

CLEI 55: Sustainability Internship

Susan Watrous

Monday 1:00-4:30 pm, Social Science 2, Room 171

Office Hours: Mon, 4:30-5:30 and by appointment

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The goal of this 2-unit internship is to provide students with the opportunity to undertake sustainability-oriented service learning and participatory action work on campus, and with community-service organizations, non-profits or public agencies. Students are supervised by project supervisors, and determine the content and work of their internship with the supervisor. The class will meet four times to discuss work, experience and assigned readings. (One of our sessions is scheduled on July 4, which is a holiday.)

The internship consists of the following activities (the amount of time you are expected to spend on each is also provided, for a total of about 60 hours):

- **4 class meetings, readings and occasional reading reflections, about 18 hours**
- **Work at the assigned internship site, about 30 hours.** The expectation is a commitment of about 6 hours each week, for 5 weeks. There will be an evaluation of your work at the site completed by the internship supervisor.
- **Journals, about 5 hours.** I will provide a simple template that you may use to record your experience each week, including the actual work performed, reflection and analysis. (The template is optional though; you may also work in your own framework, if you prefer.)
- **Project report/Final paper, about 5 hours.** A 4-page summary reflection and analysis paper on your service-learning experience *along with your completed portfolio of work*, due **in hard copy on Friday, July 22 by 10 am** at the College Eight office (marked "Attn: Susan Watrous"). A prompt will be passed out in class prior to the due date.
- **Preparation for final presentation, which will take place on July 18, about 2 hours.**

We have arranged internship placements with a number of campus and community agencies and organizations. You are expected to get to your internship under your own power (foot, bike, shuttle, Metro or car), and to check in and out when there.

Many of the required texts can be accessed online and/or through the UCSC library (you may have to install "ebrary Reader" on your computer). **Reading should be done *before* the class for which it has been assigned.**

Class Schedule

Week 1/June 20: Introduction to the class, logistics of your internship placement, and getting in touch with internship sites.

What is "service-learning"—and how will the internship and course proceed? We will meet and get acquainted, discuss the structure and requirements of the class and the internship, and review the assigned texts on service learning, participatory action research and experiential education.

What, exactly, is the difference between "service learning" and simple "volunteer work"? Your internship is designed not only to offer you a 2-unit class, but also to introduce you to the many non-academic activities and opportunities available on campus and in the community. It also allows you to observe the organization and projects, how leadership is exercised, power dynamics, negotiation and even how to start a project of your own. Such knowledge and skills will stand you in good stead not only during your four years at UCSC but throughout your life, as well.

Week 1 Assignments:

- Make contact with your internship supervisor, and establish your schedule for the next five weeks. What day(s) of the week will you be working? What expectations does the site have of you? How will you get there?
- Do a little research on the site, so you arrive with a sense of what the organization does; its mission, history and staff; and so on.
- Reflect on and write a one-page response to this question: What do you expect to learn at UCSC in addition to the disciplinary knowledge and skills required to receive a degree? What is your role in that learning process? How might your internship provide you with other types of learning? What are they? And what expectations and hopes do you have of the internship? Please include this with the internship reflection that you will be turning in on June 27.
- Set up your journal for the internship, and schedule time to complete it each week.

Week 2/June 27: What does it mean to have agency in your internship and your education, in choosing a “sustainable” life, personally and politically? And what do you need to pay attention to as you step into other people’s lives to take action? For this class meeting, please read the Freire, Remen and Cole readings, and skim the Participatory Action Research Toolkit (link is in week 3). Bring notes to class to support your participation in small group discussion.

We’ll also talk more about keeping your PAR journal. For this class, please review your journal entry from last week, and bring one entry to hand in along with your answer to the question about what you expect to learn in college beyond your discipline.

Week 2 readings (to be completed before class, please):

Teju Cole, “The White-Savior Industrial Complex,” at <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-white-savior-industrial-complex/254843/>

Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Chapter 2 excerpt, to be emailed to you.

Remen, “Helping, Fixing or Serving?” from *Shambhala Sun*, September 1999, to be emailed to you.

Week 3/July 4: HOLIDAY

Homework for week 3, even though we will not be meeting:

Participatory Action Research Toolkit: <https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/beacon/PARtoolkit.pdf>

The toolkit will give you a framework for thinking more deeply about your internship site.

And please watch Majora Carter’s TED talk, “Greening the Ghetto.”

https://www.ted.com/talks/majora_carter_s_tale_of_urban_renewal?language=en

Week 4/July 11: The environment in the news: Building media literacy beyond the headlines.

Often newsgathering organizations cover environmental issues, for example, the BP Deepwater Horizon spill, in sensational ways. How can we improve our media literacy and our understanding of the events and long-term consequences—that is, the complexity—behind the news? How—and where—might we dig deeper or read more closely for additional information?

Also, final project discussion: At this meeting, we’ll discuss the final project, and provide a handout for the various elements of it. The project includes an individual paper (about 4 pages) on your internship, and a group presentation to the class. You will be divided into work groups, according to your placement, to deliver a presentation on the last day of class.

It is likely we will also have a guest speaker during this week!

To prepare for your project report/final paper, it may be helpful to reflect on and evaluate your experience during the course. Answers are not always obvious. Nor are questions. The purpose of your report is not to critique your organization or project but, rather, to learn from your work and experience. This sounds simple, but it isn’t: you will need to explain *why* your particular and group experience was successful or not, both in terms of service and individual enrichment. Evaluation is not merely a matter of measurement; it also depends on a clear idea of goals and methods, *and how they are pursued and practiced*. A group that steals from the rich and gives to the poor could be said to be serving the poor. We would not be likely to regard such a group favorably, but explaining *why* is not that simple.

It is helpful to prepare a brief summary of your observations as you plan for the group project, drawing from the reflection questions at: http://www.uvm.edu/~dewey/reflection_manual/reflectioncircle.html

Reading: To be announced...

Week 5/July 23: Wrapping up: Final Project Presentations

Each group will have approximately 10 minutes. The expectation is that every person in your group will make some meaningful contribution to the presentation, although what that is will be up to the group. Think about what each speaker will be responsible for, and what are the 4-5 salient points you need to make. Practice helps; please come to class after having tried your collective presentation at least once.

Project report/Final paper, about 6 hours. A 4-page summary reflection and analysis paper on your service-learning experience *along with your completed portfolio of work*, due **in hard copy on Friday, July 22 by 10 am** at the College Eight office (marked “Attn: Susan Watrous”). A prompt will be emailed to you in week 2 or 3.

Wrapping up, evaluation, and grades: Your internship supervisor completes a brief evaluation form that we supply to them. It includes a certification of the hours you worked as well as an assessment of your performance.

Evaluation and grades: Students will be evaluated on the basis of: (1) participation during class meetings; (2) the evaluation from the internship supervisor; and (3) the final project report and presentation, and the weekly journal.