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DePaul University  
School for New Learning

**LL 302 Spirituality and Homelessness: A Service Learning Externship  
Autumn 2009  
LOOP Campus  
Thursdays, 6:00-9:00 PM  
September 10 – November 19, 2009**

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### **Course Description**

This course will examine the broad issue of homelessness by providing students the opportunity to reflect upon a 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 Project Manager for DePaul's Faith and Civic Engagement in University Ministry. 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 Brighton Park neighborhood in Chicago with his wife and family.

### **Competencies Offered**

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

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.

HC-9: Can evaluate the contributions of personal experience, social services, and policy that address the causes and issues of homelessness in the United States.

HC-10: Can apply research and other learning techniques to evaluate the contributions of personal experience, social services, and policy that address the causes and issues of homelessness in the United States.

PW-9: Can describe the physical, mental and/or emotional health issues affecting the lives of those who are homeless in the United States.

PW-10: Can apply research and other techniques to learn about the physical, mental, and/or emotional health issues affecting the lives of those who are homeless in the United States.

AL-9: Can appreciate the value of reflection and the service learning process as a means for holistic learning and personal development.

AL-10: Can explain the value of reflection and the service learning process as a means for holistic learning and personal development.

## **Learning Experience**

Service Learning Experience: Students will dedicate 20 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 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.

- Weekly assigned readings from select articles and chapters - available on DePaul University's electronic reserve or in paper copy on reserve in the Loop Campus library.

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. On a weekly basis, 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 5-10 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
- 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.
- 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](http://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
- 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 distributed in 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!

## Class Schedule

Week 1, September 10: *Introductions, Course Requirements, Service Learning Site Selections*

Co-Instructor: Siobhan O'Donoghue, M.S.W., M.Div. ([sodonogh@depaul.edu](mailto:sodonogh@depaul.edu))

Week 2, September 17: *Reflection: An Overview*

Co-Instructor: Siobhan O'Donoghue, M.S.W., M.Div. ([sodonogh@depaul.edu](mailto:sodonogh@depaul.edu))

Blackboard Reading:

Holtschneider, CM, Dennis, Keynote Address: 2006 Spirituality & Civic Engagement Conference

In-Class Movie Excerpt: *Shadowlands*

Distribution of "Reflective Journal Guidelines and Format" on Blackboard

Week 3, September 24: *Reflection: An Overview*

Co-Instructor: Siobhan O'Donoghue, M.S.W., M.Div. ([sodonogh@depaul.edu](mailto:sodonogh@depaul.edu))

Blackboard Reading:

Himes, Michael, Doing the Truth in Love: Conversations about God, Relationships, and Service. Paulist Press (1995), Chapter 6

Ronald Rolheiser, The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality. Doubleday (1999), pp. 167-191.

In-Class Movie Excerpt: *Malcom X*

Writing: Reflective Journals Due

Week 4, October 1:

*No Class*

Week 5, October 8: *Reflective Practitioner and Experiential Learning: Towards Active Citizenship and Civic Participation*

Co-Instructor: Karl Nass returns from Ethiopia

In-Class Reading:

SCHÖN, Donald A, The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action London: Temple Smith (1983), pp.49-69

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

Internet Reading:

Thomas Ehrlich, et al. 1999. *Presidents' Declaration on the Civic Responsibilities of Higher Education*. Campus Compact. (<http://www.compact.org/resources/declaration/>)

Writing: Reflective Journals Due

Week 6, October 15:

*Critical Social Analysis of Homelessness: History & Causes*

- Blackboard Reading: Baumohl, Jim, Homelessness in America (1996), pp.24-33.  
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: National Coalition for the Homeless: Fact Sheets  
<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/facts.html>  
Chicago Coalition for the Homeless: Learn About the Homeless  
<http://www.chicagohomeless.org/learn>  
"The Facts Behind the Faces: A Fact Sheet from the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless" (Winter 2005)  
<http://www.chicagohomeless.org/files/images/factsheet05.pdf>

Week 7, October 22:

*Critical Social Analysis of Homelessness: Policy*

Guest Lecturer: Member of Streetwise Organization

- Internet Reading: National Coalition for the Homeless: Legislation & Policy  
<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/housing/index.html>  
National Alliance to End Homelessness: Policy and Legislation  
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/policy/legislature>  
"Getting Housed, Staying Housed: A Collaborative Plan to End Homelessness," Chicago Continuum of Care  
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/667>  
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/tools/tenyearplan>  
The Partnership to End Homelessness  
<http://www.pteh.org/>

In-Class Movie Excerpt: *Fisher King*

Writing: Reflective Journals Due

Week 8, October 29:

*Critical Social Analysis of Homelessness: Services Available & Societal Responses*

Guest Lecturer: Member of Chicago Coalition Against Homelessness

- In-Class Reading:  
Henri J.M. Nouwen, (1997) "¡Gracias!" in Spiritual Journals, (selected excerpt)  
David Hilfiker, M.D., "Avoidance" from Not All of Us Are Saints: A Doctor's Journey with the Poor, (selected excerpt)  
Sara Dixon Criswell, (1998) Homelessness, (selected excerpts)

Week 9, November 5:

*No Class*

Week 10, November 12:

*Final Project Presentations*

Week 11, November 19:

*No Class*

Writing: Final Papers, Journals, and Service Log Time Sheets Due by 9 PM on Blackboard

## **DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy**

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

## **DePaul University Incomplete Policy**

Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. In the case of the Law School incompletes must be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter in which the student is enrolled in a course.

**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