Questions to Help Write Quality CAS Reflections

Pre-Reflection:

a. Elaborate on your goal(s). Why did you choose the goal you did? How are you going to get there?

b. How do you know your goal isn't going to be either too easy or too hard?

c. What makes you nervous/curious/excited about starting a specific project/experience?

Post-Reflection:

a. Explain what went particularly well during this process and why.

b. Explain what didn't go well during this process and why.

d. If you could complete this CAS experience/project again, what would you do differently?

e. If you had to give a younger student/group advice on doing something like this, what would it be?

f. What do you know now (about yourself, others) that you didn't know before you started?

Specific to the Learning Outcomes themselves…

1. Planning and initiating experiences:

a. Especially for your CAS project, how did you organize yourself? Checklist? Timeline? Outline?

b. Was your scaffolding sufficient, or did you have lots of unexpected add-ons or amendments to the process?

c. Describe planning sessions, meetings, proposals to Senate or the boosters that you had to undertake.

d. What background information did you need to collect and consider at the onset?

e. What challenges did you run into during the planning process?

2. Increased awareness of strengths/weaknesses

a. How was this experience humbling for you?

b. In what ways(s) do you feel more self-confident?

c. Did you notice a strength/weakness during this that you weren't conscious of before?

d. How do you feel now that you're aware of it?

e. How does this strength/weakness tie to other parts of your life or academics?

3. Undertaken new challenges to develop new skills

a. How would you categorize this skill: Life? Career? Interpersonal? Explain.

b. What was specifically challenging for you about this experience/project, and why?

c. Was this experience a completely new skill or more about sharpening a skill? Explain.

d. Was the challenge here more about you or more about outside circumstances? Explain.

4. Show commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences

a. How much of your struggle was about you vs. outside circumstances or other individuals?

b. Did procrastination play a role in this experience/project? For you or a partner?

c. Was procrastination an issue in the planning phase or execution phase? Why?

d. What external circumstances adversely created stress for you?

e. How were you able to overcome these circumstances to complete the experience/project?

f. Did you get stuck in a rut at any point, and what caused it?

g. How did you get out of that rut? Your advisor/interventions? The pressure of time? Communication? Will?

h. What made this experience/project difficult to commit to?

i. How is learning in CAS different than learning in the classroom?

5. Working collaboratively

a. Was working with others on this experience/project easy or hard for you? Why?

b. In hindsight, did you pick the right person/people to work with? Why/why not?

c. How did you handle situations where you felt someone was not pulling his/her weight?

d. How did you handle situations where you felt someone was micromanaging?

e. Was the amount of work for this CAS project appropriate to the number of people who did it with you?

f. What did you learn about your communication style that may be off-putting to others?

6. Engaged with issues of global importance

a. Is this CAS experience important or impact people everywhere or just locally? Explain.

b. What issue, central to this experience/project, is one of global importance? How do you know?

c. Is this global issue more or less prominent in the United States compared to elsewhere?

d. Why is this global issue important to you personally? How did you learn about it originally?

e. If a service project based on advocacy or research, what did you learn by doing it that you didn't originally know?

f. Did you get others to become more aware of this issue? If so, how did you go about that?

g. Why is this project or experience not valued enough at a global level? Discuss.

7. Considering ethical implications

a. What ethical issues were involved in this experience? Explain.

b. What rules, steps or processes were set up that you had to follow that helped your experience/project be ethical?

c. Did an adult tell you at any point that you needed to rethink your process to avoid harm? Explain.

d. Did you unintentionally offend/hurt/create anxiety others? How did that happen? How did you handle that?

e. What steps did you consciously take to avoid hurting others? Of what did you need to be particularly mindful?

f. How are other people in your (school, church, etc.) community relying on you to follow through? Explain.

g. How will others be negatively be affected if you fail to meet your responsibilities?

h. Was there conflict? Describe. If so, how did or didn't you resolve it? Explain.

i. Did you find yourself in the unique situation of having to lie to protect someone's feelings? Why did you make that choice? When is withholding truth from others morally defensible?

j. Were you particularly proud or disappointed in your good or bad judgment? Those of others? Explain.

CAS Project Questions:

1. What did you learn about your choice to collaborate with other students, if applicable?
2. Would you have selected the same individuals (students, supervisors, etc.) to complete your project?
3. For fundraisers, how did you verify the authenticity of the organization to which you are donating?
4. How did you confirm a community need for your CAS project?
5. Explain what resources/materials you think you'll need to complete your CAS project.
6. Which of the four types of service action does your project require (direct, indirect, advocacy, research) to be successful?
7. What life lesson could you project provide in a possible college application essay?