**GEN 299 29: Internships in Community and Social Change, E-term 2022**

**Final Paper**

In our reflections as well as in our reading, there has been an emphasis on learning from experience, processing what happened and using that knowledge to guide you in what you do next. Being able to identify what you’ve learned in jobs, internships, classes and extracurriculars and applying that knowledge to other, different situations is a key life skill as well as one that will make you stand out in job interviews. For your final reflection paper, you will practice this skill by using a common job interview response technique, the STAR Method.

The STAR Method

The STAR Method is a framework for explaining an experience and what you learned from it. In the STAR Method, you:

1. Describe the SITUATION: Set the scene, provide relevant context.

2. Explain the TASK you needed to complete: What were your responsibilities in that situation?

3. Explain the ACTIONS you took: Focus on what you could control, not what others did or didn’t do.

4. Describe the RESULTS of your actions: How did things turn out? **What did you learn about yourself, about the work you were doing, about working with others? What would you do differently if you were in a similar situation in the future? How will you apply what you learned going forward?**

It’s in describing the results that you can really show off your self-reflection and ability to transfer knowledge and skills into future situations. Not only is this something employers look for, but the thought process that helps you answer those questions is one that will help you get the most out of any experience.

Paper Prompt

Job interviews often involve questions that begin “Tell me about a time when...” or “Describe a time when…” These types of questions should be answered using the STAR Method. **For your final paper, you will choose one question from each category below and answer it using STAR.**

For each response, be sure to **focus on a specific incident or situation in your internship,** not your internship generally. Look for “light bulb moments.” For example, maybe your whole internship involved working with people different from you, but what is one incident that stood out as particularly impactful? Be sure to describe it clearly enough so that someone with no knowledge of your internship could understand.

The most detailed part of your answers should be the explanation of what you learned and how you will use that knowledge in the future. Keep in mind that “what you learned” can include:

* what you learned about yourself (likes/dislikes, strengths/weaknesses, etc.)
* what you learned about the issue at hand (connections to academic knowledge, new points of view, challenges to what you previously knew or believed)
* what you learned about working with others
* what you learned about planning and implementing a project
* what you learned about ways to build community or achieve social change
* Anything else you may have learned!

“How you will use your new knowledge in the future” can include:

* Skills you will build or activities you will engage in based on what you now know about yourself, and why you think it is important to do those things
* Approaches you will take to leading or serving in the future, and why
* Educational or career plans that were shaped by this experience

Keep in mind that you don’t need to have learned something radically new or plan to do things totally differently in the future. Maybe what you learned is that your approach to leadership or implementing a plan actually worked really well, and you wouldn’t change a thing if you had to do it again. In that case, you can analyze why it went so well. Was it the timeline you set out? The people involved? The way work was delegated according to individual strengths? Don’t just say that everything went well; explain why and identify the things you would try to replicate in the future.

**Your paper should be 5 -7 pages, double-spaced, proofread, and submitted on Moodle by midnight Saturday, January 29.**

Category 1

Tell me about a time you experienced criticism.

Tell me about a time you dealt with an unexpected challenge.

Describe a time when you took initiative.

Tell me about a time you were especially proud of your work.

Tell me about an incident that helped shape your career path.

Describe a time you tackled an unfamiliar task.

Describe a time you faced communication challenges in working with others.

Category 2

Tell me about a time your beliefs were challenged.

Tell me about a time you connected theory (academic/book knowledge) to a real-world situation.

Describe a situation that prompted you to learn more about a topic.

Tell me about a time you applied classroom knowledge to the “real world.”

Describe a time you were frustrated in your attempts to learn about something.

Category 3

Tell me about an incident that shaped your approach to community engagement.

Describe a time that you worked with people different from you.

Describe a time you had to operate outside your comfort zone.

Describe a time you were disappointed in your ability to create change.