

Renowned educational theorist David Kolb described his experiential learning model as a loop whereupon an “effective learner” would achieve a “mastery” of competencies and skills through experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation. He recognized that in our “rapidly changing world,” students “requir[e] a continued commitment to lifelong learning and development” (79), and that only a liberal arts education could offer “an educational approach that integrates personal experience and practical application with perceptive appreciation and understanding of concepts, and in so doing... the development of all of these competencies” (80).

The Monthly Report, then, is an opportunity to engage with your training in the liberal arts and in the workplace, and to master your competencies as an effective learner by reflecting on your skill development and your learning objectives by drawing connections between these and your academic training. You must be sure to include analysis of these elements in every report, regardless of the format. You may choose to incorporate primary or secondary research as a demonstration of critical thinking on comprehensive topics.

Monthly Report (journal-style): Monthly reports may take various forms, but the most common is a 2-5 page reflective journal.

Blog/Vlog: Create a blog. Consider whether it will be public or private and seek your supervisor’s permission about what to include

“Apply” for an Extension: Write a cover letter and resume as if you were applying to your current position. Be sure to incorporate all of your experience in the position thus far

STAR Stories: Following the STAR technique, provide written “stories” for 2-3 Behaviour Descriptive Interview (BDI) questions (i.e. tell me about a time when...)

Interview a Professional: Report on an interview you conducted with a professional staff member at your workplace. Describe their path (and the choices they made) to get to where they are today. Reflect on this and consider your own path.

Advice to Yourself: If you could go back in time and have a conversation with yourself, what time would you go back to (it could even be 3 or 4 months to the beginning of this work term), and what advice would you give yourself?

Advice for Another Co-op Student: What advice do you have for a student in your area of study who is considering joining the Co-op program? What would you recommend they do? What tips or tricks would you pass along? What valuable experiences would you share?

Learning Plan for Life: If you could set learning objectives for yourself for the next 5+ years, what would they be, and why? What do you want to accomplish in that time? What do you need to do to get there? What would you want to remind yourself of along the way?

E-Scrapbooking: Combine text and visual media to capture the essence of your Co-op experience over the past month

Fry, Ronald, and David Kolb. "Experiential learning theory and learning experiences in liberal arts education." *New directions for experiential learning* 6 (1979): 79.