Reflective Essays Required for the Certificate of Global Studies

CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

The Certificate of Global Studies records that you have participated in at least two activities with an international focus after you have returned to the U.S. These "co-curricular" activities may include lectures, performances, workshops, volunteer work, or conferences. Many of the qualifying events at UK are listed on the website of the International Center. You may hear of others from professors, friends, and organizations located both on and off campus. To find if an activity can be used for this requirement, contact the Certificate of Global Studies Director, Monica Blackmun Visonà:

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After the Director has approved an activity as your “co-curricular” event, write a reflective essay placing your responses to it within the context of the other experiences you have gained while earning the Certificate of Global Studies (including your study abroad, language learning, and coursework). A detailed rubric for the essays is available below; it is designed to guide your writing into a coherent and engaging statement.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE TWO ESSAYS

Each of the two essays must be between 400 – 600 words in length, and each must respond to an approved “co-curricular” activity (see above). Each must also include references to all three of the following experiences: study abroad, language acquisition and/or comprehension, and coursework. If you submit an essay to the Director and one or more of these references is missing, it will be returned to you for revision.

You may wish to consult class notes, your journal, your photographs, and messages you wrote to family and friends as you gather ideas for this essay. You may decide to focus upon a positive experience that has inspired you, such as an insight gained in a class discussion, or a moment of joy in a foreign land; or you may be willing to share a dilemma that still haunts you, or a fundamental question raised by an unexpected confrontation. Please organize each of your essays in this way:

1. Open your essay by describing an actual experience, a reaction, an issue or a problem you encountered as an undergraduate because you were living, studying, working, or just thinking (!) in an international context. Please note that this must be factual, not fictional.*

2. Offer a comparison, or extend that description, by referring to all of the following in the next few paragraphs: the co-curricular event or activity in which you participated; your education abroad; what you learned in a course; and the foreign language(s) in which you have tried to communicate. Remember that this is an opportunity for you to highlight the work you have done as an undergraduate, and the skills, knowledge, and interests you have acquired.

3. Close your essay by explaining how the experience, reaction, issue or problem was resolved or how it affected you, and by evaluating its impact upon your education, your personal goals, or your worldview.

All essays that are disorganized or confusing will be rejected and returned to you for revision. Errors of spelling or grammar will be noted and corrected (as you may wish to share versions of your essay in

*What is your reaction?
the future with friends or employers), but these problems will not prevent your essay from being approved.

*Note: Descriptions of courses, study abroad, and language acquisition in your essay will be compared to those recorded on your transcript. For this reason, we will be worried about plagiarism if you describe a scene in a hospital in Mexico even though you were granted credit for working in a clinic in Guatemala.

Students who plan to use this essay as a rough draft of an application for further study, for a graduate fellowship, or for a volunteer position, and who will therefore stress the skills, knowledge, and practical experience they have gained abroad, may want to look at a useful handout created by the Career Center: http://www.uky.edu/careercenter/themes/happy/pdf/personal-statement.pdf

Students who wish instead wish to write a narrative that will simply clarify their own thinking as they identify key stages on a personal journey may want to work with the Writing Center for guidance on how to use the writing process as a tool for personal growth and self-expression: http://wrd.as.uky.edu/writing-center