



Social Sciences 300: Working in the Community

Spring 2015

Instructional Team: Dr. Michele-Lee Moore, Co-Instructor
Dr. Sarah Wiebe, Co-Instructor
Barbara Fisher, Coop and Career Services

Course Description:

This interdisciplinary community service learning course combines classroom study of community organizations, civic engagement, and related philosophical and ethical issues with the development of professional competencies needed to work effectively in non-profit and volunteer community organizations, a placement consisting of a minimum of 40 hours of voluntary work with a community organization or on a community project, and critical and meaningful reflection from social science perspectives on the placement experience.

Community Service Learning (CSL) is a form of experiential learning intended to integrate voluntary service in the community with intentional learning activities encompassing application of theoretical knowledge gained in the university classroom to real-life situations, and critical reflection on community service activities (definition from the Canadian Association for Community Service Learning).

Note: This course is cross-listed with GEOG 391; POLI 323

Learning Objectives

- Examine and analyze the roles of individuals, organizations, and societal trends and how those shape and are shaped by nonprofit community organizations
- Identify, examine, and analyze key debates about nonprofit management, community engagement, and volunteerism with respect to social and ecological change
- Assess and apply the tools available to nonprofit community organizations to work towards changes for improved social and ecological outcomes

Intended Learning Outcomes:

- Understand the character, structure, and dynamics of community and the nonprofit sector;
- Describe and analyze the role of nonprofits, volunteers, and research in our community
- Identify and describe tools for community engagement, community-based research, and for nonprofit management
- Critically analyze your own engagement in the community and within a nonprofit organization
- Use academic literature, lecture notes, and materials from class discussions and activities to analyze a current community initiative and develop an understanding of the applicability of

different conceptual and analytical frameworks for examining issues related to that initiative and for proposing solutions

- Develop stronger professional competencies and leadership abilities, including personal management, communication, project and task management, teamwork and mentorship, professional behaviour, social responsibility, continuous learning, and self-evaluation in all of these areas;
- Show improvement in writing skills, which includes developing thesis statements and core arguments and through the use of appropriate citation formats. Additionally, demonstrate progress in presentation skills and the ability to describe and analyze complex issues
- Develop critical understanding of processes of social change, including relationships between structural-level change in policies and law and small-scale individual and group actions.

Learning with Community Partners:

A community service learning course is based on collaboration between the University and nonprofit and volunteer community organizations. Placements are intended to serve the needs of those organizations as well as the needs of students and the University. Community organizations should benefit from: the energy and knowledge of students mobilized in support of the organization's goals; the incorporation of insights from scholarship to improve the effectiveness of community action; strengthening the culture of community service; and the development of ongoing relationships with youth volunteers. Students registered in this course must be committed to helping meet the needs of the community organization with which they have a placement. This includes conducting themselves professionally while on placement, doing their best to fulfill agreed responsibilities and complete assigned tasks, and communicating with their primary contact in the organization if issues arise.

Meeting Times and Place:

Wednesday, 2:30-4:20 pm, Thursday, 2:30-4:20 pm* (this includes the lab component)
COR A221

Office Hours and Contact Information:

Dr. Michele-Lee Moore – Department of Geography

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12:30 – 2:00 pm; 4:30 – 5:30 pm, DTB B350

Dr. Sarah Wiebe – Department of Political Science

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12:30 – 2:00 pm, DTB A334

Barb Fisher, Coop and Career Services – bfisher@uvic.ca

Office Hours: by appointment, DTB A204

Communication:

Course Spaces will be used in this course for all course communication, including announcements, course materials, readings, and details about assignments, therefore please monitor and check Course Spaces frequently, including the Course Spaces Internal Email function (right hand side, main Course Spaces course page). We will attempt to respond to emails in a timely fashion, although depending on our schedules delays may occur. Therefore, be prepared to wait 24-48 hours for a response during the week. Email will only be checked sporadically on weekends. Therefore, you should expect that emails sent over the weekend may not be answered until Monday at the earliest. Also, remember that course emails are a professional exchange (i.e. these are not texts or social media status updates). Please follow

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proper etiquette both amongst the course instructors, fellow students, and with the organizations in which you are volunteering.

Readings:

The course draws on diverse readings from scholars and the volunteer sector, including one required textbook:

- Alan Broadbent and Ratna Omidvar, *Five Good Ideas: Practical Strategies for Non-Profit Success* (Toronto: Coach House Books, 2011).

Several other readings will also be drawn from another text, and therefore is recommended:

- Catherine Etmanski, Budd L. Hall, and Teresa Dawson (Eds). 2014. *Learning and teaching community-based research: linking pedagogy to practice*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

The list of other readings for each week will be made available on Coursespaces.

