Inequality and Social Justice Service Learning: Hunger and Homelessness/SvcLrn
Spring 2013
University of Montana

Course Number: 33786 - SOCI 442 - 01
Day: Tuesdays
Time: 2:10 pm – 5:00 pm
Class Location: The Poverello Center (535 Ryman Street, Missoula, MT)

COURSE INSTRUCTORS

Daisy Rooks       Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology
Email: Daisy.Rooks@mso.umt.edu
Office: SS 319
Phone: 243-2852

Office Hours: Tuesdays 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.
Thursdays 12:40 – 1:40 p.m.
or by appointment

Tessa Johnson     Director of Veteran Services, The Valor House
Email: tessaj@montana.com
Office: 2820 Great Northern Loop, Missoula, MT 59808
Phone: 829-3928

Cassie Sheets    Volunteer Coordinator, Poverello Center Inc.
Email: volunteerpov@montana.com
Office: 535 Ryman Street, Missoula, MT 59802
Phone: 728-1809

Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Thursdays 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this service learning course, students will:

• Provide a needed service to the Poverello Center and the individuals that it serves by volunteering for 3 hours a week at one of the Poverello Center sites;
• Write weekly ethnographic fieldnotes describing their volunteer experiences and reflecting on weekly reading assignments;
• Learn how to use qualitative research methods to investigate the lived experience of hunger and homelessness;
• Gain an intimate understanding of inequality and poverty, and related social justice issues;
• Learn to apply a sociological perspective to the lived experiences and endeavors of Poverello clients and staff;
• Conduct two in-depth interviews with present and/or former Poverello clients;
• Reflect upon the service experience and issues of inequality and social justice through written assignments and class discussions;
• Increase understanding of community service and civic engagement.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class Attendance, Preparation and Participation
Students must attend all class sessions. Students who miss a class with the permission of the university instructor must make up all missed material. The workshop in week two cannot be made up, and therefore cannot be missed. Students who miss too many classes, with or without permission from the university instructor, will be at risk of failing. They will be advised to withdraw from class.

Service Commitment
Students in this course will volunteer a total of 39 hours over the course of the semester; approximately 3 hours per week from week 2 until week 15. Students will be assigned a service placement at one of the Poverello Center sites by the end of week 1. Students are responsible for arranging a regular volunteer schedule with Cassie Sheets and getting themselves to and from their volunteer commitment.

No student may be required to participate in a service-learning placement that creates a religious, political, or moral conflict for them. If such a conflict arises, please bring it to the attention of the course instructors as soon as possible.

This course has a service learning designation from UM. Service learning is a method of teaching and learning in which students, faculty, and community partners work together to enhance student learning by applying academic knowledge in a community-based setting. Student work addresses the needs of the community as identified through collaboration with community or tribal partners, while meeting instructional objectives through faculty-structured service work and critical reflection meant to prepare students to be civically responsible members of the community. At its best, service learning enhances and deepens students' understanding of an academic discipline by facilitating the integration of theory and practice, while providing them with experience that develops life skills and engages them in critical reflection about individual, institutional, and social ethics.

Weekly Fieldnotes
Students will write weekly fieldnotes during weeks 3 through 14. Students will post their fieldnotes to the course moodle site by noon on Fridays. Although fieldnotes should be written in the first person, they have little in common with informal writing or journaling. Fieldnotes should be edited carefully and must contain the following components:
• Detailed descriptions of all service activities;
• Descriptions of the physical space where the service takes place. Pay close attention to sights, smells and other tactile details;
• Faithful recreations of all conversations with Poverello Center clients, volunteers and staff;
• Accurate descriptions of all interactions with Poverello Center clients, volunteers and staff;
• Discussion of all feelings and thoughts about the service and/or interactions during the service. *This component of the fieldnotes should be marked with italics.*

Students should engage with the course reading in a minimum of eight of their twelve fieldnotes. Students should relate their service experience back to one or two main themes or concepts from the week’s reading. *This component of the fieldnotes should be marked with bold.* Although students do not need to provide formal citations or quotes from the reading, their discussion of the course reading should be detailed, accurate and thoughtful.

**Written Assignments**
In addition to their fieldnotes, students will complete three formal writing assignments. The first is a short data analysis paper, the second is an original research paper and the third is a data analysis paper that engages with a theme or concept from Teresa Gowan’s *Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders.*

**Interviewing Clients**
Students will conduct two recorded interviews with current and/or former Poverello center clients and transcribe the interviews in their entirety. Students will work closely with Cassie Sheets to identify appropriate interview subjects. All students in the course will use a similar interview schedule for their interviews.

**Grading and Assessments**

**Completion of Service Commitment**
To pass this course, students must satisfactorily complete the service component of the course. Students do not earn points for completing their service commitment, but many other components of the course rely on successful completion of the service commitment.

Students enrolled in this course are expected to be responsible, consistent, appropriate volunteers. They must abide by all the rules and regulations listed in the Poverello Center’s volunteer agreement. 25 of their 39 service hours should involve direct contact with clients of the Poverello Center.

