



# Internship Reflection Paper Questions

Saint Mary's University requires that all student interns report and assess their learning throughout the internship period via reflection papers. Please note the following things about these reflection questions:

- ❖ These papers should be sent directly to **BOTH** the Internship email ([internships@smumn.edu](mailto:internships@smumn.edu)) and to your faculty internship advisor.
- ❖ Submit the dates and hours you worked at your internship site for each reflection period signed by your site supervisor. For your convenience, you can complete the timesheet located at <https://csi.smumn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2017/12/Timecard3.pdf> and submit it with your reflection paper.
- ❖ Due dates for these reflection papers and timesheets are noted below. **Note:** If the due date falls on a weekend, it is due the following Monday.

	<b>Fall Internships</b>	<b>Spring Internships</b>	<b>Summer Internships</b>
Reflection paper #1	September 15	February 1	May 31
Reflection paper #2	October 14	March 8	June 15
Reflection paper #3	November 15	April 5	July 15
Reflection paper #4	December 12	April 21	July 29

- ❖ The papers do not replace any additional departmental requirements that you have set up with your faculty supervisor.
- ❖ NOTE: Any changes to these reflection questions, due dates, etc. must be pre-approved by your faculty advisor and Career Services.
- ❖ Papers must be typed and should average 2-3 pages.

## Reflection Paper #1

1. Make sure you have completed the [Pre-Internship Student Self-Assessment form](#).
2. Discuss major responsibilities you have had to date. What has surprised you the most at your internship so far?
3. Describe your feelings, attitudes, and expectations of your internship up to this point. Give reasons as to, why you have these feelings, attitudes, and expectations.
4. What are the expectations for your character (how you conduct yourself and the decisions you make) and personality (how you behave and interact with others) at your internship site?
5. One of the most essential goals for career success is growing your network (3 out of 4 jobs are found through networking). Identify what your networking goals are for this internship (examples: meet 5 new people in this industry, have a conversation with the President, join a professional network, etc.) and indicate how you plan to accomplish those goals.
6. One of the best ways to learn about people, careers, and industries is by conducting an Informational Interview. For this question:

- a. Read more about what informational interviews are and how to conduct them by reading the following: [How To Get the Most Benefit From an Informational Interview](#).
  - b. Conduct an informational interview with someone at your internship site. Include the person's name, title, and relationship to you regarding the internship, and share the key insights you have gained about the company, industry, and the world of work.
7. Are you receiving adequate supervision on-site? Are there any problems requiring our assistance?

### Reflection Paper #2

1. Describe the major responsibilities you have had to date, including any new experiences (examples include: new duties, equipment, technology, cultures, populations, etc.). What have been your biggest lessons learned during the first half of your internship experience?
2. How do your daily activities and responsibilities relate to your learning agreement and your expectations about your site? How do they relate to your major? Your intended career path?
3. Complete the "What employers Want" worksheet (located on the last page of this document) to help identify what ways this internship is helping you develop specific, marketable skills.
4. Oftentimes, an internship can introduce us to people from different ethnic backgrounds/cultures/ perspectives than our own. Describe a situation or interaction with people of different backgrounds/cultures/perspectives at your internship site that has had a direct impact on your learning.
5. Are there any problems requiring our assistance? Are you receiving adequate supervision on-site?

### Reflection Paper #3

1. Have you learned about new jobs or careers while at your internship? If so, what are they and what are your thoughts about them? How has your internship helped define and/or clarify your career goals/career path?
2. What were the main goals you presented in your Learning Plan? Briefly discuss your progress toward meeting those goals.
3. What has pushed you outside of your comfort zone? Or, what has been the biggest challenge you encountered to date?
4. What skills/ experience have you gained that will help build your resume? (NOTE: be sure to update your resume in light of your internship experience)
5. Grit is a workplace skill and is defined as tenaciously sticking to a goal over a long period of time despite setbacks and failures. Have you faced any setbacks in your internship thus far? If so, describe them and tell how you showed (or will show) resilience and perseverance to overcome the obstacles. (For further information on grit, you can read the following article: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/margaretperlis/2013/10/29/5-characteristics-of-grit-what-it-is-why-you-need-it-and-do-you-have-it/#156a540e1f76>)
6. If you have not established [your Handshake profile](#) and/or a LinkedIn account (or another professional networking site/ e-folio that professionals can follow/ join), set one up. Set a goal of connecting with as many professionals from your internship site as are appropriate for your career goals and the work setting. For more information about how

to set up your Handshake profile, go to: <https://support.joinhandshake.com/hc/en-us/articles/218693368-Getting-Started-with-Handshake>. For a LinkedIn profile, go to: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-create-killer-linkedin-profile-get-you-noticed-bernard-marr>

7. In order to more effectively network, review, and revise (or develop) your 30-second commercial, an ideal tool you use to introduce yourself to people in the work world. Include your most recent 30-second commercial here in your reflection paper. For more information on what a 30-second commercial is and how to develop one, go to: <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/how-to-give-an-elevator-pitch-examples>
8. Are there any problems requiring our assistance? Are you receiving adequate supervision on-site?

#### **Reflection Paper #4**

1. In what ways have you been able to apply what you have learned in your academic coursework to your internship? Describe a situation in which you have been able to take previous classroom experiences and apply lessons learned at your internship site.
2. What was the most important thing you learned about yourself?
3. What was your greatest accomplishment or reward?
4. Based on your internship experience, do you have a stronger sense of self-worth and self-esteem? Explain.
5. What skills or knowledge areas would you like to work on/improve upon that you have identified during your internship experience?
6. Overall, was your internship a worthwhile experience? Explain.
7. Complete and submit the [Post-Internship Self-Assessment Form](#) located at: <https://csi.smumn.edu/students/internship-registration-process/> under “What are the assignments and due dates for the internship?”

## What Employers Want (Reflection Paper 2)

According to the National Association of College’s and Employers (NACE), there is a list of career-readiness competencies that employers seek in employees regardless of the opportunity. To reflect on your experience at your internship site in terms of how it has (or can) develop your career competencies, complete the worksheet below by answering the two questions in column 2 and 3 regarding each competency in the left column (1). Include specific and concrete examples.

For more information regarding the Career Competencies and to see sample behaviors of each competency visit: <https://www.naceweb.org/uploadedfiles/files/2021/resources/nace-career-readiness-competencies-revised-apr-2021.pdf> and/or attend the Career Services Career Readiness workshop ([schedule posted in Handshake events](#)).

If you type directly into this document, the boxes will expand. Otherwise, feel free to use additional paper

<b>What Qualities/ Skills Employers Want</b>	<b>What specific ways have you built this skill during your internship?</b> (NOTE: These answers will serve as good preparation for job interviews – especially behavioral based questions, which often start with the phrase, “Tell me about a time when,...”	If you’ve had no opportunities to develop this skills in your internship, <b>what strategies would help you develop them during the remainder of your internship?</b>
<b>Example:</b> Problem-solving Skills (Critical thinking competency)	We had two projects with the same deadline date and I was put in charge of creating the task timelines to assure we finished both on time	
<b>Example:</b> Verbal Communications Skills (Communication competency)		I have been quiet at the team meetings and should speak up more. Also, I plan to volunteer to make a presentation to the department at next week’s staff meeting.
Career & Self-Development		
Communication		
Critical Thinking		
Equity & Inclusion		
Leadership		
Professionalism		
Teamwork		
Technology		