Course Requirements

More details on each assignment and evaluation criteria will be provided in class and on CourseSpaces

Organizational Assessment and Community Service Learning Proposal – 20%

- Describe the organization for which you are volunteering, including details about their mission/vision, what service they provide or what issue are they hoping to resolve, the leadership style, and the funding model
- Describe how the project you are conducting will serve its needs; identify the project supervisor and his or her expectations; provide a schedule and timeline for placement activities;
- 4-6 pages in length (1000-1500 words)
- Submit electronic via CourseSpaces internal email
- Due date: February 18 and 19th (To be finalized in January)
- **Report:** 15% of course grade, **Presentation:** 5% (constructive feedback only but a requirement)

Organizational Challenge – Total 35%

- Working with the organization, identify a key challenge faced in achieving their goals or vision
- Using key concepts and ideas from course materials and from conducting scholarly research, develop a strategy for the organization to consider that would help address this challenge
- Present this challenge and the strategy to the class, and lead a discussion
- Incorporate class feedback into the final report
- **Presentations** (dates to be assigned): March 11, 12, 18, 10% of course grade (must incorporate feedback from the organizational assessment presentation to demonstrate improvement/learning).
- **Report:** Due March 18, 2200-2500 words, 25% of final grade

Learning Portfolio – 35%

- The portfolio will summarize your initial learning goals, your critical analysis of your volunteer experience and how that contributed (or not) to meeting your goals, and critical reflections on key debates about non-profit community organizations and volunteerism
- Major components of the learning portfolio will include: a) reading and exercise reflections, b) a CSL project summary report (follow up from your CSL proposal assignment), and c) learning goals and reflections
- More guidance on these components will be provided in class and on CourseSpaces
- The CSL project summary report should be 700-1000 words, and provide a constructive and meaningful reflection on process and achievements of the placement in relation to course materials and goals outlined in proposal.
- The maximum total length for the entire portfolio will be 2500-3000 words (700-1000 of that is the CSL summary) – there is flexibility for how you divide the word count across the remaining sections, but keep in mind that you need to reflect upon all that you have learned
- The final portfolio should be a professional and creative collection that has a coherent structure and demonstrates your learning to anyone that examines the material
- In keeping with the creative options, you are also welcome to select whether you will create a portfolio that can be submitted as a hard copy, or a digital portfolio. There are open-source digital platforms for learning portfolios online. Elements that may be used regardless of the digital or paper-based format, include: photos, film, script, blogposts, music, poetry, academic literature, news articles, and other forms of media. However, remember that you are using these

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elements to reflect and demonstrate what you have learned about working in the non-profit community sector, informed by both the theoretical perspectives associated with the course material. Therefore, explanations of why certain poems, imagery, or songs will need to be provided.

- Due on last day of class – April 2

In-Class Engagement – 10%

- This course aims to provide you with an understanding of the theories and concepts related to non-profit community organization management, community-based research engagement, and how the voluntary and non-profit sector may support social-ecological change initiatives. To accomplish this goal, each of you will need to engage in exercises in class, collaborate with others to support their and your own learning, and contribute questions and ideas to our discussions. This is a skill that requires practice and our time together is an opportunity for that practice!
- Due date: every class!
- It is important that you do the required reading before class. The lectures will build on the information contained in the readings. With an interactive format, the lectures are also your opportunity to ask questions about anything you find confusing, problematic, or difficult to understand in the readings for the week. You will understand the lectures better, and be able to ask better questions, if you've done the readings.
- Students are expected to demonstrate a respectful and dialogical demeanor by routinely attending class and coming well-prepared. As you do the readings, ask yourself the following questions and prepare responses to raise during class-time:
 - **1. What is the main argument and/or thesis?** (*i.e. what is the author trying to convey, or convince you of?*)
 - **2. Are you persuaded by the premises, logic and evidence presented? Why or why not? What parts did you find convincing, or not?**
 - **3. What are the implications of their argument? Provide examples**
 - **4. Write one question you have from the reading**
 - **5. Finally, make note of anything that you did not understand** (*words, concepts, examples, and so on*).
- Asking good questions prepares you to discuss the reading. It should distill your reading experience into discussion questions that solicits the responses of the group, drawing others into a collective *dialogue* on the readings. Taking questions seriously is important as it should lead you, and the others to whom you are asking it, and push you and your peers further in your thinking about what has been written.
- **Good discussion questions are “open-ended”:** They have a complex answer and/or a range of possible answers. They are usually not “closed-ended,” meaning that there is a particular, discrete answer. More importantly, good discussion questions are *genuine*. That means you have not already made up your mind what the answer is. For example if you ask, “do changes to environmental impact assessment laws adversely affect citizen engagement?” and you really have not made up your mind if the government is right or not, your question is genuine. You are really *asking*. If, on the other hand, you ask, “Harper can’t *really* believe it is right to change the EIA act, can he?” you have made up your mind that it is wrong. You are really *telling*, not asking. *Ask*, don’t *tell*.

