

## SOC 273 SL: Social Issues & Problems in the Local Community

Fall 2008: 2:20 – 4pm Tuesdays & Thursdays

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**Course Description:** Students investigate social issues and problems in our local community (i.e., the Elon/Burlington area, Alamance County, and even North Carolina as a whole) and use an interdisciplinary framework, heavily grounded in sociological theory and analysis, to discover the interconnections between local, national and global problems. Study focuses on causes, consequences, and policies concerning such problems as poverty and racism and issues pertaining to institutions such as family, economy, government, medicine, religion and others. This course is a Service-Learning course. [This is the entry course for the Social Entrepreneurship Scholars program.]

**Course Goals:** The overall goal of this course is for each student to read, write, and grow as a person and a scholar. In addition, students should develop an increased awareness of the social problems and issues faced by local communities within North Carolina, and develop connections to a community partner to begin developing a sustainable social entrepreneurship project to address their specific community need.

**Course Objectives:** At the conclusion of this course students should:

1. possess a basic knowledge of the extent and distribution of various social problems & issues in the local community;
2. be familiar with a range of theories that offer explanations for and analyses of these problems;
3. have the background preparation necessary for advanced coursework in the social entrepreneurship scholars program;
4. be able to interpret and critique contemporary social arrangements related to social structures that maintain social inequalities and injustices;
5. discover and re-evaluate their own ideas, positions, and values concerning social issues & problems; and
6. be able to write clearly, in both substantive and technical terms, and document sources properly.

### Texts:

Bornstein, David. (2007). *How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas*. Oxford University Press.

Cuadros, Paul. (2007). *A Home on the Field: How One Championship Soccer Team Inspires Hope for the Revival of Small Town America*. Harper Paperbacks.

MacLeod, Jay. (2004). *Ain't No Makin' It: Aspirations and Attainment in a Low-Income Neighborhood*. Westview Press.

Sidel, Ruth. (1998). *Keeping Women and Children Last*. Penguin Publications.

And selected articles and readings placed on reserve through the Blackboard site.

**Grades:**

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Chapter reading assignments are worth 5 points each (27) | = total of 125        |
| Bornstein Social Entrepreneurship Essay                  | = total of 100        |
| Formal reaction papers to two of the three books (2)     | = total of 200        |
| Service-Learning – group presentations (2)               | = total of 200        |
| Service-Learning – individual reflection journal (4)     | = total of 100        |
| <u>Final project/presentation (group)</u>                | <u>= total of 175</u> |
| Total possible points in the course                      | = total of 900        |

Throughout the semester, your points will accumulate. You can check blackboard at any time to see where you stand. The grading scale is as follows:

|                |                |                |                |               |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
|                | 792 – 809 = B+ | 702 – 719 = C+ | 612 – 629 = D+ |               |
| 837 – 900 = A  | 747 – 791 = B  | 657 – 701 = C  | 567 – 611 = D  |               |
| 810 – 836 = A- | 720 - 746 = B- | 630 - 656 = C- | 540 – 566 = D- | below 540 = F |

**Chapter reading assignments:** These assignments will be used to help me assess your *Attendance, Preparation & Participation*. Because our class will function through group work and class discussion it is crucial that every student attend class regularly. Each day we will have assigned reading that you need to complete and be prepared to discuss with the group. You will need to prepare and turn in for each day's reading assignment three questions that you had when doing the reading. Bring two copies to class with you, so that you can keep one and give one to me. Each time you turn these in they will be worth 5 points (a total of 125 points across the semester). You must be present in class, prepared and participating in order to receive credit for these questions.

**Service-Learning:** The plan for service-learning in this course is as follows ---

There are two layers of learning related to this component of the course – the group & the individual.

For your group learning, you will be placed into teams of three or four and then assigned to an agency that corresponds to your full team's (the 8 or 9 person team) area of interest (e.g., issues related to the environment and children / health concerns).

- Your team of three or four will work closely with your community partner throughout the semester to learn the in's and out's of the agency, and uncover issues of concern to this agency and the population they serve. Twice during the semester, your three or four-person team will present to the class what sort of issues you've uncovered and how your agency is related to the material we're reading for the course. The dates for these presentations are 9/30, 10/2, 10/7, 11/13, 11/18, and 11/20. (worth 100 points each)
- You will collaborate with the other team(s) who are working with other agencies related to the same theme, and will eventually use this collaborative work as the basis for your final project/presentation (more information below).

Each of you individually will complete **at least 20 hours** of academic service-learning with your assigned community partner. You will compile a reflection journal related to your experience with this placement. In this case, reflection means thinking about a specific question that will be provided and responding succinctly yet thoughtfully with one – two pages. I will provide a new question at four different times during the semester, and have you submit your reflections to me periodically. (worth 25 points each time)

Grading rubrics for both components will be posted on blackboard.

