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Spring 2005
Grinnell College
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ARH 317

Practicum in Applied Sociology

Course Description:

The Practicum is a learning experience combining the traditional classroom with a practical workplace setting. Students reenrolled in this course serve as interns at their local organizations or agencies while reading and applying academic literatures to the work sector which they are working. The Practicum integrates hands-on field experience, regular class discussions about the workplace, and scholarly readings and individual assignments tailored to your internship and more general professional aspirations.

Through this course you will be exposed to possible careers in Sociology and related fields and you will think about the utility of your Grinnell academic work in a new light. In addition, the Practicum should ease your eventual transition into employment- by developing invaluable professional contacts, interpersonal skills, and on-the-job experience. Moreover, the Practicum could also re-shift your professional interest to another field or direct you more specifically to the need for advanced graduate studies.

Finally, the Practicum is designed to “show and challenge” you to apply the sociological imagination. It is to help you to see the promise and potential of sociology as a tool for social change as well as a tool for social invention. Through this process you will be able to “unpack” social life at the individual, institutional and organizational levels and “repackage” the individual, institutional and organizational troubles by applying sociological theories and methodologies. You will leave the class with practical and purposeful knowledge of your and others field experiences (internships) to create deeper analysis of social organization and social problems, social structure and social politics and social change and societal dynamics.

Course Objectives:

- To observe and identify the sociologically significant structural and interpersonal processes at your internship site.
- To apply sociological concepts, theories, and methods from the course readings to your analysis of your internship site.
- To examine how gender, social class, race-ethnicity, and sexuality interact and “playout” at your internship site.
- To identify challenges/problems and potential avenues for social change at your work site.

Texts:

Sweitzer, H. Frederick and Mary A. King, 1999. *The Successful Internship: Transformation and Empowerment*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company (SI)

Hunter, Christopher, 2001. Notes and Guidelines from *Grinnell-in-Washington Internship Seminar Handbook (ISH)*

Reserved Readings/Handouts:

RR Gary Alan Fine, 1992. "Ten Lies of Ethnology"

RR Erving Goffman, 1956 "Goffman on Impression Management in Organizations"

RR Gareth Morgan, 1986 "Images of Organizations"

Requirements:

Internship-Your attendance of 14 hours per week at an approved internship site is a requirement of the course. Each student will have mid and final evaluation from you on-site supervisor. You will be also be required to write a two page end-of-semester evaluation of the experiences to the on-site supervisor

*Journal- Each week you will make two entries into your journal. You will have 27 entries to be turned in by week by **Friday May 14th by 4pm**. Journaling is a learning tool. The basic goal of the journal is to allow you an opportunity to reflect on the concepts, ideas, and theories encountered in you readings and class discussions and relate them to your intern experiences (and visa versa). Journal entries must be one page, typed and bound.*

*For the most part, you have considerable freedom in the topic you choose to explore, as long as they relate to the guidelines of the course. I suggest that you find a quiet place as soon as possible after returning from your internship site and record the following **as field notes to help "deepen your analysis"** in your journal entry:*

1. Your actual activities for the day,
2. Your observations (what you heard or saw at the site), and
3. Your reactions to questions one and two both emotional and intellectual.

*Each journal entry **might focus** on one of these four areas of the internship site:*

1. Organizational structure
2. Self-assessment
3. Conceptual
4. Social change
5. Leadership

Class Participation- You are required to be an active participant in the weekly class meeting which entails doing the reading and coming prepared to discuss them. Class attendance is mandatory.

Readings--Each week a set of reading will be assigned for classroom discussion. The readings will be selected from a pre-arranged schedule or the class can suggest alternative themes or readings they wish to address based on their experiences on at the internship site.

Research-You must write a final paper (10-12 pages) on the internship experience based on Instructors approval and guidelines.

- April 8th *Topic for the final paper due*
- April 15th *Outline of paper*
- April 29th *First draft of the paper*
- May 6th *Scheduled Individual meeting with instructor*
- May 19th ***Paper due by 4pm! No late papers!***

Assignments-Some classes will have individual and group presentation based on the scheduled class themes and instructor assignments.

NO mid examination!

NO final examination!

Grading:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| • Internship attendance | 20% |
| • Weekly class meetings | 10% |
| • Internship journal | 20% |
| • Final Paper | 40% |
| • Class participation/presentations | 10% |
| • Total | 100% |

Mechanics of the course:

- All papers returned within a two week period of turn in date.
- Instructor reserved the right to add or delete any part of the syllabus.
- Instructor will email students on a regular basis.
- Students must develop a “buddy system” when class is missed.

