Beyond the Classroom Living and Learning Program
Spring 2015

UNIV 389L: Beyond the Classroom Seminar III:
Civic Leadership for Community Engagement

Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD (3 credits) Section 0101;
1106 South Campus Commons, Building 1

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Prerequisites: UNIV 325 and UNIV 326; for advanced students in the Beyond the Classroom (BTC) Living and Learning Program.

Course Overview

This multi-disciplinary seminar enables students to develop their leadership skills by working collaboratively with their peers on joint projects to enhance and to deepen civic engagement and constructive social change on key civic issues on campus and in the broader community on local, national and global issues. Student will carry out collaborative community-based research that addresses an important civic issue and advances civic knowledge for solving that issue. Students will write a research paper (BTC monograph) and contribute to a joint professional report. The seminar will culminate in a BTC civic education or showcase event (e.g., public forum, conference, hearing, video presentation, etc.) where students will share their findings with the broader campus and members of the relevant community.

Inspiration and Challenge

“Let us reflect on what is truly of value in life, what gives meaning to our lives, and set our priorities on the basis of that inspiration.” – The 14th Dalai Lama
“Make a career of humanity. Commit yourself to the noble struggle for equal rights. You will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in.” – Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1959.

“We must have the courage to face whatever is present. If not here, where else could we bring alive compassion, justice and liberation?” – Jack Kornfield

“To understand your country you must love it. To love it you must, in a sense, accept it. To accept it as it is, however, is to betray it. To accept your country without betraying it, you must love it for that in it which shows what it might become. America – this monument to the genius of ordinary men and women, this place where hope becomes capacity, this long, halting turn of the no into the yes – needs citizens who love it enough to re-imagine and remake it.” – Roberto Mangabeira Unger and Cornel West, (1998), The Future of American Progressivism, p. 93.

“Only a visionary leadership can motivate ‘the better angels of our nature’ as Lincoln said, and activate possibilities for a freer, more efficient, and stable America – only that leadership deserves cultivation and support. This new leadership must be grounded in grassroots-organizing that highlight democratic accountability. Whoever our leaders will be as we approach the twenty-first century, their challenge will be to help Americans determine whether a genuine multiracial democracy can be created and sustained in an era of global economy and a moment of xenophobic frenzy.” – Cornel West, (1993), Race Matters, pp. 7-8.

Course Expectations

Students are expected to participate actively in framing and shaping discussion and to reflect critically on the key concepts and ideas presented in the readings and discussion. Students are encouraged to draw on both their own academic and experiential insights to understand the main dimensions affecting the possibilities for transforming leadership for effective community engagement on civic issues. Some seminar time will be devoted to collaborative group project meetings to define priorities, clarify roles and responsibilities, and delegate tasks for joint civic projects. Students will pursue active research outside the classroom that will expose them to vital civic issues, the key stakeholders in the broader community, and participatory processes for developing appropriate solutions.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will fulfill the following learning outcomes and will be able to:

1. Engage in knowledge building, problem-solving and critical thinking about vital civic and policy issues from the local to the national and global levels;
2. Understand and apply the concept of civic engagement and strategies for enhancing civic engagement and advancing constructive social change by
undertaking participatory action research that addresses a civic issue in a specific community context;

3. Develop their leadership capacities and skills for fostering civil discourse and effective professional practices for public education, research, and advocacy in the nonprofit and civil society sector; Identify the key civic values, attitudes and expectations that motivate them personally as well as others to engage in civic action and leadership; and

4. Engage in effective communication (i.e., writing, class discussion, and presentations) and outreach to key stakeholders to increase public awareness about key civic issues and to promote constructive solutions.

