CSL 300

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING, or COMMUNITIES, KNOWLEDGES, AND HEALTH

Winter 2008 Wednesdays, 1- 3:50pm Room: HC 2-41

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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Community Service-Learning 300 provides an opportunity for students with previous CSL experience or substantial volunteer experience to contemplate Community Service-Learning as a pedagogy and to examine some of the issues that arise when the Arts curriculum is combined with community engagement. The concepts of community, knowledge, service, and health serve as a focus for the course.

Community Service-Learning integrates community-based activities with classroom learning. In other words, students volunteer with a non-profit community organization as part of the course curriculum. A central tenet of CSL is that it teaches students "what it means to be citizens in democratic society" (Trigg and Balliet 87). As Mary Trigg and Barbara Balliet remark in their article, "Learning Across Boundaries: Women's Studies, Praxis and Community Service," "Advocates of service-learning hope it will contribute to creating new generations of citizens who understand the way government [and I would add, institutions and power] work, and who will feel and act on their sense of responsibility to their communities" (87). I share these aspirations of CSL; I see it as a political and potentially socially transformative pedagogy, which is not to say that social change is invariably an outcome of CSL. One of the main goals of this course is to think about some of the philosophical and practical issues that arise when conventional academic learning is combined with community engagement and social action. Similarly, the course aims to examine CSL as a pedagogy and to think about the role and responsibility of the university in building "healthy communities." What are our social responsibilities as learners? Is learning itself a part of social responsibility? How can learning be enhanced by practical and specific community engagement?

Health is one of the organizing concepts of this course for a number of reasons. On a practical level, many of the issues that non-profits organizations address are health related; that is, the non-profit sector has arguably become part of the remedial medical services system. Many community organizations work with people suffering from what are broadly termed "health issues," including mental illness, physical and developmental disabilities, addictions, psychological trauma, etc.. But many community organizations in the non-profit sector also work to promote an understanding of health in the context of its social determinants and to demonstrate the interrelationships between health and other social issues such as poverty, housing, education, peace, equality, and social justice. Moreover,

many of these organizations strive to build "healthy communities," partially through addressing the social determinants of health and improving social and individual health. The concept of health, therefore, often intersects with concepts of community and social justice. Thus, this course also aims

- to critically analyze the concept of health,
- to recognize the socioeconomic factors of health and healthy communities,
- to learn how responsibility for *care* of individuals and communities is culturally and socially allocated, and
- to understand how the non-profit sector conceptualizes and performs the work of "building healthy communities."

The course is interdisciplinary in its approach. You can expect to read material from a variety of disciplines including, educational theory, sociology, medical ethics, medical humanities, and literary theory.

The course will be run as a seminar. We will combine in-class seminar style theoretical learning and practice, including voluntary work experiences with community organizations and service groups in the not-for-profit sector. The course will be thematically structured through seminar readings, discussions and presentations. Ideally, your practical work in your community placement will complement the theoretical readings and seminar discussions.

The practical work experience will be facilitated through the rubric of Community Service-Learning. You will be required to work as volunteers for 30-35 hours in a chosen community service organization. Pre-arranged volunteer placements and projects have been selected whose mandates correspond to the course's focal themes. You will be required to develop your thinking and research on community, health, social responsibility, service, and learning through the interrelationship and juxtapositions of theoretical reading and participatory practice.

COURSE THEMES

Several themes will be addressed in this course. These themes will act as lenses for focusing our analysis on the interplay between "community," "service," "learning," and "health." Possible themes include:

- CSL and its negotiation with the context and idea of the university
- The meaning of health
- The meaning of community
- Critical thinking
- Ethics and affect/responsibility and compassion
- The "health" of the university
- "Healthy Communities"/Social Health
- Disability
- Issues in Mental Health
- Marginalization and Health Care (multicultural health care needs, HIV)
- Trauma

- Issues affecting Urban Aboriginal peoples
- Telling stories of health and illness

REQUIRED TEXTS

CSL 300 Custom Courseware, available at the U of A Bookstore

EVALUATION

CSL Participation	20%
Seminar Preparation and Participation	20%
Reflection Journal	20%
Critical Incidents Reports	20%
Classroom-Community Colloquium	20%

