

**Department of Special Education
Millersville University**

**Being A Servant; Strengthening Birthright Integrity; Internal
Reflection Leading to Actions of Community and Peace.**

(3 credits)

Instructor

Thomas J. Neuville, Ph.D.
Department of Special education
Gerhart Building
Millersville, University
Millersville, PA
717- 871-4880
E-mail: tneuville@millersville.edu

Office Hours

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to give the participant the experience of bringing together self-reflection, keen awareness of the world around them and positive social action. The content and processes of this course develop behaviors that support acting in servant hood as a way of life. The objectives of the course address the oxymoronic state of being an independent entity while also being part of and responsible to a larger system. Through the use of tools developed by civil rights movements participants learn the methods of peaceful communities while discovering the violence of the politics of individualism.

OBJECTIVES:

Based on the Course Questions

- 1) What are the characteristics and behaviors of servant, service, stewardship?
- 2) What are the politics of personal responsibility and what are the related behaviors?
- 3) What are the issues most pressing for the group?
- 4) What are the opportunities to contribute in our community?
- 5) What are / is the plan (s) of action?
- 6) What have we done and what must be done?
- 7) How does this apply to my desired calling / vocation / major?

- A. Identify methodologies of participatory action and popular education.
- B. Compare and contrast definitions and historic patterns of servant / service behavior and worthiness as it applies to the welfare of society.
- C. Develop strategies of mindfulness and self-reflection relevant to the individual and the group.
- D. Identify current and historic political trends that facilitate and build cultural bias for “resolving disagreement” vs. “defeating opponents” (politics of division) and the impact on community and peace.
- E. Experience restorative community action and acting in a servant role as a means of bringing people to agreement and healing.
- F. Identify and discuss trends and issues relevant to emerging civil rights movements as linked to personal servant behavior.

TEXT:

Alinsky, Saul, 1971. Rules For Radicals; A Programmatic Primer for realistic Radicals. Vintage Books, New York, NY.

Gecan, Michael, 2002. Going Public; An Organizers Guide To Citizen Action. Beacon Press, Boston, MA.

Palmer, Parker, 2004. A Hidden Wholeness; The Journey Toward An Undivided Life. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Course Requirements and Evaluation Procedures

Reflective Journal 25% – Each student creates a journal. The purpose of the journal is to enter into a contemplative practice. Contemplative awareness is characterized by mindfulness of the present moment, empathy and compassion for others, and insightful wisdom. This journal is aimed at helping each individual discover their habitual emotional responses to being a servant and how these responses impact individual mind, body, and behavior. The activities of this opportunity are:

- 1) Connect with a person to serve as a semester long mentor.
- 2) Research the concept of mindfulness.
- 3) Research the processes of journaling.
- 4) Record the intellectual, emotional and physical responses as the student intimately engages the mentor and selected community action.
- 5) Reflect and record the meaning of the responses.
- 6) Submit to professor for review.
- 7) Present a one minute summation on

Objectives Aligned to Assignment: A, C, F

Community Action / Service 35% - Each student chooses, by way of personal and group discernment, a community service or act of servant hood. The action is to be centered on the students personal interest and focused on the needs of a group or individual. The steps of this project are;

- 1) Engage the processes of inner reflection leading to clarity of personal commitments.
- 2) Assess local individuals, groups or communities for opportunities to serve through matching assets, needs and personal commitments.
- 3) Plan and implement action (need not be fully completed by semesters end).
- 4) Reflect on processes, actions and outcomes through public story telling events.

Objectives Aligned to Assignment: A, C, D, E, F

Ethnography of The Servant as Revealed in Film 25% - The student describes the way of life for servants (people who serve others). Through the use of films (list supplied and student recommendations accepted for review) each student develops two short ethnographies containing:

- 1) The way of life for the servant studied.
- 2) Describes the cultural basis for the individuals servant hood.
- 3) Character descriptors of each servant observed.
- 4) Details personal struggles relevant to the servant's life and resulting actions / commitments.
- 5) Reflections on personal similarities (past, present & future) between the servant studied and the writer / ethnographer.

Objectives Aligned to Assignment: A, B, D

Attendance & Reading: 15% - To demonstrate the students' understanding of their inner landscape and generate fundamental actions founded on individual interests and a supportive community. Processes introduced in this course are designed to create circles of community trust founded on participatory action, popular education and self-reflective learning consistent with intense learning communities. The success of the processes are demonstrated through the service each individual engages.

