

FORM 8840
APRIL 2025

reflecting on REFLECTION

FORM 8840.01 | Design of Formative Experience
Museum of Formation Exhibit
April 30, 2025

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Objective

As a culminating project for FORM 8840- Design of Formative Experience course in the PhD of Formative Education at Boston College, Dr. Marina Bers asked students to present a curated museum exhibit for a Museum of Formation concept. This needed to include prototypes for a powerful idea (see Seymour Papert) presented previously in class- one requirement: the prototypes and the exhibit needed to focus on the concept of formation.



Powerful Idea: Reflection



Learning Goals:

By engaging with the exhibit, visitors will be able to:

1. Understand Reflection as a Learning Tool

- Recognize how reflection deepens understanding and strengthens problem-solving skills.

2. Experience Reflection in Action

- Actively engage in reflection, rather than just learning about it passively.

3. Apply Reflection to Personal & Professional Growth

- Leave with an understanding of how reflection can shape their learning, creativity, and decision-making.

4. Explore Reflection in Different Disciplines

- See how reflection influences sciences (human-centered design/engineering), arts, education, and leadership.

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Exhibit Description

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Featuring the following elements:

- Echoes of Reflection- A Digital Reflection Archive
- From Me to You- A Reflective postcard activity and display
- Reflective Open-Mic
- Silent Reflection Corner
- Real-Time Reflection Board

“Reflecting on Reflection” is an interactive exhibit that invites visitors to step into a shared space of introspection and meaning-making. Centered around a live “Open Mic for Reflection,” the experience prompts guests to voice their personal insights, engage with others’ stories, and explore how reflection deepens learning, creativity, and growth across disciplines. Visitors leave not only having learned about reflection—but having practiced it in community.

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Prototypes

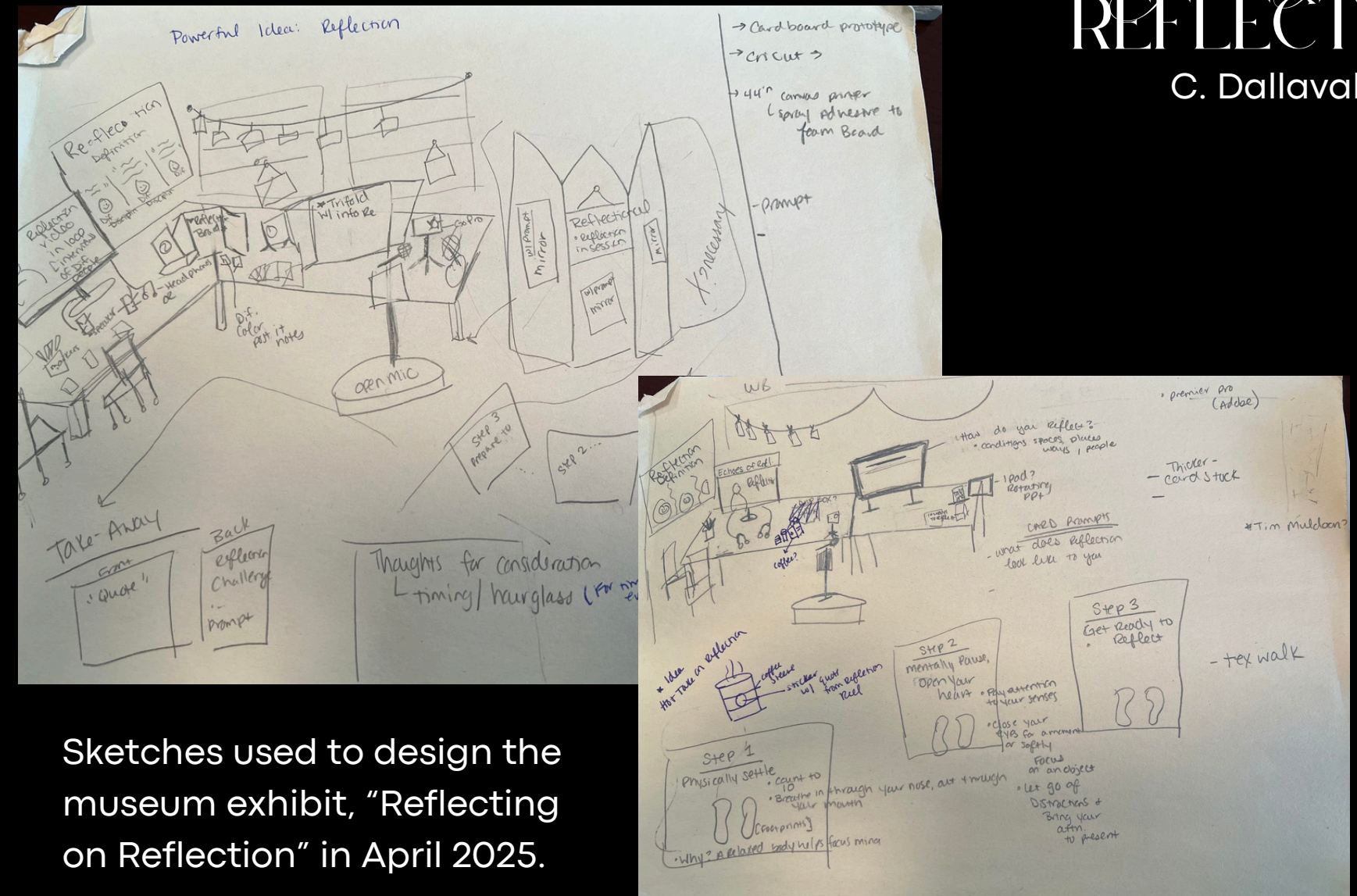
Using Boston College's The Hatchery Makerspace (a part of the Schiller Institute), I was able to imagine the classroom space, sketch out a design and, ensure that the learning goals were met. Through testing prototypes, I could see what worked and what didn't. I imagined the space differently, revisiting how we could elicit the experience that yielded the understanding.