GRADING SYSTEM

Percentage	Letter Grade	Point Value	Description
95-100%	A+	4.0	Excellent
90-94%	A	4.0	Excellent
85-89%	A-	3.7	Excellent
80-84%	B+	3.3	Very Good
76-79%	В	3.0	Good
71-75%	B-	2.7	Good
66-70%	C+	2.3	Satisfactory
62-65%	С	2.0	Satisfactory
58-61%	C-	1.7	Satisfactory
54-57%	D+	1.3	Poor
50-53%	D	1.0	Minimal Pass
0-49%	F	0.0	Fail

For further details, see section 23.4(4) of the University Calendar (online at www.registrar.ualberta.ca/calendar/Regulations-and-Information/Academic-Regulation/23/4.html#23.4). Unless otherwise discussed with the instructor, failure to complete a component of the course requirements can result in a failing grade. Violations of the Code of Student Behaviour can also result in failing grades.

LATE POLICY: Late papers, journals and assignments, without valid and documented reasons for lateness, will not be accepted. Without valid and documented reasons, late submissions will incur 10% deductions for every day late, including weekends. Valid reasons for lateness include documented illness, bereavement, etc.. Electronic copies of submissions will not be accepted.

ASSIGNMENTS

I. CSL Participation (20%)

CSL participation is a required facet of the course. Students are required to work between 30 and 35 hours with a chosen service organization. These hours can be fulfilled over the

entire winter term, or they can be concentrated over a short duration; how you fulfill your hours will depend on the project you choose, its requirements and flexibility, as well as your own responsibilities and flexibility. Before you meet with your community organization, take some time to think about how you work best and what kind of volunteer schedule will work best for you. Many students find that having a fixed day and time for CSL work is an effective time management strategy.

Grades will be awarded for completion of the requisite 30-35 hours as well as for completing the following administrative assignments:

- i. Note of Placement Preference
 - o Due: on or before January 16
 - o In a brief email (1-2 paragraphs), indicate your placement preferences. Explain which two organizations you would most like to work with and why. Include a brief explanation of what you expect to learn from your preferred placement.
- ii. CSL Student Agreement Form
 - o Refer to CSL Guidebook
 - o Due in class: January 23
- iii. CSL Log
 - o A record of dates, hours worked, activities/tasks performed; total hours
 - o Must be signed by your community supervisor to verify completion
 - o Due: April 2
- iv. CSL Survey (Tentative date: April 2)

I also expect that you will use your experiences in your service organization to reflect and write critically about the practices and theories of communities, health, service, and learning. You will be expected to bring your CSL experiences and insights to the class. Be prepared to share your CSL experiences with your peers via discussion and written assignments. (See below, Seminar Preparation and Participation).

2. Seminar Preparation and Participation (20%)

This course will be run as a seminar. I will not lecture. I expect that you will come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings as well as your CSL experiences. I hope to have lively and respectful class discussion and I expect all students to participate in the discussions.

i. <u>Article Summary Presentation</u>: To help facilitate this participation, each student will be expected to present two (2) articles to the class throughout the semester. These articles will be chosen by students on a first-come-first-served basis. Please confirm your choices by January 19.

Preparation of the readings means that you will summarize the author's argument and the main points of the article and present your summary to the class. You may make formal presentations if you wish, but you are not required to do so. Those who choose to make formal (but short, 10-15-minute) presentations to the class

will not necessarily be assessed higher markers than those who use a more informal approach. Your main tasks here are

- to summarize the key points of the articles,
- to explain the arguments or claims raised, and
- to formulate at least 2 questions about the articles that we can use as a basis of our discussion.

The questions may aim to clarify a key concept or a line of argument; they should not aim to provoke "personal opinion," but should strive for critical engagement. Please note, websites listed under "Readings" are considered supplementary texts; students are not responsible for summarizing their content unless specified.

