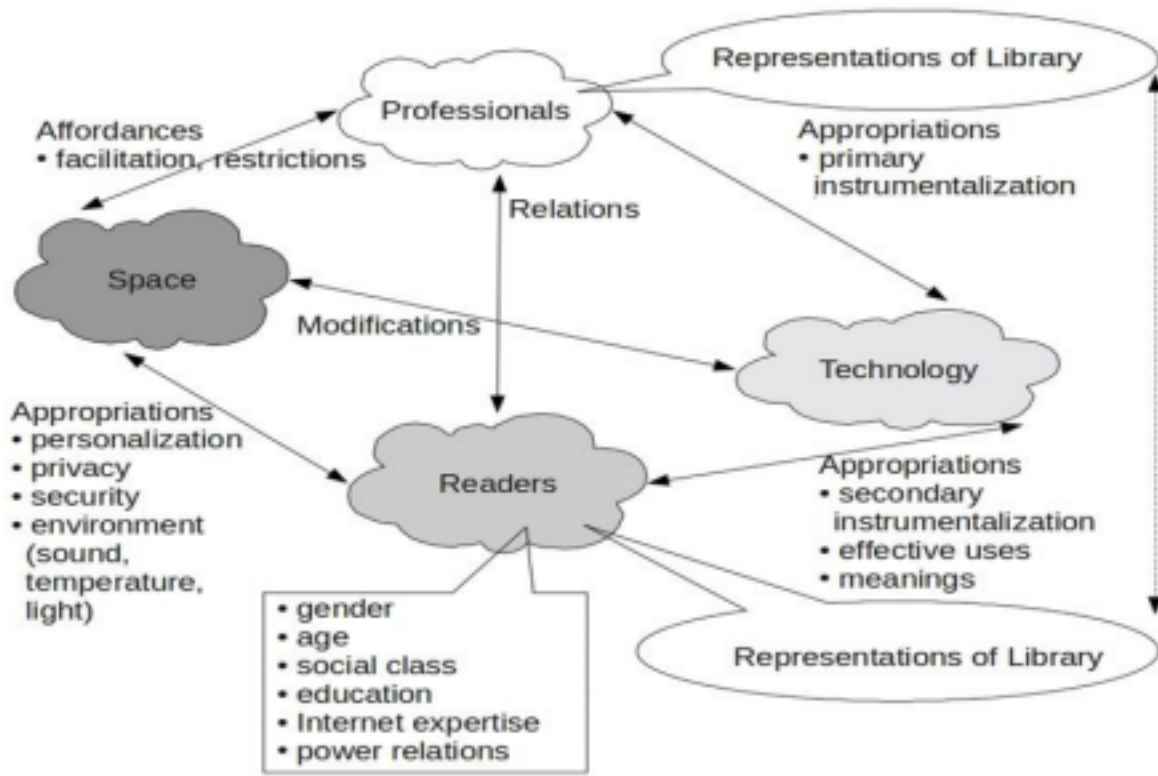
The elements of civic-minded graduate. (based on Bringle & Steinberg, 2010 and Bringle et al., 2011)

Academic Enhancement

As students ask questions of what they are learning and experiencing meaning for the larger world, it is important to help them form skills around structural thinking. Jesuit education provides “a sustained interdisciplinary dialogue of research and reflection, a continuous pooling of expertise” that encourages not only a large depth of critical thinking, but also encourages the development of structural thinking, interdisciplinary views, and reflective judgement. To do so, they need to understand larger structural frameworks. We encourage faculty to use Concept Maps or “Why Webs” to help students see this.

Reflection Strategy - Concept Maps

A concept map is a visual organization and representation of knowledge. It shows concepts and ideas and the relationships among them. You create a concept map by writing key words (sometimes enclosed in shapes such as circles, boxes, triangles, etc.) and then drawing arrows between the ideas that are related. This helps students break down larger ideas into more accessible concepts and helps encourage thinking across issues



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Action

Ignatian reflection begins with the reality of experience and returns back to that same reality with insights gained in hopes of effecting it. From the beginning, Jesuit education has set as one of its foremost outcomes, not simply *academic excellence*, but **future action** on the part of the pupil. Ignatian reflection points towards action. Ignatian reflection seeks to spark interior choices that reflect paradigm shifts and a clarified priorities as well as concrete action.

Students For and With Others and *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*

The Jesuit motto of *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*, which translates to "All for the Greater Glory of God," could be seen as an invitation to understand that every subject and skill taught at a Jesuit institution can and should have an application to the common good. This emphasis towards education as linked with responsibility for betterment of the world can help students concretize their learning in ways they may have not previously been encouraged to do so. This can ignite a

deeper passion for learning along with forming them into *students for and with others* . They are learning for a purpose that is bigger than themselves and simple intellectual mastery. Having this orientation towards the material in courses helps create students with a *well-educated solidarity* or an “educated awareness of society and culture with which to contribute socially, generously, in the real world”.

