

APPLICATION FORM

2009-10 FUND FOR ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE DEVELOPMENT GRANT

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COURSE CATEGORY:

- New Course
- Revised Course

COURSE TITLE: Community Building & Social Change

ABSTRACT OF COURSE OR BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:

Community Building & Social Change is an intensive semester-long course that introduces students to the challenges and opportunities for building community in contemporary America. Students have the opportunity to see first-hand the critical role that collaboration plays in the resolution of important social problems. The course addresses a number of issues that affect community building, and the process through which community builders attempt to foster social change. It approaches these topics through a mix of lectures, exercises, workshops, discussions, documentaries, and community builder guest speakers from the nonprofit, governmental, business, and faith sectors.

The service-learning component of this course benefits not only the students, but it also provides immediate action on significant community issues in the Green Bay area. Proposed and selected by the community, the collaborative community building projects may address issues related to affordable housing and community development, health, education, the environment, and social justice. The skills and capacities of both students and community partners grow as a result.

HAVE YOU MADE APPLICATION TO THE SNC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD, IF APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR PROJECT (Please check one)

- YES
- NO

If yes, please attach your IRB application to this form, and, if available, a copy of the letter documenting the IRB approval of your project.

INCLUSIVE DATES OF PROJECT OR ACTIVITY: Spring Term 2011 (course preparation Summer 2010-Fall 2011)

AMOUNT OF REQUEST: Stipend request: \$2000.00
Expenses request:
Total amount requested: \$2000.00

Signature

Date

PLEASE ATTACH TYPED PROPOSAL

NARRATIVE

Brief Description:

*Community Building & Social Change** is a new SNC course designed for students to apply their classroom theoretical and empirical knowledge while working with Community Partners across metro Green Bay. The Community Building Movement is a “comprehensive principle-driven approach to economic and social revitalization that highlights relationships and partnerships among residents and others who care about their community. It builds on community assets and aspirations, strengthens a community’s problem-solving capacities, and creates new relationships, more responsive institutions, new community resources, and empowered residents” (The National Community Building Network). Students will work with local Community Partners to expand the capacity of existing community initiatives to effectively address issues such as affordable housing, public education, urban sprawl, and citizen engagement through social science research projects. Furthermore, this course is intended to provide an experiential and conceptual foundation, which will emphasize issues regarding the evaluation of community building initiatives, the discovery of the key determinants of successful community transformation, and the core competencies exemplified by successful community builders.

The course has five primary goals:

1. Introduce students to the principles that support community building as an approach to addressing collective problems in America, inclusive of cities and suburbs.
2. Provide students with a set of analytic perspectives for examining social issues and fostering social change.
3. Assist students in identifying the interconnections among demography, economy, polity, and culture, and the global, national, state, regional, and neighborhood forces affecting communities to prepare students for active civic participation in society.
4. Develop students’ research skills and produce relevant and meaningful community-defined social science research project deliverables (e.g. survey instruments, best practices research, evaluation projects) to SNC Community Partners.
5. Lay a foundation for students to engage in critique, introspection, and reflection about the needs and means of community building and fostering social change.

By the end of the semester, students should have a basic understanding of the challenges, dynamics, and promise of communities, along with an appreciation for the complexity and opportunities of fostering social change. Together, these elements should ensure that students have a breadth of knowledge about community building that will permit them to confidently explore and deeply engage more complex issues at and beyond St. Norbert College.

*Note: This course is being developed following three years of experience working with Emory’s Office of University-Community Partnership’s successful centerpiece Kenneth Cole Fellowship in Community Building and Social Change Program. Please see my vitae (attached) for more information.

Methodology:

1. Academic Research: In order to develop this course I need to research contemporary resources on community development; particularly the work produced by the National Community Building Network. Below is a list of a few resources I need to review:

- Hyman, James. 2002. *Not Quite Chaos: Toward a More Disciplined Approach to Community Building*. Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, Maryland.
- Kretzman, John and John McKnight. 1993. *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*. Northwestern University: Institute for Policy Research.
- Putnam, Robert and Lewis Feldstein. 2003. *Better Together: Restoring American Community*. Simon & Schuster.

Additionally, I plan to include a variety of case studies throughout the semester. A few examples are listed below:

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Boston

- Medoff, Peter and Holly Sklar. 1999. *Streets of Hope: The Fall and Rise of an Urban Neighborhood*. Boston: South End Press.