Cassie Sheets will work closely with supervisors at each site to monitor and assess students’ volunteer work. If students have questions or concerns about their service commitment at any point in the semester, they are encouraged to do one or more of the following:

• Contact Cassie via email or phone
• Speak with Cassie when she visits class each week or during her office hours on campus
• Contact Daisy via email, phone or in her office hours
Attendance and Participation  
10 points  
Active participation in class exercises and discussions is essential for the success of the course. All students are expected to attend class regularly and participate in a respectful and appropriate manner. Adequate preparation for class is also essential. All students are expected to come to class having read the assigned materials and ready to discuss them.

Fieldnotes  
20 points  
Students will write and turn in fieldnotes during weeks 3 through 14. Fieldnotes will be reviewed by the course instructors weekly and students will receive qualitative feedback on their notes from the university instructor. Students will receive a midterm estimate of their fieldnote score as well as a final fieldnote score at the end of the semester. This score will reflect the level of detail, the amount of reflection and the careful preparation of each student’s notes.

Paper #1: Data Analysis Paper  
10 points  
In this 3 page paper, students will use the data that they have collected in their fieldnotes to make an observation about the Poverello Center. First students will identify a topic or theme that has appeared several times in their fieldnotes. Then, they will describe the topic. Finally, they will use excerpts from their fieldnotes to demonstrate the existence of the topic or theme.

Paper #2: Original Research Paper  
25 points  
In this 4-5 page paper, students will conduct original research on a topic related to hunger and homelessness. First, students will select a topic or theme that has appeared several times in their fieldnotes. After selecting their topic, students will then locate 3 relevant scholarly articles about the topic and briefly summarize the information in these articles. Finally, students will use examples from their fieldnotes to illustrate the existence of the topic or theme at the Poverello Center.

Paper #3: Gowan Response Paper  
15 points  
In this 3 page paper, students will use their fieldnotes to engage with Teresa Gowan’s book *Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders*. First, students will identify a theme or topic from their fieldnotes that relates back to one of Gowan’s findings. Next they will introduce the theme or topic using examples from their fieldnotes. Finally, they will explain how the theme or topic differs from, or is similar to, its treatment in Gowan’s book.

Interview Transcripts  
20 points  
After completing their two interviews with clients at the Poverello Center, students will produce word-for-word transcripts of both interviews. These transcripts should be edited carefully so that they are free of spelling errors, grammatical mistakes and other typos. Students will post both transcripts to the course moodle site. Each transcript is worth 10 points.

Extra Credit Option: UMCUR Presentation  
Up to 10 points  
Students have the opportunity to present findings from their second paper, the original research paper, at the annual UM Conference for Undergraduate Research (UMCUR). Students who chose this option will work closely with the instructors to prepare their UMCUR submissions and presentations. Student presentations will be scored by the course instructors using the following criteria:
• Presentation was lively and interesting;
• Presentation used visual aids;
• Presentation demonstrated careful preparation and planning;
• Presentation reflected careful original research;
• Presentation contained convincing evidence for each claim made by the student.

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**COURSE MATERIALS**

There are two required books for this class, both of which are available in the campus bookstore. Only the Gowan book will be available on traditional reserve at the Mansfield Library.


In addition to these books, there are several additional articles required for the course. These articles are available in electronic format on the course moodle site and on traditional reserve at the Mansfield Library. These articles are marked with * on the syllabus.

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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week 1  Introduction to Course**  January 29, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-Class</th>
<th>Lecture: Overview of course and syllabus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exercise: Introductions, ice breakers</td>
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<td>Exercise: Volunteer rules and regulations, tour of Ryman street facility</td>
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<td>Exercise: Overview of service-learning placements at the Poverello Center</td>
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Due: Submit volunteer preference sheets @ end of class

**Week 2  Investigating Our Biases & Assumptions**  February 5, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-Class</th>
<th>Exercise: NCBI Workshop</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exercise: Additional volunteer training</td>
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**Reading**

- Emerson, Fretz & Shaw *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (pp. 21-43)
- Gowan *Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders* (pp. 59-62, 100-103, 141-146, 223-231)
- *Hardiman & Jackson “Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice”* (pp. 21-29)

Due: Submit NIH Training Certificate @ noon  Friday February 8, 2013
### Week 3  
**Dismantling of the Social Safety Net**  
**February 12, 2013**

**In-Class**  
Lecture: History of aid to the poor, dismantling of the social safety net  
Exercise: Understanding the causes of poverty and homelessness  
Exercise: Writing fieldnotes  

**Reading**  
Emerson, Fretz & Shaw *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (pp. 1-20)  
Gowan Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders (pp. 27-56)  
* Jacobson *Homeless and Housing Instability in Missoula* (pp. 1-52)  

**Due:**  
First set of fieldnotes due @ noon  
Friday February 15, 2013

### Week 4  
**Overview of Qualitative Research Methods**  
**February 19, 2013**

**In Class**  
Lecture: Introduction to qualitative sociological research methods  
Discussion: Challenges of conducting research with people experiencing homelessness  
Exercise: Writing fieldnotes  
Guest Speaker: Student panel  

**Reading**  
Emerson, Fretz & Shaw *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (pp. 45-87)  
Gowan Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders (pp. xiii-xxiv, 3-26)  