- ii. Article Abstract: At the end of the class in which you presented your summary, submit a short (250 words maximum, typed, double-spaced) abstract of your chosen article. Several of the articles contain their own abstracts; be careful not to inadvertently plagiarize these abstracts. Make sure to put key concepts and arguments into your own words, and do not be afraid to highlight concepts that you think are central to article but may not be highlighted in the author's original abstract. These abstracts will be assessed as part of your reading preparations.
- iii. <u>Class Participation</u>: All students will be assessed on the degree to which you come prepared to discuss the assigned readings and materials, listen to others' viewpoints, engage in critical debate, and further the productive and respectful discourse of the class. All students will also be expected to participate in the class's online forum (See below, "Critical Incidents" Reports Online Forum).

3. Reflection Journal (20%)

Ongoing personal and critical reflection is fundamental to CSL. Journaling encourages you to reflect on what you're doing as part of your community service, what's going well and not so well, and what you're having difficulty doing. Journals, in other words, allow you to create an ongoing, informal record of meaningful aspects of your own learning process. Journals also encourage us to connect the private and the public and, ideally, to bridge theory and practice. Hopefully, you'll find that journaling helps you transfer academic concepts to service situations, or vice versa, that experiences with your community placement help you understand or reinterpret academic concepts. Journals are also a private place to explore your own beliefs, attitudes, responses, and emotions. Students often use journals to express complex feelings of fear, anger, frustration related to service and classroom experiences and to examine how their service work related to previous personal experiences.

Thus, the journal is intended to be a candid and reflective account of your work, thinking, and experiences over the course. Use it to record thoughts, notes, observations and activities in your CSL placement and in the class. You should also aim to make connections here between course materials and your CSL experiences. The journal is intended to be a reflective and reflexive account of your thoughts and impression on the intersections between theoretical and academic reading and practical, community activity.

The journal is not intended to be a "finished product." It is a place to work out your ideas, so I am not looking for grammatical perfection or total coherence. Still, you are handing it in for grades. Quality, engagement, and effort will be more easily (and favourably) assessed if the notebook is well organized and written clearly and legibly. I strongly encourage you to type the notebook when you can.

I encourage you to be creative with your journal. Feel free to incorporate visual materials, including photos, drawings, video work, etc., and feel free to include poetry or short fiction. Feel free to include a few drawings/images, random thoughts, cultural artifacts, or references to media stories that have some relevance to the course and that provoke particular reactions or ideas. Note that I expect relevant work and a sustained, habitual, engaged, reflexive, critical practice. Journals that have been written at the last minute (which is always obvious) will fail. Journals that are solely a catalogue of personal, emotional response will also fail. Likewise, journals that are just a record of tasks will fail.

Journals will be evaluated on the following:

- the amount of effort put into writing,
- the degree of innovative critical reflection, and
- the degree to which the author critically integrates his/her experiences with the more theoretical material, including readings and class discussions.

The journal may be as personal as you wish given that I will read it. Be assured that I will keep the journals and their contents strictly confidential.

General Content Guidelines:

- All entries should be dated.
- Write at least one entry per week, starting the first week.
- Each entry should be a minimum of approximately 300 words.
- In the days when your Journal is being reviewed, you should continue to contribute to it.

For the first entry, I recommend that you reflect on why you decided to take this class and/or why you've chosen your specific placement. What do you want to get out of this class and/or your service experience? What are your expectations of the placement? What do you think you will learn through your experiences? What preconceptions do you have about the place you will be working and the people with whom you'll be interacting?

Submission Dates:

- Week 4, January 30
- Week 7, February 27
- Week 10, March 19
- Week 13, April 9

4. CSL "Critical Incidents" Reports - Online Forum (20%)

i. (15%) Three times during the term, you will write a short (approximately 400 words) report of a "critical incident" that you have experienced at your

CSL placement and post it on the class's online forum. At the end of the post, pose a question to the class to guide our discussion of your report.