Assessment and Grading:
Assessment of student performance will be based on the following course requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Course Requirement</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Weighting (percent)</th>
<th>Relevant Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Active Leadership Role in Seminar Participation</td>
<td>+ Commentary on the readings + Active in-class discussion</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>Weeks 2-11, on ELMS by the start time of class</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Leadership &amp; Professional Skills Assessment</td>
<td>• Leadership Exercises • Survey • Interview</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Civic Research &amp; Action Project, Research Design and Literature Review</td>
<td>• 2 Project Ideas • Issue Brief • Research Strategy • Action Plan (Team)</td>
<td>30 percent</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>• February 11&lt;br&gt;• February 25&lt;br&gt;• March 11&lt;br&gt;• April 1</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Civic Research &amp; Action Project Paper (Team)</td>
<td>• Draft • Final Version</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>• April 15&lt;br&gt;• May 6</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Civic Research &amp; Action Project Presentation (Team)</td>
<td>• Draft • Civic Leadership Forum</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>• April 29&lt;br&gt;• May 8</td>
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Course Requirements:

Students will conduct, either alone or as part of a small group, a community-based research and action project using the model of community-based participatory research. Students are expected to engage in systematic inquiry, identifying and applying relevant methodological approaches that are most appropriate to addressing the civic issue under
study. Students are encouraged to identify key community stakeholders and to make use of their own contacts and resources to define appropriate civic projects.

*Course articles and materials will be distributed in class and also be made available either on-line, or through the course web site on CANVAS.*

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY INFORMATION**
The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit http://www.shc.umd.edu.

**Religious Observances**
The University of Maryland policy states that students should not be penalized in any way for participating in religious observances. Students will be allowed, whenever practical, to make up assignments or course activities missed in these cases. Also per University policy, all arrangements for such absences must be made within the **first two weeks of the course.**

**Inclement Weather**
In the event of inclement weather that leads to the official closing of the campus, please check your email and Blackboard for updates on the course requirements and any changes to the course syllabus. Check http://www.umd.edu/emergencypreparedness for updates on the university’s status.

**Students with Disabilities**
Students with documented disabilities should contact the instructor within **by the end of the schedule readjustment period** to make sure they receive accommodations. For information about services offered to students with disabilities, refer to the Counseling Center website at www.counseling.umd.edu.

**Course Evaluation**
You are highly encouraged to participate in the campus-wide online course evaluation system, CourseEvalUM, in order to provide you valuable feedback about this course. Go to the web site: http://www.courseevalum.umd.edu to complete your evaluation.

**Course Schedule**

**Week 1, February 4, 2015: Overview of the Seminar: Leadership for a Civically Engaged Semester for Research and Action**

*Course Overview*

*Discuss ideas for potential civic research and action projects*
Week 2, February 11, 2015: Embracing the Inspiration and Challenge of Envisioning a Better World

Assignment Due: Propose two ideas for possible civic research and action projects

Required Readings:

Other Resources:


Readings:


**Other Resources:**


**Week 4, February 25, 2015:** Understanding the Context: Diagnosing and Defining the Problem and Identifying Pathways for Constructive Social Change

**Assignment Due:** Prepare an Issue Brief for your Civic Research & Action Project

**Readings:**


**Week 5, March 4, 2015:** Assessing Where and How to Make Difference: Criteria for Optimizing Impact

**Video:** Peter Bloch on Community: The Structure of Belonging:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwahGcEiAr0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwahGcEiAr0) view episodes 1-3

**Readings:**


**Week 6, March 11, 2015: Participatory Action Research for Civic Action**

**Assignment Due:** *A Research Strategy for your Civic Research & Action Project*


*NO CLASS – MARCH 18, 2015 – SPRING BREAK*

**Week 7, March 25, 2015: The Millennial Generation: Transformative Leadership for the 21st Century?**

**Readings:**

**Week 8, April 1, 2015: Strategizing Civic Action: Identifying Key Stakeholders and Developing Action Plans**

**Assignment Due:** *An Action Plan for your Civic Research & Action Project*


**Week 9, April 8, 2015: Collaborative Governance: Linking Theory and Practice**

**Readings:**
Week 10, April 15, 2015: Developing Effective Communication and Outreach Strategies

Assignment Due: Draft Civic Research & Action Project Paper

Readings:

Week 11, April 22, 2015: Crafting a Common Plan of Action: Developing Key Findings and Recommendations

Readings:

Week 12, April 29, 2015: Developing an Effective Civic Presentation

Assignment Due: Draft Presentation of Civic Research & Action Project

Week 13, May 6, 2015: Evaluating the Process: Critical Reflections about the Civic Leadership for Community Engagement Process

Assignment Due: Final Civic Research & Action Project Paper

**Friday, May 8, 2015: Civic Leadership Forum: Student and Group Presentations**

Assignment Due: Presentation of Civic Research & Action Project Paper