THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN,
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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Semester: Fall 2014   **Office:** SSW 3.130H

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY GLOBAL PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

I. Course Description

Community-based project development is an effort to create positive change to enhance people's lives. Yet, the current U.S. discourse on global development is often limited to a "location abroad" while domestic project development needs abound. This course introduces students to the challenges and successes of sustainable global project development with an emphasis on underdeveloped communities abroad and in our "own back yards". Through this course, students will acquire a comprehensive understanding of significant social, political, and economic problems confronting local and global communities, and the need to consider the community's unique history and social-cultural factors as well as ethics and leadership in development project planning and implementation. Using a cross-disciplinary approach, the course engages students in comparative analysis of community development strategies while immersing them in hands-on projects in local economically distressed communities. Students are actively involved in developing innovative solutions to community development, resolving ethical dilemmas related to leadership and sustainable community development, and considering how community involvement experiences contribute to their civic participation. The course includes a **Service Learning Component**, a pedagogical model that intentionally integrates reciprocal community service, academic and civic learning, and reflection. This course carries the **Ethics and Leadership Flag**, designed to equip you with skills that are necessary for making ethical decisions in your adult and professional life. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments involving ethical issues and the process of applying ethical reasoning to real-life situations.

II. Learning Objectives
   By the end of this course, students will demonstrate:

   • **Ability to engage in complex analysis** based on knowledge of significant social, political and economic problems confronting communities.
   • **Collaborative community engagement** by developing innovative culturally grounded solutions in partnership with other disciplines, community members, and organizations in concert with peers.
   • **Understanding of complex issues involved with community-university partnerships** based on readings and experience in a service-learning project.
   • **Application of methods, theory & research** using CRAFT model of community engagement to implement "best practices" for Service Learning Project.
   • **Civic imagination & action** in building sustainable change through the Service Learning Project.
   • **Transformative critical thinking** through integrated self-reflection, intercultural maturity, commitment to public service, and ability to effectively relate to others.

III.   Teaching methods

My philosophy of teaching is based on the belief that every student is an active and responsible participant in their learning, and that meaning and knowledge acquisition are built on the praxis of study, reflection, dialog, and action. I utilize a multimedia approach that considers a variety of learning styles while building knowledge within context, applying theory to practice, and encouraging students to assume responsibility for their education. To accomplish these goals, I utilize the Learning Record (LR) method of assessment. Informing my teaching is John Dewey's

philosophy of experiential education that posits significant learning occurs when critical problems are examined, reflected and acted upon in their contextual complexity. This course incorporates a variety of teaching methods built around a service learning project including reflection through blogs, lectures, readings, group work, in class and online discussions, guest speakers, audiovisual materials, and a final student group presentation.

IV. Required Course Readings

On-Line Course Readings: Readings will be posted to Blackboard.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Learning Record

We will use the Learning Record (LR), a system for gathering, organizing, analyzing, evaluating, and reporting evidence of student progress and achievement. It is likely that evaluation by the Learning Record will be handled quite differently than in other classes you've experienced. While it offers a consistent structure for organizing and presenting this evidence, it does not constrain either the contents or the methods by which the evidence is produced; however there are required activities of the course that will be included in the LR work samples (see below). The principles of the LR model include review of diverse forms of data about student learning over time in the course of regularly occurring class activities, including samples of student work and observations that focus on what students demonstrate they know and can do. The LR, combined with blogging, provides tools for critical reflection.

Developing the LR begins by establishing the student's background from two sources: an **interview** with someone who knows the student well, and the **student's reflections** about his or her development **(Part A).**

The next step is to gather ongoing evidence of learning in two forms: **work samples,** for which virtually any kind of evidence can be included in the LR, including tape recordings of meetings, drafts of papers, sketches and diagrams, blog posts, email communications, links to online materials, and other samples of student work. The second form of evidence is **observations** of students' activity gathered over the semester providing insights into their experiences and activities in the class. In the **analysis** portion of the LR **(Part B),** this evidence is interpreted in terms of the strands of work in the course (its objectives) and six dimensions of learning:

DIMENSIONS OF LEARNING	COURSE STRANDS/OBJECTIVES
- Confidence and independence - Knowledge and understanding - Skills and strategies - The use of prior and emerging experience - Reflection - Creativity and imagination	1. **Ability to engage in complex analysis** based on knowledge significant social, political and economic problems confronting local and global communities 2. **Collaborative community engagement** by developing innovative culturally grounded solutions in partnership with other disciplines, community members, and organizations in concert with peers. 3. **Application of methods, theory & research** using CRAFT model of community engagement to design and implement "best practices" for Service Learning Project. 4. **Civic imagination & action** in building sustainable change through the Service Learning Project. 5. **Transformative critical thinking** through integrated self-reflection, intercultural maturity, commitment to public service, and ability to effectively relate to others

In the final section of the LR **(Part C),** students develop an **evaluation,** comparing the evidence in the LR with grade criteria defined by the instructor (see Grades section). The professor responds to the evidence, the analysis, and the student's estimated grade with the final evaluation. Thus, the LR is well suited to assess collaborative work, creative inquiry, online projects, and other kinds of work that are usually considered difficult to evaluate. It is also well suited for evaluating students who come into the class with different sets of skills and background experience, or physical or learning disabilities.

Using the wiki to store your Learning Records

A wiki is a website that is editable by many people. It is easy to use, and can house many kinds of materials, such as word-processing documents, movie and photography files, tables and many more. We will use the wiki as a resource for the class to use to share materials and build projects. Student Learning Records will also be housed here. Each student will have their own password-protected folder that contains all their LR documents, observations, work samples, and other materials. Whereas other areas of the wiki will be available for the whole class to view and edit, only the individual student and instructor will have access to their own LR folder and contents.

Required Assignments and Activities

1. Attendance, Punctuality, and In-Class Contributions: Students are expected to attend class regularly and participate in an interactive framework between students and professor. Failure to attend class regularly and failure to demonstrate comprehension of the readings through class discussion will have an impact on the final grade. Missing more than 3 classes will automatically result in a letter grade reduction.

2. Part A of Learning Record (Interview, Data Collection)
The purpose of Part A is to give students an opportunity to reflect on their development as readers, writers, and thinkers in a discipline as they enter the class, and engages students in first-hand research on a subject of great personal interest to them. Part A is about self-assessment—through interview, self-reflection, standardized assessments and observations.

The **data collection** section is in two parts; it engages students in making first-hand *observations* of ongoing activities, and in selecting relevant *examples of work* demonstrating their own development over time. The observational notes, though brief, help students learn about and reflect on the relationship between direct perception and interpretation or evaluation. Because these observations must present positive, rather than negative representations of activity, students are confronted with the powerful role of language in shaping perceptions of reality. The selection of samples of work engages them in matching evidence and criteria for achievement.

<u>Interview</u>
Criteria
- Interview is complete, includes student reflection
- Timely completion
- Provides a good sense of the student's experience and learning style coming into the class
- **DUE DATE: September 22, 2014**

<u>Work Samples</u>
Criteria for Work Samples
- Sufficient samples of work that represent the student's development
- Appropriate selection of samples
- The selection of samples gives the reader and student a sense of development over time
- Integration into LR Part B and C, matching evidence and criteria for achievement

3. Blog Entries
This course involves fieldwork, required reading and classroom interaction. Each student will create a blog and make weekly entries that reference the readings, classroom discussions, and responses to relevant issues related to social justice. The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate understanding of course content as well as:

a) Clarify students' thoughts an understanding of their project based work, course content covered by the readings, videos, classroom activities and discussion;
b) Examine the personal and professional use of self in ethical, culturally competent, and just social work practices; and
c) Reflect on the impact of Project 2013 and other related activities, readings, current events, etc.
d) Extend the dialog outside the classroom in a reflective and thoughtful manner, using a variety of media to articulate your responses and reflections on issues related to social justice, diversity and oppression covered in the readings