- A "critical incident" is not as dire as it might sound; in this context, a "critical incident" refers to an event that had an especially poignant impact on you for whatever reason. Essentially, you will define what constitutes a "critical incident." It might be an interaction (positive or negative) with a program participant or a supervisor; it might be witnessing the culmination of a project you've been working on; it might be a moment that illuminated a concept from the course readings for you (an "ah-ha" moment).
- Whatever the "critical incident," your report should demonstrate how it affected your thinking about your placement and the issues you're addressing and about your role as an activist learner. You are encouraged to incorporate concepts from the readings, where relevant.
- The main goal of this assignment is to demonstrate your ability to revise your analytical/interpretative frameworks on the basis of experience.
- The other important goal here is to learn about each others' community service and learning experiences and to puzzle together over aspects of our experiences that interest/trouble/upset/excite/motivate us.
- Due Dates: There is some flexibility here, but you must post your first "Cl" Report within the first 4 weeks of class. Your second "Cl" Report should be posted between weeks 5 and 8, and the third between weeks 9 and 12.
- Be prepared to discuss your "Cl" posting in class. How much time is afforded to the "Cl" Reports during class is up to us to decide and depends on some rather unpredictable variables (i.e., what happens in your placements), but I'd like to see us devote a portion of the class to discussing the "Cl"s as they arise. Let's talk about this.
- Please note: These postings *must* maintain high degrees of confidentially and anonymity when referring to people with whom you are interacting at your placement. Similarly, as a class we must commit to respecting each others' intimacies with confidentially.
- ii. (5%) At least once during the term, you will respond briefly (approx. 200-300 words) to one of the "Critical Incident" Reports online. You may respond directly to the question posed by the author, or you may comment on another aspect of your peer's experience. Your response should not be entirely personal or emotive. An effective response might offer a new way for the student to think about his or her "critical incident" via a concept from the course readings, for example. All members of the class are encouraged to read the online forum regularly.

Please join the Moodle site as a soon as possible. For instructions, see "Other Important Notes." The Moodle website also contains links to relevant websites and articles. I will also use the site to post announcements to the class.

5. Classroom/Community Colloquium (20%)

The last week of class, I'd like us to host a colloquium where we exchange final reflections on our CSL experiences with our community partners. I'd like us, as a class, to formulate

our goals and expectations of such an event. As the course progresses, we'll arrange time to discuss this final event. Right now, I'm envisioning the following 2 components:

- Critical Summary Paper (5 pgs., double-spaced, typed, 12-pt, font, due April 9)
- Colloquium Presentation (7-10 minutes, to group, including community partners, April 9)

The Critical Summary paper may involve some research, but will focus on an aspect of your placement that you found most valuable or insightful. Again, this is up for discussion, but I imagine that using the main concepts of the course might be useful, so, tentatively, you might address a question like, how has your understanding of "health" been affected by your community service work? Or, based on your service experiences, what is the most "healthy" or health-promoting aspect of your community organization? Or, how could your community organization more effectively shape a "healthy community"? Or, what aims of the organization do you feel that you've fulfilled?

The Colloquium Presentation will be a rendition of your Critical Summary paper. It's your chance to share what you see as the most important aspects of your experiences with your peers and your community supervisors. Don't feel like you have to censor yourself. Your community supervisors are as eager to learn from you as you are to learn from them.

OTHER IMPORTANT NOTES

COMMUNITY SUPERVISOR

Think of your community supervisor as a co-educator and mentor in the course. You can learn a lot from them, perhaps more than from the classroom or the instructor. Accord your supervisor due respect and courtesy. Remember, they also want to learn from you, just as I do, so be open to discussing any relevant issues that come up for you.

ETHICS, CONFIDENTIALITY and RESPECT

Familiarize yourself with the "Safety and Ethical Guidelines for CSL Participants" in the CSL Guidebook, pgs. 6 and 7.

REFLECTION JOURNALS

Instructor Confidentiality: Reflection Journals may be as personal as you wish given the fact that the instructor will read them. Be assured that the instructor will keep the notebooks and their contents strictly confidential.

Student Confidentiality and Anonymity: You may include anecdotal information drawn from your personal experiences and experiences at your CSL placement, but you must take steps to avoid any identifying information. Do not use real names; do not include details that would allow a reader to deduce anyone's identity.

