UNST 399
Experiential Pathways: Engaging in Social Change

Course Description
In our courses, we gain a wide variety of knowledge about community problems. However, often we lack sufficient opportunities to directly engage these issues and miss out on the unique and important experiential learning inherent in such work. This course is a 4-credit, 300-level UNST course that fulfills one of your UNST Cluster requirements through an applied learning experience based on the approaches, theories, and practices of your cluster.

As part of this course, you must find a relevant community internship*** (in the form of a traditional internship or a volunteer placement). You may continue pre-existing work you are doing with a community organization if you are already engaged in such. In addition to the direct experience of working on one of the many issues raised in the course of your studies in your UNST Cluster, you will also participate in an online reflective space with peers engaged in other projects. This complementary experience will allow you to explore different forms of engagement; determine how race, class, and gender intersect with community work; and develop professional skills.

This course is a space to reflect on and look at the community internship work you are doing so that we can better participate in that work, create community to support one another, develop plans for continued engagement at and beyond the university, and understand the connections between the work and larger UNST and Cluster goals.

***Students will be required to find a community internship before the course begins and should go to http://experientialpathwayspsu.wordpress.com/ and click on For Students for resources for finding a volunteer placement **************.

Course Textbook

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (and connections to UNST goals)

- **Social Engagement to Address Community Problems**
  - Students will evaluate and analyze methods of addressing community problems that are focus issues in their community internships. *(inquiry and critical thinking, ethics and social responsibility)*
  - Students will explore and develop a values-based approach to their community internships by identifying and building an awareness of their
own core values and how those connect to their community work and to values in their Cluster disciplines. (inquiry and critical thinking, ethics and social responsibility)

- Students will become familiar with basic theories of civic engagement, community problem solving, and social change. (inquiry and critical thinking, diversity of human experience)
- Through an individual and group reflective practice, students will examine their own personal experience and motivations for change in our community. (inquiry and critical thinking, communication).
- Students will map their community internship goals to the larger UNST goals and to their specific cluster goals, reflecting on the ways their FRINQ and SINQ courses have prepared them for this work, how the work connects to the cluster, and how to extend this work into future courses (including a Capstone) and future graduate school and/or employment. (inquiry and critical thinking)

- **Intersections with Community Work: Power and Privilege**
  - Students will develop a basic understanding of the ways issues of power and privilege (including race, class and gender) impact the community problem of their focus and will apply this understanding to their reflection, action, and understanding of solutions and social justice. (ethics and social responsibility, diversity of human experience)
  - Students will examine their own lived experience and how it intersects with, connects with, and shapes the community work they are engaged in. (ethics and social responsibility, inquiry and critical thinking)

- **Communication and Professional Development**
  - Students will develop and apply professional skills (focusing particularly on written communication skills) that are transferable and applicable to their cluster disciplines, their major, and their future work in the community as employees, leaders, volunteers, and active community advocates. (communication, ethics and social responsibility)
  - Students will utilize various current forms of technology to communicate about their community work and gain fluency with these mediums. (communication)

- **Continued Engagement and Investment in the Learning Pathway**
  - Students will design and articulate a plan for continued engagement to address community problems. This plan will include a look forward to planning future cluster and Capstone coursework in addition to future community action, possible graduate and/or employment related to the community problems of focus. (inquiry and critical thinking, communication, ethics and social responsibility)

- **Student-defined learning outcome**
  - As part of the application process, students will be required to define a personal learning outcome for the course and to articulate how they will achieve the outcome through their community experience and course activities.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**
Community Internship: Prior to the first day of the academic term you must find a community internship or substantial volunteer experience. A Community Internship is a form of experiential learning that can take place within a nonprofit, community-serving organization, an educational institution, or governmental agency. It is a short-term work experience that allows students to integrate the knowledge and theory learned through their academic coursework with practical, hands-on experience in a real-world setting. Community Internships are meant to include substantive learning and engagement opportunities and provide the intern with an in-depth understanding of the organization and the communities it serves. For the purposes of this course, community internships will be those that work to address specific community problems with their efforts. Community internships may be paid or unpaid, and in either case will be highly educational in nature and supervised or mentored by a professional.