**Bornstein Social Entrepreneurship Essay:** As we near the conclusion of our reading from *How to Change the World*, you will be given several question prompts from which you will select one to which you would like to respond. You will write an essay, bringing in other relevant scholarship where appropriate, that will be due on Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>. A grading rubric will be posted on Blackboard.

**Formal reaction papers to two of the three books:** You choose two out of the three books that we will be reading (Macleod, Sidel and Cuadros) and write a formal reaction paper to the book at the appropriate time. The due dates are listed on the schedule below. A reaction paper should reflect more than just your opinion about the book. The paper should illustrate where you see connections between the reading material and the work we will be doing in the local community. What sort of vision would you have for social entrepreneurship to address the issues discussed in each of the texts? A grading rubric will be posted on Blackboard.

**Final project/presentation:** Each group of eight or nine needs to work together throughout the term to:

- (1) Select a social problem in our local community that you want to address;
- (2) Establish connections with community partners that address the population and/or problem of interest;
- (3) Begin working closely with the community partners to learn how the agencies work, how they are structured, and who they serve;
- (4) Connect scholarship from our course as well as additional scholarly resources from your own research to the problem of interest (In other words, what do we already know about this social problem, and what questions are left to be answered.)
- (5) Collaborate/debate the pros and cons of working with your community partners and decide which agency will be the best candidate for your social entrepreneurship project.
- (6) Develop a presentation (powerpoint, handouts, and/or posters) that will inform the audience about your social problem, your community partner of choice, the pertinent scholarship, and your “dream” for your social entrepreneurship project.
- (7) Present your work on our exam day (12/15/08 from 8:30 – 11:30am).

A grading rubric will be posted on Blackboard.

**Conduct:** In addition to attending class, there is the requirement that all members of the group treat each other with respect. This is an academic community in which expression of ideas is welcome when those expressions are thoughtful, reasoned, and civil. I also expect thoughtful, reasoned consideration of ideas expressed by others, whether or not we agree with these ideas.

**Academic Integrity** is a top priority in this class, meaning you are expected to do your own work on ALL assignments (that includes reading assignments and papers), unless otherwise instructed. The University has an honor pledge that each student is expected to abide by. It reads: “I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this test or assignment.” If you deviate from these expectations, appropriate judicial action will be taken.

### List of tentative readings and assignments

| <b>Date</b>  | <b>Readings</b>                               | <b>Class Activities</b>                                  |
|--------------|---|--|
| 9/2          | Welcome!                                      |  |
| 9/4          | Bornstein Preface & chpts 1 – 3               |  |
| 9/9          | Bornstein chpts 4 – 7                         |  |
| 9/11         | Bornstein chpts 8 – 11                        |  |
| 9/16         | Bornstein chpts 12 – 15                       |  |
| 9/18         | Bornstein chpts 16 – 17                       | <b>1<sup>st</sup> reflection question due</b>            |
| 9/23         | Bornstein chpts 18 - 19                       | <b>Jonathon Kozol @ 6:30 in Alumni Gym</b>               |
| 9/25         | Bornstein chpts 20 – 21, Epilogue & Afterword | <b>Bornstein Essay due</b>                               |
| 9/30         | Macleod Forward, preface, & chpts 1 – 4       | <b>2 groups present</b>                                  |
| 10/2         | Macleod chpts 5 – 6                           | <b>2 groups present</b>                                  |
| 10/7         | Macleod chpts 7 – 8                           | <b>2 groups present</b>                                  |
| 10/9         | Macleod chpts 9 – 10                          |  |
| 10/14        | Macleod chpt 11                               | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> reflection question due</b>            |
| 10/16        | Article on blackboard                         | <b>Macleod paper due</b>                                 |
| 10/21        | <b>FALL BREAK</b>                             |  |
| 10/23        | Sidel Intro & chpts 1 – 2                     | <b>Fall Convocation begins @ 4pm, class ends by 3:30</b> |
| 10/28        | Sidel chpts 3 – 4                             |  |
| 10/30        | Sidel chpt 5                                  |  |
| 11/4         | Sidel chpts 6 – 7                             | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> reflection question due</b>            |
| 11/6         | Sidel Epilogue                                |  |
| 11/11        | Article on blackboard                         | <b>Sidel paper due</b>                                   |
| 11/13        | Cuadros Intro & chpts 1 – 5                   | <b>2 groups present</b>                                  |
| 11/18        | Cuadros chpts 6 – 9                           | <b>2 groups present</b>                                  |
| 11/20        | Cuadros chpts 10 – 13                         | <b>2 groups present</b>                                  |
| 11/25        | Cuadros chpts 14 – 16                         |  |
| 11/27        | <b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>                     |  |
| 12/2         | Cuadros chpts 17 – 19                         | <b>Last reflection question due</b>                      |
| 12/4         | Cuadros chpts 20 – Epilogue                   |  |
| 12/9         | Wrap things up!                               | <b>Cuadros paper due</b>                                 |
| <b>12/15</b> | <b>Exam Time 8:30 – 11:30am</b>               | <b>Group Presentations &amp; Projects due</b>            |