



Engage HONORS with Cornerstones Compass
ACT - ADAPT - CONTRIBUTE - QUESTION

HONORS CORNERSTONES REFLECTIONS COMPLETION GUIDE

Revised December 2019

The Philadelphia University Honors Institute at Jefferson

East Falls Campus

Philadelphia, PA

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CORNERSTONES Qualifying Activity Examples:

Question

- Conference Presentation
- Industry/ Major Project
- Faculty Guided Research
- Fulbright Application
- Independent Research/ Study
- Graduate Course
- Publication

Act

- Professional Certification
- Internship/Shadow
- Toastmasters
- Professional Development Activity
- Club Officer
- Pre-Professional Org Membership
- Resident Assistant
- Conference Activity

Contribute

- Service to Honors Community
- Honors Student Association Officer
- Office of Student Engagement Activity
- Community Service
- SGA/Class Officer
- Organization Chair
- Great Hostel Give Back
- Alternative Spring Break

Adapt

- Study Away
- Semester Study Abroad
- Nexus/Short Course Abroad
- Global Brigades
- Cross Cultural Activity
- American Sign Language Club

General Cornerstones Guidelines

The Cornerstones—required co-curricular activities built around the Core Values of the Philadelphia University Honors Institute at Jefferson—are an important component of the Honors Institute experience. The Philadelphia University Honors Institute at Jefferson (Honors Institute) has developed this set of Cornerstones Reflection guidelines that you are strongly encouraged to follow when engaging in your Cornerstones activities and writing your reflections. The guidelines were developed to help you create successful Cornerstones reflections that reflect the high curricular and co-curricular standards of the program. To help you get the most out of your Cornerstones experiences, please review these guidelines before and during your engagement in approved Cornerstones activities.

Recommended Cornerstones Timeline:

Regardless of major and curriculum (three- four- or five-year plan), all Honors students are required to complete the four Cornerstones reflections by the end of their respective senior year. It is recommended that you complete the **CONTRIBUTE** and **ADAPT** Cornerstones in either Freshman year or during the Freshman and Sophomore years, respectively. Doing so will better equip you to address the **QUESTION** Cornerstone in your Junior/Senior year, which requires the completion of at least two Cornerstones as a pre-requisite. Finally, the **ACT** Cornerstone is a flexible undertaking and you may choose to complete it at your convenience over the duration of your curriculum; however, students have often elected to complete this Cornerstone during the Junior/Senior year, when they engage in internships or other professional development opportunities.

Identifying A Realistic Cornerstones Completion Opportunity:

This is the first step in completing your Honors Cornerstones requirements. We recommend that you discuss potential Cornerstones opportunities with your Honors Advisor for clarity and to be sure that the opportunity you have identified will be approved for your Cornerstones enrollment.

Self-evaluating the Learning Objectives within the Cornerstones Opportunity:

The second step in the process is to establish clear learning objectives. Toward the end of your Cornerstone experience, evaluating the extent of your achievement of these learning objectives will help you produce a comprehensive Cornerstone reflection.

Documentation of the Cornerstones Experience

While completing your Cornerstone experience, it is important to document the details. These details will often make their way into the reflection as illustrations of your learning. We recommend that you maintain a daily/weekly record of events to avoid omission of any important learning experiences. Please feel free to use the Cornerstones Tracking Form (<https://forms.gle/TfbVwpj32GMNbeoUA>) to help you log your Cornerstones activities.

Submitting a Cornerstone Reflection:

If you have followed the steps mentioned above, you should be in a good position to complete your reflection right after the conclusion of your Cornerstone experience, essentially in the same semester. We have often received feedback, from graduating Honors students, that submitting the Cornerstone reflections in the same semester as the Cornerstone experience, is the best practice. The reflection paper should follow the following formatting guidelines:

- APA Style
- Min. 5 pages (excluding graphics, tables, figures and references, etc.) to max. 10 pages
- Must include at least 3-5 popular or scholarly references on a separate page
- All pages should be numbered
- Font size for all text should be 12 pt. Headings should be 24pt. and subtitles should be 18pt.
- The reflection must be submitted in .pdf format and renamed as "CORNERSTONE-Last name First Name-Semester-Yr." (For example: CONTRIBUTE-Bouchenafa Karima-Fall-2019)
- Please submit your completed Cornerstones reflections to Honors@PhilaU.edu.

Cornerstone Reflection Content:

The Cornerstone reflection aims to document your Cornerstone experience in a way that can be evaluated for Honors co-curricular credit. Ideally, the reflection must follow an overall logical sequence. For example, you could start by filling in the details of your Cornerstone experience (*e.g.*, what activity/event/opportunity you engaged in, when (start and finish dates) and where, why you chose this activity, *etc.*).

Moving forward, you could write about the organization/activity, your supervisor/point of contact, and your role and primary responsibilities. You could then talk about your experience and illustrate how you hit the marks on the Cornerstone requirements. If you made any significant contributions or received any special recognition, be sure to include that here. Furthermore, you could explore how this experience connects to your undergraduate experience, aligns with what you plan to do post-graduation, and how it has helped you evolve into a better professional/person. You may include pictures, tables, charts, figures, etc. if it helps you express your experience better, but please be mindful that the length of actual text in the paper is at least 5 double-spaced pages, excluding graphical representations.

In conclusion, you may evaluate the extent of achievement of the learning objectives you established, expound on any lessons learned and challenges overcome, as well as critique the Cornerstones experience. Finally, you could mention any next steps that you intend to take and whether you would recommend this experience to another student.

Please feel free to contact the Honors staff with any additional questions you may have.

GOOD LUCK!

