

## **Course Description**

### **Service Learning in Community Organisations in Madrid Villanueva International Programs/ Villanueva Solidaria/ Aprendizaje Servicio**

**Subject Areas:** Sociology, Service Learning, Anthropology, Urban Studies

**Language of Instruction:** English

**Contact Hours:** 30

**Recommended Credits:** 6

**Semester:** Winter 2019

#### **Course Description:**

Students will be placed in a community (non-profit) organization where they will work one morning, afternoon or, possibly, evening each two weeks. To mediate and develop upon these experiences students will also attend class one day every second week. This class will contextualize the service learning placement in relation to broader educational, sociological and policy issues such as inequality and segregation in contemporary Ireland.

As the world becomes increasingly globalised employers look favourably upon job applicants who present with an ability to adapt and excel when faced with the challenges associated with working in foreign countries such as a variety of working conditions, work practices and cultural norms. Because service learning requires intensive intercultural engagement on a regular basis and exposes students to populations they might not otherwise interact with as visiting students, it provides a unique opportunity for them to gain the socio-cultural and research skills employers are looking for. Furthermore, acceptance onto post-graduate courses can be bolstered by students participating in service learning abroad as it illustrates their ability to understand and contextualise academic theories and use / adapt research skills to field work.

Students will work for one morning, afternoon or evening (2.5hrs) each two weeks at a community organisation located in a disadvantaged neighbourhood in Madrid. Placements might include: helping children at a homework club, working at an educational project at an immigrant centre, working with a homeless organisation, assisting in centres working with the elderly or people with disabilities, assisting ONG's in updating their webpage, accountancy etc. As much as possible, the students' service learning placements will involve working and interacting with local community volunteers, which will give students a unique insight into the placement neighbourhood. Before placements begin, the management of student and organisational expectations will be diligently managed. The students will undergo initial in-depth orientation and (inter)cultural training. Students will be introduced to group work skills and activities that may be beneficial for their placements. During their placement students will keep an in-depth field journal that will be periodically checked by the course lecturer. To aid the students' analysis of their placements and geographic locations, they will be introduced to participant-observation, note-taking and interviewing skills in line with best research practice. Students will conduct a final research paper on the work of their placement organisation and situate its work in broader sociological and political contexts.

Students will meet with their lecturer every second week for a series of lectures and workshops to read relevant literature on non-formal education and the cultural, economic and political contexts of the community sector in Spain, as well as social exclusion and social policy in Spain. One class session will look at the unique ways in which this sector fund raise, such as organising Kenia's Matumaini project. Classes will importantly provide a space for students to discuss and reflect upon their on-going experiences.

### **Learning Objectives:**

#### Knowledge Skills (Historical and Social)

- Understand the history of social disadvantage and exclusion in Madrid to include social class, unemployment and immigration
- To understand the role of activism in determining social policy
- To understand the history of social policy in Spain

#### Critical Thinking Skills (Oral & Written)

- to demonstrate an ability to obtain and disseminate quantitative data
- to demonstrate an ability to obtain and disseminate qualitative data
- Develop research writing and presentation skills

#### Attitudinal Skills (Affective & Behavioral)

- to further develop inter and intra personal skills
- to develop communication skills
- to develop group work skills
- to be confident & mindful when exploring & engaging new spaces & places
- to demonstrate an ability to empathize & interact with different sub-groups

### **Instructional Format:**

Students will work at their placement sites once each two weeks 2.5hrs over a 12 week period. Class will be held one evening (2hrs) every second week. The course comprises in-class lectures, seminars and workshops. The class provides a space for each student to reflect on their experiences in a supportive environment and thus, participation in discussion and workshop activities is essential.

### **Form of Assessment:**

The interdisciplinary nature of this course and the teaching methodologies employed by the instructor will be reflected in the forms of assessment. There are no exams, however, there will be on-going structured discussion and activities that will test your progress throughout the semester. For the record, these are listed and weighted below. The content, criteria and specific requirements for each assessment category will be explained in greater detail in class. You must complete all grading assessment categories and participate fully in the community placement to receive a grade for this course. In addition, student work and behavior in this course must fully conform to the regulations of the *CEA Academic Integrity Policy* to which you are subject. Finally, all formal written work you carry out in this course (research papers, projects, studies, etc.) must be submitted in electronic format. Your instructor may also require that you hand in a hard copy of such work.

#### **Assignment**

#### **Grade weighting**

#### **Due date**

Full Participation in placement... The placement organisation will have an input into student	30%	
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assessment.

Essay on social exclusion...	25%
Field Journal... (3)	15%
Final research project & presentation...	30%

Class Participation: When determining your class participation grades, traditional criteria such as material preparation, completed reading before class, and collaborative group work are all evaluated. But it is the active, meaningful and informed verbal and written contribution that you make that is most important to your overall participation grade. The grade includes student participation in class discussion, as well as small in-class writing and workshop activities. Whereas attendance and punctuality are expected and will not count positively towards the grade, laxity in these areas will have a negative effect.

Placement:

- Attendance and timekeeping is essential!
- Students must undertake all tasks assigned in a caring and diligent manner and report as required to their supervisors
- While students will aid the work of the organization, an explicit aim of the placement is to observe and learn from the other staff and volunteers

In-Class sample assignments:

- Interview. Conduct and write-up an interview and present findings
- Presentation of student placement organization (depending on class size, this may include bringing classmates to their placement site)

Field Journal: ¿instagram?

*(periodically students will present material from their journals in class)*

- Weekly notes on tasks undertaken
- Personal reflections on the work of the organization
- Accumulation of data for the final research project
- Photo documentation of placement site

Final Research Project & Presentation:

This in-depth research project will discuss the remit and daily operations of students' placement organisations and include relevant statistics and staff interviews. The students will discuss the role of the organisation within a broader framework of the neighbourhoods in which they are located, including for example, census data such as unemployment figures. Finally, students will include a discussion of the relevant issues such as segregation and social policy in Spain.

Every student is expected to attend all scheduled class sessions on time and be thoroughly prepared for the day's class activities. In compliance with NEASC and UNH accreditation requirements, CEA GlobalCampus instructors compile regular

attendance records for every course and take these records into account when evaluating student participation and performance.

- In each course, a maximum of four days of accumulated absences due to sickness, personal emergency, inevitable transport delay and other related impediments will be tolerated.
- Your final course grade will drop one full letter grade (e.g. A- to B-) for missing five days of class and another full letter grade for missing six days of class, regardless of the reason for your absence. However, you will automatically fail a course if your absences exceed six days of class.