

Diversity Internship
Sociology 3393-001

Fall 2012
3 credit hours

Instructor: Daniel Poole
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Office / Hours: By Appointment

Objectives:

The Purpose of the diversity internship is to provide you with practical experience related to issues of diversity in our society. Internships are a form of “experiential learning” – i.e. they promote learning through direct personal experience rather than through the kind of indirect or “remote” learning that generally occurs in the classroom. Experiential learning can be a particularly powerful part of your education when we make sure that your experiences are consciously connected to the concepts about which we want to learn. The diversity internship course is designed to ensure that those connections are a central part of your internship experience.

Issues of diversity are central to the discipline of sociology and to American society at the beginning of the 21st century. “Diversity” can be used to refer to any kind of differences among any variety of subjects. In sociology, diversity is most often used to refer to specific categorical differences with important implications for our personal experiences and life chances in society. Those categories are race (and ethnicity), gender (and sexuality), and class. That short list does not exhaust the categories that are applicable and appropriate to the diversity internship; essentially, any categorical difference that identifies a group (to themselves or others) as a distinct category and because of which they are treated differently in our society.

Prerequisites: Because of the nature of the internship, it is essential that you have some base of understanding relevant to diversity when you enter the internship. However, there will be no course content presented that addresses diversity – largely because, as an internship, there will be very little “course content” of any sort. Consequently, in order to enroll in the course, you are required to have taken some sociology course that focuses centrally on issues of race/ethnicity, class, and/or gender. There are a number of courses within the department which satisfy that criterion; if you are unsure as to whether you have taken such a course, please discuss it with the instructor, Daniel Poole. Such courses are essential to getting a useful experience out of your internship, as well as to provide an important foundation for completing the end of semester research/reflection project.

Course Enrollment:

In order to enroll in the course, students must have arranged an internship with a host agency and complete a learning plan (internship contract). *Securing a placement and arranging the internship is the responsibility of the student.* To assist you in that process, the Sociology Department maintains a list of potential host agencies with contact information (although students are welcome to make arrangements with an appropriate host agency outside of that list). Your faculty sponsor should be willing to advise you as well. There are four steps that you need to take to set up and finalize the internship: get a commitment from a faculty sponsor, choose a prospective agency, meet with a potential supervisor to discuss an internship, and – once you have

reached a tentative agreement with a host agency – develop and complete a learning contract that specifies the responsibilities of all parties. That contract must be signed by the intern, the supervisor, and the faculty sponsor, and be submitted to the instructor. Two handouts are available to assist you in navigating those steps. One handout explains to you in detail the steps that you need to take to arrange the internship and enroll in the course. The second handout describes the essential components of the learning plan; you should use it to guide you through the development of your own learning plan. Once you have completed those steps, and have a learning plan signed and delivered, you will be enrolled in the course. Please contact the course instructor to receive the handouts and detailed instructions.

Requirements:

There are several requirements that you must fulfill in order to satisfy the requirements for the diversity internship course and receive credit.

Faculty sponsor: Every intern must identify a faculty member from within the Sociology Department who has committed to sponsoring your internship (i.e. monitoring the academic component of the internship). That sponsor may be the course instructor or another faculty member.

Arrange an internship placement: As noted above, every student is responsible for their own placement with a host agency, and formalizing the learning plan in the form of an internship contract. Again, handouts are available that will assist you in completing the process and identifying all of the specific requirements.

Internship contract: Enrollment requires a fully formalized learning plan, or contract. Consult the handout available through the course instructor or the Sociology Undergraduate Advisor to make sure that your plan contains all of the necessary components.

Course orientation: While there will be no regularly scheduled class meetings throughout the semester, there is a required course orientation meeting at the beginning of the semester that you must attend (date and time TBA). If, for some reason, you are unable to meet at that time, you are required to have your faculty sponsor verify your absence and to make alternative arrangements for getting the necessary information and for completing the tasks associated with the orientation. I strongly encourage you to make every effort to attend the orientation; in addition to the issues that we will cover, this will be your only opportunity to meet other members of the class who can be rich sources of mutual assistance and support for navigating your internship and completing all course requirements.

Internship duties: The central requirement is obviously that you fulfill the duties of your internship as delineated in the learning plan.

Journal Entries: You are required to make biweekly journal entries throughout the semester. Journal entries will contain three components: a work log; a description of activities; and a reflection on experiences relevant to diversity. Each of those components is described in more detail in the available handout.

Semester research / reflection project: You are also required to complete a semester project integrating sociological research and personal reflection concerning some issue relevant to diversity. The project will be completed in the form of an 8-10 page paper. A full explanation of the project requirements is available in the handout.

Materials and resources:

Canvas course page: All of the critical course information will be made available to you via Canvas (e.g. the syllabus, course readings, and course grades when available, as well as all of the handouts mentioned above). Canvas will also be an important venue for communication within the class, so please check Canvas regularly!

Readings: While the focus on the internship will be on the experiential component in your host agency, there are two brief suggested readings. Those readings have been selected to prompt you to think about important aspects of your internship, and hopefully to help you to make the most of it. The readings are available via Canvas. The two readings are:

Atlas, Stacy. 1998. "How to Make the Most of Your Internship." Pp. 387-395 in K. Srinivasan, *The Yale Daily News Guide to Internships* 1998. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Sweitzer, H. Frederick, and Mary A. King. 1999. "The Stages of an Internship." Pp. 59-65 in *The Successful Internship: Transformation and Empowerment*. Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole Publishing.

Grading Criteria:

Course grades are based on each of the following components, according to the percentage indicated:

Supervisory evaluation: Your supervisor will provide feedback to the instructor at the end of the semester internship. A central part of that feedback will be an evaluation of the student intern. The supervisory evaluation will address the extent to which the intern has fulfilled the duties specified in the internship contract. You are required to provide your supervisor with an evaluation form for completion and return via mail; no grade will be given without a completed evaluation form. The supervisory evaluation counts for 40% of your course grade.

Journal entries: You will be graded on the thoroughness and thoughtfulness of your journal entries throughout the semester. Journal entries will count for 25% of your course grade.

Semester research / reflection project: The semester project must be submitted to your faculty sponsor on or before the semester reading day. It is strongly recommended that you make an appointment with your faculty sponsor at some point in the middle of the semester to discuss the project. The semester research project will count for 25% of your course grade.

Self-assessment / outcomes (final journal entry): The final journal entry of the semester will be a self-assessment concerning how well your internship met your goals and objectives. A full explanation of expected format is provided in the handout on journal entries. The self-assessment will count for 10% of the course grade.

Student rights and responsibilities:

As a student you have both rights and responsibilities that are outlined in the Student Handbook. I would recommend that you become familiar with the University regulations which also provide me as your instructor with rights and responsibilities as well.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement:

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.

***This syllabus can change at any time. Students will be notified of all changes.**