

## Coral-Reef Management Course Journals

Check Dates	Points Possible
Thurs., Feb 12	10
Tues., March 17	10
Thurs., April 2	10
Total	30



Your course journals are an important resource as you work your way through the collection of experiences that are part of this freshman seminar. Your journals will help you organize your thoughts, build upon new knowledge, revisit your ideas as you progress through the class, sketch illustrations, structure data, and provide a structured place for reflection. We know that you will have a lot to reflect about as we build knowledge and apply concepts regarding coral-reef management. Your journal is a place where you can share personal insights, struggles, and experiences. It is a resource that will be reviewed by your instructors, so you take that into account and decide how personal you want your expressions to be. With that caveat, we will regard journals as confidential and only share outstanding insights, comments, sketches, and reflections with prior permission. Your journal is a bridge between personal insights and academic knowledge. We will structure the journal experience so that you are guided to record what you feel and think now, build a detailed record of your international experience, and revisit your early thoughts to see how you've learned and grown as a student at the University of Minnesota and as a global citizen.

Purchase a separate, dedicated notebook for your course journal. A glue-bound notebook is preferred. Rite-in-the-rain is not necessary. Journal entries need to be hand-written in your journal. We are embarking on a scientific exploration in Belize. Your journals will be with you in the field. We can't guarantee Internet and electrical access while we travel, so we want you to be prepared and willing to leave your computer/technology behind and keep those thoughts coming. That's why you can't build your journal electronically.

As scientists and explorers, we sample a range of plants, animals, and habitats, using a wide variety of skills. Your journal is a resource to carry with you and use consistently. It is important for data collection, but it is much more than that. As you hike, swim, float down a river, or walk through a forest, you will think of questions about species identification, your surroundings, and topics from class lectures and how they may apply to what you see. You will not remember those things if you wait until you are back from the field and have an opportunity to write them down or enter them into your computer. Your journal will be with you as you make observations, consider questions, and make connections. Use your journal to document your ideas, write down your questions, sketch a new plant, or describe an unknown bird call. You are encouraged to use your journal extensively. You are required to use it weekly before departure and daily during travel. Build a clear system of organization. A sample of entry headings is provided. You do not need to use all headings. You are welcome to build your own. Make sure the way you design your notebook keeps your information clearly organized and easy to access. This is not a place to scribble notes. Rather, it is a record and a resource. You will be surprised how much you refer back to your journal as you study, analyze data, and build presentations. The higher the quality of your records, the better resource your journal will be.

Each week or day, you will create entries in your journal. At the end of every entry, you should include a section for reflection. As a guideline, you should include 1-3 paragraphs for reflection. Some days we will give you a specific topic to address in your reflections. Other days you are free to write about your week/day, questions you have, lessons learned, difficulties encountered ... as you choose.

Sample headings for a journal entry:

- Date
- Statement of activities (e.g., Skype conversation, chapter reading, TED Talk, class discussion, experimental set-up, travel connections, snorkeling and practicing fish ID, sampling in the field)
- Response to guiding question
- Sketches when appropriate
- Reflection (at least 1 paragraph and up to 2 pages)

Headings specific to field conditions:

- Weather conditions/time (leave additional space so you can record multiple entries if the weather changes)
- Location
- Habitat type (you may want to use this heading with a specific sampling technique if there is considerable variation among techniques)
- Field observations (can include statements, sketches, descriptions)
- Modifications to protocol (if something changes in the field)
- Data tables
- Observations (about data that may guide your exploratory data analysis)

## Coral-Reef Management Journal Scoring Rubric

Name:

\_\_\_\_\_ out of 5 points for **insight and understanding** (conveys evidence of a personal response to the issues raised in the journal prompts; contemplative and demonstrates self-awareness or understanding of activities; applies course content to in-country experience)

\_\_\_\_\_ out of 2.5 points for **organization, writing style, sketches/illustrations, and effort** (entries are clear, organized with appropriate headings, and include specific, concrete details; work demonstrates consistent and deliberate effort)

\_\_\_\_\_ out of 2.5 points for **quality of reflection** (and data tables/graphs when applicable) (Reflection: makes meaning of the experience and works to recognize implications for connections to coral-reef management; Data: when appropriate, data tables are clearly organized with titles and headings, data are recorded correctly, and a corresponding graph is included with titles and labels)

\_\_\_\_\_ Total score

Comments:

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Comments:

***Source: Dr. Dawn Tanner, Teaching Specialist in College of Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resource Sciences, Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation***