Reflective Journals and Writing Responses

Your responses to readings, and journals written related to “prompts” offered in the syllabus, should include reflective analysis of your perspective, not merely a descriptive listing of events, as in a diary.

Your writing should reflect your evolving experience in the class, as well as your views of beauty and aesthetics; self-expression and discovery; human well-being, and our relationship with nature as expressed in the garden. It will also reflect your opinions, thoughts and feelings about writings assigned for reading.

Journals can include/focus on:

- Issues/concepts of art and horticulture as you perceive them; personal opinion and experience; or statements of belief – “I believe that this garden is beautiful and provides a sense of respite because….”

- How your thinking, opinions, and beliefs about art and horticulture are changing/may change through experience, as well as what factors are influencing those changes.

- What have you come to understand about art and horticulture, and how did you come to know it?

- Problems, areas of ambiguity, and how you resolve problem(s).

- Observations about artists, art works, art techniques, gardeners, gardens, landscapes, etc., ….what you admire, what you dislike.

- Something you are learning, discovering, uncovering, and how you are learning it as an on-going process; what factors contributed to your successful learning? Unsuccessful learning?

Criteria for grading journals:

- Reflective – not just descriptive!
- Submitted once each week in a timely manner, a page in length, at the least, with a developed idea (consistently late journals will impact your grade, see the syllabus for due dates).
- Evidence of analytical, thoughtful weighing of art and horticulture concepts & their meanings.
- Evidence what you are learning, how you are learning it, from this course experience.

Sending your journals:

- Please paste your writing response or journal into the body of an email to ME14@cornell.edu (no attachments).
- In the subject line, print the number (week one, week two, etc.).