**A+CE Designated Signature Assignment**

***(A+CE Related Measures highlighted in green)***

**Service Learning Project and Paper**

During the semester, you will be provided with a list of local social service agencies. You are required to provide **10 hours** or more of service in a social service agency of your choice from this list. **This service should primarily involve direct client contact** (i.e., at least 50% time on the following activities: intakes, assessments, interviewing, shadowing staff during their work with clients, and so on), (Taking Risks). You will then prepare a 3-5 page paper based on your experiences, which incorporates key social work concepts and principles from the course.

The agency you select must be an agency other than your place of work or one familiar to you. In other words, you should not be an employee or have a pre-existing volunteer relationship with the agency. Once you identify a social service agency from the approved agency list, you will post this selection on Blackboard. (5% of final project/paper grade). You will then contact the agency and make arrangements to complete their volunteer application and training. Time spent in mandatory volunteer orientation will not count towards the 10-hour requirement. You will also need to submit a UHD Release Form prior to beginning your service hours (5% of final project/paper grade). After completing the service learning hours, you will need to obtain a signed letter (on agency letterhead) confirming the date(s)/time(s) of your service to the agency (10% of final project/paper grade). **Failure to submit either the Release Form or Agency Letter will result in a “F” on the project.**

**You may choose from one of the following: The Houston Food Bank, SEARCH Homeless Services, St. Vincent de Paul, or The Beacon.** In very limited cases, students may select an “off-list” agency; however, they must provide a detailed explanation for why they desire to perform their service learning hours at this agency and receive instructor permission before performing their hours. Detailed information regarding this assignment will be posted in Blackboard and discussed in class. Part of the grading rubric is that you follow the posting requirements on Blackboard.

By the due date you must have selected one social service agency, completed no less than ten hours of service to this agency, and submitted a corresponding paper regarding your experience. You will submit this assignment online in Blackboard Learn into the appropriate portal.

**Paper formatting instructions**: When preparing your paper, please use APA 6th edition formatting (i.e., title and reference page; double spaced; 12 pt. font (even for the title) in Times New Roman; and 1.0 inch margins on each page, without bolding or color).

**Paper content instructions**: In 3-5 pages (not including title or reference pages), please provide the following information regarding your service:

* In 1 page: Provide the basic information about the agency where you spent your 10 hours to include: who they are and what types of services they provide to the community, who they serve in the community, where they are located, and the basic history of the agency. In addition, please provide the name of your contact/supervisor in the agency (including how you contacted them).
* In 2-4 pages: Provide a very brief description of exactly what you did during your 10 hours in the agency. Based on these experiences, you should then provide detailed reflection and discussion on the following:
* How does the agency or program services impact traditionally underserved, vulnerable, and marginalized populations? (Engaging in Regional, National & Global Communities); (Acquiring Competencies);
* What impact does the agency’s or program services have on the larger community within which it operates? (Engaging in Regional, National & Global Communities);
* Think creatively about strategies the agency could implement to improve services reflect (Solving Problems/Innovative Thinking);
* Compare and contrast your worldview (i.e., values, beliefs, and practices) to the mission, vision, and services of the agency or program. (Embracing Contradictions);
* As a result of your service learning project, what have you learned about your thinking and values as they relate to your role as a citizen within a larger community? (Connecting, Synthesizing, Transforming).

**Grading Rubric**:

* Service Learning Project (40 points maximum):
	+ 5 points of your project/paper grade will be determined by timely postings of your Agency Declaration on Blackboard. (Due week of Jan 30, 2017)
	+ 5 points of your project/paper grade will be determined by timely posting of your Release Form (Due week of Feb 13)
	+ 10 points of your project/paper grade will be determined by timely completion of your service learning hours, as confirmed by submission of the Service Learning Letter from the agency (Due week of April 3)
* Service Learning Paper (20 points maximum):
	+ Of the remaining 20 points of your project/paper grade, 5 points is based on grammar/syntax, APA, spelling, and clarity of writing. The remaining is based on the content of your paper: Did you answer fully the questions provided in the paper instructions above that focus on connecting key ideas or solutions, AND embracing contradictions in value systems, AND an analysis of the organizations role in the community and its impact/effectiveness on vulnerable populations?

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| ***Grading Criteria*** | ***Point Value*** | ***Was Criteria Met?*** |
| * **Agency Characteristics**
 | 5 points |  |
| * + Description and analysis of Agency’s history, mission/vision, target population and effectiveness
		- *Prompt 1*
		- *Prompt 2*
 |  | * Excellent, paper contains accurate, well-detailed descriptions of the agency’s characteristics (5 points)
* Fair, paper contains some inaccuracies, scanty details, or is missing some of the required descriptions of the agency’s characteristics (partial credit, 3 points max)
* Poor, paper contains a number of inaccuracies and/or is missing most of the required descriptions of the agency’s characteristics (0 points)
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| * **Student Reflections**
 | 10 points |  |
| * Compare differing world views/values and beliefs
* Synthesize information for civic and social responsibility
	+ - *Prompt 3*
		- *Prompt 4*
 |  | * Excellent, detailed reflections provide evidence of student’s ability to connect experiences in community engagement with knowledge from the course and/or emerging sense of civic identity and social responsibility (40 points)
* Fair, scanty or scattered reflections that provide little evidence of student’s ability to connect experiences in community engagement with knowledge from the course and/or emerging sense of civic identity and social responsibility (partial credit, 30 points max)
* Poor, reflections provide no evidence of student’s ability to connect experiences in community engagement with knowledge from the course and/or emerging sense of civic identity and social responsibility (0 points)
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| * **Overall Presentation**
 | 5 Points  |  |
| * Uses professionally appropriate language
* Uses appropriate grammar/syntax and writing style
* Contains proof of copyediting
 |  | * Excellent, the paper is mostly free of APA and/or grammar/syntax errors (5 points)
* Good, paper contains some grammar/syntax and/or APA style errors, but these are relatively minor (partial credit, 3 points max)
* Poor, paper lacks copyediting and contains moderate to major grammar, syntax and/or APA errors (0 points)

**Automatic 30-point penalty for improper paraphrasing and an automatic score of “0” for plagiarism** |

Please note that you can submit the assignment multiple times up until the due date/time. Each time you submit the assignment, Turnitin.com will provide you with an originality report that you may use to check for grammar/syntax, spelling, and potential paraphrasing or plagiarism issues.

**Papers showing evidence of poor paraphrasing** **will earn an automatic 30-point penalty** (i.e., one or more instances involving verbatim phrases without quotation marks, and/or maintaining similar sentence structure from the source material with only a few words changed); **those showing evidence of plagiarism will earn an automatic grade of “F”** (i.e., whole sentences or paragraphs taken verbatim from source material, and/or failure to use quotation marks or in-text citations)**.** To assist with avoiding these issues, students are welcome to make in-person (or Zoom appointments) with me to discuss elements of their papers and/or effective writing techniques.