Types of Social Change

To help students concretize the ways in which their knowledge can be applied to the larger world, it can be helpful to expand their own understanding of what social change looks like. [The Social Change Wheel diagram](#) 14 different but complementary models of activity for making social change happen. The wheel can prompt discussion around what methods of social change are most often utilized by professionals in the field of study as well as what method a student is most personally drawn to through their own experiences, talents, and drive.

- Socially Responsible Daily Behavior
- Deliberative and Reflective Dialogue
- Community Organizing
- Advocacy and Raising Awareness
- Community Building
- Social Innovation and Enterprise
- Fundraising, Giving, and Philanthropy
- Community and Economic Development
- Protests and Demonstrations
- Voting and Formal Political Activities
- Mutual Aid and Informal Association
- Volunteering and Direct Service



Reflection Strategy - Advocacy Action / Position Paper

Focusing on current social justice issues in the professional fields connected to the discipline makes excellent fodder for action-based reflections assignments. After identifying a current issue, students can write a position paper on it for a “lay” audience.

Students should first take a specific stance (i.e. against animal testing, in favor of a soda tax, revising a high school English class curriculum to reflect a broader representation of authors) and then explain the basic academic and contextual information needed to understand the problem. They would then argue for their and identify the social change action they think would best address the issue.

Students can also be encouraged to look up current local, state, and federal legislation that dovetails onto course material and take a stand in support or against it using www.govtrack.us. This can be done as a written assignment, oral assignment or individual or group assignment. It can also be a prompt for an in-class discussion with groups assigned to support or reject the legislation and explain why using course context.

Assessment

Because Jesuit education is concerned with more than simple knowledge retention, Ignatian pedagogy aims at formation which includes, but goes beyond academic mastery. Learning should result in the internal integration of that knowledge and the committed application of it for the common good. This view towards education as transformative requires periodic evaluation of the student's growth in attitudes, priorities and actions.

Ignatian Examen and FIDeLity Feedback

The Examen, a meditative practice from Ignatian Spirituality focuses on a daily review of a person's actions and how they felt about them. This spiritual practice is meant to be done daily, not with the purpose of penalizing or castigating the individual for shortcomings, but rather to build deeper insight, reveal areas for growth, and leverage personal learning for the future. It is also framed with an attitude of gratitude and kindness both by and for the participant. The same distinction of assessment and self-examination for growth rather than simply measurement should also be brought to assessment.

This Ignatian way of viewing growth and feedback is echoed in Dee Fink's idea of FIDeLity Feedback. Fink believes that feedback for students should be Frequent, Immediate, Discriminating, and Lovingly Delivered.

- **Frequent:** Give feedback daily, weekly, or as frequently as possible.
- **Immediate:** Get the feedback to students as soon as possible after grading.
- **Discriminating:** The difference is clear between poor, acceptable, and exceptional work.
- **Lovingly Delivered:** Feedback is delivered empathetically.

Rubric Creation for Evaluating Reflection

Faculty often chose to grade reflections. While every reflection activity does not need to be graded to be effective, utilizing a rubric can be helpful in the process. That way a faculty member does not feel like they are grading the validity of a student's emotional reaction or unduly allowing a students with more expressive writing to receive a better grade than a students who reflected deeply on the subject matter, but may have trouble finding words for the experience.

CELTs recommends using the [AAC&U's VALUE rubrics](#). VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) is a campus-based assessment approach developed and led by AAC&U. VALUE rubrics were created across students' diverse learning pathways, fields of study and institutions. These rubrics have been nationally normed, created by a cross-section of educators. They can be utilized as-is or modified/adapted for a specific course/program/goal.

The VALUE rubrics include:

- Inquiry and Analysis
- Critical Thinking
- Creative Thinking
- Written Communication
- Oral Communication
- Quantitative Literacy
- Information Literacy
- Reading
- Teamwork
- Problem Solving
- Civic Knowledge and
- Engagement—Local and Global
- Intercultural Knowledge and Competence
- Ethical Reasoning and Action
- Global Learning
- Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning

Reflection Strategy - Self Evaluations through Learning Portfolio

Learning portfolios are a tool for critical reflection. Electronic learning portfolios allow learning to become digitally interactive, adaptable, unique, and a way of demonstrating student learning. Through many forms of artifacts, media, student collective works, portfolios allow for a creative demonstration of learning through curating reflections, expanding on learning, and revealing intersections of students backgrounds, experiences inside and outside of the classroom, and personal identities.

For each learning artifact students select, they are to "curate" those items by reflecting on their experiences. Critical reflection goes beyond articulating a student's experience. It allows students to take a step back to make meaning of their experiences and how their context and identities shape the lens in which they interpret their experiences. Critical reflection occurs within the past, present, and future actions, and it allows students to connect their experiences both within the classroom and beyond.

This guide was primarily authored by Dr. Susan Haarman for the [Center for Engaged Learning, Teaching, and Scholarship at Loyola University Chicago](#).