Additional training in the workroom of the hatchery included:

- Vinyl Cutting
- Poster Printing
- Laser Cutting

Utilizing the materials in the space, I created materials used in the exhibit.

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Sketches used to design the museum exhibit, "Reflecting on Reflection" in April 2025.



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Exhibit Feature | Print Materials

Part of the exhibit included visuals and posters that would be on display to provide context, diversify delivery of materials, and provide additional content to digest throughout the experience.

The definition of “reflection” and its epistemology provided participants with context to understand how the phrase was used and formed. In considering its role in the concept of formation, participants actively engaged in a retrospective on the term’s history, use, and understanding.

re·flec·tion

(noun)

- the production of an image by or as if by a mirror
- the action of bending or folding back
- a thought, idea, or opinion formed or a remark made as a result of meditation
- consideration of some subject matter, idea, or purpose

Source: Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). *Reflection*. In Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. Retrieved March 23, 2025, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reflection>

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Poster examples used in exhibit on April 30, 2025.

re·flec·tion

Origin

Latin
reflectere

RE- FLECTERE

“Re-” = Back

“Flectere” = To Bend

↓
Latin
reflex

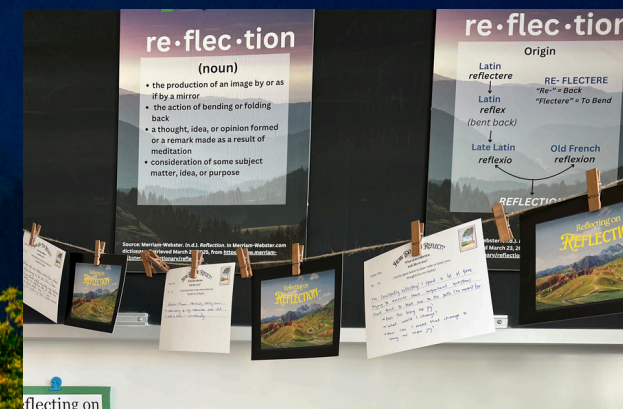
(bent back)

↓
Late Latin
reflexio

↓
Old French
reflexion

REFLECTION

Source: Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). *Reflection*. In Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. Retrieved March 23, 2025, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reflection>



Reflection posters on display along with completed postcards hung on display in exhibit (April 30, 2025).

