

PUBLIC SERVICE INTERNSHIP - STSH/STSS 4800

SAGE 3705

MR Thursdays 4:00 - 5:50

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Office Hours Thursdays 1:00 - 4:00

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OVERVIEW

Public Service Internship (PSI) is an upper level course that matches student interest and skills with community needs. Placing students throughout Troy and regionally, PSI connects Rensselaer students with community groups, non-profit organizations and public government offices. Through the internship experience, course readings and assignments, students develop an informed position on contemporary social issues, such as inequality, difference, urban planning and revival, community agriculture, and local sustainability initiatives. PSI incorporates concepts and methods that enable students to excel in their internship experiences. By putting technical, organizational, and social skills to work with local organizations, students gain tangible experience with concrete community and governmental organizations through which they can consider course material. This course will challenge students to critically reflect upon their understanding of community and citizenship. At the end of the semester students will submit a final report and give a presentation to the class that describes their internship experience, the contemporary issues addressed through the internship and organization, and how this relates to citizenship and community.

Both your internship supervisor and I will oversee the internship experience. You must conscientiously fulfill your obligations to your service organization (this includes making up missed service dates, being prompt and reliable, etc.). Each student's supervisor will complete an evaluation form about the intern's performance. Students are responsible for getting the forms to the supervisor in a timely manner and requesting that the supervisor email the evaluation to me. Please treat the internship as seriously as you would a job. Students will complete *a minimum of 75 hours* of unpaid service by the last week of class. Students may work more than that. You are encouraged to work as many hours as reasonable – more time on the job often leads to enhanced responsibility. Among other benefits, this allows an internship supervisor to write more knowledgeable letters of recommendation for you.

This course has four central learning outcomes:

- Learn about different forms of **civic engagement, in the local area and beyond.**
- Learn **about complex problems**, and how these problems are understood and practically addressed by non-profit and governmental organizations.
- Learn about different **types of organizations**, how they are structured, function, and develop organizational cultures.
- Develop **social science research, analysis and communication skills**, and an ability to imagine how academic insight can inform practical action through the research process.

COURSE GRADING

Final course grades will be based on the following factors:

Participation	20%
Annotations (5x)	15%
Engagement Papers (2x)	20%
Presentation	20%
Final Paper	25%

COURSEWORK OVERVIEW

Participation:

This course is centered primarily on class participation and discussion. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and your internship experiences. You should have a general ability to articulate key arguments and ask informed questions.

Annotations:

Annotations are an effective way to critically engage with the reading material. Annotations help draw out key concepts, important quotes, and arguments that will help you write your final report.

Engagement Papers:

Engagement papers should describe the organizational context and work that you are doing as an intern. There are two engagement papers, each worth ten points. Engagement papers should be five pages (1500-2200 words).

Final Report:

A Final Report is due the last day of class. The written report with supporting annotations of articles and books read to further understanding of the internship organization, context and problems addressed should be ten pages PLUS a bibliography. The final report must adhere to the guidelines specified in the final section of this syllabus.

Final Presentation:

Final Presentations will be given during the last two or three classes of the semester. Each student will give an eight-minute presentation with at least ten slides, followed by a short Q&A session. Presentations should provide an overview of content presented in the Final Report.

COURSE POLICIES

All assignments will be submitted the day before (11:59PM) the class listed on the syllabus.

This will ensure I have some time to review the submitted work, which will make for better discussions in class. Please put [[PSI]] in the subject of all course e-mails.

Attendance is required. Unexcused absences will result in a 5% reduction of your course grade. Documentation for excused absences should be obtained from the Student Experience Office, 4th floor Academy Hall, x8022, se@rpi.edu. Similarly, late attendance, sleeping during class, or general inattentiveness (due to computer or cell phone use) will result in absence penalties for that class period, at my discretion.

If you have a problem that may impact your ability to complete assignments or be fully prepared for class discussion, please come talk to me. Do not wait until the last minute, or past the assignment deadline. There are institute resources available, and for many others I am usually willing to be flexible, particularly if you have demonstrated high quality written work and in-class discussion in the past.

Academic honesty is an expectation in this course. It is unacceptable to resubmit work prepared for another course, or to submit work prepared by another as your own. Citations, using a standard citation style of your choice (such as APA or MLA) must be included for all written work, particularly those that draw on either direct or indirect quotations. Please see the Student Handbook for complete guidelines on academic honesty. Students who are found to have violated the academic dishonesty policy are likely to fail the course. **If you find yourself considering academic dishonesty, or any act that might remotely resemble academic dishonesty, you should come talk to me.** Students who are found to have violated the academic dishonesty policy will fail the assignment in question and are likely to fail the course.

A final grade of incomplete will not be given to any student unless negotiated with me in advance of the final day of class/final assignment deadline.

You may appeal your final grade through a written statement describing the grounds on which a change of grade should be considered appropriate. Before initiating a formal appeal, please feel free to share your concerns with me. If you decide to pursue an appeal, the written statement must reference one of the three criteria identified in the Student Handbook as grounds for appeal.

