CHRISTIAN POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT FIELD SEMINAR
SPRING 2020
January 13 – April 23
Mondays, 3 pm – 5 pm; Fridays: 8 am – 5 pm
Recommended Credit Hours: 3.0 semester – 4.5 quarter

INSTRUCTOR
Peter J. Baker, Ph.D.
Tel. (o) 202-546-3086
pbaker@cccu.org
Office Hours: By Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course blends theological studies and fieldwork activities to provide a Washington, D.C.-based study of how Christians engage in contemporary public life as citizens and professionals. The course begins with a “liturgical audit” of public life by investigating the institutional nature of power, the formative nature of institutions, and the challenges Christians face when trying to exercise power justly in morally pluralistic societies. The course next uses a Creation-Fall-Redemption-Consummation framework to explore how the biblical narrative shapes our understanding of Christian identity and responsibility as citizens and professionals when relating to earthly rulers and cultural powers. The course concludes with a comparative study of historic and contemporary Christian public engagement practices. We are honest about the potential for “malfunctions of the faith,” but also hopeful about the possibility of sustaining authentic Christian public witness and the faithful practice of power in public life.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY
A variety of instructional methods are used in this course, including large- and small-group instruction, onsite and offsite guest practitioner presentations, individual student presentations, and written and oral assignments.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES
After completing the required readings, attending all lectures and discussion groups, and completing other assignments, the successful student will be able cite current events and Washington, D.C.-based experiences to:
- Explain the formative nature of institutions for personal and corporate identity and responsibility
- Explain the institutional nature of power in public life
- Explain the challenges all citizens and professionals face when exercising power in morally pluralistic societies like our own
- Identify the historic and theological origins of different Christian public engagement practices, as citizens and professionals, in morally pluralistic societies
- Express how the Biblical narrative shapes his/her understanding of Christian identity and responsibility as it relates to a specific public issue or professional practice of power.

COURSE MATERIALS

Additional assigned reading materials will be made available at a shared Google Drive site.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

**Written requirements and exams**
- *Test (20% of course grade)*. Test study guide will be handed out in advance of the exam.
- *Op-Ed Blog Post (40% of course grade)*
- *Final Project (40% of course grade)*

**Participation requirements**

*Attendance policy*: An excused absence requires permission from Dr. Baker at least 24 hours before class. One unexcused absence in the course will reduce the student’s *assignment grade* by a whole grade (e.g. A to B-). A second unexcused absence will reduce the student’s *course grade* by a whole grade (e.g. B to C). A third unexcused absence will result in a *failing grade for the course*.

*Late Assignment policy*: The ASP policy on late assignments is as follows:
- One day late: 1/3 grade deduction (e.g. A to A-, B- to C+)
- Two days late: additional 2/3 grade deduction (e.g. A to B, B- to C-)
- Another 1/3 letter grade deduction for each day, up to seven calendar days
- Any assignment submitted seven days late or more will result in a failing grade, but may still earn up to 50% of the assignment’s points if it meets assignment expectations.

This syllabus provides you with the grading rubric for each assignment. Please direct any questions pertaining to the content of the grading rubrics to Dr. Baker individually at least 48 hours before the assignment due date.

The ASP grading scale is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual assignment scale</th>
<th>Cumulative course scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+ 9.8</td>
<td>A  100 - 93</td>
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<tr>
<td>A  9.6</td>
<td>A- 92.9 - 90</td>
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<tr>
<td>A- 9.2</td>
<td>B+ 89.9 - 87</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+ 8.85</td>
<td>B  86.9 - 83</td>
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<td>B  8.5</td>
<td>B- 82.9 – 80</td>
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<tr>
<td>B- 8.15</td>
<td>C+ 79.9 - 77</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+ 7.85</td>
<td>C  76.9 - 73</td>
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<tr>
<td>C  7.5</td>
<td>C- 72.9 - 70</td>
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<tr>
<td>C- 7.15</td>
<td>F  69.9 - 0</td>
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<td>D  Must resubmit</td>
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TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