At the conclusion of this course, students are asked to demonstrate through teaching, writing, drawing acting, etc insights and information detailing personal reflections, observations and learning from the assigned readings, community conversations and public actions. This assignment will be completed in class, and requires each student to make substantial and explicit reference to the assigned readings and draw on the concepts in such a way as to demonstrate individual understanding of the material, Self and completed service. Two or three specific questions will be provided to prompt and guide reflections that result in:

- 1) Depth of critical reflection
- 2) Demonstrated understanding of course material
- 3) Active effort to connect challenging ideas with personal experience
- 4) Presence in all workshops and weekly seminars.

- 5) Ability to summarize and synthesize reading materials during group process.

Objectives Aligned to Assignment: A, B, C, D, E, F

Grading

<u>Course Activity</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Journal	25%
Community Action	35%
Ethnography	25%
Attendance & Reading	15%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

A = 94 – 100%
A- = 90 – 93 %
B+ = 87 – 89 %
B = 84 - 86%
B- = 80 – 83 %
C+ = 77 – 79 %
C = 74 – 76%
C- = 70 – 73 %
D+ = 67 - 69
D = 64 – 66 %
D- = 60 – 63 %
F = 59% or lower

Important Considerations

Attendance: is a critical part of the course. It is not possible to pass this course if one nine hour workshop is missed in part or whole. It is not possible to pass this course if two weekly seminars are missed.

Special Accommodations. Students in need of special accommodations due to disability or any other circumstances are responsible to inform the instructor of their needs. They are also responsible to provide the required documentation, which is processed through the Office of Students Services.

COURSE OUTLINE:

- I. Knowing Oneself (accomplished in a nine hour interactive workshop)**
 - a. What is personal integrity?
 - b. How does one decrease the likelihood of living a life devided between what is culturally expected and what is true to calling?
 - c. Tools to explore the true self.
 - d. Using community to develop personal and professional strength.
 - e. Learning to speak and listen within circles of trust.
 - f. Experimenting with truthful actions.
 - g. The strength of silence.
 - h. Nonviolence in everyday life.
- II. Relating to the Other and the Habit of Action**
 - a. Knowing the world as it is through the use of community interaction.
 - b. What Do Means and Ends Have to Do With Each Other?
 - c. Communication, the use of words and developing understanding.
 - d. Living with ambiguity, reciprocity and victory as individuals grow in influence.
 - e. Clarity of purpose and developing the courage to act.
- III. Organizing for Personal Action and Community Wellbeing.**
 - a. The beginning middle and end of practical organizing.
 - b. The benefits of disorganizing and reorganizing.
 - c. The genesis of tactics.
- IV. Reflecting and the Circular Tools of Popular Education and Participatory Action. (IV. & V. are accomplished in one nine hour interactive workshop)**
 - a. Cultures that support reflection and cultures that defame reflection.
 - b. Who is at fault and what can I do?
 - c. Building the right relationships and the world of interdependence.
- V. Experience as the Foundation for Knowing.**

WEEK	TOPIC & ASSIGNMENTS
1	Nine hour workshop held on first Saturday of Semester <p style="text-align: right;">Knowing Oneself</p>
2	2 hour evening meeting Knowing the world as it is through the use of community interaction.
3	2 hour evening meeting What Do Means and Ends Have to Do With Each Other?
4	2 hour evening meeting Communication, the use of words and developing understanding.
5	2 hour evening meeting Living with ambiguity, reciprocity and victory as individuals grow in influence.
6	2 hour evening meeting Clarity of purpose and developing the courage to act.
7	2 hour evening meeting Collaborative meeting with members of Solanco High School's Social Action Club
8	2 hour evening meeting Adventures of a radical Hillbilly; myles Horton and the Highlander center (film).
9	2 hour evening meeting Guest: Local representatives of the Disability Rights Movement tell their stories and challenge course participants.
10	2 hour evening meeting The beginning middle and end of practical organizing.
11	2 hour evening meeting Guest: Brightside Baptist (Vern) shares tales and struggles of community servant-Leadership
12	2 hour evening meeting The benefits of disorganizing and reorganizing.
13	2 hour evening meeting The genesis of tactics.
14	3 hour evening meeting <p style="text-align: right;">Film: Sargent York</p>
15	Nine Hour workshop held on final Saturday prior to finals week. <p style="text-align: right;">Reflecting and the Circular Tools of</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;">Popular Education and Participatory Action.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Experience as The Foundation for Knowing.</p> <p>Process requires each participant to demonstrate personal insights and material understanding via, writing, acting, drawing, teaching, etc.</p>