

LDST 205: JUSTICE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Community Based Learning Guidelines

*“Service is the rent we pay for being.
It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time.”*
~ Marian Wright Edelman~

The Justice and Civil Society course explores contemporary society and understandings of justice. It combines community-based learning with seminar to assist you as you explore issues related to civil society, justice, poverty and related socio-economic problems.

The Justice and Civil Society course requires that you spend 24-30 hours in service on site with a nonprofit agency or organization in addition to several hours a week in seminar. The course will enable you to link leadership theories and principles to practice in a variety of community settings through concrete, specific tasks while serving a population in need.

Considering a Service Site

An appropriate service site for this course is one in which you will encounter a significant area of social need. Ideally, the site you select should entail working with a particular population that is new and unfamiliar to you. The tasks you are asked to perform at the site you select must involve direct, face-to-face contact with the person or group being served. In this way you will learn from the site staff and those in need.

As you review potential service sites, please consider where the site is located and/or if a background check or certain inoculations are required (see list of sites for details). As you have a significant number of hours of service to complete and it is an integral part of the course, you want to make sure that you have transportation to and from your site (car or carpool, bus, Center for Civic Engagement shuttles). A background check may take 3-4 weeks and arranging for inoculations may take time, which will delay you starting your service hours.

- A list of sites that the Jepson School has screened and approved is available at: <http://jepson.richmond.edu/academics/practicing/suggestions.html>
- You may also peruse the listings on the Career Development Center site at <http://oncampus.richmond.edu/academics/tltcenter/servicelearn/agency.htm> or on the Center for Civic Engagement site at <http://engage.richmond.edu/>. Or you may investigate possible sites on your own. If you are considering a site that is NOT one of the suggested Jepson sites, please check with your professor and Dr. Kerstin Soderlund, associate dean for student and external affairs, to insure that your site meets Jepson criteria.

- Some professors will let students use their Bonner site to fulfill their service hours for this class and others won't. This is something the student must discuss with his/her professor at the beginning of the semester. The key is to discuss this with your professor and then obtain the professor's signature on the site approval form and the learning contract if you plan to use a Bonner site or any other site where you are already volunteering to fulfill your service-learning hours.

Selecting a Service Site

- Arrange an interview, either in person or over the phone, with the site supervisor at the site you have selected for your service learning. Use this interview to complete the Justice and Civil Society Service-Learning Contract and be sure to obtain your site supervisor's signature. A faxed signature is acceptable if you are conducting a phone interview. You may use the fax machine in the workroom in Jepson Hall for this purpose; feel free to ask any member of the Jepson staff for assistance with the fax machine if you need it.
Contract at: http://jepson.richmond.edu/current/forms/justice_learningcontract_writable.pdf
- Have your placement approved and submit the Justice and Civil Society Service-Learning Contract, including both your signature and the signature of your site supervisor, to Dr. Soderlund **no later than the end of the second week of class**. This deadline is nonnegotiable. If you do not meet the deadline, you may not take the seminar. *NOTE: If you select a Build It or Richmond Families Initiative site, please speak with Dr. Soderlund about your learning contract.*
- NOTE: If you need to change sites for any reason during the semester, you must first complete another Justice and Civil Society Service-Learning Contract and have it signed by your professor before submitting to Dr. Soderlund. Hours worked at a site not previously approved will not count towards your required minimum volunteer hours. Permission to change sites will only be granted in the most extreme circumstances.

Steps for a Successful Service-Learning Experience

- As previously mentioned, transportation may be a concern for many students enrolled in this course. If you do not have access to a vehicle, other options include the following:
 - ✓ Borrow a car from a friend or carpool with a friend to your site.
 - ✓ Choose a site that is on the bus route. Bus schedules are available from a kiosk in the basement of Tyler Haynes or online at <http://www.ridegrtc.com/RideGRTC.aspx?pg=Schedules-And-Routes>.
 - ✓ Let Dr. Soderlund know where you plan to volunteer and she will email students in all Justice and Civil Society classes to see if it would be possible to make carpool arrangements with other students who may be planning to volunteer at that site.
- Review the University Guidelines for Learning in the Community at <http://engage.richmond.edu/programs/cbl/guidelines.html>
- In addition to the University Guidelines, please:
 - ✓ DO NOT become romantically involved with those you are serving. If the individual being served is underage, the legal penalties for having a sexual relationship with that individual can be severe.
 - ✓ DO NOT try to offer advice you are not qualified to give. Remember, you are not a lawyer, licensed social worker, doctor, accountant, or psychiatrist.

- ✓ DO NOT do anything that might physically endanger the person(s) you are serving. For example, if you are volunteering at a medical site, do not try to perform any medical procedures you are not approved to do. If you are working with small children, be vigilant at all times in an effort to prevent accidents and injuries.
- ✓ DO NOT have inappropriate conversations with the individual(s) you are serving. Discussing the drunken revelries of Saturday night's frat party with someone you are serving is definitely inappropriate. Remember, you are a representative of University of Richmond and should be setting a good example at all times.
- ✓ DO NOT exhibit inappropriate behaviors. For example, volunteers should never smoke or use offensive language at their service site.
- Keep track of your service hours over the course of the semester as you will need to submit a log of hours with your site supervisor's signature at the end of the course. If your site uses an automated log system, you will need to ask your supervisor for a signed print out of those hours at the end of your service. If your site does not use an automated system, please log your hours on the Log of Volunteer Hours form.
Form at: http://jepson.richmond.edu/current/forms/justice_volunteerservicelog.pdf

Wrapping Up Your Service Experience

- Upon the fulfillment of your hours of volunteer service, complete the Student Evaluation of Service-Learning Site Form and submit it to Dr. Soderlund by the last day of class. Form at: http://jepson.richmond.edu/current/forms/justice_student_siteeval.html
- Dr. Soderlund will be in contact with your site supervisor at the end of the semester to verify that you have, in fact, completed all required service hours at your designated site. Failure to complete the required number of hours will result in a failing grade.
- Dr. Soderlund will also contact your site supervisor at the end of the semester to secure from them their evaluation of your service.

ALL FORMS REQUIRED FOR JUSTICE AND CIVIL SOCIETY COMMUNITY BASED LEARNING CAN BE FOUND AT <http://jepson.richmond.edu/academics/practicing/justice.html>

If you have any questions or concerns regarding Justice and Civil Society community based learning, please feel free to contact:

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