



Social Sciences 300: Working in the Community

Fall 2015

Instructional Team Contact Information:

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Office Hours: Monday 2:30 – 3:30 pm, Tuesday 1:00 – 3:00 pm, DTB B350, and by appointment

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Office Hours: by appointment, DTB A204

Course Meeting Times and Place:

Thursday, 10:00 am – 12:50 pm
COR B145

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 as GEOG 391 A03; POLI 323 A01

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.

Communication:

CourseSpaces will be used in this course for all course communication, including announcements, course materials, readings, and details about assignments, therefore please monitor and check CourseSpaces frequently, including the CourseSpaces Internal Email function (right hand side, main CourseSpaces 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

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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 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, which is available through the Library as an e-book 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. Please submit your assignment through the CourseSpaces Internal Email (use the attachment feature). If there is a discrepancy between the syllabus and the information shared in class or on CourseSpaces, please rely on the CourseSpaces info.

Learning Goals Self-Assessment – 5%

As part of standard practice for students working in external placements, you will be required to complete a short online form with your learning goals for your volunteer experience by **October 1**. You will then complete a follow-up self-assessment at the end of term (deadline will coincide with the final take-home exam/assignment, TBD). Each online assessment is worth 2.5%.

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 electronically via CourseSpaces internal email
- Due date: October 22nd 2015 (Note – some presentations may occur the following week if more time is needed, but all reports will be due on the same day. Schedule to be finalized in Sept).
- **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): November 19 and 26, 10% of course grade (must incorporate feedback from the organizational assessment presentation to demonstrate improvement/learning).
- **Report:** All due on November 26th (regardless of presentation date), 2200-2500 words, 25% of final grade

Take Home Exam/Assignment – 30%

- Recognizing the need to balance the workload of volunteer hours and the need to design assignments that provide a meaningful learning opportunity, we will use the exam period time for your final assignment
- The take-home exam/assignment will require you to: reflect on your initial learning goals, critically analyze your volunteer experience and how that contributed (or not) to meeting your

goals, and consider those experiences in reference to the key debates about non-profit community organizations and volunteerism introduced in class

- Details on this assignment will be provided in the final classes
- Due date: Final exam date TBD

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 we 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.

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Grading Policies and Academic Integrity:

Students must complete all assignments, including community placement hours, in order to get credit for the course. This course uses the qualitative criteria associated with each letter grade in the University of Victoria Calendar when marking assignments.

UVic Percentage Grading Scale

Undergraduate Grading Scale			
Passing Grades	Grade Point Value	Percentage *	Description
A+ A A-	9 8 7	90 – 100 85 – 89 80 – 84	An A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically superior, shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.
B+ B B-	6 5 4	77 – 79 73 – 76 70 – 72	A B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student's full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.
C+ C	3 2	65 – 69 60 – 64	A C+ or C is earned by work that indicates an adequate comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.
D	1	50 – 59	A D is earned by work that indicates minimal command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.
COM	Excluded Grade	N/A	Complete (pass). Used only for 0-unit courses and those credit courses designated by the Senate. Such courses are identified in the course listings.
CTN	Excluded Grade	N/A	Continuing . Denotes the first half of a full-year course.
Failing Grades	Grade Point Value	Percentage *	Description
E	0	0 – 49	Conditional supplemental. Supplemental examinations are not offered by all departments and the allowable percentage may vary by program (e.g. 35-49). Students will be advised whether supplemental will be offered and if the percentage range varies when assessment techniques are announced at the beginning of the course.
F	0	0 – 49	F is earned by work, which after the completion of course requirements, is inadequate and unworthy of course credit towards the degree.
N	0	0 – 49	Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.
N/X	Excluded Grade	N/A	Did not complete course requirements by the end of the term; no supplemental. Used only for Co-op work terms and for courses designated by Senate. Such courses are identified in the course listings. The grade is EXCLUDED from the calculation of all grade point averages.
F/X	Excluded Grade	N/A	Unsatisfactory performance. Completed course requirements; no supplemental. Used only for Co-op work terms and for courses designated by Senate. Such courses are identified in the course listings. The grade is EXCLUDED from the calculation of all grade point averages.

