

## SAMPLE SYLLABUS

### EXL 202 Service-Learning Immersion

This course combines relevant and meaningful service with the community, enhanced academics, learning and purposeful civic learning. Students have an opportunity to work with a non-profit partner organization chosen by the instructor in a location outside the greater Springfield community as well as service to a similar organization in the student's home community. This course is a unique learning opportunity that pairs sociological theory with community service. Through this course students are constantly making the link between "lived" experiences in the community and the concepts and theories presented in this and other classes.

NOTE: Students must attend the service experience in the location chosen by the instructor to enroll in this course.

During the spring semester students will use the Alternative Spring Break destination as the location outside of Springfield. Contact the instructor for more information about the destination specific to the semester offered.

### Course Philosophy

Learning is an active process from the points of view of the teacher and the learner. Instructors and students have a strong responsibility to one another. The instructor's obligations include (a) being knowledgeable and current on the subject matter, (b) planning and providing quality learning experiences, (c) evaluating work fairly and promptly, and (d) assisting you to meet the course objectives and to fulfill your Service-Learning goals. Student obligations include (a) preparing and completing assignments, (b) actively participating in the learning process, and (c) expressing needs to the instructor.

### Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand the foundational questions related to the social issue of hunger and homelessness.
2. Explain key issues for the community organization and its values and mission.
3. Identify strategies for social influences/social change in others and yourself.
4. Enhance overall Service-Learning comprehension by participating in the reflective learning process.
5. Reflect on the relationship between the individuals and society within contemporary American context.

### Accommodations for Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. A documented disability can include: physical, psychological, chronic health, vision, hearing, learning, traumatic brain injury, Asperger's Syndrome and/or autism, cognitive, and AD/HDD. Please notify the instructor during the first week of class of any accommodations needed for the course. While ODS does accept late applications, accommodations are not retroactive. All accommodations must be approved through the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 217-206-6666, HRB 80.

Instructor: TBA

### Course Requirement and Grading

The traditional scale of grading will be used.

A	>92
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	<60

### **Service Sites Attendance and Participation – 15%**

A total of 60 service hours are required for this course. While in the destination city, 30-40 hours of service will be completed; however, 20-30 additional hours will need to be done in a local non-profit agency, of the student's choice, that is focused on hunger and homelessness issues. The instructor will work with the local agency coordinator to assign the grade, as well as observe participation in the destination city.

### **Online Seminar/Onsite Seminar Participation – 15%**

The online seminars are the student's chance to critically digest the reading material and reflect on site experiences through group discussion and activities. Students must be prepared to discuss the readings in order to actively integrate academic and practical components of the course.

### **Local Site Selection Information Paper – 10%**

The local site selection information needs to outline the site the student will be serving for at least 20 hours during the semester of registration. This site needs to be a non-profit and serve homeless individuals or populations close to or below the poverty line. It can focus on either homelessness or hunger issues, or both. To complete the assignment, the student needs to have contacted the agency and arranged to volunteer for at least 20 hours during the semester of registration. This paper needs to be 2-4 pages, double-spaced that includes 1) description of the agency; 2) reason why this particular agency was selected; 3) the site coordinator who was contacted including telephone number and email address; and 4) what specific projects the student will be doing while serving. The site coordinator will be contacted by the instructor to make sure this site is appropriate for this course. If the student has problems finding a specific agency in his/her local area, the instructor and the Service-Learning staff are available to assist.

### **Course Action Plan – 10%**

The action plan should outline personal learning objectives and what the student hopes to gain from the experience at the service sites. While there are learning objectives for the course, it is important to think about what you, as the student, would like to personally accomplish over this semester. Examples of these personal learning objectives may include: to become more confident dealing with conflict or improve communication skills with homeless individuals. The length of the personal action plan should be 3-5 pages, double-spaced.

### **Reflection Journal – 20%**

There will be a journal assignment aimed at exploring the sociological implications of issues arising at your service sites. The student is expected to incorporate readings and site experiences in these reflection entries. Site experiences should contain "fact" and student's own review and critique of performance. More detailed information on the format of this assignment will be explained during the first seminar. A minimum of 20 entries are needed for this reflection journal that is equivalent to one entry for every 3 hours of service.

### **Portfolio – 30%**

The final project will be a portfolio which will cover the work done in this course. There is no one model for portfolios because each person has a unique learning style; the presentation of that learning will be unique.

