

Denise Brend – WID Fellows – Winter 2010

Ideas for Exploratory Informal Writing In-Class

Social service classes are participatory and dynamic. Students are socialized to include themselves in their studies from the first course they take in the program. Their perspectives, their reactions, their experiences, etc. are key in learning how to situate themselves into a new role as professional and understand the boundaries between personal/ political/ professional.

The following short writing exercises are meant to be done independently, and during class time.

1. A 3-minute free write at the beginning of each stage seminar:

“My stage experience has caused me to feel...”

“My stage experience has caused me to think...”

Grading would be on a Pass/ Fail basis for bonus marks - rewrites welcomed.

2. Note-taking while watching a role play (especially appropriate for the second year class: Intervention with Individuals)

Placing data in three categories: observations, reactions, and conclusions

Repeating this exercise throughout the term to enable students to trace their evolution as writers who can separate the objective and subjective and then apply meaning to what they have observed and experienced.

Grading would be done in small peer groups where pre-assigned grade levels would be determined (5 marks, 3 marks, 1 mark), the group would assign each grade once, giving the highest marks to the entry with most in depth and detailed observations.

- 3.

Maintaining an activity book throughout the semester in a class where regular structured/ unstructured and exploratory writing exercises can be compiled and submitted at the end.

This would enable a one time mark to be awarded for the students participation in the exercises, rather than individually marking each one. The individual entries could be given comments and/ or used in peer groups.