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 us 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 appropriate Department Chair and University policy will be followed.

For more information, see: <http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2015-09/GRAD/FARe/PoAcI.html>.

The UVic Library has useful information on the appropriate use of sources and avoiding plagiarism at: <http://www.uvic.ca/library/research/citation/plagiarism/>

Be sure to consult the Centre for Academic Communication (formerly the Writing Centre): <http://www.uvic.ca/library/locations/home/learning/cac.php>

For more good advice about how to avoid plagiarism, see: <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.

Recording

If you prefer to record lectures or class exercises, or use any sort of device for images in the classroom, please ensure you follow the principles of prior, informed consent with the instructors and fellow students.

Course Experience Survey (CES)

We value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, you will have the opportunity to complete a confidential course experience survey (CES) regarding your learning experience. The survey is vital to providing feedback to us regarding the course and our teaching, as well as to help the Faculty improve the overall program for students in the future. When it is time for you to complete the survey, you will receive an email inviting you to do so. If you do not receive an email invitation, you can go directly to <http://ces.uvic.ca>. You will need to use your UVic NetLink ID to access the survey, which can be done on your laptop, tablet or mobile device. We will remind you nearer the time, but please be thinking about this important activity, especially the following three questions, during the course.

1. What strengths did your instructor(s) demonstrate that helped you learn in this course?
2. Please provide specific suggestions as to how the instructor(s) could have helped you learn more effectively.
3. Please provide specific suggestions as to how this course could be improved.

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 and Defining Community	Sept 10	Course Introduction & Welcome	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 1 – Situating Community, Situating Ourselves	Sept 17	Student Placements – Barb Fisher Place-making and Community-Mapping <u>Guest Speaker: Ken Josephson – TBC</u>	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 Corbett & Lydon, "Community-Mapping: A Tool for Transformation", 2014
Theme 2 - State Restructuring	Sept 24	Emerging Trends in State Governance: Implications for Community	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

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Theme 3 – Approaching Community Engagement	Oct 1	Theory, Method and Practice of Engagement <u>Learning Goals Self-Assessment Due</u>	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
Theme 4 – Social Change Theory	Oct 8	Theory of Change Frameworks	Five Good Ideas: pgs 38-42; 219-222 Five Configurations article – Westley et al., 2014
Theme 5 – The Internal Dynamics of Managing Nonprofits	Oct 15	Organizational Leadership, Diversity, and Management Issues	Five Good Ideas: pgs 10-15; 45-48 Freeing the Social Entrepreneur – Below & Tripp, 2010
	Oct 22	<u>*Organizational Assessments Due</u>	Student Presentations - All Reports due
	Oct 29	Evaluation, Fundraising and Social finance	Five Good Ideas: pgs 16-22, Chapter 4 Drowning in Data – Snibbe, 2006

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<p>Theme 6: Advocacy and Policy</p>	<p>Nov 5</p>	<p>From Engagement to Action</p>	<p>Five Good Ideas: Chapter 6</p> <p>Michels, A. "Citizen Participation in Local Policy Making: Design and Democracy", <i>International Journal of Public Administration</i>, 2012</p> <p>Review: Drowning in Data – Snibbe, 2006</p>
<p>Theme 7: Tools and Techniques of Engagement</p>	<p>Nov 12</p>	<p>The Arts of Community Engagement</p> <p><u>Guest Speaker: Crystal Tremblay</u></p>	<p>Etmanski, "Creating the Learning Space: Teaching the Arts in CBR", 2014</p> <p>Tremblay, C., & Jayme, B. " Co-creating community knowledge through Participatory Video", <i>Action Research</i>, 2015.</p>
<p>Theme 8: Addressing Organizational Challenges</p>	<p>Nov 19</p>	<p>Organizational Challenge</p>	<p>Student Presentations I</p>
	<p>Nov 26</p>	<p>Organizational Challenge Continued</p>	<p>Student Presentations II - <u>All reports due</u></p>
	<p>Dec 3</p>	<p>Course Wrap Up and Final Assignments</p>	