



HP275-Honors Internships  
Smithsonian, Library of Congress, & Holocaust Museum  
Journal Description/Requirements  
Spring 2010

**Due Dates:**

- Mid-term submission due to your MC mentor: the week of March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010
- Final submission due to your MC mentor: At the last private mentoring session (paper and electronic (via email))

**Purposes for keeping a journal:**

Journal writing is often used to document involvement and become a written record of activities, observations, and thoughts during a project or activity in which we are observing, evaluating, or participating for a specific purpose (such as an internship). It is a valuable tool for:

- Keeping track of your involvement in a project
- Providing a database of observations about the institution, unit, or project on which you are working so that you can refer to it later when writing your final paper
- Helping to understand your own intellectual, emotional, and critical thinking (and be observant of your own growth) during a project

**Journaling tips:**

- Good journaling requires discipline
- Write regularly (you should have an entry for each week that you work)
- A bound journal may be helpful to carry with you to take notes during the day about your experiences and to help prompt and inspire your future journal entries
- The longer you wait to write, the more you will forget. Write the information as soon as you can after you complete your day at the internship so that you can remember what you've done and record as accurately as possible. (Unless your mentor gives you specific permission, please try not to do it during your work day.)
- Enjoy the journal writing experience. Include details that you find amusing, captivating, disturbing, intriguing, or compelling. Make your entries come to life by using sensory details (details that appeal to one or more of the five senses—sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch), so that you can relive your internship experience when you revisit your journal entries at a later point in your life. Include short, memorable anecdotes that you can later share with family members, friends, and professors.
- Pay attention to the particulars such as: Who was present? What activities took place? What interactions took place (and with whom)? How did you feel?, so that you are able to answer the following questions:
  1. How does the project you are working on contribute to the institution's mission?
  2. Describe how your work made good use of your skills and talents.
  3. What need(s) did your role as an intern meet for your unit today?
  4. What did you learn about the institution?
  5. Describe any insights, challenges, or other growth experiences where you learned something about yourself.

**Technical Requirements:**

- Final journal submissions must be in electronic form (a Word document) with a print version turned in as well.
- You must complete ONE journal entry for EVERY week that you work at your internship (so during the fall/spring semesters, you will wind up with approximately 15 entries. During the summer you will have 11-12 entries)
- Entries should be between 250-300 words each and should be written in two parts. The first part of each entry should consist of your observations, descriptions, your 'gut response' to what you experienced and observed during your week at your internship; the second part should be more analytical as you stand back and examine the context and causes of the subjects of your entry.

## EXAMPLES of successful journal entries:

- 1) *"Sometimes the simple little details in our day-to-day doings can reveal something interesting and thought provoking. When visitors enter the permanent exhibit they are supposed to receive a passport that tells them a little bit about an actual victim of the Holocaust. Groups receive these also when they come to the museum. When I talk to the groups I usually tell them a bit about the cards, such as how to use them and how they correspond to the floors of the exhibit. I had finished talking to a group and was getting ready to send them up in the elevators when one of the kids came up and asked me why they were given the cards. At first this question annoyed me a little as I had just gotten through explaining what the cards say. It then occurred to me that I might have taken the meaning of his question wrong. Initially I was just going to repeat what I had already said, but instead I told them why I thought they were given these cards. I told the kids that they were given the cards so that they would actually have a face to go with the story, so that there might be some sort of personal connection established. I told them that this could have been their grandparents or great-grandparents and that some of the people on the cards actually volunteered in the museum. The kids all got really excited after hearing what I had to say and they all behaved better too. It's good to remember that not all the questions that people ask are bad!"*
  
- 2) *"Today I had a new experience. In the news one constantly hears all about the protests all over the world about the situation in Israel and Palestine to the point where one is almost ready to throw the radio out the window! I have never even seen a single protest over these issues and it really surprised me to see a couple of protestors out in front of the museum today. At first this struck me as odd, why would anyone protest at the USHMM? It has no legislative power and is an institution dedicated to the preservation of the memory of the Holocaust and the education of the public on genocide issues. How can someone protest genocide prevention? It then occurred to me that I may actually want to find out what these people were actually protesting. The protestors were carrying placards that said "Never Again Includes Palestine! End the Genocide in Gaza!" I feel I must quibble with this. While I certainly agree that there are definite problems that must be resolved between the Israelis and the Palestinians, I do not think that calling it genocide is either correct or moral. Why moral you ask? I feel that it is using someone else's suffering to one's own ends. By comparing what is happening in the Middle East to the Holocaust they are insulting the suffering of millions of people. One cannot gain sympathy for one's plight by abusing what has happened to another. I guess one could call it false advertising for lack of a better term. By all means make your voices heard, you have a perfect right to do so, but do not abuse someone's memory in doing so!"*