DRAFT SCHEDULE

This is a tentative schedule, and it will change throughout the course. In the case of alterations to this schedule, you will always be notified by e-mail.

1/18 Introduction	Introductions, pitches, current and past public service Review syllabus <i>Reading:</i> “The Vanity of Volunteerism” by Sara Mosle, available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2000/07/02/magazine/the-vanity-of-volunteerism.html <i>In Class:</i> Head-start on HW for next class, identifying internship opportunities. Reading discussion
1/25 A Genealogy and Definition of Service Learning	<i>Readings:</i> “Jane Addams and the Origins of Service-Learning” by Daynes and Longo, p. 5-12 (http://goo.gl/M5Ds0o) “Service-Learning: A Balanced Approach to Experiential Education” by Andrew Furco, pg. 71-76 (http://educacio-cp89.webjoomla.es/wp-content/uploads/03-Furco-1-English.pdf)

	<p><i>HW (due Wednesday 11:59pm):</i> List five organizations you would like to work with, including a sentence or two on why. Rank these in order of preference.</p> <p><i>In Class:</i> Go over HW, organizations you're thinking of working with. Reading discussion HW for before next class: Internship Contract due</p>
2/1 Public Administration	<p><i>Readings:</i> Foundations of Public Service 2nd Edition, Douglas F Morgan, Richard T Green, Craig W Shinn, and Robert K Robinson. Chapter 5. A troubled History of American Public Administration. (A .pdf will be emailed to you.)</p> <p><i>Assignments:</i> Internship Contract Due</p> <p><i>In Class:</i> Review Internship Status Reading discussion</p>
2/8 Citizens & Civic Engagement	<p><i>Reading:</i> 8 forms of capital: http://www.appleseedpermaculture.com/8-forms-of-capital/</p> <p><i>HW:</i> Head start on Engagement Paper #1 (bring questions for discussion)</p> <p><i>In class:</i> Updates on internship/organization work thus far, next steps. Connect to majors... what public problems/solutions might your major/career contribute to?</p> <p><i>Assignments:</i> Annotation #1 Due Engagement paper #1 (due 2/22) discussion/questions Updates on internship/organization. Reading discussion</p>
2/16 Unincorporated Organizations & Cultural Capital	<p><i>Readings:</i> The Four-Legged Stool, John L. McKnight https://www.kettering.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Four-Legged-Stool.pdf</p> <p><i>In class:</i> Updates on internship/organization. Reading discussion</p> <p><i>Assignments:</i> Annotation #2 Due</p>

2/22 Understanding Nonprofits from a Historical Perspective	<p><i>Readings:</i> The Nonprofit Sector in Historical Perspective: Traditions of Philanthropy in the West, by Kevin C. Robbins (You can get this through RPI library online.)</p> <p><i>Assignments:</i> Engagement Paper #1</p> <p><i>In class:</i> Updates on internship/organization. Reading discussion Mapping/analyzing the 8 forms of capital for your organization, and yourself.</p>
3/1 More on Nonprofits	<p><i>Readings:</i> https://nonprofitquarterly.org/management/21259-nonprofit-accountability-and-ethics-rotting-from-the-head-down.html Discussion question: Ethical challenges/issues facing your organization?</p> <p>http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/ten_nonprofit_funding_models Discussion question: What funding model aligns closest with your organization? What others might it draw from?</p> <p><i>In class:</i> Updates on internship/organization. Reading discussion Empathy: https://www.ted.com/talks/jeremy_rifkin_on_the_empathic_civilization</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i> Annotation #3 Due Head start on Engagement Paper #2</p>
3/8 Alternatives	<p><i>In Class:</i> Updates on internship/organization.</p> <p>Two takes on charity: http://www.thersa.org/events/rसानimate/animate/rsa-animate-first-as-tragedy,-then-as-farce http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pallotta_the_way_we_think_about_charity_is_dead_wrong?language=en#t-9299</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i> Annotation #4 Due</p>
3/22 Organization Types (Different corps.)	<p><i>Readings:</i> Images of Organization by Gareth Morgan 2006, Selection. (A .pdf will be emailed to you.)</p>

