DePaul University
School for New Learning

Spirituality and Homelessness: A Service Learning Externship - Fall 2017
Loop Campus & Hybrid
Tuesdays 5:45-9:00 PM
Sept. 12- Nov. 20
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If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time.
But if you have come because your liberation is bound with mine, then let us work together.
--Lila Watson, Aboriginal Australian

Course Description
This course will examine the broad issue of homelessness by providing students the opportunity to reflect upon an 18 hour service learning experience at a community-based organization that serves the homeless population in Chicago. Students will explore what can be learned about themselves as reflective practitioners, service learners, and spiritual human beings when reflecting upon this experiential learning process. Through the class discussions, assigned readings, invited speakers, and journal assignments, students will reflect on their own beliefs and perceptions of homelessness and analyze the history, causes, and policy associated with this societal problem.

About the Instructor
Karl Nass is the Assistant Director for the Vincentian Community Service Office at DePaul University. He completed his Master’s in City Planning from the University of Pennsylvania in 1998, and he earned his Bachelor’s of Arts in Economics from the University of Notre Dame in 1993. He engaged in post-graduate research and service in Santiago, Chile from 1994-1996, and he was the Director of the Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development (PHENND) from 1998-1999. He lives in the Roger’s Park neighborhood in Chicago with his wife and family.

Competencies Offered
LL-11, Externship: Can reflect on one’s own service learning experience and perceptions regarding homelessness and integrate the critical reflection and subsequent research, class discussions, and course readings into a final project.

LL-7, L-10, Externship: Can reflect on the learning process and methods used in an experiential project.

Learning Experience
Service Learning Experience: Students will dedicate 18 hours of service, spanning over at least 6 weeks, to a community-based organization that both serves a homeless population in Chicago and is partnering with DePaul’s Stean’s Center for Community-based Service Learning.
Written Journal: Students will be required to complete a bi-weekly journal describing your perceptions, feelings, and ideas about your experiential learning process.

Required Reading: There are readings that will be assigned on a weekly basis. Students are expected to read the assigned portions.

Invited Guest Lecturers: Speakers dedicated to addressing the problem of homelessness at the community, government, or university level have been invited to present their work and participate in class reflection and discussion.

Attendance and Participation: Regular attendance is required. Students must inform the instructor of any anticipated or emergency absences. Students who miss more than two classes will be mandated to drop the course. I ask that students arrive on time and stay the entirety of the class session. Students will be expected to engage in small and large group reflective discussions that focus on the students’ service learning experience, assigned readings, guest lecturers, or written journal work.

Final Project: All students will complete a final critical reflection paper of no more than 6 pages as well as a 4-5 minute oral presentation to the class.

Evidence to be Submitted
All students will:

- Submit a reflective journal on a biweekly basis that reflects on your experiential learning process as well as weekly written service site check-ins.
- Submit a final paper of no more than 6 pages due at the end of the quarter. The paper will demonstrate the student’s experiential learning derived from the service learning project, readings, class discussions, research, and journal work.
- Submit all written assignments that follow the accepted practices of standard English grammar and usage. The paper and journal should be typed and double spaced. Students can reference the Writing Guide for SNL Students (www.snl.depaul.edu/writing) with any questions about standards or resources for writing.
- Uphold the University’s guidelines concerning academic integrity. These may be found in the Student Handbook or on the DePaul Web Site (www.depaul.edu)

Criteria for Assessment
The assessment will strive to embody the four qualities of clarity, integrity, flexibility, and empathy. This class is a Pass/Fail course. In order to pass, students are required to:

- Fulfill the attendance requirement and service learning hours at selected site.
- Complete a journal entry for each visit to your service site. Student reflective journals must follow the format and guidelines distributed at the second course session. Additionally, students will submit weekly written service site check-ins.
- Participate in reflective conversations with other members of the class that focus on their service learning experience, assigned readings, guest lecturers, or written journal work.
- Complete a final project of two parts:
  - A critical reflection paper of no more than 6 pages due at the end of the quarter. The paper will respond to an assigned question and follow guidelines that will be posted on D2L during Week 5. The paper will be an exercise of critical reflection upon the student’s service learning project, readings, class discussions, research, and journal work.
A 5-10 minute class presentation that can be made alone or in collaboration with another class member based on your critical reflection paper. Creativity is highly encouraged!

- All liberal studies (SNC) courses are set to allow you to only receive letter grades, rather than pass/fail. However, you may request Pass/Fail grading instead.
- If you decide to request a Pass/Fail option, you need to send an email to knass@depaul.edu before the 5th week of the term.