The professor may elect to provide specific questions related to the readings or class discussions for students to respond to in their blog posts. Blog posts can include photographs, video, and poetry, etc. as well as written reflections and responses to the readings. Students are also required to comment on at least two blogs of fellow students each week. While blog posts are candid and honest portrayals of your reflections and experiences, they must be respectful and are not an arena for digression on unrelated issues or personal attacks. **Blog posts are due Saturday by noon, and comments on peers' blogs each Monday by noon.**

Criteria
- Timely completion of the assignment.
- Address the key points from the readings/videos/classroom exercises and activities in the service-learning project.
- Connection between themes discussed in readings/videos/classroom exercises, and service-learning project to relevant individual, group and structural issues of the community and society.
- Comprehension, analysis and evaluation of themes discussed in readings/videos/classroom exercises, and service-learning project to relevant individual, group and structural issues of the community and society.

4. Cultural Assessment
The purpose of this assignment is to identify your "collective me" that has shaped your social identity. Choose 5 items that represent your social identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, social class, nationality, age, size) that have influenced your worldview or behavior. These items might include photographs, pieces of art, jewelry, piece of clothing, or anything you believe has significant influence on how you perceive and behave in the world.

Criteria for evaluation

- Thoughtful reflection and sharing
- Completion of reflective blog post on activity
- **DUE DATE: September 22, 2014**

5. Ethics and Leadership-- Debate and Op-Ed

Students will divide into teams to address a specific ethical dilemma related to community development. Students will submit a proposal to obtain approval for the chosen ethical dilemma. As part of the proposal, students will need to identify specific community members who will serve as expert advisors and consultants in helping students to understand and represent the community perspective in the ethical dilemma.

"Taking Sides" Debate Activity: Teams of students (regardless of their personal opinions) are challenged to take a side on an ethical dilemma and debate the issue, using the Social Work Code of Ethics as a blueprint. See BB-Guidelines for Taking Sides Debate.

Criteria for Debate

- Debate clearly identifies and addresses a relevant ethical dilemma related to sustainable community development
- Debate communicates the complexities of the community development as these relate to ethics and leadership
- Debate/op-ed Connects and synthesizes Social Work Code of Ethics as guideline for decision-making
- **DUE DATE: November 3**

Writing an Op-Ed: Students will work in small groups to write an op-ed as a way to advocate for ethical leadership in local and global communities. Students will work in groups to produce an op-ed related to one of the ethical dilemmas addressed in the course. This writing exercise is a way to present an effective and concise argument about important issues that impact the lives of your clients and the communities they live in. Writing Op-Ed pieces are also a way to advocate and participate in our democracy. We will read several examples of op-ed writings from the NY Times, Washington Post, and other major newspapers to familiarize students with the structure of writing an opinion that is substantiated by facts. Cite all sources used and include a reference list following APA format (see Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition) and include a reference page of all cited literature.

DUE DATE: November 10

6. SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT and PRESENTATION

The course content dovetails with the nature of service learning in critical ways to ensure that: 1) student learning is enhanced, 2) small-scale community needs are met, and 3) students are able to critically reflect upon their entire experience. For Fall 2014 semester, the service-learning theme is: urban housing concerns. Working in teams, students complete community-based projects focusing on urban housing concerns for various sub-populations. Students will choose from 2-3 options for direct engagement in the campus or East Austin community to implement a small-scale service project. Students will implement this project over the course of the semester and then present their work at an end-of-semester project presentation to their peers and invited guests. Students will gain experience in presenting/representing their experience in a service-learning project that includes a synopsis of relevant demographic and historic information about the community they partnered with and critical issues identified through hands-on experience, reflection (blogs), course readings, research about the community and dialog with their peers and community partners. Students are encouraged to be creative in their project presentations and utilize a variety of formats including photo essay, video, power point and even performance. Students will submit updates throughout the semester that demonstrate progress towards achievement of the project.

