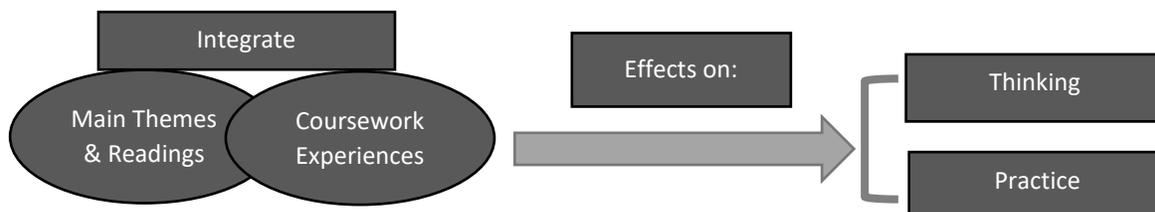


**Comprehensive Final Reflection Essay**  
**M.A. in Higher Education Administration**  
**Louisiana State University**

Students pursuing a Master’s degree in Higher Education Administration from LSU have the option to write a Final Reflection Essay to fulfill the comprehensive exam requirement. The Final Reflection Essay should be a 12 to 15 page reflective description of your journey through the graduate program, elaborating on what you believe you learned from the experience and how it relates to professional practice. How did coursework completed as you reached your academic goal contribute to your professional development? What do you believe will be the eventual impact of reaching this educational milestone on your professional career?

Reflective writing inevitably requires you to make connections between experience and theory, and consider implications for the future. In this instance, especially, you will need to consider the impact your learning experiences have had on career and professional development goals. Using readings, class discussions, and work completed for your courses, write about the topics that seem most relevant to these experiences and how new knowledge of your field of study has resulted. In your critical reflection and analysis, you should be able to articulate the understanding(s) you have gained and describe a transition from theory to practice.

Finally, in writing your Final Reflection Essay you should apply these guidelines for reflective writing adopted from the International Institute of Restorative Practices:



- A reflection paper is not a summary of the course readings or a stream of conscious mind dump on paper. As the diagram suggests, a reflection paper is your identification of the main themes of readings integrated with coursework experiences, and how they affected your thinking and practice.
- A reflection paper is your chance to add your thoughts and analysis to what you have read and experienced.
- A reflection paper is meant to illustrate your understanding of the material and how it affects your ideas and possible practice in future.
- Relate readings and classes to previous knowledge and experience when appropriate.
- Consider if and how what you have read and learned changes, or changed, your thinking and how it might affect your actions in professional situations.
- Review the readings and class notes to be sure you’ve included all the relevant information you can and made all the connections you can.
- While a reflection paper may adopt an informal tone, it should still have an identifiable opening, body, and conclusion.
- Your paper should be well organized. Consider the use of subheadings to designate themes and provide structure for your final product. Use of the singular person “I” is appropriate in a reflection paper.
- Your paper should be double-spaced and typed in a 12 point, easy to read font. Include in-text references and a reference page for any materials you cite using APA citation formatting.