Years One and Two:

CONTRIBUTE

Students will be able to create dialogue among peers that elevates and advances the articulation of ideas.

- The core value of this Cornerstone is facilitation of collaborative opportunities that promote the courage to **contribute** ideas that make a difference.

Discuss your engagement with your selected community:

- How has your engagement influenced your knowledge about the community?
- What are a few of the most important things you learned from working with this community, thus far?
- Who was the teacher of this lesson (and why)?
- What would you want your peers to know about this community?
- How would you convincingly communicate this community's perspectives to an audience of your peers (friends, classmates, colleagues)?
- Who are influencers of this community? What would you want them to better understand about this community and its needs?
- What would you communicate to them given the opportunity to advocate on their behalf?

ADAPT

"I don't like that man. I must get to know him better." -Abraham Lincoln

Students will be able to recognize and assess the interdependence of complex issues to negotiate unfamiliar contexts.

- The core value of this Cornerstone is facilitation of collaborative opportunities that promote empathy to **adapt** with respect to diverse perspectives.

Discuss your experience learning about the particular lifestyle, culture, approach, discipline, etc. that you engaged:

- Identify 1-2 things that occurred to you for the first time as a part of this experience.
- What did you observe as the most pronounced differences in people's perspectives on life/ their communities/ the world?
- What significant commonalities did you find?
- What helped you arrive at realizing the commonalities?
- How do these commonalities work to improve your understanding of people/ communities different from those familiar to you?
- Who was the best teacher of this lesson?
- What did you learn about yourself from: 1) your biggest challenges? 2) your experience overall?
- How, if at all, will this experience impact how you engage unfamiliar social, professional, cultural environments moving forward?

Years Three Through Five:

ACT

Students will be able to apply knowledge and skills gained to collaborate and work effectively in diverse professional settings.

- The core value of this Cornerstone is facilitation of collaborative opportunities that promote the confidence to **act** and apply knowledge in real-world conditions. Just when you thought you were acing your major, you actually had to go out and **do** it – the real test!

Discuss your initial experiences:

- How familiar was the work you were expected to perform?
- How did you find and respond to the work environment (physical, social, etc.)?
- Who were the people you met?
- What were/ who made the strongest impressions?
- What kind of (first, lasting) impression did you make? What was uncomfortable for you?

Discuss your experiences mid-way through the activity:

- What steps did you take to get into the rhythm of things?
- Who did you observe, converse with, consult or spend time with to achieve this?
- How did these steps and/or people impact your confidence in your place there?
- What else contributed to your confidence?
- Any detracting factors or people?

Discuss your experience in hindsight:

- Ultimately, what did you learn about what's expected of you in that professional environment?
- What prior or learned-on-site knowledge did you or others call upon in that environment?
- How well do you think you met expectations (theirs and yours)? What realities did you confront about: 1) working in your profession and; 2) about yourself from the experience?

QUESTION

Students will be able to pursue research questions using appropriate resources and articulate conclusions persuasively across disciplines.

- The core value of this Cornerstone is facilitation of collaborative opportunities that promote the curiosity to pursue your own **questions**.

Discuss what led you to this project:

- How were you introduced to the opportunity?
- If self-motivated, how did you go about establishing it as a project?
- In what ways did others (faculty, advisor, friends, etc.) influence you to pursue the project?
- What roles do/did others involved in your project play?
- What was it like for you to work with others on this research project?
- What skills related to research did you enhance by working with them?
- What other questions generated from the primary investigation along the way?
- How did they come about?
- Once steeped in the research, how comfortable did you become pursuing the question: handling data, analysis, and interpretation? Which areas proved most challenging?
- Having completed the project, where do you feel the greatest sense of accomplishment – of what feature of your involvement are you most proud?
- Are you still wrestling with any aspect of your work on the project?
- As a result of completing this project, what types of questions are you inspired to research next?

Helpful Resources



Honors Institute Office

Paul J. Gutman Library, Room 102

4201 Henry Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19144

215-951-2761

Honors@PhilaU.edu

<http://www.eastfalls.jefferson.edu/honorsprogram/Cornerstones.html>

Dr. McCoy-Deh and Ms. Bouchenafa are available to discuss your plans for completing your Cornerstones and your required reflections. Don't hesitate to suggest a Cornerstones activity that hasn't been done before!

Paul J. Gutman Library

4201 Henry Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19144

(215) 951-2848

AskGutman@jefferson.edu

<http://library.jefferson.edu/gutman/research/write/>

Gutman Library offers a wealth of resources to help you write stellar Cornerstones reflections. Please be sure to take advantage of the library resources available online and in person!

Cornerstones Reflections Quotations

"I learned from working with this community...patience and how to properly listen..."

"...Taught me important communication skills and responsibilities..."

"Getting involved was the best decision I made in college, and I encourage my peers to do the same."

"Students are the influencers of the University - student engagement and community..."

"...we were prepared for all the questions directed to us."

"I was able to write my story with conviction....Gave me more confidence in my work."

"Presenting at the symposium gave me the chance to see what the expectations are of me in the professional environment."

"I learned that, in order to be a scientist, you must expand your knowledge through speaking with others in your field."

"Even though our study did not produce the results we hoped for, we were confident with the work we completed."

Cornerstones Enrollment

STEP 1:

When you are ready to begin completing the hours required to complete a Cornerstone, please be sure to inform the Honors Office Staff. You can do so by completing the **Cornerstones Enrollment Form** found here:

<https://forms.gle/57tj4eT9V9xdw8iS7>

STEP 2:

As you engage in your Cornerstone activities, you can log them and write field notes/brief reflections using the **Cornerstones Tracking Form** found here:

<https://forms.gle/TfbVwpj32GMNbeoUA>