- **Good, genuine questions can be descriptive:** These ask about what actually *is* happening in the reading or in the world. Examples: “Does the author mean to say...?” or “What does the author’s use of the term objectivity mean in this text?”
- **Good, genuine questions can also be normative:** Normative questions ask what *should be* going on in the readings or in the world. For example, the question above about whether the federal government is right to streamline laws is normative. Normative questions open up the issue of values, of what people think the world *should* be like. You can ask either descriptive or normative questions in your questions.
- **One last thing:** As we move along in the class, you might find it helpful to think about the readings in conversation with each other. By this I mean that you might start thinking about the commonalities and differences between the arguments made by different authors. Some arguments will seem more compelling to you. Ask yourself why, and try to think the differences through.

Grading Policies and Academic Integrity:

Students must complete all assignments, including community placement hours, in order to get credit for the course. Numerical grades will be converted to letter grades as follows:

UVic Percentage Grading Scale

Passing Grades	Grade Point Value	Percentage	Description
A+	9	90 – 100	Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.
A	8	85 – 89	
A-	7	80 – 84	
B+	6	77 – 79	Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.
B	5	73 – 76	
B-	4	70 – 72	
C+	3	65 – 69	Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
C	2	60 – 64	
D	1	50 – 59	Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
Failing Grades	Grade Point Value	Percentage	Description
F	0	0 – 49	Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.
N	0	0 – 49	Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.

1. The percentage grading scale applies to all Faculties at the University of Victoria.

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2. The percentage grades should be associated with a letter grading schema.
3. A percentage grade for an N grade should be assigned in the following manner:
N grade percentage range 0-49: In cases where a student who has not completed the exam or has not completed the course requirements but has submitted course requirements that total more than 49% of the total grade for a course, an instructor will assign a percentage grade of 49%.

For details, see: <http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2014-09/FACS/UnIn/UARe/Grad.html>

This course uses the qualitative criteria associated with each letter grade in the University of Victoria Calendar when marking assignments. University Policy on Academic Integrity will be strictly enforced. The UVic Library has useful information on the appropriate use of sources and avoiding plagiarism at <http://library.uvic.ca/site/lib/instruction/cite/plagiarism.html>.

Be sure to consult the Centre for Academic Communication (formerly the Writing Centre):
<http://ltc.uvic.ca/servicesprograms/twc.php>

Policy on Late Assignments

Late papers are strongly discouraged and are penalized at 10% per day. Nonetheless, at times situations do arise where they are unavoidable. If you anticipate you may have difficulty meeting a due date, let me know as far ahead of time as possible, preferably by e-mail, and indicate when you think you can have the assignment completed. Given that you know due dates well ahead of time, simply running out of time or having a lot of work due at the same time is not an adequate excuse. Unless you provide reasonable documentation of the reason for its lateness, the assignment will be penalized.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is intellectual honesty and responsibility for academic work that you submit individually or as a member of a group. It involves commitment to the values of honesty, trust and responsibility. It is expected that students will respect these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research and service. Therefore, plagiarism and other acts against academic integrity are serious academic offences.

The responsibility of the institution - Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic honesty are met. By doing so, the institution recognizes students for their hard work and assures them that other students do not have an unfair advantage through cheating on essays, exams, and projects.

The responsibility of the student - Plagiarism sometimes occurs due to a misunderstanding regarding the rules of academic integrity, but it is the responsibility of the student to know them. If you are unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing your sources, ask your instructor. Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student's transcript, or a suspension. It is your responsibility to understand the University's policy on academic integrity, which can be found on pages 32-34 of the undergraduate calendar.

Any problems regarding the academic integrity of submitted assignments will be referred directly to the Chair of Political Science and University policy will be followed.

University of Victoria Policy on Academic Integrity:
<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2008/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAcI.html>

Good advice about how to avoid plagiarism:
<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

Accessibility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please approach me and/or the Resource Centre for Students with a Disability (RCSD – <http://rcsd.uvic.ca/>) as soon as possible. The RCSD staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving our learning goals in this course.

Attendance, Assignments, and Grading:

The UVic Academic Calendar states: “*Students are expected to attend all classes in which they are enrolled.*” Any student who attends fewer than 70 percent of scheduled class sessions may be assigned a grade of “N” for the course. Students must complete all assignments (see Course Requirements) in order to get credit for the course.

The Learning Environment:

The UVic Academic Calendar notes: “*The University of Victoria is committed to promoting critical academic discourse while providing a respectful and productive learning environment. All members of the university community have the right to experience and the responsibility to help create such an environment.*” Students and community partners have diverse views on the issues discussed in this course, and we seek to create an environment in which all perspectives – including those of the instructors – can be analyzed critically in a respectful fashion.