I. FOUNDATIONS—A “LITURGICAL AUDIT” OF PUBLIC LIFE

13 JAN – Monday  Course Orientation
10am – Noon
Required Reading: Robert Coles, The Call of Stories (Chp. 1, pp. 1-30; excerpt of Chp. 3, pp. 70-81; and excerpt of Chp. 5, pp. 102-111, 115-119, 128-129)

14 JAN – Tuesday  The Institutional Nature of Public Life
10am – Noon
Required Reading: James Davison Hunter, To Change the World (pp. 3-47, 93-96)
Required Viewing: Yuval Levin, “A Crisis of Confidence”
• View video, “Lecture 1: A Crisis of Confidence.” Begin at 4:33, End at 48:38. (No need to watch Intro or Q&A). Note discussion of social capital that begins in minute 22. Note explanation of what institutions are that begins in minute 24. Note explanation of the formative nature of institutions that begins in minute 40.
• Video assignment: Come to class ready to explain Levin’s perspective on (a.) what is an institutions, (b.) why they are important to human society and human flourishing (why we place our faith in them), and (c.) the social consequences when we lose faith or trust in our institutions.
  Full link: https://jmp.princeton.edu/events/why-institutions-matter-three-lectures-breakdown-and-renewal

15 JAN – Wednesday  The Formative Nature of Institutions
10am – Noon
Required Reading: James K.A. Smith, You Are What You Love (Preface, Chps. 1-2)
Recommended: Steven D. Smith, Pagans and Christians in the City (pp. 16-70, 78-81)

16 JAN – Thursday  Moral Pluralism, Politicization, and Polarization in the Late Modern World
10am – Noon
Required Reading: Hunter, Culture Wars (pp. 31-51) and Hunter, To Change the World (pp. 101-110; 167-193)
Recommended: James K.A. Smith, Awaiting the King (pp. 131-150)

17 JAN – Friday  Can You Know the World and Still Love It?
10am – Noon
Required Reading: Steven Garber, “But We Don’t Blink” and “Making Peace with Proximate Justice”

II. BUILDING BLOCKS OF A POLITICAL THEOLOGY

24 JAN – Friday  The Kingdoms of this World and the Religious Nature of Governments
10am – Noon
Required Reading: James K.A. Smith, Awaiting the King (pp. 8-23, 26-30)

31 JAN – Friday  The Kingdom of God and the Political Nature of the Church
10am – Noon
Required Reading: Jonathan Leeman, How the Nations Rage (pp. 129-173), Clarke E. Cochran, “Life on the Border: A Catholic Perspective” (pp. 39-42, 47-66)
### 7 FEB – Friday
How Should Christians Use the Bible Ethically and Politically?
10am – Noon


### 14 FEB – Friday
What is Justice? How Should Christians Protest on its Behalf?
10am – Noon

*Required Reading:* Hoang and Johnson, *The Justice Calling* (pp. 1-7; 9-28; 37-54)

## III. CHRISTIAN FAITH IN PUBLIC TODAY

### 21 FEB – Friday
Common Malfunctions of a Public Christian Faith
10am – Noon

*Required Reading:* Volf, *A Public Faith* (Introduction, Chps. 1-3)

### 28 FEB – Friday
TEST
10am – Noon

### 6 MAR – Friday
Christian Realism and Prophetic Witness
10am – Noon

*Required Reading:* Roger E. Olson, “Can a Bridge Be Built between the Christian Political Ethics of Reinhold Niebuhr and Stanley Hauerwas?” (see Google drive)