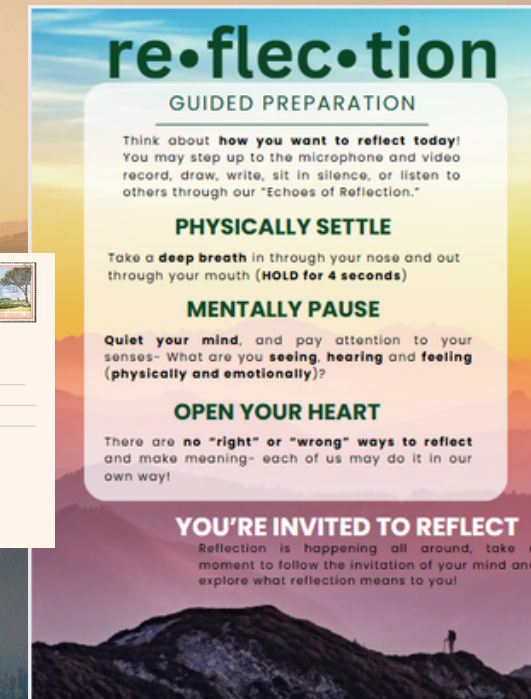
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Exhibit Feature | Print Materials (contd)

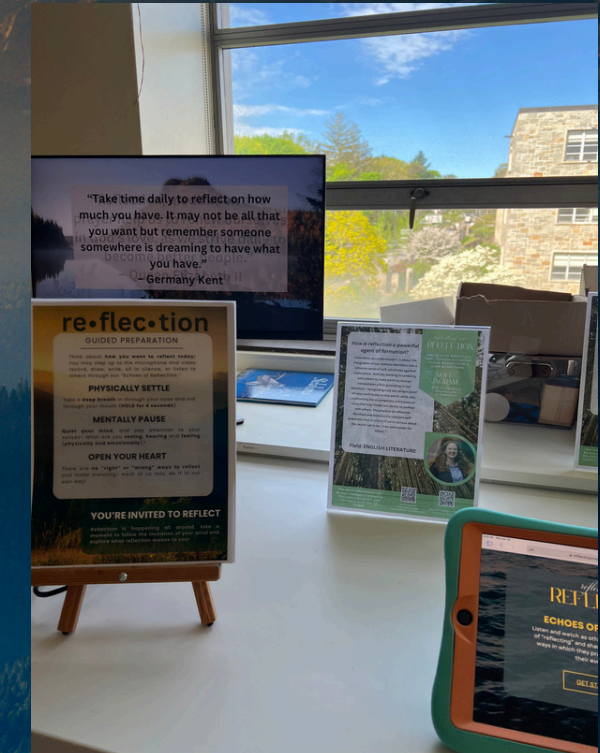
Additional print materials for the exhibit included:

- A Reflection Preparation Guide
- Testimonials from faculty and staff about how they use reflection in their research, life, and studies
- Postcards participants reflected on and were hung in a display.

Materials created opportunities for individuals to engage at the exhibit and continue after the event.



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Postcard example (far left).
Reflection Preparation Guide
example (center). Image of how
print materials were
displayed/distributed (right).



Examples of interdisciplinary perspectives. Each piece is also connected to the faculty's research profile.

