

## Journal

The Journal is a record of reflections, analysis and reactions to what was said in a lecture, seminar, reading class or in your own private study. It is a vehicle for you to develop a critical understanding of the complexity of the subject matter discussed in the module and to provide evidence of engaging critically and analytically with module content. It provides you with an opportunity to pursue aspects of the curriculum which interest you. There is no expectation that you will write about everything you hear/read. On the contrary, part of the exercise is choosing what to focus on, providing a synthesis/summary of the main trend, topic, concept, issue you want to discuss and developing a line of argumentation based

The Journal is **not** a record or description of what was said in a lecture, seminar, or reading class. It is **not** a record of feelings about the set text, a lecture or secondary sources.

## Writing your Journal

You should write the Journal in English.

You should write in the first person ("I"), and acknowledge all other views by crediting them to (a) a lecturer, (b) a student, (c) the author of a text you have read or consulted [the details of which need to be supplied in a bibliographical reference]. At all times you need to keep your voice separate and distinct from others' voices. The Journal is the record of your dialogue with these other voices.

You should date each entry and make it clear what it is you are commenting on. You are expected to comment on all of the following (though not necessarily on all in each journal entry)

- lectures
- discussions in seminars
- reading classes

Most importantly you are expected to develop your understanding of trends, issues and concepts discussed in class by spending private study time

- reading and analysing the set texts
- reading critical responses to the set texts and challenging your original response to the text by understanding how and why others have read the text differently
- reading about the historico-cultural background to the set texts

You are asked to do the following:

- Select, analyse, comment and reflect on key or 'critical' moments in a lecture, student presentation, book or article you have read which is of particular interest to you and which you want to think about further. These could be moments which enthused you, but they could equally be moments which made you feel disengaged or discouraged (if, for instance, you couldn't follow the line of argument of a critical source or lecture; or if you are feeling particularly frustrated by the difficulty of reading the original Russian text)
- Document ways in which you used academic reading or conversations (in class or outside class) to increase your understanding of a particular question, to inform, support and/or shape your reflections on that question.
- Elaborate on what you learnt from your research, thinking, involvement in a discussion. So, for instance, if someone asks you a question about one of your presentations and if, in answering that question or in the course of the conversation/discussion, you come to revise your opinion — document and

account for that shift. Similarly, if a student presentation or lecture or reading class makes you see an issue or a detail differently: comment and reflect on that change in your perspective. If your reading of a secondary sources helps you develop you opinion, or helps you refine your argument — document that learning.

In your reflections you are encouraged to make connections between the following:

- old knowledge and new knowledge
- your views and other people's views and arguments (whether the other people are class members or authors of secondary sources/background reading)

Provide reference to all your sources; provide evidence in support of your opinion/argument

Length of entries

You should write 300-500 words per week. You should write in continuous prose (not note form or bullet points).

Marking criteria

This exercise is not about measuring whether or not you have attended class and/or acquired a body of knowledge. It is about determining whether or not you provide evidence that you have moved beyond **description** of what you or others state, think or argue to **commentary, analysis** and **reflection** on what you or others state, think or argue.

- III Students accept what they hear and read at face value. Opinions are stated with no analysis or evidence. No evidence of reading beyond set texts. No links made across topics. No evidence of learning beyond a body of knowledge. Little to no attempt to demonstrate connections between past and present learning experiences, between old and new information. Students do not provide references to sources.
- II.2 Students show awareness of different points of view. Opinions are stated with some analysis or evidence. Limited evidence of reading beyond set texts. Some attempt to demonstrate connections between past and present learning experiences, between old and new information. Students provide references to sources.
- II.1 Students assess and evaluate perspectives. Opinions are argued; arguments are supported by evidence. Sustained evidence of reading beyond set texts. Consistently demonstrates connections between past and present learning experiences, between old and new information. Students provide references to sources and engage with sources.
- I Students assess and evaluate perspectives. Opinions are argued; arguments are supported by evidence. Insightful evidence of wide reading beyond set texts. Reflection demonstrates connections between between past and present learning experiences, between old and new information. Students provide references to sources and engage critically with sources.