

Service, Citizenship, and Community
Professor Meta Mendel-Reyes, Fall 2002
T, Th 10-11:50 am. Trades 208
Office hours (Trades 202) TTh1-3
and by. appt. email or call 3940

GST/WST 244
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Introduction

At the turn of the 21st century, we see a resurgence of community service, a decline in political participation, and the persistence of the urgent social problems that both seek to address. For example, a recent survey conducted by Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government reported that 60% of college students polled said that they were currently involved in community service. Yet only 7% planned to volunteer to work on a political campaign during the upcoming elections. These results parallel developments beyond the campus: as interest in the formal political system wanes, more and more people are practicing new approaches to service and democracy at the grassroots. Through service learning and community based research, this course explores the theory and practice of service and democratic citizenship in an effort to help each student answer this fundamental question for herself: What individual and collective actions are most effective in transforming our communities into places in which each person can thrive?

The course is also designed to introduce students to the interdisciplinary study of community, including such topics as economic, racial, and other forms of inequality, and sustainable community development. There will also be opportunities to develop leadership skills for effective service and citizenship; to learn about possible careers in the non-profit sector; and to prepare for field experience in their majors. Since the course fulfills the Appalachian Culture requirement and is a Women's Studies elective, we will integrate issues of Appalachia and gender throughout the semester. This is a WebCT course.

Objectives

1. To demonstrate understanding of theoretical and practical approaches to service, democratic citizenship, and community building, particularly in Appalachia.
2. To demonstrate effective skills in community service and citizenship, including oral and written communication skills, critical reflection, teamwork, leadership, and diversity awareness.
3. To formulate and examine the student's own commitment to service and citizenship.
4. In order to achieve the preceding objectives, to engage in service learning and community based research as well as classroom based education.

Texts

Our basic text is an interdisciplinary anthology especially designed for courses like this one. Its wide range of materials, from political science and sociology to philosophy and theology to poetry and literature, represent differing perspectives on service, citizenship, and community. Additional articles and chapters will be distributed in class.

Please buy the following books:

Benjamin Barber and Richard Battistoni, Education for Democracy: A Sourcebook for Students and Teachers.

Janet Poppendieck, Sweet Charity? Emergency Food and the End of Entitlement

Format

Each student will participate in service learning, through a class service project and a team community based research project (CBR). You will spend time out of class in the community (the readings and other assignments have been adjusted accordingly). The class service project will be part of the Hunger Hurts food drive. In addition to spending one Saturday morning (see syllabus for tentative dates for the drive), there will also be a weekend service trip to a soup kitchen. This assignment will include an essay reflecting on the book, Sweet Charity?, in light of your experiences.

In the CBR project, the teams will work with a local group or organization on a project that will be designed, carried out, and evaluated collaboratively. In Fall 2002, three-member teams will be working with New Opportunities School for Women, Save the Children, Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, Mountain Maternal Planned Parenthood, and Madison Middle School Mentoring Project. This assignment will culminate in a presentation to the community and a written product appropriate to the project. Donovan Cain, the CELTS Service Learning Coordinator, will be the Instructor for this part of the course, and will work closely with you from the process of team and project assignment through the community presentation. Early in the semester, you will receive a schedule of due dates for each step of this project. You should expect to conduct multiple on-site visits in addition to the concluding presentation.

It is essential that our service and research be conducted in the spirit of reciprocity. As most of you already know, we have as much to learn and to receive from them as they do from us. The organizations and leaders who work with us this semester should be respected as equal partners, not treated as “walking data.” These relationships will be formalized in a project design signed by team members, the primary community representative, and the CBR Instructor; furthermore, any serious incident of lack of respect will be potential grounds for **failure in the course.**

Our class meetings will be conducted primarily in a seminar format, through which we will explore democratic community building among ourselves. Sessions will include analyses of the readings and reflection upon them in light of your service and research experiences; presentations and discussions led by members of the class; interactive activities that promote learning through discovery; and dialogues with community leaders. Throughout our studies, we will integrate scholarly and community “voices” which are not always included in academic or public debates. Our goal will be to create a genuine learning community, in which we all have the capacity to be both teachers and learners. As professor, my goal is to create conditions in which you can take an active role in your own learning.