### 13 MAR – Friday
Op-Ed Blog Post Workshop
10 am
Noon – 1pm


### 20 MAR – Friday
Field Visit: The Trinity Forum
10am – Noon

*Required Reading:* TBA

### 27 MAR – Friday
Field Visit: AND Campaign
10am – Noon

*Required Reading:* TBA
Noon – 1pm


### 3 APR – Friday
Field Visit: Center for Christian Civics
10am – Noon

*Required Reading:* TBA

### 10 APR – Friday
EASTER BREAK

### 17 APR – Friday
Political Liturgies of Christian Hope
10am – Noon


### 20 APR – Monday
Guest Speaker, Andy Crouch
9am – 11 am
23 APR – Thursday

Op-Ed Blog Post and Annotated Bibliography due

TBD – Tuesday

6pm – 8pm

Family Night Dinner with the Center for Public Justice

TBD – Tuesday

6pm – 8 pm

Family Night Dinner with the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission

TBD – Wednesday

6pm – 8pm

Trinity Forum “Evening Conversation,” National Press Club

TBD – Saturday

10 am – Noon

DC Unity and Justice Fellowship’s “Justice Tour”
OP-ED BLOG POST
Due Thursday, April 23

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT
This blogging assignment provides you the opportunity to demonstrate what you are learning about how Christians, as citizens and professionals, exercise power in pluralistic societies. Our understanding of Christian identity and responsibility is shaped by the biblical narrative that reveals God’s character and purposes for creation and its creatures. However, living out the public implications of our Christian faith, as citizens and professionals, is complicated by the reality of moral pluralism. The Christian Bible is not a source of moral authority in the lives of most of our neighbors. Consequently, we define problems and solutions differently. What are you learning about how to exercise power as a policy advocate, policy analyst, policymaker, or public affairs or public relations professional, for example, under such conditions?

Op-Ed Post Profile:
• **What is your role?** You are writing as a young D.C. professional, either a Christian church member or neighborly friend of the Christian church.
• **Who is your publisher?** Consider publications that are interested in cultural and political analysis through the lens of Christian faith, like your campus newspaper, the American Enterprise Institute’s *Values & Capitalism* blog, the Center for Public Justice’s *Shared Justice* blog, Mennonite Central Committee’s policy advocacy blog, or Sojourners magazine.
• **Who is your audience?** Christian church members from your generation—college students and 20-something professionals.
• **What is your topic?** You choose! Consider the following:
  o Evaluate a current event
  o Evaluate a specific policy issue
  o Evaluate specific professional practices or work matters in your career field of interest
  o Evaluate a core course theme in-depth
  Note: please submit your topic to Dr. Baker for approval before writing.
• **How should I organize the blog post?** While the author should enjoy the freedom to organize the blog post as s/he wishes, it is advised that the blog post (a.) define the situation or problem being considered and explain why it’s important and (b.) incorporate course materials to help us consider how the biblical narrative may shape a Christian sense of responsibility on the matter.
• **What information does my audience already have on the issue?** You are writing for an educated audience that is not familiar with this content (same posture as writers at *The Atlantic*, for example).
• **Is the analysis written in an objective voice or a persuasive voice?** This op-ed piece should be both “for information” and “for persuasion.”
• **Do we have examples of Op-Ed Blog Posts you can review?** Yes, we will post samples taken from *The Atlantic* in the ASP Google drive, CPE subfolder.

**Key Tips:**
• Title your Op-Ed Post in the form of a question. Examples include:
  o Current event: “What is a proper Christian response to ‘cancel culture’?”
  o Policy issue: “If environmental stewardship is biblical, should Christian churches more actively support the development of international climate change policy?” Or, “Can Christians disagree on what good immigration policy looks like?”
  o Professional practice: “What should a Christian strategic communicator do when work practices undermine truth or public unity in favor of resentment to mobilize donors and publics?”
  o Core course theme: What does it look like in practice for a Christian church to be political, but not partisan?
• Use subheadings within the article to help your readers track with your arguments.
• Educate first. Then persuade.
• Use stories to educate and persuade. Data is important. Use it. Narrative is more important.