Improving Health via social capital in Detroit

- Sherman, James, Amy Schultz, and Juliana van Olphen (2001) "Social Capital, Poverty, and Community Health: An Exploration of Linkages," *Social Capital and Poor Communities*. Eds. Susan Saegert, J. Phillip Thompson, and Mark R. Warren. Russell Sage Foundation.

Improving opportunities for families in Kansas

- "Setting a Community Agenda: A Case Study of Local Investment Commission, Kansas Cit, Missouri." Washington D.C.: Center for the Study of Social Policy, December 1998.

Market Creek Plaza, San Diego

- Sherwin, Doug. 2006. "Community Members Purchase Shares of Market Creek IPO," *San Diego Daily*. November 13, 2006.

A partnership to reduce youth crime, Boston

- Berrien, Jenny, Omar McRoberts, and Christopher Winship. 2000. "Religion and the Boston Miracle: The Effect of Black Ministry on Youth Violence," from *Who Will Provide: The Changing Role of Religion in American Social Welfare*. Eds. Mary Jo Bane, Brent Coffin, Ronald Thiemann. Boulder: Westview Press.

2. Potential Community Partner Research: With the guidance of Dan Robinson and other resources from the Center for Community Service and Learning, I will need to obtain information on local community organizations that might benefit from student social science research projects.

3. Service Learning at SNC Research: As I am new to St. Norbert College, I would also like to gather information on previous SNC service-learning courses. More specifically, I plan to talk to SNC faculty members who have incorporated community research projects (e.g. Wendy Scattergood, Deirdre Egan) in their courses.

4. Designing Additional Course Components: Beyond traditional course development (syllabus, activities, assignments, etc.), I also need to create a "Call for Research Proposal" to identify potential community-driven research projects for the semester. Additionally, I plan to implement a variety of assessment tools during the semester, including mid-semester student evaluations and a Community Partner rubric for feedback.

Significance of the Course:

Often students are unaware of the power and usefulness of the theoretical and research skills they acquire at St. Norbert College and how their training relates to crucial social issues. While many courses at SNC utilize ASL components in their course work, this particular proposal seeks to take service learning one step further by connecting *scholarship* to *service*; where student research projects are purposeful in addressing community-identified research needs.

Furthermore, this course provides students with a set of analytic perspectives for examining social problems and fostering social change that prepare them for active civic participation in a diverse society. Beyond the substantive development of asset-based community development approaches to community building, the level of engagement with community organizations also exposes students to a variety of career opportunities in the community development field including, but not limited to, work in the nonprofit, business, governmental, and faith sectors. Finally, this course provides an exceptional way for a faculty member to integrate research, teaching, and service. Thus, professionally, the development of this course offers an exciting, strategic, and efficient opportunity to prepare for promotion.

Applicability:

I am excited for the opportunity to extend St. Norbert College's intellectual resources to the greater Green Bay community. My recent work with Emory University's Office of University-Community Partnerships equipped me with the background to development this course. My hope is that *Community Building & Social Change* provides SNC students with a unique approach to explore the interdisciplinary nature of community development. This experiential learning course promotes service-learning and highlights how research, service, and learning intersect can intersect. I would like to teach *Community Building & Social Change* in the Spring of 2011. Depending on departmental needs, I would like to continue offering this course with some frequency (potentially every other year). I would also be willing to teach this course during the summer.

Need:

Grant support is crucial for the development of a new service-learning course of this magnitude. While I intend to seek guidance from Dan Robinson and other resources from the Center for Community Service and Learning for more information on community agencies and local research needs, lining up research projects from community-based groups and nonprofit organizations for collaborative community building initiatives that would benefit from the focused involvement of undergraduate students is time consuming.

I am seeking external support for the development of this course by applying for the American Sociological Association Teaching Enhancement Fund (TEF). This grant program supports teaching projects that advance the scholarship of teaching and learning within the discipline of sociology. These modest national grants (\$2000) serve as support for seed projects that will continue to have an impact over time. I am applying for this grant in January, but the funds are highly competitive. There is no support overlap in these proposals.

