

Learning Diary

Your learning diary provides a large part of the basis for grading the course. You should therefore compile it carefully so that the teacher can assess your learning process from it. The main purpose of the learning diary is to help you to deepen your understanding of the subject and become more reflective of your own learning process. You should not try to re-write the lecture, nor should you use the learning diary as a notebook. You should write a short summary of the topic (day's lecture, article you've read, experiment you have performed etc.), no more than one page per assignment. In this summary, you should also answer the following questions:

- What was known and familiar beforehand?
- What did you learn?
- What did you learn, because you are in the course?
- What remained unclear?

The learning diary for the whole course will thus be no more than about 25 pages (preferably less!). A **very important** part of the learning diary is the last paragraph, where you should reflect on the whole course, and especially on your own learning process!

- How well did you learn the topics?
- Did your learning process change during the course?
- Did your expectations of the subject matter change, broaden or narrow during the course?
- What grade would you give yourself?

Grading the learning diary

On a scale from 1 to 5

0 (rejected): "Didn't put any effort to it"

You haven't put any effort to the learning diary, or it contains mainly misunderstandings.

1-2 "Knowing the facts"

You have learned the basic concepts and definitions. The main facts presented in the lectures are mentioned but you haven't got any further in understanding them. This prevents you to see connections between things. You are in the "rote learning" phase.

2-3 "Understanding of separate topics"

You show that you understand the separate topics and subjects covered in the course and can discuss them. However, you lack the "bigger picture" and have problems to link the separate topics to each other.

3-4 "Understanding the connections between subjects"

You have created a uniform and coherent picture of the studied subjects and can link them well together. You have started to understand how the topics covered in the course influence the environment by connecting theory and concepts to observable phenomena in the nature. You can be reflective to your own learning.

4-5 "Deep understanding"

You can put the things you have learned at the course into larger context and understand deeply the connections between the subjects. You are able to apply the information from the course together with your earlier knowledge in new contexts and even create new insights. You are able to look at phenomena from different viewpoints, e.g. by linking the subjects to your own work / studies or to the processes that exist in the nature.

The way you present the learning diary (clarity and coherence of the text) will have some influence (+/- 1) to the grade. The length of the diary should be about 10-15 pages, definitely not more than 25! The learning diaries will be returned with comments after the course ends.

At the end of the learning diary you should grade yourself based on the criteria / levels of understanding shown above and include a short (few sentences - half page) justification for your grade.