The primary form for in-depth integration of the readings and your experiences will be electronic journaling through WebCT. Your CBR team will be your journal group. At least once a week (generally after the Thursday class), you will write an entry, read the other entries in your group, and respond to at least one of them. Sometimes I will prompt your response; other times, you may respond as you like. As you read, serve, and

conduct community research, ask yourself such questions as: How do the readings help to understand my experiences? In what ways do my experiences tend to confirm or refute the readings? Before most sessions, one student will also write an agenda on one reading, and then lead discussion.

During our class discussions and journaling, we will work hard to express our views and to listen to the views of others. This requires a degree of courage and trust; it is sometimes very hard to take an unpopular stand on a controversial or sensitive issue, or to open ourselves to a very different viewpoint. But if we cannot do so in a class, how will we ever be able to do so in our communities?

I will ask you to give me anonymous feedback periodically in order to assess how the course is going, and to make adjustments as necessary. Your feedback on any aspect of the course is welcome at any time, in office hours, in class, or through email or phone.

Assignments and Evaluation

The assignments are designed to encourage structured critical reflection upon our service and research experiences outside the classroom, and to promote an active learning community in class. Accordingly, the evaluation process is designed to match the multiple ways in which our learning takes place. The course grade will be determined as follows:

1. Weekly reflection journals: 25%.
2. Final journal reflection: 5%.
3. Class service project (Hunger Hurts food drive) and essay: 20%.
4. Team community based research project and presentation: 30%. Students taking the course for Women's Studies credit will do a CBR project with an emphasis on women's issues. This grade will include an evaluation by the community organization, and peer and self assessments.
5. Community responsibility index: 20%. Because your work in this class affects the rest of us, your full participation is essential. So, there will be an evaluation of the extent to which you have met your responsibilities to our own democratic learning community, depending upon a procedure to which we all agree. This will include a self-assessment. Below is a suggested standard for evaluation, to be ratified during the first week of class. Each section is worth 5%.

COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY INDEX

- a. Attendance and punctuality. Two unexcused absences or substantial tardies to class or outside events will affect your grade. With 6, you will be asked to leave the course. If you do miss class, it is your responsibility to find out from another classmate what you missed, including assignments. I will be glad to work with anyone who misses class due to an extended excused absence. An excused absence is documented illness or other compelling situation (e.g. not a test in another class).
- b. Completing required readings by the date assigned. This will be determined by short daily quizzes.
- c. Completing written assignments on time. This includes journals.

- d. Participating actively and deporting oneself as an equal member of a democratic community.

More information about assignments will be given out in class and on WebCT. Be sure to check it frequently. Please see me if you would like help on any assignments, or have questions.

Schedule (subject to change, due to availability of presenters and service activities, and to student or faculty evaluation)

(code: selections in Education for Democracy are identified with ED, followed by page numbers; selections from Sweet Charity? are identified with SC, followed by chapters; articles to be handed out are noted with an *; “tba” means “to be announced”)

Introduction

8/29 Introductions. Syllabus.
Community responsibility index.
Service learning, community based research, and active learning.
What is service?

