

## **KEEPING GOOD JOURNALS - Gerontology**

**1) Keeping track of time:** You need to record the time in/time out, hours each day, and running total of hours. Then you, your site supervisor, and I can clearly see you where you are in terms of completion of the required hours.

**2) Reflecting Gerontologically:** Most beginning interns do very well in recording the activities in which they are engaged but are less likely to be systematic in reflecting on the significance of what they are seeing or making the connections to their existing body of Gerontological knowledge. Each day's journal needs to include a reflection on the significance of what you are doing and an attempt to apply Gerontological knowledge in terms of the goals you set forth in your Learning Contract.

Make this kind of reflection a daily part of your journaling. Sometimes this reflection will be brief and sketchy, and other times it will be more extensive and in-depth. It will depend on the nature of what you're doing on a daily basis. But make it a habit to be thinking reflectively every day. This will maximize the quality of your experience and the transferability of the skills you are learning.

Being able to generalize from a specific experience to a wider context will help you as you interpret this experience to a potential employer who wants to know just what you gained from your internship that would be useful in a new work situation.

If you have taken courses in qualitative methods, ethnography, or applied sociology, you should apply the principles of taking good field notes to your internship journals.

Below is the required format for your journals.

**Date:** June 3, 2008  
**Time:** 1 pm – 5 pm  
**Hours:** 4 hrs.  
**Total:** 14 hrs.

### **Activities:**

Write what you did, what you observed, in as much detail as you can record.

### **Reflection:**

Reflect on the significance of what you did and the patterns you are seeing. What concepts from Gerontology do you see in play? How would you look at the situation from various Gerontological perspectives (life course perspective, political economy of aging, continuity theory, humanistic gerontology, critical gerontology, etc.) Think of concepts from your courses in sociology, psychology, or anthropology of aging or from health and aging or biology of aging.

Your reflections will be useful to you as you put together your final paper. Review them and synthesize the hands-on experience you have had in the internship and the Gerontological knowledge you've gained in your coursework.