Course Syllabus - School for New Learning
Campus-based Course - Individualized Focus Area (BA) – (4 Credit Hours)
FA 386 - Exploring the Nonprofit Workplace
Spring 2016-2017

Instructor: Maria L. Ugarte-Ramos, M.A.
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Phone: 847.675.7055

Course Dates: Mondays, March 27 – June 5, 2017

Course Time: 6:15 p.m. – 9:15 p.m.

Course Location: O’Hare Campus - Room TBA

Course Description
What makes work meaningful? The concept of work has numerous meanings, multiple purposes and can be accomplished in many different ways. For some individuals, meaningful work is about serving a community need, addressing a social issue or making a difference in an area where they feel most passionate. This course is designed for students who are considering a nonprofit job or contributing as a volunteer. The lessons provide students with an understanding of social issues through an exploration of social institutions and a self-examination of their own skills and talents. Students identify ways to broaden their skills as they align their interests to their core values. The course provides students with an overview of the key elements of successful nonprofit organizations and a foundation for how to assess meaningful work. Students also reflect upon what actions they can take to impact a significant social issue through short films, reflection, readings, discussion, research, writing and self-analysis. The final paper may consist of a description of a social issue from an ethical perspective, an examination of a community challenge, an evaluation of the effectiveness of social institutions or the formulation of an action plan for how to transition into a nonprofit job or volunteer work.

Competences

A-3-C: Can examine a social issue from an ethical perspective.

1. Identifies and describes a social issue or situation.
2. Identifies an ethical perspective relevant to the issue or situation.
3. Uses that perspective to raise or explore questions about this issue or situation.

Students demonstrate this competence by using an ethical perspective to analyze a social issue. They may create their own ethical perspective, but should always engage the ideas of one or more significant ethicists. The issues or situations that students address in this competence should affect large groups of people. Students should explore the implications of this analysis for their own experience.
H-1-H: Can describe and analyze the challenges faced by communities in urban, suburban or rural areas.

1. Articulates the characteristics of an urban, suburban, or rural geographic area.
2. Identifies one or more communities that embody the attributes of an urban, suburban, or rural geographic area.
3. Provides an in-depth description and analysis of one or more challenges for the selected area(s).

Students demonstrate competence by describing the elements of a geographic area that define it as being urban, suburban, or rural. Analysis may concentrate on either change over time within one location, or, compare and contrast of several locations and their challenges (such as adequacy of housing and transportation, development of an adequate tax base, migration or emigration of population, planning for land use). Students should consider experiences they have had in their own community as the basis for approaching this competence.

H-2-A: Can understand a social problem and can analyze the effectiveness of social institutions in addressing it.

1. Identifies and frames a significant social problem.
2. Identifies a social institution that addresses this problem.
3. Articulates criteria used to assess the effectiveness of the social institution.

Students demonstrate this competence by choosing an institution that addresses an important social problem. Students develop a rationale for the selection that speaks to the following questions: What is a social institution? Does it address a significant social problem? Students explore the ways the institution may or may not be effective. Courses applied to this competence will emphasize the analysis of institutional effectiveness.

F-X: Can design and articulate a career transition plan based on reflection and self-assessment to obtain a job or volunteer position in a nonprofit organization.

1. Articulates skills, abilities, qualifications and interests.
2. Assesses nonprofit organizations for a potential job or volunteer opportunity.
3. Designs a plan to transition into a nonprofit career or volunteer path.

Students demonstrate this competence by reflecting upon their current skills and strengths and identifying what impact they want to make in a nonprofit setting. Students research organizations to help them identify an appropriate setting based on their interests. Students design a plan to transition from a current workplace into a nonprofit organization or develop a plan that serves as a tool to gain experience from a volunteer opportunity. Students will specify goals, objectives and timelines and create proactive solutions to potential challenges to help them succeed.
Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe a social issue, problem or situation and the impact it has on society.
- Develop questions about a social issue from an ethical perspective.
- Identify characteristics of an urban, suburban, or rural geographic area and how these impact the surrounding population.
- Examine the challenges faced by communities in an urban, suburban, or rural geographic area.
- Articulate key components of a social institution.
- Assess the effectiveness of a social institution in addressing a social problem.
- Evaluate individual interest, skills and qualifications to work or volunteer in a nonprofit.
- Compare nonprofit organization missions to determine alignment with career or volunteer goals.
- Formulate a plan to transition into a nonprofit career or volunteer path.

Learning Strategies and Resources

**Lecture:** The lectures include how nonprofits evolved, best practices for operating a nonprofit and an overview of key operational components that contribute to the success of a nonprofit.