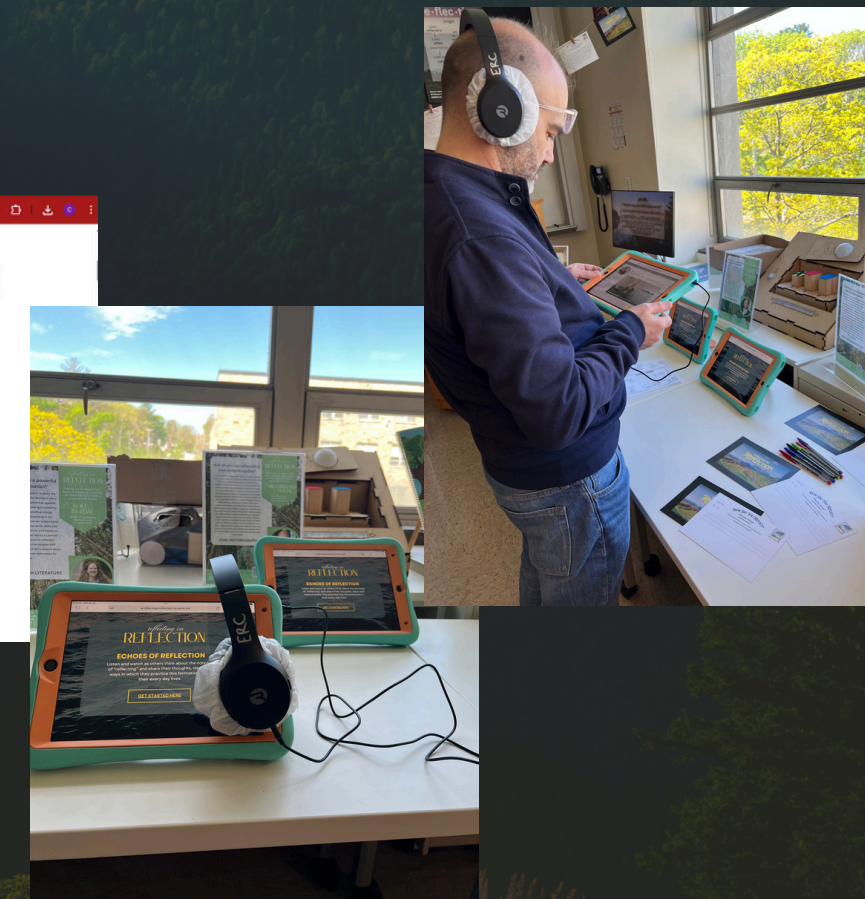
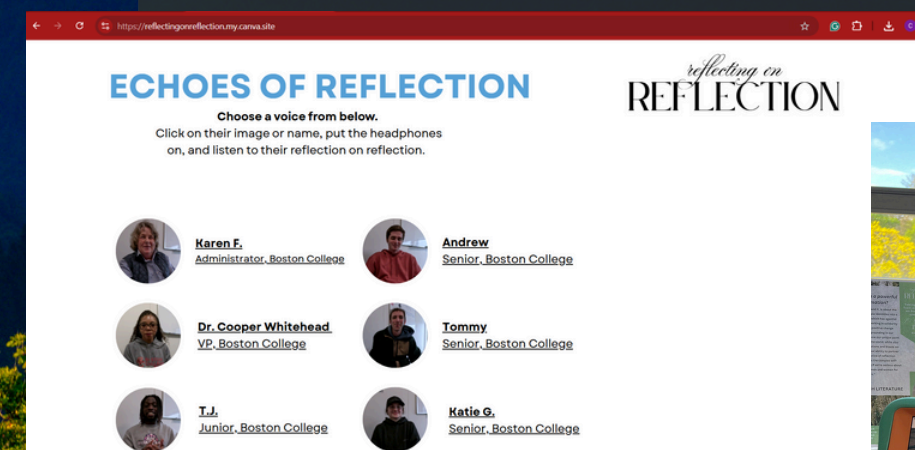
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Exhibit Feature | Echoes of Reflection