Weekly Journals
Each week, the student will keep a journal about his/her field experience. This journal will be both narrative (what happened?) and reflective (what do you think about what happened?). Journals will be guided by prompts asking students to connect their field work with (a) cluster goals, (b) personal goals, and (c) course themes and objectives. Students will be asked to draw from their journals in some course discussions, and the journals will inform students’ final reflections in the portfolio.

Weekly Discussions
Students will participate in bi-weekly, asynchronous online discussions, sharing and reflecting on their experience, research, and learning with other members of the class.

Communications
Students will write a mid-term check-in letter and an end of term exit letter to the contact person at their community internship. The exit letter will be followed by an exit interview.

Final Portfolio
Students will select examples of their work from the term and reflect upon, synthesize, and evaluate their work in relationship to the course, UNST, and Junior Cluster, and future civic engagement goals.

Public Action
Students will do a small, web-based educational project and post it to our course blog.

Instructor Feedback, Grading, and Assessment
Bi-weekly Discussions are worth a total of 200 points and will be graded based on your self-assessment of the quantity and quality of posts (see rubric in Course Content in D2L). These will be assessed twice during the term (mid-term and final). Weekly Journal Entries are worth a total of 160 points (see rubric in Course Content in D2L). Each week your instructor will provide audio or written feedback on your journals.
Final Portfolio is worth 150 points (see rubric in Course Content in D2L).

Technology Requirements

In order to successfully complete this course, you must have daily access to a reliable high speed internet connection. You must have word processing software (Microsoft Office works best). You may need to download free software in order to view or use certain course texts or tools. A microphone and webcam are helpful, but not required. Keep in mind that taking online courses requires the ability to be flexible and resourceful when it comes to navigating online tools and formats. You will have to figure out unfamiliar tools, formats, and environments, sometimes with help, sometimes on your own. Welcome to the 21st century.

The D2L Platform

Our course takes place in Desire2Learn (D2L), the learning management system adopted by PSU. Following is a brief orientation on how to navigate this platform and find the tools we'll be using in this course.

D2L Homepage

This is the first page you'll see when you log in to D2L Courses. This is where you access your individual courses. On this homepage you'll find general D2L announcements, such as system maintenance updates. You can also access help and tutorials using the buttons on the D2L banner.

Course Homepage

This is the page you'll see when you open our course. On it, you'll find "widgets," boxes that have important course information: News -- updates from instructor and mentor, Library Resources -- a website for library resources customized for our course project, DRC -- a website for the Disability Resource Center, and Student Help in D2L -- a website with resources for navigating D2L.

Course Content

This is the "door" to the class. Everything you'll need to complete the course work is here in a linear "stack" organized by weekly modules. When you open a file in Course Content, you can click through each item in order using the arrows on the upper right of your screen, or skip around by clicking on an item title in the Table of Contents on the left of your screen.

VoiceThread

Is an online discussion tool that allows us to interact with one another asynchronously (not in real-time) using video, audio, or text. You’ll find detailed instructions for how to use this tool in Course Content.

Course Navigation Bar

Use the darker green navigation bar at the top of our course screen to access the course tools specifically:
Course Content (see above)

**Activities:**

**Discussions**
Where you can access weekly discussions

**Dropbox**
Where you can submit assignments and see instructor feedback and grading rubrics

**People:**

**Classlist**
Use this tool to send D2L mail messages to your classmates, mentor, or instructor. Simply click on the person's name to open a mail message.

**Grades**
The gradebook, where you can see your grades and instructor feedback

**Note on Course Texts**
In addition to our course textbook, other readings are accessed through our D2L classroom and the PSU library. I strongly recommend you make hard copies of all printable texts, especially those longer than 1000 words, in order to save your eyes, take good notes, and allow yourself a break from screen time. Believe me, you'll thank me for this later.

