

Service-Learning Program

The Institute of Cultural Affairs has a fifty year history of engaging college students in civic engagement activities both locally in Chicago and throughout the globe. Historically the engagement has not been tied to course credit, but in recent years ICA has revamped its civic engagement opportunities. The new Service Learning Program partners with Universities to provide students with the option of college credit for participating in a rigorous 3 or 6 week program (3 or 6 credit hours). Currently, the program is offered during May Term and Summer Term. In the coming years, the program will also be offered as a semester long course, both here in Chicago as well as with our partners abroad.

Program Description

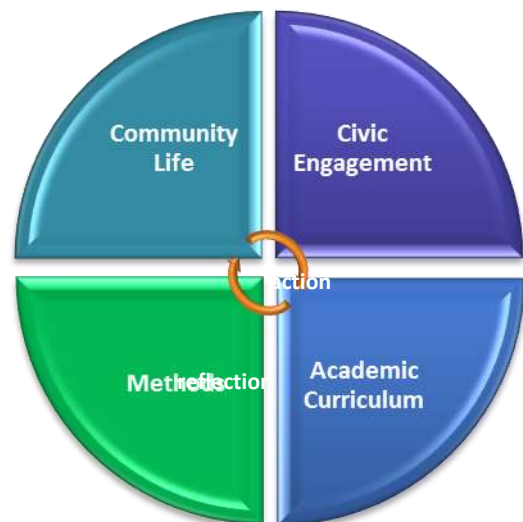
This program takes place in the city of Chicago – one of America’s major metropolitan areas. Students participating in this intensive service-learning opportunity will complete the equivalent of one academic course and will receive three credits for the three week program, and six credit hours for the six week program. Students’ time will be apportioned among rigorous **academic work**, **civic engagement**, and life in an intentional **learning community**. For every hour spent in academic work, two hours will be spent in civic engagement projects.

The **academic** portion of their experience will consist of three modules that are an extension of the Oikos Scholars Curriculum of Oklahoma City University:

Creating a Just and Equitable Society; Shaping a Green, Sustainable Society; and, Building the Foundations for Peace.

Woven throughout these three modules and connecting them to the community action component are three methodological strands: **intellectual methods** (conceptual/cognitive), **social methods** (social analysis, participative planning, and organizing social transformation), and, methodologies of the **interior life** (journaling, meditation, etc.).

The three **academic** modules, the three **methodological** strands and the community action projects constitute an integrated curriculum with a warp and weft character. **Action-reflection pedagogy** integrates the academic curriculum with participants’ civic engagement experience. Student’s **Civic engagement** assignments will offer an opportunity for practical engagement in one of the local program areas of ICA-USA or involvement with another community-based agency.



Additionally, participants will have a rich experience of **intentional community life**. The community dimension of this program serves as the envelope in which academic inquiry and community engagement occur. Participants will experience themselves as a community of learners, eating, working and celebrating together. The intensity of life in community will be balanced with time for solitary reflection and exploration. There will also be opportunity to experience Chicago's richly diverse neighborhoods, as well as its well-known cultural and artistic life.

Eligibility

This program will be most beneficial to third-year or beyond students; however the program is open to students that have demonstrated a degree of maturity and personal discipline. Students will gain the most from the program if they are prepared to be challenged and have a degree of comfort with ambiguity, diversity and social critique. When possible, we recommend that institutions invite a diverse group of students to participate (in regards to race/ethnicity, gender, class, etc.)

Cost

The ICA encourages students who are seeking credit to participate in the program, but welcomes non-credit seeking.

For credit seeking students, in addition the University's tuition charges there is a room and board fee of \$945.00, a program fee of \$140.00. The student will pay tuition to the home institution, and ICA will receive 60% of the tuition costs for credit hours awarded.

For non-credit seeking students, the flat rate for the 3 week program is \$1,000 +\$ 945 (room and board) and for the 6 week program is \$1,500 + \$1950 (room and board).

ICA is willing to be flexible and work with institutions on creating a reasonable financial model for all parties. Participants are responsible for transportation to and from Chicago. Students are also welcome to sign up for the class at Oklahoma City University, (summer session) and transfer the credit hours if their home institution allows. We are also in the process of creating partnerships with more universities (both Chicago-based and national) to offer credit for the course.

Number of Credits

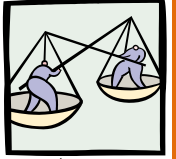
If students elect to take the course for credit, the three week course translates to three credit hours while the six week course translates to six credit hours.

Staffing

Terry Bergdall, PhD, James Addington, MA and Seva Gandhi, MSW along with other ICA staff and consultants will all be part of the team who bring academic credentials and several years' experience in international development, leadership training, organizational change and community organizing.

Preparation

Participants will receive reading materials prior to the start of the program as well as program expectations, a syllabus, and guidelines.



Module One: Creating a Just and Equitable Society

This module provides an overview of the multigenerational systemic dynamics that tend to replicate poverty and social subordination. It will explore how systemic advantages based on socially-aconstructed identities (race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ability, etc.) reproduce disproportionate economic, political and cultural benefits. Finally, it will address the implications for organizing social transformation rooted in the strengths and assets of local communities.

Students will have the opportunity to view how these dynamics play out in the diverse, vibrant neighborhoods of Chicago. They will encounter individuals and groups that are actively involved in social justice organizing efforts and will be challenged to imagine their place in organizing social change. Particular attention will be paid to surfacing the deep linkages between social justice and shaping a green and sustainable society.

