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Reflection Paper Three

Alliance for Civic Engagement (ACE)

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Professor Teresa Duvall

### **Internship Reflection Paper Three**

#### **Final 50 hours**

The final set of fifty hours was the most difficult by far in the entire internship course. Between balancing the end of the semester and the internship completion requirements, I felt like I would fail multiple times. I became more anxious and burnt myself out before even starting my work due to the worry. It was very apparent that I had to make a lifestyle change and focus on the correct things to ensure my success in the internship and my coursework. Throughout the final fifty hours, I learned how to organize my workload more effectively, as well as give myself time to decompress to process better all that goes on in my life.

Within the last fifty hours, an incredible amount of work and expectation was placed on us interns. The first assignment that we were given was our second brief, which was to be done on another technological policy. I chose to focus on the California Age-Appropriate Design Code Act and the debate surrounding it for my publication. The second assignment, which was given almost simultaneously, was the joint report brief that would require our entire technological policy group to work together. This brief focused on Homework and the Digital Divide, and I chose to work on the Cons section of this paper. Handling both tasks at the same time proved to

be extremely difficult; however, as I was going through the process, I made an important realization.

The realization was that I was often making the work and time required bigger than what it had to be. I would make myself so worked up and worried about the effort required to complete these seemingly impossible tasks, only to start and progress through them with ease. It was all reinforced as more team meetings happened, and I saw that I was not the only one feeling the pressure. Whilst the purpose of the meeting was to organize for our joint research, it also became a place where we could talk about how we felt and how to deal with the overwhelming pressure of both the internship and the end of the semester. It helped motivate me to keep going, as I no longer felt alone in my struggles.

Speaking up and taking time to breathe were the key values that I learned in these final fifty hours. For so long, I have been caught in the grind of continuing to push for success to the point where I forget to give myself the time to recover and realize what is truly happening in my life. It was also refreshing to see the value of my voice and how talking with fellow interns in the program could benefit me not just academically but also socially. We became a little family and were able to see each other as more than virtual colleagues. I also noticed improved performance from myself because of this, since the team I was doing it for mattered more than ever before.

As the internship comes to an end and the final fifty hours have concluded, I am extremely grateful and honored to have had such an opportunity to work for ACE. It took over one hundred applications to finally land an internship, and I am so happy that I got to work for a company that strives to make such a difference in the nation. I will take the vital lessons of speaking up and taking time for myself into the professional world, as well as helping others realize these critical values.