STRUCTURE & ORGANIZATION
• The Op-Ed Post should use a header in the top left corner of the first page to identify:
  o Title of your article (in bold)
  o Your name
  o Date
• Required format is typed, 8 ½ x 11 paper, Garamond, Georgia, or Times New Roman, 11 or 12 font size, single-spaced, with 1-inch margins and numbered pages.
• Minimum word count is 1,000 words. There is no maximum word count.
• Instead of an annotated bibliography, your Op-Ed Post must use hyperlinks to point to online sources of information whenever it can. The more sources you cite, the higher your score will be.
• When selecting sources to incorporate and hyperlink: Strive for balance (i.e. different viewpoints) when presenting information and perspective. Strive for coverage (i.e. multiple organizations) when choosing voices. Strive for credibility (i.e. reputable organizations) when choosing sources to cite.
• Only highlight a word or short phrase (no more than five words) when creating a hyperlink. The process is straightforward. First, copy the online link to the source. Second, highlight the word or short phrase that you wish to attribute to the online source. Third, right click and scroll down to the “Hyperlink” option. Fourth, in the address bar (the cursor should already be there blinking), paste the online link. Lastly, click on the “Ok” button.
• Be sure all hyperlinks are working properly before submitting this assignment.

SUBMISSION—Your paper is due on Thursday, April 23. Submit your essays in MS Word electronically to Dr. Baker as an email attachment. Title the subject of your email: Op-Ed Blog Post.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem Definition or Situation Analysis</th>
<th>30%</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Approaching Expectations</th>
<th>Falls Below Expectations</th>
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<tr>
<td>The blog post’s introduction provides a clear, complete, and compelling account of a current event, policy issue, professional practice, or course theme. The introduction provides more than enough information for the reader to gain a strong understanding of the issue, problem, or situation. Excellent use of hyperlinks to cite reputable sources providing key information.</td>
<td>The blog post introduction provides a clear, substantive account of a current event, policy issue, professional practice, or course theme. The introduction provides adequate information for the reader to gain a basic but adequate understanding of the issue, problem, or situation. Use of hyperlinks is adequate.</td>
<td>The blog is too vague or incomplete in parts when introducing the current event, policy issue, professional practice, or course theme being evaluated. Too often, the writer takes for granted that the reader is knowledgeable on issues or public debates/problems that really should be carefully explained. More information is needed if the reader is to gain a basic understanding of the issue, problem, or situation. Too often, information is not cited.</td>
<td>It is not at all clear what the problem, issue, or situation is that the blog is trying to educate and reflect upon. It may be a case of trying to touch on so many issues that none are evaluated adequately. Even the title is too vague to know what the blog post is supposed to be about.</td>
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<td>Substantive Engagement of Course Themes</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>The blog post clearly, accurately, substantively, and thoughtfully connects to three or more course sources when evaluating the situation. The writing is integrative, connecting course themes and materials to real-world situations and/or student experiences in DC. Course themes and sources are clearly, accurately, and substantively introduced and evaluated for the reader, using hyperlinks when possible.</td>
<td>The blog post connects to two course sources substantively and thoughtfully. The blog provides basic but adequate explanations and evaluations of the CPE concepts it introduces, using quotes and hyperlinks to good effect.</td>
<td>The blog post’s connection to course themes is too often unclear or underdeveloped. The blog post’s explanations and evaluations of the CPE concepts it introduces are too often vague or incomplete, too often assuming the reader knows more than s/he does. Quotes and hyperlinks are too often missing in places where they are required.</td>
<td>The blog post fails to connect to course themes in ways that the reader can appreciate or understand. The blog post fails to provide adequate explanations and evaluations of the CPE concepts it introduces. Quotes and hyperlinks are missing or unrelated to the subject and logical argument of the blog post. In sum, the post is weighted too heavily in favor of empirical over normative content.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of Persuasion</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Provides a clear explanation of what the reader should do next—ask more questions and get informed? Get involved?—and details clear and doable, practical next steps.</td>
<td>Provides a general explanation of what the reader should do next and provides some basic practical steps how</td>
<td>Provides a vague and superficial call for the reader to act; provides unclear or incomplete advice explaining practical steps how</td>
<td>Explanation of what the reader should do next and how is missing or wholly inadequate (e.g. ill-informed, impractical, unethical)</td>
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<td>Project Objectives and Formatting</td>
<td></td>
<td>The blog post is clearly written with an audience of 20-somethings in mind. It is fit for publication in a campus newspaper or professional blog. It follows the assignment’s formatting instructions and meets the minimum word requirement of 1,000.</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1/3 grade. The blog post too often reads like a classroom research project aimed at a professor than a blog post aimed at peers. The formatting instructions are not always followed and the paper is just below the 1,000 word min.</td>
<td>- Whole grade or more. The submission does not meet the basic expectations of what would be required of a professional blog post or campus research paper. Formatting is unprofessional or inadequate. The post is well below the 1,000 word minimum.</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
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WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT
You are required to submit an annotated bibliography comprised of the required course readings listed below. Each annotation is made up of two parts. First, provide a descriptive and substantive account of key content from each reading (200 word minimum; no maximum). It may help to write with your campus professor in mind, with the objective of sharing with her/him what you are reading. Second, provide two questions in response to the material. They may be clarification questions and/or application questions. It may help to construct questions with the author in mind: if s/he were leading our classroom discussion, what more would you want them to share with us to help us understand and apply the content?