**Course Schedule**

**Pre-Term**
- Review course description and supplemental definitions
- Locate an internship that fits with both your cluster theme and the course’s focus of Social Change
- Fill out and submit the online Experiential Pathways Cluster Course Evaluation
- Register for the course after submitting the application

**Week 1: Our Stories, Values, and Community Engagement**
Week 1 Journal
Week 1 Discussions
Submit Community Partner-Student Agreement

**Week 2: Community Partner Mission and Stakeholders**
Week 2 Journal
Week 2 Discussions

**Week 3: Navigating Difference, Investigating Power**
Week 3 Journal
Week 3 Discussions

**Week 4: Unpacking Privilege**
Week 4 Journal
Week 4 Discussions

**Week 5: Reflection in Action**
Week 5 Journal – Midterm Voicethread self evaluation
Week 5 Discussions

**Week 6: How Social Change Happens**
Week 6 Journal – Mid-term check in letter to community partner
Week 6 Discussions

**Week 7: Connecting Experience to UNST and Cluster Goals**
Week 7 Journal
Week 7 Discussions

**Week 8: Connecting Past, Present, and Future: Transferable Skills and Mapping Engagement**
Week 8 Journal
Week 8 Discussions

**Week 9: Going Public: Course Blog**
Public Action: create an educational object for course blog
Week 9 Discussions

**Week 10: Wrapping Up and Moving On**
Week 9 Journal – exit letter for community partner
Week 10 Discussions
Final Portfolio (Community Partner evaluation, Exit letter, Final Voicethread Self-evaluation, and Final journal reflection)

**Total Available Class Points: 560**
- Class discussions: 200
- Journals: 160
- Final Portfolio: 150
  Public Action: 50

**Percentage of Points Earned/Grade**

100 – 93 = A
92– 90 = A-
89 – 87 = B+
86 – 83 = B
82 – 80 = B-
79 – 77 = C+
76 – 73 = C
72 – 70 = C-
69 – 67 = D+
66 – 63 = D
Course Policies

- All assignments are due by midnight of the due date (for example, if an assignment is due Tuesday, turn it in by 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday).
- You should plan to spend 4 - 5 hours per week on your classwork (viewing texts, taking notes, participating in discussions, completing assignments, etc.).
- Plan to visit our online environment for news and peer interaction at least three times per week. Check for announcements in "News" on the Course Homepage and in D2L mail when you visit.
- This course is not self-paced. Assignments will be due regularly as listed in the course schedule and weekly checklists.

*Late assignments will be docked points and may not receive instructor feedback. If you turn in an assignment late, you must email me to notify me that it is in the dropbox. It is your responsibility to make sure your attachment is saved in the dropbox when turning in work.

- When saving and naming files to turn in, use your last name and the title of the assignment in the file name. [For example, if your name is Smith and you're turning in the first draft of the final essay, you might name your file Smithfinaldraft1.doc.]
- When emailing instructor, always include your first and last name in the email and a clue about your purpose in the subject line. [For example, if you were writing with a question about an assignment, you might write, “Smith week 5 assignment question” in the subject line.]
- You must save your documents as a Word docx, Word doc, PDF, or RTF (rich text format). If you are using any other word processing software, your peers and I may not be able to open your documents. If you don't have Microsoft office software, Google docs is a good alternative, though you'll need to attach a "dummy file" to the dropbox in order to leave a link to a Google doc in the dropbox.
- If you have a learning or physical disability, please contact the Disability Resource Center for approval to request accommodation.
- You are expected to interact with your instructor, community partners, and other students respectfully and observe rules of online etiquette. All students are expected to comply with the PSU code of conduct.

Support Links

Advising and Career Services (for help with internship search, resumes, and applying for internships)
http://www.pdx.edu/advising-career-services/

Career Connect (database for internships)
http://www.pdx.edu/careers/jobs-databasecareerconnect

Help Desk for technical issues
http://oit.pdx.edu/contact-us
Online Learning Support for Students (self-assessment for online learning and D2L tutorials)
http://www.pdx.edu/psuonline/node/40
Disability Resource Center
http://www.drc.pdx.edu
PSU Writing Center
http://www.writingcenter.pdx.edu
Peer Tutoring and Learning Center
http://www.pdx.edu/tutoring/