IDS 398.02
Professional Practice: The Service Learning Experience in Civic Engagement

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Course Description:
Professional practice in Civic Engagement is a formal, cooperative field experience between a student completing the minor in Civic Engagement, a site supervisor, and the coordinator of the Minor. This capstone course provides the opportunity to integrate academic study with service learning by having a supervised, practical experience in a professional environment that focuses on civic responsibility. “Service learning combines community service with academic instruction, focusing on critical, reflective thinking and personal and civic responsibility. Service learning programs involve students in activities that address community-identified needs, while developing their academic skills and commitment to their community (The American Association of Community Colleges).” At this point in your college career, you have probably been involved in some form of community service, volunteered, or been assigned an experiential learning activity in another course. Through this culminating experience, you will be able to apply your class lessons to a specific community need. Your learning will expand beyond the classroom as you actively participate in civic engagement.

Course objectives—General Minor:
• To apply competencies (civic knowledge, skill, and attitude) learned throughout the Minor course work.
• To transform informed judgments into civically responsible actions.
• To demonstrate the ability to recognize “moral” and “civic” dimensions of issues and apply appropriate intervention skills.
• To develop a working awareness as an engaged citizen and a community member.
• To identify various spheres of influence and gain an appreciation for diversity.
• To demonstrate personal growth through structured application and consistent reflection.

Course objectives—Urban Teacher Prep Emphasis:
• To draw connections between issues which low-income and under-served students face and the greater relevant social and civic issues.
• To recognize inequity as it exists in the lives of low-income and under-served students—both as it is shown in the classroom and at home.
• To better appreciate the reciprocal relationship between school and community.
• To become aware of potential methods of collaboration with students, parents, and community members to ensure civic justice.
• To become acquainted with causes and initiatives through which, as an educator, one can create positive change for students.
**Evaluation:** The evaluation of students for this course is based on the following components:

1) **Placement Request (Proposal).** The student will identify a community service learning need (consistent with student’s personal goals) in an organization within the community. The student will then contact the organization’s supervisor, explain the professional practice, and subsequently contact the minor coordinator with a brief report of the proposed professional practice. Refer to the Internship Application Packet for further details of the Placement Request Proposal.

2) **Supervisor Evaluations (Midterm and Final).** Information provided by the site supervisor will account for 20% of the student’s grade. Site supervisors will turn in a midterm and a final evaluation. These evaluations contain a number grade (0-100) for the student’s performance and answer questions about their work, professional behavior, knowledge in the area, and professional appearance. The supervisor will also certify that the student has completed the required number of hours of service for his/her project. The Minor Coordinator is responsible for sending and collecting these evaluations.

3) **Professional Practice Cohort-On-line weekly assignments and participation (when logistically appropriate & could vary during summer session).** Using the discussion board in Blackboard, students should post at least once a week to answer weekly questions posted by the instructor. These questions will function as a weekly reflection in which students will provide information about their service learning experience. Students should also comment on one of the other students posting. There will be weekly postings. **Weekly questions will be posted on Monday morning and students have until Sunday at midnight to post.** This gives students one week to respond to each week’s posting. For this course, posting to the discussion board will be equivalent to attendance in a face-to-face course. Students who wish to do well in their online assignment grades will access all assigned online material; participate thoughtfully in on-line discussions and complete on-line assignments in a timely fashion. Evaluation will occur every week. The instructor will partially rely on data provided by the course software to determine students’ online activity.
Here are some general guidelines that will be used to assess on-line assignment and participation grades:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>80-100% of pts</th>
<th>50 to 80% of pts</th>
<th>30 to 50% of pts</th>
<th>0 to 20% of pts</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Development of ideas</strong></td>
<td>Well-developed ideas; introduces new ideas; stimulates discussion.</td>
<td>Developing ideas; sometimes stimulates discussion.</td>
<td>Poorly developed ideas; does not add to the discussion.</td>
<td>Did not enter the discussion for one or more lessons.</td>
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<td><strong>Evidence of critical thinking</strong></td>
<td>Clear evidence of critical thinking. Postings are clear, relevant and demonstrate depth of insight. Arguments are well supported.</td>
<td>Beginnings of critical thinking. Postings tend to address peripheral issues. Generally accurate, but could be improved with more analysis and creative thought.</td>
<td>Poorly developed critical thinking. Tendency to recite fact rather than address issues.</td>
<td>Did not enter the discussion for one or more lessons.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Response to instructor and other students</strong></td>
<td>Interacts two or more times with the instructor and/or other students.</td>
<td>Interacts at least once with either the instructor or other students.</td>
<td>Only responds to the question without reference or response to other student comments.</td>
<td>Did not enter the discussion for one or more lessons.</td>
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<td><strong>Adherence to deadlines</strong></td>
<td>2 or more messages posted before each deadline.</td>
<td>At least 1 message posted before each deadline.</td>
<td>1 message was posted after a deadline.</td>
<td>Did not enter the discussion for one or more lessons.</td>
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4) **Self Reflection (“Person in the Mirror”).** Read chapter 2 in Robert Coles’ book, *The Call of Service* or a similar reading. In your 4-5 page paper, consider your own experiences with service and what led you into this minor and this service learning activity. How does your service fit within Coles’ framework?

5) **Portfolio and Final Report.** The portfolio and final report should be provided on an e-file that will be submitted in person or through Blackboard. The purpose of this portfolio is to collect different samples of student work and evaluate their experience in the professional practice. Because the nature of assignments will vary widely, the exact form and format of portfolios will vary too. The portfolio and final report should include:
   - Cover page. This will include name of the student, agency where the student worked, supervisor name, and credits earned.
   - Copy of student’s current resume.
   - Collection of samples of work (7 to 10 products worked on during the internship). This can include copies of press-releases, articles written and published, pictures of events that were organized, pictures that were published, video clips that were shot or...
edited, video clips in which students participated, sample of web-page developed, letters written, program rundowns, brochures, newsletters, and/or press-kits. Each sample of work should include an introduction that describes the activity that the student was responsible for and what did the student contribute within the project. Additionally indicate who conceived the idea, who wrote, who edited the project and which additional people contributed to the project. **Please include samples of projects you worked on, even if the final draft was not yours.**

- Self-analysis report (7-10 pages). In the paper, students will provide a self-analysis, reflection, and review of their performance and experience in the field. This paper should include a description of your responsibilities, activities, and any outcomes.

Below is a description of the distribution of points in this course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Midterm &amp; Final Evaluation</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection Paper</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>On-line Assignment and Participation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement Request (proposal)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio and Final Report</td>
<td>30</td>
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**Grading**

Grades are awarded based on the quality of your performance, evaluated in the context of your mastery of the concepts discussed in this course and the general expectations of an upper division university student at Illinois State University. Letter grades reflect an assessment that your performance:

- **A** achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
- **B** achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
- **C** achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect
- **D** achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
- **F** Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed.