Sociology 3452 — Education & Society — Fall 2018

COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING ASSIGNMENTS

Community-engaged learning (CEL) is a teaching and learning strategy that combines meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. Community-engaged learning and classroom-based academic learning complement one another. On one hand, our understanding of academic issues will be enriched by seeing how those issues play out in the real world. On the other hand, through CEL we will learn about practical applications of academic knowledge and we will become actively contributing citizens and community members through service.

Here's what you need to do:

1. ***Sign Up!***

By <u>Monday, September 10 at 11:59pm</u>: Submit your CEL referral request, which identifies your top three choices of organizations, through the online system at <u>http://csl.umn.edu/</u>.

Several things to keep in mind as you consider your request:
   1. Try to find an organization whose work interests you personally.
   2. If you already work or volunteer at the organization, please do not request it.
   3. Consider practical issues like transportation and schedules very carefully. Will you be able to get there and to serve when they need you?
   4. If you want to request an organization that is not on the list, ask me about it—I will certainly try to make it work—but please be sure its mission has to do with education.

If you are doing community-engaged learning for multiple classes, email your service-learning coordinator as soon as possible and copy all of your instructors on the message. They will work with you to make sure your organization is approved for both classes and to decide how many total hours of service-learning will be expected of you during the semester; students in this situation are asked to do more than the minimum number of hours required for just one class.

This part of the CEL assignment is worth **4** points. You will lose all 4 points if you fail to submit your referral request on time. <u>Note</u>: You do not need to do anything to prove to me that you fulfilled this requirement on time; the CEL office will let me know.

2. *Attend a Pre-Service Workshop … for Extra Credit!*

OPTIONAL, and for **8** points of extra credit (see the blue "Extra Credit" handout for details): Attend a pre-service training and reflection workshop at the Center for Community-Engaged Learning. For schedules and to sign up, see this web page.

If you are new to community-engaged learning, I strongly recommend that you attend a session of "Community Involvement in Practice." If you have previously been in courses that featured community-engaged learning, I recommend you attend a session of "Critical Perspectives on Community Involvement."

Note: You do not need to do anything to prove that you attended one of these workshops; the CEL office will let me know.

3. *Serve 22 Hours at Your Organization*

By Thursday, December 20: Complete 22 hours of service at the organization. You are expected to work 2-3 hours per week for a total of at least 22 hours during the semester. (You must also complete any trainings or orientations required by your service-learning organization.)

Throughout the semester, log your hours through the online system at http://csl.umn.edu/. Time travelling to and from the organization or site does *not* count toward your 22 hours. However, time spent being trained at the organization or site *does* count. Continue to work through the end of the semester, even after you complete your required 22 hours.   If you are going to miss a scheduled shift or assignment at your organization, be sure to notify the staff member you report to as far in advance as possible. Also, please be aware of privacy and ethical issues in your organization.

This part of the CEL assignment is worth **60** points. You will lose 5 points for every hour you fail to complete. For example: If you only completed 20 hours (not 22), you would lose 2 x 5 = 10 points. This means that you will get no credit at all if you complete fewer than 11 hours.

Misrepresenting the hours you spend at your organization constitutes academic dishonesty.

4. *CEL Essay #1: The History and Mission of Your CEL Organization*

Write an essay about the history, mission, and clientele of your CEL organization.   In your essay, answer these questions:

1. Why, when, and by whom was your organization founded or opened?
2. What problems does the organization seek to solve, or what issues does it address?
3. How does your organization try to solve those problems or address those issues?

4. Who are the people that your organization serves or helps?
5. If your organization is a school:
   a. What grades does your school include? How many students are there? What is the racial/ethnic composition of the school's students?
   b. How do the school's test scores and "report cards" compare to other schools in the district? In the state? This web site may be useful.
6. If your organization is not a school:
   a. How does your organization identify its clientele, or how does its clientele come to be served by your organization?
   b. Where does the money come from to support your organization?

To answer these questions, you may need to combine information from a variety of sources. The organization may have written documents it gives you; it may have a web site; or you may be able to read about it elsewhere. You may also need to talk to people in the organization (e.g., your supervisor, long-time employees, key staff), at least informally. Be sure to cite your sources, and document where you obtained your information.

This essay should be about **1,000 words**. Use reasonable formatting and font sizes. Bring 3 printed copies of the essay to class on Tuesday, October 2. Then, after receiving feedback from your peers on that day, revise the essay and turn it in via Canvas by Tuesday, October 9.

The essay is worth **8** points. Only the final version that you turn in by Tuesday, October 9 will be graded. It will be graded based on how completely and thoughtfully you address the questions above. You will not be directly penalized for poor writing (e.g., grammatical or spelling errors, run-on sentences) but your score may suffer indirectly if your writing is not clear. Essays turned in up to one week late will receive no more than half credit; those turned in more than a week late will be read and will receive feedback but will get 0 points

5. *CEL Essay #2: Your Initial Impressions of Your CEL Work*

Write an essay about your initial impressions of your work at your CEL organization.   In your essay, answer these questions:

1. Very Briefly, to Remind Me:
   a. What is your organization, what problems does your organization seek to solve, or what issues does it address?
   b. How does your organization try to solve those problems or address those issues?
   c. What is your role in the organization? Why are you needed?
2. What are your initial impressions of your work at your CEL organization? Are the environment, the work, and the overall experience the same or different from what you expected? How so?
3. *Before you started*: What were some of your preconceptions or beliefs about the people or clients the organization serves? What did you think the people were going to be like?

4. *Now*: Have those preconceptions or beliefs turned out to be true so far? Explain.
5. How do you personally differ from the people that your CEL organization serves (in terms of your background, prior life experiences, advantages and disadvantages you may have, race or gender, political views, etc.)?
6. *Before you started*: What fears or anxieties, if any, did you have about your work at your CEL organization? Have you overcome those fears or anxieties? If so, how?
7. *Now*: What fears or anxieties, if any, do you have about your work there the rest of the semester?

This essay should be about **1,200 words**. Use reasonable formatting and font sizes. Use reasonable formatting and font sizes. Bring 3 printed copies of the essay to class on Tuesday, October 16. Then, after receiving feedback from your peers on that day, revise the essay and turn it in via Canvas by Tuesday, October 23.

The essay is worth **10** points. Only the final version that you turn in by Tuesday, October 23 will be graded. It will be graded based on how completely and thoughtfully you address the questions above. You will not be directly penalized for poor writing (e.g., grammatical or spelling errors, run-on sentences) but your score may suffer indirectly if your writing is not clear. Essays turned in up to one week late will receive no more than half credit; those turned in more than a week late will be read and will receive feedback but will get 0 points.

6. *CEL Essay #3: Progress Report*

Write an essay about your work at your CEL organization.   In your essay, answer these questions:

1. Very Briefly, to Remind Me:
    d. What is your organization, what problems does your organization seek to solve, or what issues does it address?
    e. How does your organization try to solve those problems or address those issues?
    f. What is your role in the organization? Why are you needed?
2. What have been your biggest challenges or frustrations so far in your CEL work? How have you dealt with those challenges or frustrations?
3. Have you had any unexpected emotional or intellectual reactions to your CEL work, or have there been any unexpected events?
4. Over the past few weeks, how has your understanding of the problems the organization tries to solve changed? What caused your understanding to change? Be specific.
5. What are your future professional goals (i.e., what line of work do you want to go into)? What are you doing in your CEL work right now that you think will be important or useful for furthering your professional goals?

This essay should be about **1,200 words**. Use reasonable formatting and font sizes. Use reasonable formatting and font sizes. Bring 3 printed copies of the essay to class on Tuesday,

November 13. Then, after receiving feedback from your peers on that day, revise the essay and turn it in via Canvas by Tuesday, November 20.

The essay is worth **10** points. Only the final version that you turn in by Tuesday, November 20 will be graded. It will be graded based on how completely and thoughtfully you address the questions above. You will not be directly penalized for poor writing (e.g., grammatical or spelling errors, run-on sentences) but your score may suffer indirectly if your writing is not clear. Essays turned in up to one week late will receive no more than half credit; those turned in more than a week late will be read and will receive feedback but will get 0 points.

7. *Send an Email to Your CEL Supervisor to Warn Them You Are Leaving Soon*

By the start of class on Tuesday, December 4: copy me (warre046@umn.edu) on an email to your supervisor at your CEL organization in which you remind them that you will end your service to them at the end of the semester.

Do not assume that your organization knows you will be leaving because the end of the semester is coming up. Treat this as you would a job and send an email with a two-week advance notification of the end date of your service. Copy me.

Note: This is a great opportunity to provide feedback and a note of thanks for the experience, and to ask if you can contact your supervisor in the future for a letter of recommendation.

This part of the CEL assignment is worth **3** points. You will lose points if you fail to send the email on time on time (or if your email is unprofessional).

8. *CEL Essay #4: Reflecting on Your CEL Experiences*

Write an essay reflecting on your CEL experience. In your essay, answer these questions:

1. Very Briefly, to Remind Me:
    a. What is your organization, what problems does your organization seek to solve, or what issues does it address?
    b. How does your organization try to solve those problems or address those issues?
    c. What is your role in the organization? Why are you needed?
2. Think about the community that is served by your CEL organization. What have you learned about that community through your CEL work? About the problems it faces, the source of those problems, and how the community is approaching solving those problems?
3. What impact did you have on the community through this work? What did you contribute?
4. What have you learned about yourself through your CEL work? How have you been challenged personally? How did you grow or change as a person?

5. What values, opinions, or beliefs of yours changed because of your CEL work? Be specific: What ideas, preconceptions, or opinions changed and why?
6. What do you think are the long-term solutions to the problems and issues your CEL organization addresses through its work? How does the work of your CEL organization fit into the long-term solution, if at all?
7. How have course materials (e.g., readings, class discussions) changed your understanding or views of your CEL work—that is, of the mission or importance of your organization, of its role in solving problems, or of the issues faced by its clients? Provide specific examples.
8. How has your CEL work changed or informed your understanding of course materials (e.g., readings or lectures)? That is, how has your time in your CEL organization affected the way you interpret or understand class materials? Provide specific examples.

This essay should be about **2,000 words**. Use reasonable formatting and font sizes. Use reasonable formatting and font sizes. Bring 3 printed copies of the essay to class on Tuesday, December 11. Then, after receiving feedback from your peers on that day, revise the essay and turn it in via Canvas by Thursday, December 20.

The essay is worth **12** points. Only the final version that you turn in by Thursday, December 20 will be graded. It will be graded based on how completely and thoughtfully you address the questions above. You will not be directly penalized for poor writing (e.g., grammatical or spelling errors, run-on sentences) but your score may suffer indirectly if your writing is not clear. Essays turned in up to one week late will receive no more than half credit; those turned in more than a week late will be read and will receive feedback but will get 0 points.

9. *Complete the Online End-of-Semester Evaluation*

The Center for Community-Engaged Learning is constantly trying to improve the services they offer. Please complete an end-of-semester evaluation through the online system at http://csl.umn.edu/ by Thursday, December 20.

This part of the CEL assignment is worth **3** points. You will lose all 3 points if you fail to submit your evaluation on time. Note: You do not need to do anything to prove to me that you fulfilled this requirement on time; the CEL office will let me know.

See below for more information about academic integrity as it applies to community-engaged learning; about accommodations for students with disabilities; about confidentiality and privacy issues within the community-engaged learning context; about criminal background checks; and about non-discrimination and religious service.