Learning Objectives/Outcomes

- Students will gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics of systemic oppression, socially constructed identities (race, class, gender, etc.) and the self-replicating processes that produce poverty and social subordination;
- Students' sense of personal agency and resolve will be strengthened;
- Students' capacity for systemic thinking and analysis will be strengthened.

Resources

Primary text

Lopez, I.H. (2006). *White by law: The legal construction of race*. 10th Anniversary Edition, New York: NYU Press

Secondary Materials

Alexander, M. (2010) *The new Jim Crow: Mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness*. New York: New Press.

Anzaldúa, Gloria, and Moraga, C. (1981) *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. Watertown, Mass.: Persephone Press, 1981. Reprint. New York: Kitchen Table Women of Color Press, 1983.

Hooks, B. (2003) *Teaching community: A pedagogy of hope*. New York: Routledge. Systems Thinking , The Kirwan Institute, The Ohio State University, 2010

Video: Race, the Power of an Illusion, 2003



Module Two: Shaping a Green, Sustainable Society

This module explores practical challenges of being sustainably green in urban America. It presumes the importance and necessity of moving toward a society that is committed to minimizing destructive environmental impacts and shaping sustainable economic and social processes. It will explore energy initiatives, recycling programs, popular education, etc., from a community perspective (in contrast to a more typical governmental or corporate perspective).

The module will examine neighborhood engagement and empowerment; developing the political will to shape relevant policy initiatives at the city, county and state levels; building supportive infrastructure (such as city-wide recycling programs); and engaging schools (public and private), non-profits, and community organizations in the effort. It also examines, briefly, the challenge of shaping neighborhood level recycling programs that are economically viable.

The broader context for exploring these practical challenges is that of living in a time of global economic stress, dramatic transition in energy production and consumption, changing consumption patterns and their impact on the production of goods and services, the impact of digital technology on life style and organizing the support of corporate American beyond public relations campaigns.

Learning Objectives/Outcomes

- Students will gain a clear grasp of some of the practical challenges associated with “going green” in urban America;
- Students will develop a sense of personal agency regarding “making the case” and facilitating/organizing the change process at the local level;
- Students will gain a deeper understanding of and skill at framing issues as practical challenges rather than ideological debates.

Resources

This class will utilize articles, reports and videos that explore the challenges and experiences of local people committed to “green” organizing; these will be provided on-site by ICA. Local Chicago organizers will also share their experiences as guest presenters.

Primary text

Hawken, P. (2007) *Blessed Unrest: How the largest movement in the world came into being and why no one saw it coming*. New York: Penguin

Secondary Materials

Hopkins, R. (2008) *Transitions Handbook: From oil dependency to local resilience*. White River Junction, VT : Chelsea Publishing

DVD: A Convenient Truth: Urban solutions for Curitiba, Brazil



Module Three: Building the Foundations for Peace

This module explores challenges to peace in our complex, multicultural world with its globalizing economy and multigenerational political conflicts. Students will work to discern the deep connections among international peace, creating just and equitable societies and building green, sustainable communities. Students will explore the challenges of ecological sustainability, long-term economic viability and social justice. The module will initiate a dialogue that addresses the challenge of economic processes that seek to balance profit and growth with community wellbeing and ecological health;

Learning Objectives/Outcomes

- Students will gain a deeper grasp of global interdependence; their ability to discern and articulate linkages among the persistence of poverty, shaping sustainably green communities, and building the foundations for global peace will be strengthened.
- Students will also gain a sharpened appreciation for the importance of local/micro actions in relation to global/macro challenges.
- Students will gain the ability to see and think beyond the silo imagination that separates the issues and challenges of social justice, ecological sustainability and world peace.

Resources

Primary text

Friedman, T. (2008) *Hot, flat, and crowded*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Secondary Materials

Pomeranz, K., Topik, S. (2005) *The World That Trade Created: Society, Culture, and the World Economy, 1400 to the Present*. New York: ME Sharp (paperback)

Diamond J. (2006) *Collapse: how societies choose to fail or succeed*. New York : Penguin

Mann, C.C. (2006) *1491 : New revelations of the Americas before Columbus*. New York: Vintage (paperback)

Course Outline - Academic Contextual Work

Week One

Module: Creating a Just and Equitable Society

Resource: White By Law: the Legal Construction of Race, Ian Haney Lopez

Session 1

Poverty: a systems view

An interactive workshop identifying the systemic dimensions of poverty & impacts on poor communities

Session 2

Systemic power and the dynamics of oppression

Lopez, Chapter One

Session 3

Systemic power, race and other *socially constructed identities*

Session 4

Organizing change: shaping strategic interventions

Lopez, Final Chapter: the impact of *colorblind ideology*

Week Two

Module: Shaping Green, Sustainable Communities

Resources: Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Movement in the World Came into Being and Why No One Saw it Coming, Paul Hawken, 2007

Transitions Handbook: From Oil Dependence to Local Resilience, Rob Hopkins, 2008

Session 1

Setting the stage: two perspectives - organizing change or ideological debate

Session 2

Economic, Political and cultural challenges to being *Green*: a local neighborhood perspective

Session 3

DVD: *A Convenient Truth: Urban Solutions for Curitiba, Brazil*

Session 4

Being sustainably green at the neighborhood level – the Transition Towns experience.

Week Three

Module: Building the Foundations for Peace

Session 1

The Global Context: a time of transition

Selection from *Hot, Flat and Crowded*, Friedman

Session 2

Exploring our interconnections

Selection from Pomeranz and Topik

Session 3

DVD: *The Power of Community*

Session 4

Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation: pathways into the future

Selection: *Hot, Flat and Crowded*