

CPSY 519 – Pre-Practicum in Community Engagment

Fall 2016 – Credit: 1 semester hour

Instructor: Tod Sloan, Ph.D.

Contact Information: sloan@lclark.edu , office hours by appointment

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Examines strategies for developing collaborative partnerships with community-based agencies to promote social justice. Through supporting coursework, student volunteers gain a greater understanding of struggles and resilience in the communities they serve. Students gain awareness of how social and agency policy impact diverse communities and inspect their potential role as change agents.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an opportunity to examine the theoretical underpinnings and practical application of civic engagement. Students in this course will complete readings and discussions relative to working with members of diverse communities from social justice and civic perspectives. Students will inspect their own assumptions, biases, and challenges to working with diverse and traditionally marginalized populations. By the end of this course, students will demonstrate 1) clarity in their potential role as social change agents, 2) a theoretical framework for guiding their practices, and 3) increased ability to develop and maintain non-exploitive relationships.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will help students:

- 1) fully engage in a meaningful volunteer experience and avoid potential pitfalls common to beginning social change agents;
- 2) gain an understanding of their role and experience from a social justice perspective;
- 3) develop a system of support and accountability by having consistent contact with the course instructor and peers;
- 4) gain a greater understanding of the struggles and resilience in communities they serve; and begin to connect with advocacy projects
- 5) gain a greater understanding about social and agency policies impacting the communities they serve.

ASSIGNMENTS

Class Preparation

Participants are expected to complete the assigned readings (to be announced) and to synthesize and apply them in class. Classroom discussions are an opportunity to bring up questions about the assigned readings, deepen one's understanding of the issues under study, and integrate course material with one's own personal and professional experience. This is worth 25% of grade.

Presentation of a reading

Students are required to provide at least one article to the class related to their type of site/group and/or the population/cause they serve. Students will lead a discussion (5 min overview, plus 10 minute facilitated dialogue) regarding the reading and the issues it raises. We will create a reading/presentation schedule during class. Readings will be posted on the moodle site at least two days before the class session in which they will be discussed. Fellow students should read at least

half of the posted articles before arriving at class in order to discuss them. This is worth 25% of grade.

Participation in Sharing and Reflection on Community Engagement

This will be one of our main activities in each class session. Be prepared to share about the emotional, ideological, organizational, political, etc dimensions of your community engagement experiences. 25% of grade.

Reflection Paper

Write a 500-word volunteer site review and reflection paper. Students will provide a description of the site/group and their involvement as a volunteer. Highlight issues related to culture, class, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and social justice. Make connections to how furthering the agency's or group's mission will help you better understand the resilience, and mental health and wellness issues impacting the communities in which they are embedded. 25% of grade. Due by email to sloan@lclark.edu by November 20.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY/SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

Lewis & Clark College adheres to a nondiscriminatory policy with respect to employment, enrollment, and program. The College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap or disability, sexual orientation, or marital status and has a firm commitment to promote the letter and spirit of all equal opportunity and civil rights laws.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability and/or you have emergency medical information to share please make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Session 1: Overview of the human services sector in its social-historical context
(9/9)

Session 2: Researching human service organizations; volunteering.
(9/21)

Session 3: Training for ongoing involvement in non-profit and grassroots organizations
(10/7)

Session 4: Reflections on experience: Learning from the Community of Practice (or
Conference on Community Research and Action – PSU)
(10/21)

Session 5: Mentoring, Leadership, Group Dynamics, Politics
(11/4)