**Films:** Students will view and discuss several short film clips about social issues such as hunger, homelessness, health care crisis, immigration, human rights and volunteer groups.

**Discussion:** Students discuss the challenges that confront disadvantaged populations and how social issues impact communities. Students also discuss components of an effective nonprofit institution and how each area contributes to the organization’s mission.

**Exercises:** Students identify social issues as a group, research a specific issue of interest, create tools to assess a community need and reflect upon ways to individually address a social issue. Students may also revise their resume, practice interviewing or conduct job/volunteer searches.

**Research:** Students conduct online research and visit a nonprofit agency to learn more about a social problem and how it is addressed. Students will use these experiences to learn about the impact of a social issue, assess an organization’s services and evaluate its effectiveness.

**Oral Presentation:** Students will conduct a 5 - 7 minute oral presentation about a social issue that is meaningful to them, how a social institution addresses a problem or identify basic steps for how they will transition into a nonprofit career or volunteer opportunity.

**Written Assignments:** Students will write short essays in class, a reflective essay and a final paper that demonstrates their learning experience. Students who require help with writing are
encouraged to obtain assistance from DePaul’s Writing Center at http://snlapps.depaul.edu/writing


Learning Deliverables

**Reflection Essay:** Students write a 3-page reflective essay that identifies why a social issue is important to them, pose questions to learn more about a community challenge and what type of impact they could make in a community or nonprofit organization.

**Oral Presentation:** Students provide a 5 - 7 minute presentation describing one of the following: 1) a social issue and propose questions from an ethical perspective; 2) challenges of an urban, suburban, or rural geographic area; 3) a social institution and how it addresses a social problem; or 4) steps to transition careers or become a volunteer.

**Final Paper:** Students write an 8-10 pp. final paper to describe 1) a social issue and its impact on society from an ethical perspective; 2) examine the challenges a community faces; 3) evaluate the effectiveness of a social institution in addressing a social problem; or 4) formulates an action plan with specific goals for how to transition into a paid position or volunteer work.

Assessment of Student Learning

**Grade Breakdown:**

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Essay</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
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**Class Participation:** The Instructor will assess participation in classroom discussions by how clearly and concisely students express ideas and pose insightful questions.

**Oral Presentation:** The Instructor will assess oral presentations by evaluating how clear, focused, well-organized and timely key concepts are explained and how these concepts relate to the proposed competences.

**Grading Rubric:** See Rubric for SNL Papers at https://snlapps.depaul.edu/writing/Rubric.html
Grading Criteria & Scale

A = designates work of high quality; reflects thorough and comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; reflects a clearly identifiable thesis and argument that demonstrates cogent and creative development and support of idea.

B = designates work of good quality; reflects clearly organized and comprehensive understanding of issues at hand; presents substantive thesis and argument with evident development and support of ideas.

C = designates work which minimally meets requirements set forward in assignment; reflects some organization and development of ideas but develops argument in superficial or simplistic manner; may only address part of the assignment or be otherwise incomplete.

D = designates work of poor quality which does not meet minimum requirements set forth in the assignment; demonstrates poor organization of ideas and/or inattention to development of ideas, grammar, and spelling; treatment of material is superficial and/or simplistic; may indicate that student has not done reading assignments thoroughly.

Pass/Fail
Students have the option of taking the course as Pass/Fail. If you intend to do so, you must inform the instructor within the first two weeks of the course. Once you commit to taking a course Pass/Fail, you will not be able to switch back to a letter grade.