Acknowledgement: I want to gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Chris Hunter, Susan Ferguson and others for design of this course.

Course Schedule:

Date

Topics

Jan. 28th

Introduction to the Practicum Goals and Procedures
(SI) Introduction: Beginning the Journey

Feb. 4th	(SI) Chapters 1 and 2 Becoming an Ethnographer at the Internship Site RR “Ten Lies of Ethnography” (SI) Chapter 3 and 4
Feb. 11th	Making an Organizational Map of the Internship Site? (SI) Chapter 5 (ISH) Mapping Exercise
Feb. 18th and Talk	Describing and understanding Everyday Routines, Performances (SI) Chapter 6 and 7 (ISH) Goffman’s Organizational Paradigm
Feb. 25th	What is the Formal Organizational Structure? (SI) Chapter 8 (ISH) Characteristics of Bureaucracy
Mar. 4th	What are the Organizational Goals? (SI) Chapter 9
Mar. 11th Site?	What is the Division of Labor or Labor Process at the Internship (SI) Chapter 12 (ISH) Who is Doing What?
Mar. 18th Setting	Identifying and Understanding Ethnics in an Organizational (SI) Chapter 13 (ISH) Defining Ethics
Spring Break:	March 18th- April 3rd
April 8th	Organizational Metaphors for Reading your Internship Site (SI) Chapter 10 and 11 (ISH) Overview of Images of Organizations
April 15th	Organizations as Machines and Organisms
April 22nd	Organizations as Brains and Cultures
April 29th	Organizations as Political Systems and Psychic Prisons
May 6th	Organizations as Instruments of Domination
May 13th	Inequality, Diversity and Inclusion at the Internship Site

(SI) Chapter 14
Pulling it all Together: Lessons and Best Practices in the

Workplace

Key Internship Glossary: (Terms of the course)

Academic supervisor: faculty charged with overseeing a student's placement and progress in supervised field work and internships.

Application: involves the interpretation and transfer of knowledge in support of the practice of sociology in local, state, national, or international contexts.

Basic scholarship: includes discovery of new knowledge and integration of knowledge across disciplinary boundaries.

Director: the person who is responsible to provide the ongoing direction and daily leadership for the operation and development of the program. Other titles that are often used include coordinator or chair.

Instructional development: includes research in support of the instructional efforts of the institution or discipline.

Learning outcomes: what a student knows and/or is able to do as a result of an educational experience.

Macro level: the unit of practice which is designated as the social institutional or large social system level.

MesoP level: the unit of practice which is designated as the organizational level.

Micro level: the unit of practice which is designated as the individual or small group level.

On-site supervisor: professional based in a formal agency, organization and similar workplace environment who is commissioned to work directly with interns in their work-site.

Portfolio: a means of measuring student learning outcomes in which the student presents a collection of his/her work along with a commentary on it; this work is to reflect what the student knows and is able to do, as well as the progression of knowledge and ability over the course of an educational experience.

Practice experience: internship, practicum, or field experience (*the term used by a program to label its practice experience may vary; however, the key distinction is whether the experience is supervised off-site by an academic supervisor or on-site by an agency or organization employee.*)

Practicum: supervised curricula emphasizing practical applications of theory, methods, skills, professional orientations, and ethics in a specialized area of study.

Professional development: a process of learning and keeping up-to-date in one's area of expertise.

Professional ethics: the principles and standards that underlie one's responsibilities and conduct in a particular field of expertise (profession).

Professional orientation: the attitudinal and behavioral characteristics of individuals that guide them as they fulfill their work related roles.

Program: any coherent sequence of courses and/or learning experiences within a department, or other administrative unit recognized by its institution, that has as its core the application of sociological knowledge, methods, and skills in a practice setting.

Quality control: the procedures put into place to continuously assess the performance of a program and if it is meeting the goals and objectives, as specified.

Research methods: the various ways in which data can be gathered, organized, and analyzed, whether it be quantitative or qualitative data and data analysis.

Safety responsibility agreement: an agreement between an agency and student placed in the agency for a practice experience. This agreement specifies the extent of liability of each party as related to the safety of the student.

Supervised field work: applied or clinical sociological training overseen off-site by an academic supervisor.

Supervised internship: applied or clinical sociological training which is overseen in formal agencies, organizations, and workplace environments by on-site supervisors as arranged by an academic supervisor.