



Summer Quarter, 2003

**Externship Course: “Everybody’s Kind of Town”:
Experiencing Chicago’s Cultural Diversity**

Campus: South

Credit Hours: Pre-99, 6 hrs. BA-99, 4 hrs.

Dates: Tuesday evenings, 6:30 – 9:30 pm, June 17 - August 26

Pre '99 Competencies: AL-9, 10; HC-9, 10; PW-9, 10; WW-9, 10; LL-7

BA '99 Competencies: L-10, 11

Prerequisite: Research Seminar

Faculty: David Simpson received his PhD in English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University and has served on the faculty in English and humanities at Columbia and Northwestern. His academic interests include classical and Renaissance literature, media studies, American culture, professional communication, and intellectual history. A former member of the Chicago Board Options Exchange, he has served as a consultant in business writing and technical stock-market analysis and has written articles and reviews on topics ranging from jazz and cinema to slang and cyber-culture. He has served on the visiting faculty at SNL since 1990.

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Course Description: At the peak of the ancient Empire, when “all roads led to Rome,” Roman citizens – from Spain to Asia, Africa to Gaul – took great pride in their capital as a unique and original *orbis in urbis* (“world in a city”) and *microcosmos* (“miniature universe”). Within the walls of the city there flourished a multitude of languages, dialects, costumes, customs, civil and religious ceremonies, foods, festivals, local

communities, and cultural pageants – making Rome in effect a literal *cosmopolis*, a true and bustling “world-city.”

Today most of the great cities of the world have grown and developed in similarly cosmopolitan fashion – Chicago, with its wealth of local neighborhoods and individual communities, not the least among them. Yet the fact is, while urban Americans continue to applaud the benefits of pluralism and the melting pot and pay lip service to the values of “multiculturalism” and “ethnic diversity,” most of us either ignore or remain careless of the rich opportunities for cultural interaction that lie only a few blocks away.

This course is designed to provide students with the incentive, resources, institutional support, and opportunity to observe and personally experience genuine urban cultural diversity. At the beginning of the course students will select a particular Chicago cultural group or ethnic community (other than their own) and then go out and experience it as fully and directly as possible – visiting it, touring it, interacting with its members, studying it, learning about it (via whatever resources and methods the student finds most appropriate or agreeable) and then documenting it and reporting on it to their fellow class members. Since this is an externship course, particular emphasis will be placed on experiential learning and on the discovery and use of resources and facilities outside the DePaul University classroom and library system. The course will meet in the South campus classroom for five sessions (see Schedule below). During the other five weeks students are expected to conduct independent research and do topic-related field activities.

Special Requirements: Access to and familiarity with the Internet recommended. Access to email required.

Competence Statements:

Pre-99 Competencies:

LL-7: Can design and carry out an independent learning project which exhibits control of the learning methods used.

AL-9, 10; HC-9, 10; PW-9, 10; WW-9, 10: To be written by the student with the cooperation of the instructor.

BA-99 Competencies:

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

L-11: To be written by the student with the cooperation of the instructor.

A note on the LL-7 and L-10 Competencies: As indicated in the *Foundations of Adult Learning Resource Book*, an Externship course is designed to give each student the opportunity to learn from direct experience either in a new or different field or in a new or unaccustomed way. In effect, such a course is concerned not only with *what* students learn (and Externship remains an excellent way to introduce oneself to new areas of study) but also –and perhaps more particularly – with *how* they learn.

Ideally, this class will provide an opportunity for students to gain important insights about themselves *as* learners – and at the same time help prepare and encourage them for ongoing success as capable, resourceful, self-directed *lifelong* learners.