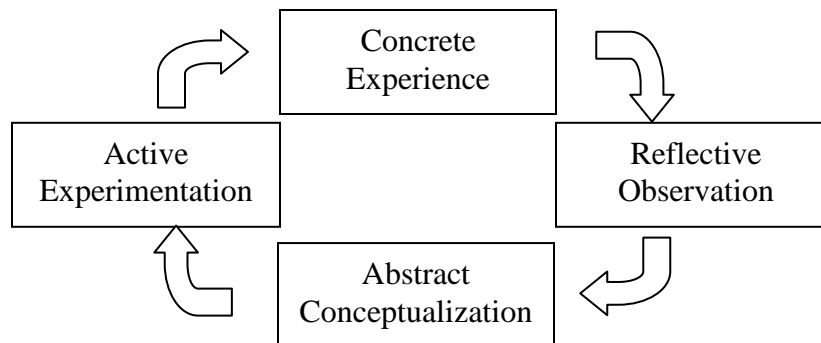
Summer grant history: N/A

Method of evaluation:

1. Course Material Completion: The first measure of success is the completion of the syllabus and class assignments, and the selection of course reading materials.

2. Course Enrollment: My hope is that this interdisciplinary course attracts a variety of students interested social change, broadly defined. Enrollment is one indicator of a course's potential.

3. Journal Reflections: A major measure or indicator of success for this course will come through the evaluation of Personal Application Reflection journal papers (PARs). According to researcher David Kolb, experiential learning occurs through a process that begins with concrete experience and students' reflective observations about their experience. As students work up their observations through the use of models, metaphors, analogies, and paradigms, they generate abstract conceptualizations (theories). On the basis of these theories, they can design active experiments to practice and test our theories. These experiments then become the basis for a new set of concrete experiences, which restarts the cycle. The figure below represents this process.



Using all the learning modes greatly increases the range and depth of learning. The Personal Application Reflection (PAR) exercise engages all four modes and will aid students in learning more effectively. The PAR also serves as a way of evaluating student performance and student learning.

4. Project Deliverables: A fourth, and in my opinion equally as important, indicator of success for this course is the usefulness, methodological rigor, and timely production of project deliverables to our Community Partners. Here, I am referring to the student social science research projects (e.g. survey instruments, best practices research, evaluation projects) that address critical community-defined research needs. Following the semester's end, I will meet with each Community Partner for formal feedback on the student projects, as well as general thoughts on their experience working with SNC students. Ideally, the experience working with Community Building & Social Change students on these collaborative research projects will foster on-going community-college partnerships.

5. Teaching Evaluations: Finally, following the completion of the course, the SOOTs and my own evaluation tools will gauge how well I was able to meet the goals specific to the course and my overall pedagogical objectives for the students.

TIMETABLE

Course Preparation (75+ hrs)

May-June 2010	Gather information on local community agencies and explore established community-SNC partnerships (meet with Dan Robinson, Nancy Mathias)
May-June 2010	Gather information on previous SNC service-learning courses. Talk to SNC faculty members who have incorporated community research projects (e.g. Wendy Scattergood, Deirdre Egan)
June-July 2010	Review relevant literature and empirical work on contemporary community development resources (see previous methodology section)

Course Development (75+ hrs)

June-August 2010	Develop and design course syllabus
June-August 2010	Develop and design course assignments
June-August 2010	Develop "Call for Research Proposal"
June-August 2010	Develop assessment tools (mid-semester student evaluations and Community Partner rubric for feedback)

Collaborative Research Project Formation (75+ hrs)

July 1, 2010	Call for Community Proposals- Collaborative Research Projects in Community Building & Social Change
July-Sept. 2010	Work with interested Community Organizations on Project Proposal Application (specifics of research needs, timeline, deliverables, etc.)
November 1, 2010	Deadline for Proposals
December 15, 2010	Selection of Research Projects for Spring Term

Course Duration and Evaluation (250+ hrs)

January-May 2011	Community Building & Social Change Course offered
May 2011	Project Deliverables to Community Partners (e.g. survey instruments, best practices research, evaluation projects)
May-June 2011	Course Evaluation/Reflection
June 2011	Project Completion Date

BUDGET

I will need to buy a few new books and films for the course, but these needs should be covered through the Sociology Department library budget. Thus, I do not anticipate any non-stipend expenses for the development of this course.