

Note: Part B is the section that relates specifically to the OEP ILOs.

FINAL: Integrative Research & Reflection Paper

Purpose

The acts associated with composing this paper enable you to identify and integrate a specific theme from your civic engagement project into discourse with the environmental literature, and it provides a space for you to reflect on how the experiences you have had, including work with a community partner, informs your current and post-St. Olaf trajectories. Moreover, this culminating assignment asks you to discuss how acquired knowledge gets synthesized and translated into actions that forward environmental initiatives and organizational goals.

Tasks

Throughout the semester you have done research to support the aims of a project with a community partner, analyzed and discussed contributions from the environmental literature, examined your preferred or default perspectives in environmental study, and considered frameworks of environmental leadership and justice that moved others into action. All of these activities intersect in this final paper and you will leverage your prior work to document your learning through the following tasks.

1. **Identify a specific theme of interest** relevant, either directly or indirectly, to your civic engagement project experience. Effective ways to do this include:
 - a. Review entries in your project journal
 - b. Notice related topics in the class readings and the project on which you worked
 - c. Discourse with others, including your peers in this class.
 - d. Consider your interactions with the community partner and the broader community. Reflect on what you know about the organization or group's goals and approaches: Which aspects of your experience did you find most important, interesting, challenging, frustrating, or surprising? What questions did these aspects raise about your specific project and the environmental issues that the organization addresses through its programs? What does integration and application look like in environmental work?
2. **Evaluate the research you have completed** for the civic engagement project and how it connects to the theme you have identified.
 - a. Where are the opportunities to make arguments or generate reflections that find support in the environmental literature?
 - b. The community partner and its offices (or meetings) constitute an experiential "text" that you should use to reflect on and document your learning.
3. **Evaluate the other class activities** to ascertain how they connect (or do not) to the theme you have identified. Where are the opportunities to make arguments or generate reflections that find support from those resources? Contributions of other courses with possible intersection?
4. **Conduct additional research** within the environmental literature that addresses holes in the prior evaluations (steps 2 and 3) or builds out the conversation within that literature and your theme.
5. **Synthesize** your research, experiences, journaling and assignments into the paper. Make sure you include at least 12 scholarly sources in a suitable bibliographic format. *You may find it helpful to think of this as a set of two smaller papers.*
 - a. Integration and application in environmental studies (approximately 4-5 pages)

- b. Personal development & future plans (approximately 2-3 pages)
6. **Revise**, clarify, spell-check, grammar check, proofread...

Additional Guidance

Use GreenFile, GreeNR, Web of Science, Academic Search Premier, and other databases/resources to locate and use at least 12 scholarly sources - journal articles, chapters, monographs, government publications, and many others. All sources should be as current as possible, preferably published in the past decade. You may use 3 of the resources from our class readings as sources for your paper.

Part a: Integration and application in environmental studies

Connect your community based work to your curiosities and conversations in the environmental literature.

1. Begin with a brief (1 paragraph) introduction about your ACE project.
2. Next include a succinct (1 page) **statement of your specific topic** that describes the source of your interest and a thesis for your narrative. Support this statement by summarizing or sharing brief excerpts from your journal or other work; if the inspiration for your topic also came from our class readings, use an appropriate style to cite the source.
3. Discuss what your scholarly sources say about your topic (3-4 pages).
 - Briefly summarize the main points of your scholarly sources, making explicit the way in which they relate to your topic.
 - For any empirical research conducted or reports, briefly identify the hypothesis and method and limitations of the studies you read about.
 - Connect the scholarly sources to your civic engagement experience by considering questions such as: How might the information in the scholarly sources been employed in the project? Are the organization's current practices supported by scholarly sources? Based on the scholarly sources, what recommendations would you make about the project or organization's goals?

Part b: Personal development and future plans

Reflect on the extent to which your civic engagement project related to your personal development, vocational discernment,¹ and future professional and personal goals. (3 pages):

- Discuss the extent to which any readings, class discourse, and project experiences applied to you personally, in relation to your interests, values, attitudes, and beliefs.
- Discuss the extent to which your project and related activities fostered behavior and thinking that was meaningful to you personally.

¹ At St. Olaf, vocation is who you are called to be and what you are called to do across all the parts of your life – not only in professional work, but also in your family and friendships, community engagements, relationship with the earth, search for meaning, and pursuit of justice. It's living your life on purpose, directed toward both your personal flourishing and the common good. <https://wp.stolaf.edu/lutherancenter/the-lutheran-center/vocation-at-st-olaf/vocation-definition/>

- Discuss the extent to which our readings, class discourse, and project experiences contributed to your understanding of ways to implement environmental knowledge, skills, and values in a variety of settings, including vocational discernment.
- Discuss the extent to which your project and related activities promoted opportunities to assess your abilities, knowledge, motivation, and work habits.
- Discuss the extent to which your experiences in this course helped you develop or identify skills and gain experiences relevant to your career goals and emerging vocational framework.

References

Employ an appropriate citation style used in any area of environmental inquiry and creative practice and create a Cited Works list at the end of your paper. You simply need to be consistent with the style you choose. Some common styles include: APA, MLA, Chicago, Ecological Society of America, American Chemical Society, American Economic Association, etc.

Criteria

Grading Rubric for the Integrative Research and Reflection Paper

	1 No evidence	2 Minimal evidence	3 Moderate evidence	4 Full evidence
Integration and application in EnvSt (4-5 pages)				
Introduction about project				
Statement of specific topic and thesis; it describes the source(s) of interest				
Makes explicit use of the experiential “text” through reflections about the project				
Summary of main points of scholarly sources				
Empirical research describes hypothesis & method & limitations (if applicable)				
Clear, appropriate connections between scholarly sources and civic engagement experience				

Evaluation of/recommendations for project implementation and organization's goals				
Personal development and future goals (3 pages)				
Discusses links between readings and discussions and personal interests, values, attitudes, and beliefs				
Discusses links between civic engagement project and personally meaningful behavior and thinking				
Discusses links between readings and discussions and understanding of ways to implement environmental knowledge, skills, and values in a variety of settings, including vocational discernment.				
Discusses links between project experience and ability to assess your abilities, knowledge, motivation, and work habits				
Discusses links between course experiences and identification of skills and experiences that are relevant to career goals and emerging vocational framework				
Written Materials				
Literature review summary contains 12 appropriate scholarly sources (max of 3 from class readings)				
References, both in-text and cited works list, is presented in appropriate style				
Information is clearly, effectively organized				
Grammar and spelling are correct				