Criteria for Project/Presentation
- Clearly identifies and addresses the identified community need using service learning praxis
- Communicates the complexities of the community engagement from an individual and structural perspective
- Connects and synthesizes service learning experience, course readings, discussions, films, guest speakers, and student development over the semester (documentation of the process should be evidenced in student's LR)
- Presentation methods engages students in dialog about the service learning experience presented
- Adherence to the guidelines of the proposal approved by the professor
- Individual student contributions are evident in final product and during presentation (documentation should be evidenced in student's LR)
- **DUE DATE: December 1**

Part B1 & 2 and C1 &2
At mid semester students will complete Part B1 and C1 of the LR. This can be thought of as a "dry run" and is not graded and is **due October 20th, 2014** It is intended to assess where the student is at a critical juncture and address and support any changes that need to be made. The completion of Part B2 and C2 at the end of the semester will determine the student' final grade. In the **analysis** portion of the LR **(Part B),** this evidence is interpreted in terms of the strands of work in the course (its objectives) and six dimensions of learning. In the final section of the LR **(Part**

C) students develop an **evaluation,** comparing the evidence in the LR with grade criteria as outlines in the syllabus. The instructor responds to the evidence, the analysis, and the student's estimated grade with the final evaluation.

Criteria for Part B Summary interpretation
- Student interpretation is supported by observations and samples of work
- Refers to the dimensions of learning and the course strands (learning objectives established by the teacher) for the course
- Represent the student's activity and accomplishments

Criteria for Part C Grade Estimate
- Grade estimate matches the criteria for the grade as explained by the professor and outlined in the syllabus
- The student's LR follows the LR format
- The LR itself in one text document, in a folder that includes the samples of work as separate files
- The LR and its author properly identified in its file name

7. Additional LR Work Samples
Students are encouraged to contribute to the wiki page by uploading videos, links to articles and programs, and other relevant information. Students are a great source of information and inspiration, and the wiki is well suited to collective contributions that can be included in the student's LR as work samples.

8. Graduate level research/project component

Graduate students are required to propose and complete an independent research project, which must be proposed to the instructor by the 3rd week of class.

COURSE GRADING
Grades in this course are determined by use of the Learning Record Online, a system that requires students to compile a portfolio of work at the midterm and at the end of the semester. These portfolios present a selection of your work, both formal and informal, plus ongoing observations about your learning, plus an analysis of your work development across six dimensions of learning and centers on the course strands/objectives.
Grade Criteria

A	Represents outstanding participation in all course activities; all assigned work completed, with very high quality in all work produced for the course. Evidence of significant development across the six dimensions of learning. The Learning Record at this level demonstrates activity that goes significantly beyond the required course work in one or more course strands.
B	Represents excellent participation in all course activities; all assigned work completed, with consistently high quality in course work. Evidence of marked development across the six dimensions of learning.
C	Represents good participation in all course activities; all assigned work completed, with generally good quality over six dimensions of learning.
D	Represents uneven participation in course activities; some gaps in assigned work completed, with inconsistent quality in course work. Evidence of development across the six dimensions of learning is partial or unclear.
F	Represents minimal participation in course activities; serious gaps in assigned work completed, or very low quality in course work. Evidence of development is not available.

VI. Class Policies

1. **Attendance:** Attendance and prompt arrival to class is mandatory. Individual exceptions are made only in the event of *properly documented* extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control and prior notice of reason for absence and/or tardy. Poor attendance/participation will impact grade. Students missing 5 or more classes will automatically fail the course
2. **Late Assignments:** Assignments are due on date assigned. Students will be accountable to tardy work in their Learning Record assessment and will have bearing on final grades.
3. **APA format**: We will use APA editorial style as the standard format for all written assignments. Details of the APA style are included in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition.
4. **Small group work:** Groups are expected to resolve challenges. The instructor serves as consultant on group dynamics and teamwork. Groups are not penalized in their grade for consulting with the instructor.
5. **Respect and Civility:** Cross-cultural group work can raise emotional issues and usually involves moderate to high processing of self and others. The instructor and classmates have the ethical responsibility to see that the class environment is maintained as a respectful and inviting place to grow together. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.
6. **Technology and Information Sharing:** We will technology frequently in this class. Due to the nature of the course, you will be sharing your work and reflections with classmates and peers. Some of your work will be accessible online. By taking this course, you indicate that you accept these requirements.

OTHER POLICIES:

The University of Texas Honor Code
The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty
Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/).

Documented Disability Statement
Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/.

Religious Holidays
By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a

project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.