Learning Goals: In this particular course, it is by no means expected that students will become authoritative *experts*. Indeed they will likely acquire only a modest and very basic knowledge of the cultural or ethnic group they study – though, hopefully, in the process they will learn quite a lot about methods of experiential learning and about themselves. In addition, as part of their own custom-designed term project, students enrolled in the course will be required to:

- Identify and explain a personal learning goal.
 - Identify and select learning opportunities to support the goal.
 - Select and employ methods to achieve the desired learning goal.
 - Analyze and assess their own strengths and weaknesses as independent, experiential learners.
 - Explain and assess the outcomes of their particular project and learning experience.
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Criteria for Demonstrating Competence: Students are responsible for completing the following required assignments:

1. A one page document identifying the cultural or ethnic group that the student intends to learn about during the course and listing at least five contacts (either individuals or public and private institutions and organizations) or other sources of information. (Due June 24.)
2. A brief (4-5 minute) in-class presentation explaining the student's choice of subject group and describing the experiential learning opportunities and field activities likely to be pursued. (Presented in class July 15.)
3. A one-page description and outline of the term project. (Due in class July 15.)
4. A final document (8-10 pages) describing and reflecting on the learning experience itself (including places visited, activities, highlights, etc.) and providing general impressions, important lessons, interesting anecdotes, etc. relating to the cultural group that was studied. (**Note:** students may supplement the written portion of their project with photographs, souvenirs, video clips, interview tapes, or anything else that might prove helpful in documenting their experience and communicating it to others.) (Due in class August 12.) *
5. A 10-12 minute in-class presentation re-capping the student's learning experience and sharing its most memorable discoveries and highlights. (Presented in class on August 12 and August 19.)

* **Please Note:** Full details of this assignment will be made available in class on July 15. Note further that in addition to the project as described above, **Pre-99 students are**

also required to include an annotated bibliography and a section devoted to an aspect of their learning experience appropriate to their particular capstone domain (A, HC, PW, or WW).

Assessment: Students who complete all assignments satisfactorily will receive a grade of “P.” Failure to complete one or two requirements will result in a grade of “IN.” If no assignments are completed, student will receive a grade of “F.” The final project will be assessed on the basis of organization, style, quality and interest of information, and overall appropriateness to the particular competencies. All students in the course are expected to attend class, participate in discussions, and uphold the standards of academic integrity as described in the *DePaul Student Handbook*.

Format: Informal discussion seminar with one or two brief background lectures from the instructor and in-class presentations by students.

Texts: There is no required text – though students will probably find it convenient to obtain a fairly comprehensive, up-to-date Chicago cultural handbook or tourism guide. An extensive bibliography, listing resources relating to urban development, cultural diversity, city neighborhoods, and Chicago history, will be distributed during the first two weeks of class.

Schedule of Class Meetings, Discussion Topics, and Assignments

June 17. Introduction. Cosmopolitanism and Cultural Diversity in History.

Discussion topics: What is “cosmopolitanism?” What is required in order to achieve it? What are the advantages (and disadvantages) of urban cultural diversity?

Assignment: Select a Chicago ethnic or cultural group (other than your own) and locate at least one source of demographic information about it. Due June 24.

June 24. Cosmopolitanism and Cultural Diversity in Chicago and the United States.

Discussion topics: Melting Pot or Salad Bowl?: What are the pros and cons of assimilation vs. cultural preservation? What is pluralism? What ethnic and cultural groups are established in Chicago?

Assignments: (1.) Select a Chicago ethnic or cultural group (other than your own) and visit one of its museums, restaurants, neighborhood attractions, cultural centers, etc. In a one-page paper provide a list of at least five contacts (individuals, public or private institutions, organizations, etc.) or sources of information on this group. (2.) In a brief (4-5 minute) in-class presentation explain why you selected this group, report on your museum or cultural experience, and describe your plans for further experiential learning and field research. Due July 15.

July 1. No class meeting. Independent field study and research.

July 8. No class meeting. Independent field study and research.

July 15. In-class presentations. Guidelines for term projects.

Assignment: Write a one-page outline of your term assignment, listing planned activities, sub-topics, highlights, etc. Include one or two proposed competence statements. **Due via email July 22.**

July 22. No class meeting. Independent study and research.

Assignment: Outline plus two competence statements due via email. Final project and presentation. Due November 5.

July 29. No class meeting. Independent study and research.

August 5. No class meeting. Independent study and research.

August 12. In-class presentations. **All learning journals, term projects, etc., due.**

August 19. In-class presentations. Summary and Review.