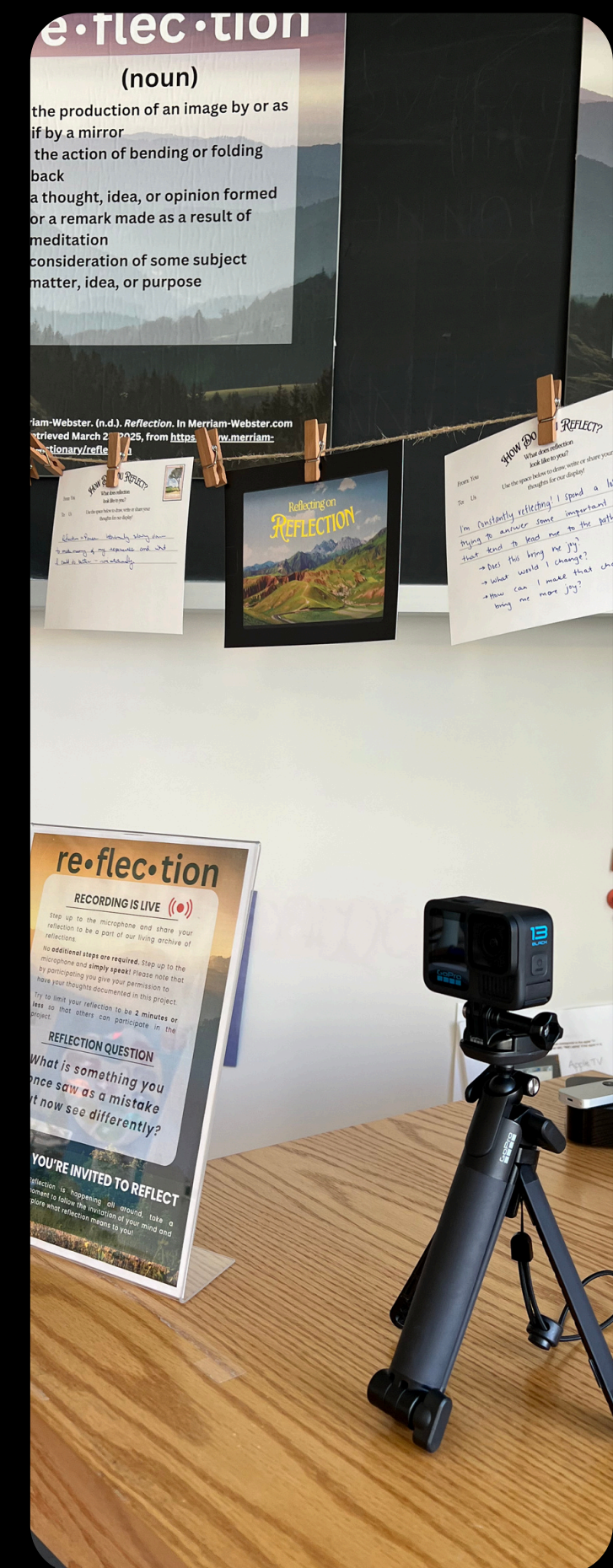
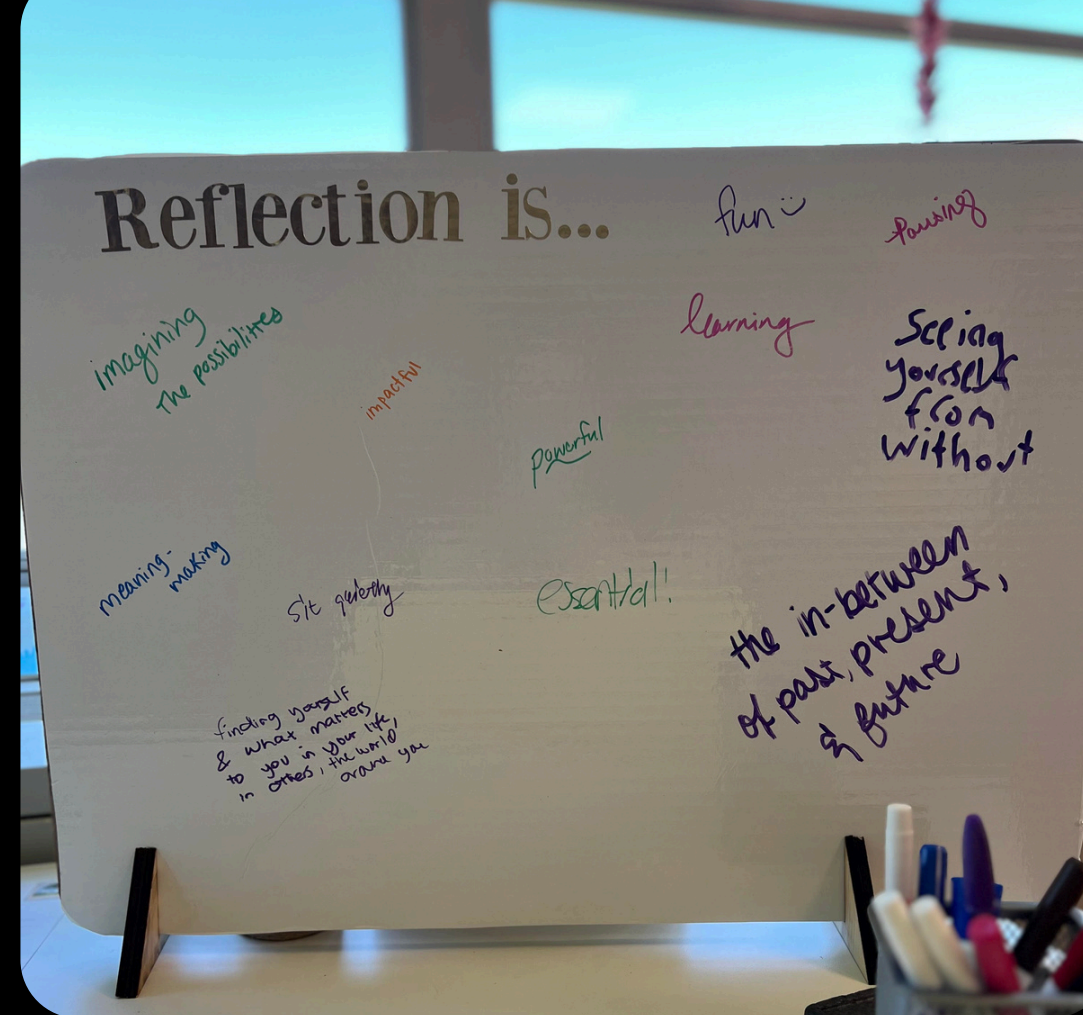
Echoes of Reflection is formatted as a website and a digital archive. Over the course of two (2) months, I interviewed fifteen seniors, faculty, and staff members asking them about how they use reflection and what ways it was a powerful agent of formation. Their thoughts became a digital archive and resource for others to contemplate how reflection may serve them as a tool in life.



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Exhibit in Practice

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Designer Reflections

Although I had never considered myself a designer, through this experience, I learned that I may have missed an essential piece of my identity as an educator. This experience reinforced my core beliefs:

- **Everyone has a greater purpose.** Our job, as educators, is help them get to know themselves and their values well enough for them to walk confidently into their calling.
- **Experiences help people feel what they cannot articulate.** Throughout my career, I have built and designed experiences that encourage people to be intentional, reflective and authentic within spaces.
- **Education is all about design-** how we think about the spaces we inhabit is critical to learning. The spaces we cultivate either inhibit or liberate people to center their humanity and explore what life is about and how they want to live.
- Most importantly, I think it's critical to **love deeply, have fun, and share your gifts with the world!**



A silhouette of two hikers on a mountain ridge at sunset. One hiker stands on the left, looking out over the landscape. The other hiker is on the right, leaning forward and pointing towards the distance. The background shows rolling hills and a bright sunset sky.

COLLEEN DALLAVALLE

Educator | Designer | Experience Curator

In a way, aren't we all on a
journey to design the life
we imagined?

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Thank You

Special Thanks to Dr. Marina Bers, my peers, students, staff, and faculty
who helped make this exhibit a reality.

In a way, aren't we all on a journey to design the life we imagined?

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