I. The meaning of service, citizenship, and community.

- 9/3 Entering into service.
Mansfield (ED,5-15); King (ED,601-07).
Community dialogue: Meta Mendel-Reyes.
Service/citizenship/activism autobiography due.
- 9/5 Why do I serve?
Coles, Mother Teresa, Fuller, Nuesner (ED,184-204).
Community dialogue: Donavan Cain.
Reflection – WebCT and journal orientation.
- 9/10 The Appalachian context.
Fisher, “Introduction,” Fighting Back in Appalachia*; Horton, “The Appalachian Land Ownership Study”*; Clark, “Appalachia: The Changing Times”*
- 9/12 Community-based research.
Turgeson, “What is Participatory Research?”*; Merrifield, “Knowing, Learning Doing”*
Orientation to CBR projects.
- 9/17 Democratic citizenship.
What is the meaning of citizenship in the U.S., and how has it changed?
Jefferson (ED,554-57); Boyte & Evans (ED,610- 16); Boyte (ED,174-79).
- 9/19 Community.
What is the meaning of community in the U.S., and how has it changed?
Kemmis (ED,111-19); Moffat (ED,523-25); Putnam (ED,571-81).
Extra credit: Convo, 8 pm, “One Race. One People, One Peace.”
Community dialogue: Tom McCrae, MACED

- 9/24 The global context. Sustainability in the region and around the world.
Berry, Boutros-Ghali (660-76); “Justice, Sustainability, and Participation”
(on website)
Community dialogue: Lori Briscoe, Appalachian Center.

II. The practice of service and citizenship

- 9/26 Leadership and team-building
What is democratic leadership? What is women’s leadership?
Barber (ED,163-72); Greenleaf, “Servant Leadership”*; Lewis, “Women’s
Leadership”*; Schein, “Would Women Lead Differently?”*
Community dialogue: Jeanne Hibberd, Communities by Choice
- 10/1 Self-interest – is it selfish?
Lappe & DuBois (ED,3-17, 37-44).
- 10/3 Power – is it a dirty word?
Lappe & DuBois (ED,45-68).
Community dialogue: Hasan Davis, art and social change.
Extra credit: Convo, 3 pm, “York.”
- 10/8 One-on-one skills
Lappe & DuBois (237-65).*
- 10/10 Group skills
Lappe & DuBois (266-85).*
Activity: Color Blind.
- 10/15 Reading period: no class
- 10/17 **CBR agreement and proposal due**

III. Case study: Hunger Hurts food drive

- (service dates tentative – two of three activities required)
- 10/19 Service trip to soup kitchen in Lexington
- 10/22 Emergency food, and who eats it.
Poppendieck, SC (Introduction, Chs. 1-2).
Community dialogue: Betty Hibler, Students for Appalachia
- 10/24 The uses of emergency food, the seduction of charity
Poppendieck, SC (Chs. 5-6).
- 10/26 Hunger Hurts food drive – distribution of bags
- 10/29 What’s wrong with emergency food? Charity for all.
Poppendieck, SC (Chs. 7-8).
- 10/31 The ultimate Band-Aid.
Poppendieck, SC (Chs.9, Conclusion).
Community dialogue: Marie Cirillo, Woodland Community Land Trust.
- 11/2 Hunger Hurts – collection of bags, stocking of food pantry.

IV. Challenges to Service, Citizenship, and Community

- 11/5 Difference: Racial and gender inequality.
Lorde (ED,249-256); Steele (ED,281-288); Wilkinson (ED, 431-40).
Community dialogue: Judith Faulkner, Black feminism.
- 11/7 Economic and other inequalities.
Hooks, Reich (ED, 301-314); Sacks (ED,316-330).
Community dialogue: Kengmo on international service.
Essay due.
- 11/12 Do service and community conflict with other values?
Rand (ED,406-18); LeGuin (ED, 423-29).
- 11/14 Does democracy conflict with other values?
Thoreau, Korematsu, King (ED, 393-404).
Community dialogue: Paula McGhee, Black Cultural Center.
- 11/19 Does service lead to justice?
Illich, McKnight (ED, 441-464).

V. Community based research: integrating theory and practice

- 11/21 Community dialogue with Lisa Abbott and Teri Blanton, Kentuckians for the Commonwealth.
CBR teams.
- 11/26 Student presentation on Kentucky Environmental Foundation, with Elizabeth Crowe, KEF.
CBR teams.

11/28 THANKSGIVING!

- 12/3 CBR teams.
- 12/5 **Team presentations and written work due.**
Class celebration!

12/12 1pm Final journal reflection due.