Students are required to keep their Journals in safe and secure places. Journals might contain material sensitive to clients involved in the CSL projects. It is required that students respect this privacy and sensitivity by keeping their Journals and reflections secure.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RESPECT

You may be privy to sensitive parts of people's personal and social lives. Consider how often you are privy to intimate details of those around you. As we draw on our experiences outside of the classroom in class, please maintain high degrees of confidentiality. Respect peoples' intimacies with confidentiality.

RESEARCH ETHICS

Should any student choose to represent any other person or his/her experiences, they must obtain permission from the subject. People subject to representation must be able to provide **informed consent**. If people are not able to provide informed consent, then they must NOT be represented. Subjects must be informed that they are able to withdraw consent at any time, before or after being represented, and that they are not obliged to provide reasons for the withdrawal of consent. If you choose, for example, to interview someone or to photograph them, you must document their consent; consent forms are available from the instructor.

A NOTE ON CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

Please do not hesitate to contact me about course-related issues of any kind, but do not rely on email to do so. You should see me during my office hours to discuss any issues that arise for you throughout the course. I will be happy to set up an appointment with you via email. I will not have academic discussions over email, however. Please note that I will not respond to email queries dealing with matters already covered in class. This does not mean that I am not available to clarify things that come up in class. It means, rather, that I will not respond to queries about what you missed in class. Again, for queries of a more detailed nature, it is best to talk to me in-person. I will be in my office during the office hours noted at the top of this syllabus. I hope you'll take advantage of this time to come chat with me about any course-related issues you may have. Feel free to ask questions, talk about assignments and grades, and discuss personal issues that might affect your performance in the course. If you cannot come to see me during my office hours, we can schedule an appointment.

CSL300 MOODLE WEBSITE

Go to: www.arts.ualberta.ca/efsboard

In "Course Categories," our course is under "Miscellaneous" and then CSL300. *Instructions for signing onto the website*:

- I. Using your favourite web browser go to the Moodle site (if you're in a computer lab you may need to authenticate first (using your U of A username and your password) www.arts.ualberta.ca/efsboard
- 2. Click on **create new account** in the login block in the upper-left corner.
- 3. You'll be asked to choose a Username and a password, to enter your email address, and a few other things. Click 'Create My New Account'. A box will pop up telling you it has sent an email to you, and will show the email address you used to create the account. Click on the word 'Continue' and it will take you back to the main Moodle page.
- 4. An email will go to you at the address you gave Moodle. Check your email messages for the one sent to you by Moodle. Open the message and click on the link inside this message, and you will be taken back into Moodle- this means your account has been authenticated and you are ready to enroll in the class website.

5. To enroll in a class, click on **CSL 300**. Moodle will ask you for the enrollment key. For this class the enrollment key is: **health**. This is the only time you will need to use the enrollment key. After you enter it click on the button that says 'Enroll me in this course.' 6. You will now be registered in this course and the next screen you see will be the website for your class. From now on when you log on you will be taken directly to a page that shows your class and the Moodle default information.

OTHER REGULATIONS

- * Please note that students cannot receive credit for both CSL 300 and AUCSL 300.
- * Policy about course outlines can be found in §23.4(2) of the University Calendar.

THE CODE OF STUDENT BEHAVIOUR outlines the rights and responsibilities of all students. Please be aware of the regulations under the Code regarding behaviour in the classroom and discrimination. Disruptive classroom behaviour will not be tolerated, nor will discrimination as defined by the U of Alberta's Code of Student Behaviour (consult Section 30.3.4). http://www.ualberta.ca/~unisecr/policy/sec30.html. Inappropriate behaviour and the disrespectful treatment of others includes, but is not limited to, personal attacks inside or outside of class and the harassment of others in any form. A number of penalties can be imposed, such as lowering a grade or expulsion from the University (as outlined in Section 30.4(2) of the Code). I will report and act on any violations of the Code of Student Behaviour.

CELL PHONES will be turned off before entering the classroom and will stay off for the duration of the class.

PLAGIARISM IS A SERIOUS ACADEMIC OFFENSE

Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are punishable under the Code. All written work must be your own. Others' ideas and words must be meticulously documented. Ignorance is not considered an acceptable defense in cases of academic offences.