Course Experience Survey (CES)

We value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. We will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

Course Schedule

**IMPORTANT - This schedule is subject to change; be sure to pay attention to announcements during classes and check CourseSpaces regularly for announcements. Required readings are indicated below, with additional bibliographic information included on CourseSpaces. Be prepared to discuss these during class and in your assignments.*

Schedule	Class	Topic	Readings, Assessments
Introducing Community in the Classroom	Jan 7	Course Introduction & Welcome	
Theme 1 – Defining Community	Jan 8	Defining community and the non-profit sector Critical pedagogy	Bickford & Reynolds, “Activism and Service-Learning: Reframing Volunteerism as Acts of Dissent” 2002 The Walrus, “Train of Thought” http://thewalrus.ca/train-of-thought/ Hawken, “A Global Democratic Movement is About to Pop”, <i>Orion Magazine</i> , 2007. http://www.alternet.org/environment/51088
Theme 2 - State Restructuring and the Context of Community Engagement	Jan 14	Macro trends – Third Sector in UK, civic engagement in US, neoliberalism and state restructuring,	Kelly & Caputo, “Meanings of Community”, 2011 Smith, “The Non-Profit Sector”, 2012 Hall, “Non-Profit Organizations in Canada”, 2009 Kirby, “Meeting austerity with creativity”, <i>Briarpatch Magazine</i> , 2012 http://briarpatchmagazine.com/articles/view/meeting-austerity-with-creativity
Placements & Portfolios	Jan 15	Getting started with placements – Barb Fisher	SOSC 300 Community Service Learning Placement Proposal – See CourseSpaces website: UVic Coop and Career Services, “Competency Kit”, available at: http://www.uvic.ca/coopandcareer/studentsalumni/resources/competencykit/ UVic Coop and Career Services, “Description of 10 core competencies”, available at: http://www.uvic.ca/coopandcareer/assets/docs/corecompetencies/Description_of_10_Core_Competencies.pdf

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Theme 3 – Approaching Community Engagement	Jan 21	Theory, method and practice of engagement	Blouin, “Whom does Service-Learning Really Serve? Community-based organizations’ perspectives on service-learning”, 2009 Cahill et al., “Participatory Ethics: Politics, Practices, Institutions”, 2007 Hall, “Introduction”, in <i>Knowledge, Democracy and Action</i> , Hall et al., eds. 2014. Ochocha & Janzen, “Breathing Life into Theory: Illustrations of Community-Based Research – Hallmarks, functions and phases”, 2014-12-23
Portfolio and Practical Skills Development	Jan 22	Communications	Five Good Ideas: pgs 147-166, 191-194
Theme 4 – Nonprofits and social change	Jan 28 -29	Theory of change frameworks	Five Good Ideas: pgs 38-42; 219-222 Five Configurations article – Westley et al., 2014
Theme 5 – The Internal Dynamics	Feb 4 - 5	Organizational Leadership, Diversity, and Management Issues	Five Good Ideas: pgs 10-15; 45-48 Freeing the Social Entrepreneur – Below & Tripp, 2010
	Feb 11 - 12	READING BREAK	
Presentations	Feb 18	Organizational assessments Part I	Organizational Assessment and CSL Proposal Reports Due Individual presentation dates TBD
	Feb 19	Organizational assessments Part II	Organizational Assessment and CSL Proposal Reports Due Individual presentation dates TBD
Theme 5 continued – The Internal Dynamics	Feb 25 - 26	Organizational Leadership, Diversity, and Management Issues continued	Five Good Ideas: pgs 16-22 Drowning in Data – Snibbe, 2006
Theme 6: Resourcing work in the community	Mar 4 - 5	Fundraising, philanthropy, and social finance	Five Good Ideas: Chapter 4

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Theme 7: Addressing organizational challenges	Mar 11	Organizational Challenge Presentations Part I	Individual presentation dates TBD
	Mar 12	Presentations Part II	Individual presentation dates TBD
	Mar 18	Presentations Part III	Individual presentation dates TBD All reports due March 18th
Theme 8 - Tools and Techniques of Engagement for nonprofits and universities	Mar 19	Arts-based engagement	Etmanski, “Creating the Learning Space: Teaching the Arts in CBR”, 2014
	Mar 25	Community-Mapping Maeve Lydon & Ken Josephson, Guest Speaker	Corbett & Lydon, “Community-Mapping: A Tool for Transformation”, 2014
	Mar 26	Participatory Video and Policy	Tremblay, C., & Jayme, B., “ Co-creating community knowledge through Participatory Video”, 2015 Five Good Ideas: Chapter 6
Theme 9 – Learning in the Community	Apr 1	Final Reflections	
	Apr 2	Course wrap-up	Learning Portfolios DUE