Incomplete Grades
Unfinished work or work requiring revision will be given an Incomplete (IN) grade. In order to qualify for the IN, students must have regularly attended class, and must have completed three-fourths of assignments. In order for a student to have an incomplete (IN) grade granted in this course, there must be a significant extenuating circumstance evidenced by the student (e.g., medical and/or significant personal issues). The student will need to initiate and file an SNL Incomplete grade contract before the final session of the course to receive an incomplete grade. Students are strongly advised to review the university deadlines for withdrawal without tuition refund and the implications for financial aid and grades.
## Course Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-27</td>
<td>Creation of Nonprofits, Nonprofit Development, Impact of Social Issues</td>
<td>Welcome &amp; Introductions, Review Syllabus &amp; Writing Guidelines, Nonprofit evolution lecture, View Film on Hunger, Exercise: Identify social issues, Group Discussion</td>
<td>• Read Body of Work Chapters 1 &amp; 2</td>
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<td>4-3</td>
<td>Disadvantaged Populations, Role of NPO, NPO Structure, Mission, Volunteerism</td>
<td>Discuss Reading, Review Organizational Charts, Brainstorm Exercise: disenfranchised populations, and nonprofit organizations, View Film on Volunteer Hero Writing Exercise and Discussion: What does volunteerism mean?</td>
<td>• Read Body of Work Chapter 3, Draft Reflective Essay</td>
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<td>4-10</td>
<td>Needs Assessments, Communities in Need, Social Services</td>
<td>Discuss Reading, Review and analyze needs assessment data, Identify disenfranchised communities and discuss challenges, View Film on Homelessness, Exercise: Sharing interest areas</td>
<td>• Reflective Essays Due, Read Body of Work Chapter 4</td>
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<td>4-17</td>
<td>Governance, Management, Strategic Planning</td>
<td>Discuss Reading, Reflection and Discussion: Why serve on a Board?, Lecture: Board Committees, Discussion: What challenges does management face?, Exercise: Identification of roles, Discuss SWOT Analysis, Writing Exercise: Identify role</td>
<td>• Read Body of Work Chapter 5, Prepare Oral Presentation</td>
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| 4-24 | - Oral Presentations including site visit planning information  
- Program Planning  
- Finance  
- Fundraising  
- Discuss Reading  
- Discuss program development  
- Exercise: How to establish goals and objectives  
- Discussion: Creating Budgets  
- Writing Exercise: What does sustainability mean?  
- View Film on Immigrants  
- Oral Presentations Due  
- Read Body of Work Chapter 6 |
| 5-1  | - Field Work – No Class  
- Community Organization Visits  
- Interview staff or community members  
- Read Body of Work Chapter 7 |
| 5-8  | - Personnel  
- Volunteerism  
- Job Searches  
- Volunteer opportunities  
- Discuss Reading  
- View Film on Health Care  
- Reflection and Writing: Preferred work environment  
- Brainstorm: Volunteer opportunities  
- Read Body of Work Chapter 8 |
| 5-15 | - Resumes  
- Cover Letters  
- References  
- Discuss Reading  
- How to write an effective resume and cover letter  
- Discuss job interests  
- Visit job posting websites  
- Read Body of Work Chapter 9 and Conclusion |
| 5-22 | - Research  
- Interviewing  
- Discuss Reading  
- Review posting qualifications  
- Share interviewing tips  
- Discuss questions and prepare answers  
- Role Play interviews  
- Draft Final Paper Due 6-5  
- Submit Draft for feedback by 5-29 - Optional |
| 5-29 |  
- Memorial Day – No Class  
- Final Class  
- Reflection: What does a social mean to me?  
- Student presentations of next steps  
- Wrap-Up  
- Final Papers Due |
Course Policies

Attendance: Attendance and participation are essential. In the event of an absence, students must (1) inform the Instructor ahead of time, and (2) contact a classmate ahead of time to collect information from the missed session.

Late Work: Students must inform the Instructor in writing ahead of time if they will submit assignments beyond the due date. A date of submission will be agreed upon and must be adhered to depending on the circumstances. In most cases, one week will be granted for late submissions.

This course includes and adheres to the college and university policies described in the links below:
- Academic Integrity Policy (UGRAD)
- Academic Integrity Policy (GRAD)
- Incomplete Policy
- Course Withdrawal Timelines and Grade/Fee Consequences
- Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability
- Protection of Human Research Participants
- APA Citation format (GRAD)
- University Attendance Policy

Other Resources for Students
- University Center for Writing-based Learning
- SNL Writing Guide
- Dean of Students Office

Instructor Biography
Maria L. Ugarte-Ramos, M.A. is the Founder and Director of the FAMA Bilingual Center for Family Caregivers (FAMA Center), a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving and maintaining the health of family caregivers. She earned a Master of Arts Degree in Social Service Administration and Certification in Health Administration and Policy from The University of Chicago. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from DePaul University’s School for New Learning. Maria became a community leader early in her career and has held several executive leadership roles. In 2011, Maria was the principal investigator of a study to determine gaps in services for caregivers and authored the report, “A Unique Perspective: The Silent Voice of Latino Family Caregivers”. In 2015, she was recognized by Chicago’s LaRaza Newspaper with the Distinguished Woman Award for Community Leadership. She also received recognition from the American Heart Association for advancing cardiovascular education and has been recognized for her work in crisis intervention and adult education. Maria has served on various nonprofit boards, has extensive organizational development experience and is skilled at developing and implementing strategic goals.