

Writing Requirement: Journal

One of the key credit requirements of the New York semester is that you keep a journal. Your writing is an opportunity for discovery and critical engagement with your experiences. It is also, in effect, a reporting tool to help you and your faculty advisor assess your learning experience.

You need not focus on major events or “Eureka” moments. Your work day, you, traveling around the city, a passage in a book, a conversation, a work of art -- any of these has the potential to challenge and influence you. The relevance and importance of these encounters and events may not be immediately apparent, but if you record them regularly you will be able to look back to perceive patterns and connections that can inform your thinking and direction. Remember that your struggles and unanswered questions will also give you a fuller picture of the progress you’ve made, and reveal areas you want to explore further.

In order for the journal to be an effective tool you should write several times a week. There is no prescribed length or format for entries but keep the purpose of the journal in mind when shaping your posts. If you are a blogger remember that though the content of some of your journal and your public blog posts may intersect you must make your journal a separate document. Your internship sponsor will expect you to maintain a professional level of confidentiality with respect to your work. You should never discuss the business of your workplace or your relationship with colleagues in public blogs or social media, but they are relevant to your NYAP journal. Your Faculty Advisor will give you more specific instruction and guidance.

Evaluation. Your journal will be reviewed at least twice by your faculty advisor: as part of mid-semester review and as part of the final evaluation. Your writing should reflect the skills you have developed throughout your liberal arts education: the ability to synthesize diverse elements of experience including unexpected benefits and challenges, to analyze information and ultimately to understand and be able to communicate what you have learned. Write clearly and with purpose, but write in your own individual voice.