Class Schedule

**Week 1 (On Ground):** Introductions, Course Requirements, Service Learning Site

**Selections**

**Assigned Reading**


**In-Class Reading**

Holtschneider, CM, Dennis, “All the Questions: Spirituality in the University,” Keynote Address at 2006 Spirituality and Civic Engagement Conference

Perceptions of Homelessness Survey

**Week 2 (On Ground):** Reflection: An Overview

**Assigned D2L Reading**

Holtschneider, CM, Dennis, Keynote Address to Annual St. Vincent de Paul Society

**In-Class Reading**


Rolheiser, Ronald. *Holy Longing* – paragraph excerpt


**In-Class Movie Clips:** *Shadowlands* and *Malcolm X*

**Distribution of “Reflective Journal Guidelines and Format” on D2L**

**Week 3 (Online):** Reflection: Perception, Methods, and Facilitation

**Online Perceptions Quiz**

Cycle of Oppression Workshop with Center for Intercultural Programs

Personal and Collective Guidelines for Facilitating Reflection Due

**Bi-Weekly Journal #1 Due**

**Week 4 (On Ground):** Humanizing Homelessness with Vincentian Spiritual Wisdom: Engaging Real Life Stories and Experiences

**Guest Lecturer:** Member of Streetwise Organization/Chicago Coalition for the Homeless

**Assigned D2L Reading**

Holtschneider, CM, Dennis. “Expanding the Circle of Solidarity” (2005) NVFG Keynote Address


**In-Class Reading**

Sharon Daloz Parks (2000). *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Young Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith*. San Francisco: Jossey Boss (2000), In-Class Excerpt

Howard, Jeffrey, “What Will Be Your Likely Civic Involvement?” (2003) Adapted from Nadinne Cruz’s “How Do You Define Citizenship?” Activity Sheet
**Week 5 (Online): Reflective Practitioner and Experiential Learning: Towards Active Citizenship and Civic Participation**

**D2L Reading:**

**Internet Reading:**
- DEWEY, John (1938), *Experience and Education* New York: Macmillan (1938), pp. 17-31

**Writing:**
- Biweekly Journal #2 Due
- Experiential Learning Module Assignment

**Week 6 (On Ground): Critical Social Analysis of Homelessness: History & Causes**

**D2L Reading:**

**Internet Reading:**
- "The Facts Behind the Faces: A Fact Sheet from the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless." (2011) Retrieved from [http://chicagohomeless.issuelab.org/research/listing/facts_behind_the_faces_a_fact_sheets_from_the_chicago_coalition_for_the_homeless](http://chicagohomeless.issuelab.org/research/listing/facts_behind_the_faces_a_fact_sheets_from_the_chicago_coalition_for_the_homeless)

**Writing:**
- Homelessness Causes and Statistics Assignment
- Biweekly Journal #3 Due
- Experiential Learning Module Assignment

**Week 7 (Online): Critical Social Analysis of Homelessness: Policy**

**D2L Reading:**
- David Hilfiker, M.D., “Victims of Victims” from *Not All of Us Are Saints: A Doctor’s Journey with the Poor*, pp. 130-145.

**Internet Reading:**
- Legislation, Policy, Funding, and Advocacy readings:
  - National Coalition for the Homeless
    - [http://www.nationalhomeless.org/advocacy/housing.html](http://www.nationalhomeless.org/advocacy/housing.html)
    - [http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/policy](http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/policy)
    - [http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/solutions](http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/solutions)
    - [http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/solutions/ten_year_plan](http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/solutions/ten_year_plan)
    - [http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/667](http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/667)
  - Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness
    - [http://www.thechicagoalliance.org/](http://www.thechicagoalliance.org/)
  - Chicago Coalition for the Homeless
    - [http://www.chicagohomeless.org/about/organizational-achievements/](http://www.chicagohomeless.org/about/organizational-achievements/)
  - Supportive Housing Providers Association–Illinois
    - [http://www.shpa-il.org/about-us](http://www.shpa-il.org/about-us)
  - Housing Action Illinois
    - [http://housingactionil.org/](http://housingactionil.org/)

**Writing:**
- Bi-Weekly Reflective Journal #3 Due
- Individual vs. Societal Responsibilities Assignment
**Week 8 (On Ground):** Critical Social Analysis of Homelessness: Services Available & Societal Responses

D2L Reading (Posted PDF Under Content):


In-Class Reading:


David Hilfiker, M.D., “Avoidance” from *Not All of Us Are Saints: A Doctor’s Journey with the Poor*, (selected excerpt)


Movie Excerpt: *Fisher King*

Writing: Strategies for Addressing Homelessness Assignment

**Week 9 (Online):** Critical Social Analysis of Homelessness: Services Available & Societal Responses

Podcast: Ed Udovic, C.M. on "The Vincentian Question"

Writing: Bi-Weekly Reflective Journal #4 Due

**Week 10 (Online):** TBA

**Week 11 (On Ground):**

*Final Project Presentations*

Writing: All Final Papers, Journals, and Service Log Time Sheets Due by 6 PM on D2L
See additional information pertaining to the grade designations for undergraduate grades. See Pass/Fail Grading Options.

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

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