"The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behavior (online at www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm) and avoid any behavior which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offense. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University."

COURSE SCHEDULE

Readings are from the coursepack unless otherwise indicated.

This schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Any and all changes will be discussed/announced in class. Students are responsible for any changes to the schedule given in class.

Week I: 9 January

Introductions

Activities

- Course Overview and Assignment Discussion
- Definition of CSL
- Choosing CSL placements
- CSL partners classroom visits
- Expectations and goals
- Overview of different "service" models

Readings

- Morton, "The Irony of Service: Charity, Project and Social Change in Service-learning"

Week 2: 16 January

Community Service-Learning and The University

Readings

- Butin, "Service-Learning as Postmodern Pedagogy"
- Fish, "Aim Low"
- Fish, "Why We Built the Ivory Tower"

Week 3: 23 January

Community, Citizenship, and Critical Thinking

Readings

- Rocheleau, "Theoretical Roots of Service-Learning: Progressive Education and the Development of Citizenship"
- Kwak, "Reconceptualizing Critical Thinking for Moral Education in a Culturally Plural Society"
- West, "The Moral Obligations of Living in a Democratic Society"

Week 4: 30 January

Responses and Responsibility

Readings

- Saltmarsh, "Ethics, Reflection, Purpose, and Compassion: Community Service Learning"
- Brennan, "The Education of the Senses" (handout)
- Dunlap et al., "White Students' Experiences of Privilege and Socioeconomic Disparities"

Guest Speaker

- TBC: Kris Fowler, Sexual Assault Centre, University of Alberta

Week 5: 6 February Discourses of Health

Readings

- WHO website: http://www.who.int/about/agenda/en/index.html
- Dolfman, "The Concept of Health: An Historic and Analytical Examination"
- Bircher, "Towards a Dynamic Definition of Health and Disease"
- Sullum, "An Epidemic of Meddling"
- Zola, "Medicine as an Institution of Social Control"

Week 6: 13 February Healthy Communities

Readings

- Fawcett et al., "Building Healthy Communities"
- Wolff, "The Healthy Communities Movement: A Time for Transformation"
- Fyfe and Milligan, "Out of the Shadows: Exploring Contemporary Geographies of Voluntarism"
- CBC, "Alberta's Social Services in Crisis" http://www.cbc.ca/edmonton/features/socialservices/

Activities

- TBC: class meets at ECVO

-- Reading Week --

Week 7: 27 February

The Health of the University

Readings

- LaCapra, "The University in Ruins?"
- Giroux, "Public Pedagogy and the Politics of Resistance"

Week 8: 5 March

Mental Health

Readings

- Canadian Mental Health Association, http://www.cmha.ca/bins/index.asp
- Burr and Butt, "Psychological Distress and Postmodern Thought" (tentative, substitute TBA)
- Thomas et al., "Challenging the Globalisation of Biomedical Psychiatry"

Guest Speaker

- Michelle Markham, CMHA

Week 9: 12 March

Disability

Readings

- Wendell, "The Social Construction of Disability"
- Shogun, "The Social Construction of Disability: The Impact of Statistics and Technology" (pdf available on Moodle)
- Gent and Gurecka, "Service-Learning: A Disservice to People with Disabilities?"

Guest speaker:

- TBC: Debbie Reed, SKILLS Society

Week 10: 19 March

Trauma

Readings

- Brown, "Not Outside the Range: One Feminist Perspective of Psychic Trauma"
- Cvetkovich, "Introduction" to An Archive of Feelings and "The Everyday Life of Oueer Trauma"
- Erikson, "Notes on Trauma and Community"
- Mitchell and Maracle, "Healing the Generations: Post-Traumatic Stress and the Health Status of Aboriginal Populations in Canada"

Week II: 26 March

Telling Stories of Health and Illness

Readings

- Bruner, "Narratives of Human Plight"
- Morris, "Narrative, Ethics, and Pain: Thinking With Stories"
- Frank, "Illness as a Call for Stories"

Week 12: 2 April

Colloquium Preparation

Activities

- Peer editing/exchange colloquium material

Week 13: 9 April

CSL300 Classroom/Community Colloquium