Your annotated bibliography must include entries for:
1. Coles, The Call of Stories (Jan 13)
2. Hunter, To Change the World (Jan 14)
3. Levin, Video (Jan 14)
4. James K.A. Smith, You Are What You Love (Jan 15)
5. Hunter, Culture Wars (Jan 16)
6. Hunter, To Change the World (Jan 16)
7. Garber, “But We Don’t Blink” and “Making Peace with Proximate Justice” (Jan 17)
8. James K.A. Smith, Awaiting the King (Jan 24)
9. Leeman, How the Nations Rage (Jan 31)
10. Leeman, How the Nations Rage (Feb 7)
11. Hays, “Violence in Defense of Justice” (Feb 7)
12. Skillen and Pavlischek, “Political Responsibility and the Use of Force” (Feb 7)
13. Hoang and Johnson, The Justice Calling (Feb 14)
14. Volf, A Public Faith (Feb 21)
15. Olson, “Can a Bridge Be Built Between the Christian Political Ethics of Reinhold Niebuhr and Stanley Hauerwas?” (Mar 6)
16. Hauerwas, “Hope Faces Power” (Apr 17)

ORAL PRESENTATION
The final project’s oral presentation builds off the annotated bibliography, but is designed to be a “capstone” project for the entire semester. You have 7 minutes to share a PowerPoint presentation that provides an initial reflection on your semester experience: “Considering what you’ve read, the conversations you’ve collected, the observations you’ve made, and the experiences you’ve gained…what have you learned, how have you changed, and what influence will the lessons you learned have on the decisions you make as you look ahead to what’s next for you after ASP?”

Your oral presentation should:
- Be organized into 2 or 3 main themes you would highlight to characterize your Washington, D.C. semester experience
- Explain how these themes originated and developed over the course of the semester. Different semester elements work together over time to produce change. Tell stories that collectively integrate these five elements:
  o Internship work experience
  o Public policy or Strategic Communication studies
  o Neighborhood engagement and/or other D.C. activities and experiences
  o Conversations with classmates and roommates, informational interviews, and mentors
- As you look ahead to what’s next for you, how are the lessons you learned this semester influencing your perspective and your decisions on specific matters as you prepare to return to campus and/or enter into post-campus life?
## GRADING RUBRIC – ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (70% of Final Project assignment grade)