**Due:**  
(Extra Credit) UMCUR abstracts due @ 11:59 am  
Monday February 25, 2013

### Week 5  
**Families & Intergenerational Poverty**  
**February 26, 2013**

**In Class**  
Discussion: Families and cycles of poverty  
Exercise: Brainstorming research questions  
Exercise: Writing fieldnotes  

**Reading**  
Gowan Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders (pp. 80-99)

### Week 6  
**Homelessness, Precariousness & Resilience**  
**March 5, 2013**

**In Class**  
Exercise: Understanding precariousness  
Guest Speaker: Domestic violence and homelessness  
Exercise: Listening skills and interview role-play  

**Reading**  
Emerson, Fretz & Shaw *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (pp. 89-127)  
Gowan Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders (pp. 63-80)  

**Due:**  
Paper #1 due @ noon  
Friday March 8, 2013
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 7</th>
<th>Substance Use &amp; Abuse</th>
<th>March 12, 2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Class</td>
<td>Lecture:</td>
<td>Abstinence and harm reduction treatment models</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Guest Speaker:</td>
<td>Substance abuse and treatment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Guest speaker:</td>
<td>Megan Stark from Mansfield Library</td>
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<td>Lecture:</td>
<td>Transcribing interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Emerson, Fretz &amp; Shaw <em>Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes</em> (pp. 129-169)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gowan Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders (pp. 104-119, 181-184)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Morrell <em>Voices from the Street</em> (pp. 139-153)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due:</td>
<td>Students should start conducting interviews this week</td>
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<td>Topic for Paper #2 due @ noon</td>
<td>Friday March 15, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 8</th>
<th>Health, Mental Health and Co-Occurring Disorders</th>
<th>March 19, 2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Class</td>
<td>Guest Speaker:</td>
<td>Co-occurring disorders</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Exercise:</td>
<td>Homelessness and mental health</td>
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<td>Discussion:</td>
<td>Deegan article</td>
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<td>Reading</td>
<td><em>Deegan “The Lived Experience of Using Psychiatric Medication…”</em> (pp. 62-69)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gowan Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders (pp. 119-140)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 9</th>
<th>Hunger and Food Insecurity</th>
<th>March 26, 2013</th>
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<tr>
<td>In Class</td>
<td>Guest Speaker:</td>
<td>Hunger and food insecurity in Montana</td>
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<td>Lecture:</td>
<td>The Poverello Center’s food recovery program</td>
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<td>Lecture:</td>
<td>Writing annotated bibliographies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading:</td>
<td>Emerson, Fretz &amp; Shaw <em>Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes</em> (pp. 171-199)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gowan Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders (pp. 147-165)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due:</td>
<td>Annotated bibliography for Paper #2 due @ noon</td>
<td>Friday March 29, 2013</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 10</th>
<th>No Class</th>
<th>Spring Break</th>
<th>April 2, 2013</th>
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<tr>
<th>Week 11</th>
<th>Veterans and Homelessness</th>
<th>April 9, 2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Class</td>
<td>Guest Speaker:</td>
<td>Experiences of homeless veterans</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Discussion:</td>
<td>Reflection on conducting interviews</td>
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<td>Exercise:</td>
<td>Analyzing fieldnotes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Emerson, Fretz &amp; Shaw <em>Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes</em> (pp. 201-242)</td>
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<td>Gowan Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders (pp. 165-177)</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Criminalization of Homelessness</td>
<td>April 16, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Class</td>
<td>Guest Speaker: Criminalizing homelessness</td>
<td>Lecture: Presenting evidence effectively</td>
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<td>Exercise: Peer review exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Gowan Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders (pp. 232-281)</td>
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<td>* Morrell Voices from the Street (pp. 51-70)</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Homelessness &amp; Public Policy</td>
<td>April 23, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Class</td>
<td>Lecture: Funding for social services and anti-poverty programs</td>
<td>Guest Speaker: Local/state/federal funding for homelessness</td>
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<td>Exercise: Analyzing interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Gowan Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders (pp. 203-222)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due:</td>
<td>Paper #2 due @ noon</td>
<td>Friday April 26, 2013</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Envisioning Solutions to Homelessness</td>
<td>April 30, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Class</td>
<td>Guest Speaker: Envisioning policy solutions</td>
<td>Discussion: What works &amp; why, what doesn’t work &amp; why</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Gowan Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders (pp. 185-203)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due:</td>
<td>First interview transcript due @ noon</td>
<td>Friday May 3, 2013</td>
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<td>Due:</td>
<td>Topic for Paper #3 due @ noon</td>
<td>Friday May 3, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Course Wrap-Up</td>
<td>May 7, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Class</td>
<td>Discussion: Course wrap up</td>
<td>Exercise: Course evaluations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Gowan Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders (pp. 283-290)</td>
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<td>* Morrell Voices from the Street (pp. 267-282)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due:</td>
<td>Second interview transcript due @ noon</td>
<td>Friday May 10, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due:</td>
<td>Paper #3 due @ noon</td>
<td>Monday May 13, 2013</td>
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