Example of Reflection: Service & Leadership

**Reflection:** How does a twenty-one-year-old handle organizing an academic conference? I balanced it with the support of my faculty mentor and fellow students. After last week’s literary conference—which I designed, organized, and provided the keynote speaker—future conferences seem much easier to facilitate. While I handled the material necessities of the conference: reserving the building, securing the honorarium and money from student council for refreshments and lunch, my friends put together the various panels. They organized it according to regional and theoretical studies. This pattern showed us the interconnections between author, reader, community, and literature. And, thankfully, I cast off the formidable tasks that I would have overburdened me. Because each one of us had different abilities, we were able to seamlessly put together a very successful conference that will become the cornerstone for future undergraduate research in English.

We have decided that next year we will expand into the university’s surrounding communities—we’ll also look for greater student involvement. Getting more funding, and possibly reserving another building next year, will be some challenges to anticipate. Some of the professors who participated are talking about using this as a component for next year’s Human Sit course. The possibilities are so exciting!

**Proficiencies:** Because of these experiences, I now have a more complete understanding of the reciprocal nature of various academic and non-academic organizations. Of course, my confidence in understanding how and where to secure funding for such endeavors has greatly improved. My handling of administrative and business discourse has increased as well, especially in determining how using language may influence the donor attitude of such organizations. Finally, my time management and organizational management skills were tested by coordinating and delegating for this small-scale conference (125 attendees).