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<th>3</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bibliography grade</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td><strong>Exceeds Expectations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Meets Expectations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Approaching Expectations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Falls Below Expectations</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Substantive quality of annotation and questions</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Provides accurate and detailed descriptions of main point(s) of the readings, demonstrating evidence of careful and complete reading; good use of quotes to highlight key passages; clarification and/or application questions demonstrate thoughtful engagement with material, often also explaining why the question matters to the student; most annotations exceed the 200-word minimum.</td>
<td>Provides accurate but general descriptions of the main point(s) of readings; on rare occasion, some obvious points of emphasis are missing, suggesting reading could have been more careful or complete; clarification and/or application questions are relevant to the reading and constructive to the learning process; annotations meet the 200-word minimum.</td>
<td>Provides overly vague, sometimes inaccurate descriptions of the main point(s) of readings, or too many points of emphasis are completely missing, indicating tests were not read carefully or completely. Questions tend to be too superficial or unrelated to core content; Too often less than 200-word minimum.</td>
<td>Annotations are incomplete, contain serious errors, or show no recognition of the key arguments or points of emphasis, indicating poor or incomplete reading. Questions are missing or mostly too superficial or unrelated to core content; Most annotations are less than 200-word minimum.</td>
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## GRADING RUBRIC – ORAL PRESENTATION (30% of Final Project assignment grade)

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<td>Presentation grade</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td><strong>Exceeds Expectations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Meets Expectations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Approaching Expectations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Falls Below Expectations</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Balanced treatment of 2-3 semester themes</strong></td>
<td>The presentation clearly introduces 2-3 themes; presenter takes the time to explain what the themes mean before telling stories to explain how they help characterize their semester experience; presentation considers two themes equally (3rd may be shorter).</td>
<td>The presentation introduces 2-3 themes; presenter provides general take on what the themes mean before telling stories to explain how they help characterize their semester experience; slight substantive imbalances in presentation among themes.</td>
<td>-1/3 letter grade. There is a noticeable imbalance in the treatment of the semester theme(s), but each theme is considered; the presenter assumes audience knows what themes mean, explanation too vague.</td>
<td>-Whole grade or more. One or more of the themes discussed is identified but largely unconsidered in relation to the other theme(s); themes are not suitably introduced or explained.</td>
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<td>Balanced incorporation of 5 semester elements</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>The presentation skillfully integrates content from each of the 4 semester elements—(1) Internship, (2) Public Policy or Strat Comm, (3) Neighborhood Engagement or DC city experiences, and (4) conversations—when explaining the origins and development of at least two themes. Each element receives substantive treatment.</td>
<td>The presentation presents content related to each of the 4 required semester elements, but there are slight imbalances in treatment; one or two elements do not receive the same careful treatment or level of integration as the others.</td>
<td>The presentation misses one of the four semester elements it is meant to evaluate. Or, all four elements are present, but one is only referenced but not adequately evaluated.</td>
<td>The presentation is missing two or more of the four required semester elements, or two or more elements are only referenced but not evaluated.</td>
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<td>Quality of integration and experiential specificity in analysis</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>The presentations skillfully and substantively connects specific conversations, observations, experiences, and lessons learned from the 4 semester elements to the 2-3 themes that define the student’s semester experience.</td>
<td>The connections between conversations, observations, experiences, and lessons learned from the 4 semester elements to the 2-3 themes are clear and adequate, though could be more substantive.</td>
<td>The presentation evidences a compartmentalized approach to processing the semester, it presents more like a book report, providing accounts of different activities but too often does not explain lessons learned and how they led to change and growth.</td>
<td>Presentation of content is disorganized; experiential elements are minimally referenced; presentation focuses on general observation or opinion rather than change and growth.</td>
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<td>Statement on influence of lessons learned as we look ahead</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>The presentation provides thoughtful statements that consider how specific lessons learned cited in the presentation are influencing the student’s decisions on specific matters as they plan to return to campus or look ahead to what’s next after graduation.</td>
<td>The presentation provides clear but general statements that consider how lessons learned are influencing the student’s thinking and/or decisions on general matters as they return to campus or look ahead to what’s next after graduation.</td>
<td>Statements that consider how lessons learned are influencing the student’s thinking and decisions on specific matters as they return to campus or look ahead to what’s next after graduation are too often vague or superficial.</td>
<td>Statements on the influence of lessons learned are inadequate or missing; may be due to poor time management of presentation.</td>
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