

Reflection Instructions

For this assignment, please reflect on the Fall 2024 semester, and your experience as a whole. For each question, please provide a few thoughtful, well constructed sentences.

Your First Semester

- Tell us how you have grown from the beginning of the semester to now.

Coming into college was overwhelming for me because I didn't know how everything worked, from managing my schedule to understanding academic expectations. However, over the course of the semester, I have grown significantly as a student and as a person. I've become more proactive in my learning, reaching out for help when needed and using campus resources like tutoring and office hours to stay on track. I've also improved my time management and organizational skills, which has helped me keep up with assignments and balance my personal life. Most importantly, I've learned to embrace challenges and setbacks, viewing them as opportunities to grow rather than as failures. This change in perspective has given me the confidence to keep pushing forward even when things get tough.

- What were your expectations for this year? Did this semester's experiences meet your expectations? Explain.

I expected this year to be a difficult adjustment period, especially transitioning from high school to college. I thought I would struggle with the increased workload and independence required. Additionally, I expected my writing and research-focused classes to be particularly challenging since those aren't my strongest areas. My experiences this semester mostly met those expectations, as I did face struggles early on. However, I was surprised by how quickly I adapted with the help of supportive professors, peers, and resources like academic workshops. While it wasn't easy, I'm proud of the progress I've made and how I've been able to overcome obstacles I initially thought were too difficult.

- What is something you wish you knew 14 weeks ago?

I wish I had known how much research and writing would be required for most of my classes, as I could have prepared better for this workload. Time

management has been a learning curve for me, and I've realized how essential it is to have a system in place to balance coursework, extracurriculars, and personal time. I also wish I had reviewed the degree plan for my major earlier. For example, I didn't realize how important it would be to take a preparatory course for chemistry to set myself up for success in my major.

Study Habits

- How much time do you spend studying for each class now vs. at the beginning of the semester?

At the beginning of the semester, I would dedicate at least two hours to studying for each class. As the semester progressed, I realized I needed to spend more time preparing, especially for high-stakes assignments. After midterms, the workload increased, and I had to juggle multiple major assignments at the same time. For example, I spent almost half a day working on and revising my research and presentation for my History class. Overall, I now spend significantly more time studying, especially for classes that require research, writing, or detailed problem-solving.

- How have your study habits changed?

My study habits have changed in several important ways. At the beginning of the semester, I often studied passively, simply rereading notes or highlighting textbooks. Now, I take a more active approach by summarizing information in my own words, creating study guides, and using flashcards for quick reviews. I've also started breaking up my study sessions into smaller chunks of time, rather than trying to cram everything into one sitting. Additionally, I've learned to prioritize tasks based on their deadlines and importance, which has helped me stay organized and focused. Collaborating with peers for group study sessions has also been a helpful addition to my routine.

- Tell us about a resource that you have used/learned about this semester that will assist you next semester.

The Writing Center has been an invaluable resource for me this semester. Their feedback on my papers has helped me improve my writing clarity and structure. Since I'm taking an English course next semester, I plan to continue using the Writing Center to refine my essays and assignments. I've also

discovered the tutoring centers on campus, which I plan to utilize for Chemistry and Statistics next semester. Additionally, I've found that attending professors' office hours is incredibly helpful for asking questions and getting clarification on difficult concepts, and I plan to make that a regular habit.

- What study habits/techniques will you use going into next semester?

Next semester, I plan to use a combination of study habits and techniques that I've developed this semester. First, I'll continue breaking my study sessions into smaller, focused time blocks using the Pomodoro technique, which helps me stay productive without feeling overwhelmed. I'll also create more detailed study guides and practice active recall by quizzing myself on key concepts. For classes like Chemistry and Statistics, I plan to use practice problems and review sessions at the tutoring center to ensure I fully understand the material. Additionally, I'll keep a consistent schedule for studying, dedicating specific days and times to each subject to stay organized and on top of assignments.

Health Professions Learning Community

- This semester you were enrolled in at least SOC 201S, and HLTH 101. Many of you were also enrolled in CHEM 105N and CHEM 106N, and some of you were enrolled in HIST 104H with Professor White.
 - On the surface these classes do not appear to be connected; however this semester each professor was intentional about drawing connections between content, and subjects discussed. Discuss the ways in which these courses are tied together.

Although I didn't take Sociology or Chemistry this semester, the classes I did take—History, Psychology, and Introduction to Health Professions—shared meaningful connections. A key theme that tied them together was the concept of social determinants of health. In Psychology, we explored how factors like socioeconomic status, a strong support system, and fulfilling basic needs—such as outlined in Maslow's hierarchy of needs—directly influence physical and mental health. For example, having a stable job or a strong network of supportive relationships can reduce stress and improve overall well-being, which ties into our health and stress chapter. Similarly, in History, we explored how historical events, such as public health movements or policies,

shaped societal health outcomes. My History Snapshot project, for instance, focused on Mary Mallon (also known as Typhoid Mary) and the role of asymptomatic carriers in public health. Her story revealed how poor living conditions during the early 20th century, combined with rapid immigration and limited understanding of asymptomatic carriers, led public health officials to implement stricter policies to prevent the spread of disease. This tied into the broader discussion in Introduction to Health Professions about the importance of public health initiatives and the social context of healthcare delivery. HLTH 101 helped us understand how these factors influence healthcare delivery and the roles of health professionals. Together, these courses emphasized the interconnectedness of social, historical, and psychological factors in understanding and addressing health disparities.

Parallel Plan

- a. This semester we had presentations from different majors in the College of Health Sciences as well as from different majors on campus. This was to give you an idea for possible parallel majors to your current intended major.
 - Which two other majors would you be most interested in? Why?

Two other majors that interest me are Nuclear Medicine Technology and Public Health. I find Nuclear Medicine Technology fascinating because it combines healthcare with advanced imaging technology to diagnose and treat diseases. I'm especially drawn to the hands-on nature of the field and its potential to make a direct impact on patients' lives. My interest in this field grew after Ms. Sara Maynard's presentation, where she explained how imaging and radiopharmaceuticals are used to detect and treat medical conditions. It was fascinating to learn about the science behind these techniques and their critical role in patient care. Another highlight was the EVMS symposium event, where I had the opportunity to try out an ultrasound machine, which was an exciting and hands-on experience that deepened my appreciation for medical imaging technology. Public Health is another field that interests me because it focuses on improving health outcomes at a community or population level. I'm passionate about addressing health disparities, and Public Health offers

the tools to create meaningful change through education, policy, and prevention programs.

- What benefit is there to having a parallel plan (or two) in place?

Having a parallel plan is beneficial because it provides flexibility and ensures that I have alternative pathways to achieve my career goals if my original plan changes. Sometimes, unforeseen challenges—such as limited program availability, competitive admissions, or a shift in personal interests—can make it difficult to stick with an initial major. A parallel plan allows me to explore other fields that align with my strengths and interests while staying on track academically. It also broadens my career opportunities by giving me skills and qualifications in multiple areas of health sciences.

- How could one or both of these two majors benefit your current intended major?

Both Nuclear Medicine Technology and Public Health complement my current intended major by offering a broader perspective on healthcare. Nuclear Medicine Technology would enhance my understanding of diagnostic and treatment technologies, which are essential for specialized patient care. This knowledge could make me more competitive in the healthcare field and open doors to interdisciplinary roles. Public Health, on the other hand, would provide insight into the systemic factors affecting patient outcomes, such as social determinants of health, public policy, and community programs. This perspective could make me a more holistic and empathetic healthcare professional, equipping me to address not only individual patient needs but also larger public health challenges.