**The syllabus lists a number of course objectives. The portfolio should include a personal assessment of these course objectives:**

- Did I meet these objectives?
- What, if any anything, did I gain from meeting these objectives?
- Did the course provide opportunities to meet these objectives?
- Were these valid objectives?

### **An assessment of personal learning objectives:**

At the beginning of the semester you, as a student, were asked to think about personal learning objectives for the course, which were outlined in an action plan. Examples of these personal learning objectives may include: to become

more confident when dealing with conflict or to improve communication skills with homeless individuals. Students should ask themselves:

- What kind of progress has been made towards these objectives?
- What kind of evidence can I show?
- How will this learning impact me in the future?

**A statement of what Service-Learning means to you, as a student:**

Students have been learning about Service-Learning first-hand. Hopefully, they have a better understanding of what Service-Learning means to them personally. The challenge is to define Service-Learning personally. Students should not simply say that service or Service-Learning feels good; they need to take it a step further and ask themselves why and how service has affected them, if it indeed it did.

**A description of your struggles and satisfactions:**

Most service and Service-Learning experiences produce laughter and tears. In this section the student should try to example their struggles and satisfactions with this course. (Please refer to *The Call of Service*, Robert Coles, chapter: Motivations, Satisfactions and/or Hazards.)

**Additional Materials:**

The student might choose to include additional materials in the portfolio will help to paint a more complete picture of the work done. This is neither required nor expected. Examples of additional materials include: photographs, items from the site, related article or news clippings that connect the student with the service/issue.

**Portfolio Format:**

There is not a strict format for the portfolio. As long as the required items are included, the student has completed the assignment. Please speak with the instructor to discuss the format of the portfolio. While writing is the most typical format for a portfolio, it is not always the most effective for everyone. If the student is planning to write the final portfolio, a rough estimate of pages might be 8-10 with reasonable margins. Collect the portfolio items in a small 3-ring binder or email the contents to the instructor.

**Reflection Model:**

Use the Strachan (2001) model of reflection when constructing the reflection journal and final project. This model will also be used for every reflection activity done for this course. The Strachan “what” model of reflection asks three basic questions: What? So what? Now what?

- *What?* What did I just do? This outlines the facts of the experience. Feelings are not represented yet.
- *So what?* How do I feel about what I have just done? Have I been impacted by this experience? What did I learn from this experience? \*\*Remember: it’s okay not to love the experience. \*\*
- *Now what?* Now that I have done this and I feel this way, what is next? Do I want to do this again?

Students are encouraged to be creative in the approach to answering these questions. Students can write, compose, design or create:

- A reflection paper (8-10 pages)
- A 30-minute videotape/audiotape presentation
- A compilation and analysis of interviews with site members (discuss confidentiality issues with the instructor)
- A proposal for future projects that are believed to be necessary based on the experience at both service sites (5-8 pages)
- A painting , collage, or collection photographs accompanied by text to explain the meaning (5-8 pages)

**Required Text:**

Anthony, Laurie, (1999). *Have a Great One! A Homeless Man’s Story*. Dublin, OH: Anthony Publishing.

Ehrenreich, Barbara. (2001). *Nickel and Dime: On (Not) Getting by in America*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

\*\*Additional articles provided by instructor.

## **Calendar of Topics:**

### **Online Units before service trip**

#### Unit 1: Introduction to Course Reflection

- Overview
- What is Service and Service-Learning?
- History of Service in America
- Kinds of Service

#### Unit 2: Discussion of Rhetoric and Terminology of “others”

- Privilege and Service
- **Local Site Selection Information Due**

#### Unit 3: Defining Poverty—Who are the Poor?

- *Have a Great One! A Homeless Man’s Story* reading completed

#### Unit 4: Site Specific History/Issues

- Site/Springfield/U.S. Comparisons of Homelessness
- **Action Plan Due**

### **Course Meetings While on Site**

#### Unit 5: Homelessness and the Media

- Dichotomy of the Site and Its Homeless Shelters

#### Unit 6: Demographics of Homelessness

- Differences between Genders, Ages, etc.

#### Unit 7: Social Policy

- Living Wage Debate
- *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America* reading completed

#### Unit 8: Where Do We Go from Here?

- Social Change Wheel

### **After returning from the site**

#### Final week of summer session (specific date TBA)

- **Final Portfolio Due**
- **Reflection Journal Due**