	<p><i>In class:</i> Updates on internship/organization. Reading discussion</p> <p><i>Assignment</i> Engagement Paper #2</p>
3/29 Citizenship Reprise	<p><i>Readings:</i> Donella Meadows' <u>"Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System"</u></p> <p><i>In Class:</i> <u>https://www.ted.com/talks/don_tapscott_four_principles_for_the_open_world_1#t-1051144</u></p> <p>Updates on internship/organization. Reading discussion -- Making sense of "Leverage Points" together.</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i> Annotation #5 Due</p>
4/5 Leaving a legacy, how can you finish strong with this internship?	TDB
4/12 Final Presentations	Each student will give an eight-minute presentation with at least ten slides (You are encouraged to use primarily images. How can you tell part of your story visually?), followed by a short Q&A session. Presentations should provide an overview of content presented in the Final Report. The best presentations will a) link to your readings and class discussions, b) contain lots of moments of clarity, surprise, etc. - i.e. what can you say now that you couldn't say on the 1st day of your internship? what did you learn?.
4/19 Final Presentations	Each student will give an eight-minute presentation with at least ten slides (You are encouraged to use primarily images. How can you tell part of your story visually?), followed by a short Q&A session. Presentations should provide an overview of content presented in the Final Report. The best presentations will a) link to your readings and class discussions, b) contain lots of moments of clarity, surprise, etc. - i.e. what can you say now that you couldn't say on the 1st day of your internship? what did you learn?.
4/19 Wrap up Final Presentations	Each student will give an eight-minute presentation with at least ten slides (you are encouraged to use primarily images. How can you tell part of your story visually?), followed by a short Q&A session. Presentations should provide an overview of content presented in the Final Report. The best presentations will a) link to your readings and class discussions, b) contain lots of moments of clarity, surprise, etc. -

	i.e. what can you say now that you couldn't say on the 1st day of your internship? what did you learn?.
Assignments: Final Report	

ANNOTATIONS

Each annotation should be 250 words, provide a full citation (using an approved social science citation format) and address the following questions separately, but with full sentences/paragraphs:

- Where does the author work, what else has s/he written about, and what are her/his credentials?
- What is the main topic or argument of the text?
- Describe at least three ways that the main topic or argument is fleshed out.
- What three quotes capture the critical import of the text?
- Explain how the argument and evidence in the text relates to your internship experience.
- List and briefly comment (in about three sentences) on at least two additional references that this text led you to. Provide full references. These references should not duplicate reference for which there are full annotations. Plan on using these references and including them in the Bibliography of your final report (see below)

ENGAGEMENT PAPER PROMPTS

Both engagement papers should engage with topics and concepts covered in course reading and class discussion. Engagement papers are also prompts designed to get you to articulate your experience and to describe the organization you are interning with. The following sets of questions are designed to help you reflect upon and write about your internship experience, in relation to the readings and class discussion. Aim to address some of the following themes in both engagement assignments; **don't try to address all in one submission.** These papers should become material for your final report. 1500 – 2000 words.

Social and historical context - What is the mission of the agency for which you are interning? How is the organization funded? What can you learn about its history? Think about the physical "look" of the building and individual work spaces. How do your co-workers dress, individualize their spaces, and interact with each other and you? What do these elements tell you about the site you've chosen?

Your responsibilities -- What are your responsibilities? Who explained them to you? Did you ask any questions? If so, how were they answered? Are there questions you want to ask but haven't yet? How will you pursue answers to these questions? What is your supervisor's role in the agency? What are your supervisor's responsibilities? How have the people in this agency treated you and the work you do?

Your co-workers – What motivates people to work at this agency? What motivates you? Look thoroughly at the mix of possible motivations for engaging in public service work — personal fulfillment, personal ambition, compassion, religious or philosophical beliefs, economic theories, political values, or individualism. Which of these seems to enter into why people work for this particular agency? How do people in this agency cope with frustration, with problems that won't go away, or with "burnout"?

Interaction with community members -- What is this experience teaching you about working with other people? What in them, in you, and in the situation makes some interactions easier and others more difficult? Does anything surprise you (positively or negatively) about your interactions with community members, your fellow workers, or your supervisor?

– What role does the agency play in the community? What role does this agency play in our wider society? Have any issues of wide social significance come up for you in the course of your internship? How is this experience affecting your sense of yourself as a community member, professional, student, leader, or teacher? How diverse is this work site? (Diversity includes gender, age, race, class, educational level, sexual preference, disabilities, ethnicity, or religious background.) Do people's differences affect them at the internship site or in their interactions with those they serve? Is cultural diversity or difference ever a topic of discussion? How does diversity matter within the context of this agency's mission?

Organizational structure: What is the communications structure in this agency? Who talks to whom about what? Who has what kind of authority concerning what gets communicated: within the agency, to the public, to other agencies? How is the agency organized? Is work delegated along a clear chain of authority, or not? How would you describe work allocation? How is the agency funded? Who is responsible for making sure it stays financially solvent?

FINAL REPORT

A Final Report is due the last day of class. The written report with supporting annotations of articles and books read to further understanding of the internship organization, context and problems addressed should be ten pages fifteen annotations, following the template below. At least five annotations should be of peer reviewed scholarly articles. The final report must adhere to the guidelines specified in the final section of this syllabus.

Title

The title of your internship should be creative and informative. Here's an example
High Efficiency Stoves as a Pathway to Sustainability: A Report on an Internship with the Aprovecho Research Center

Abstract

A short abstract (approximately 250 words long) should describe the site of the internship, the reason it was of interest to you, what you learned about the organization you worked

with, and what you learned that is of more general significance to the sciences and humanities.

The report describes an internship at the Aprovecho Research Center (ARC) in Cottage Grove, Oregon during summer 2011 (100 hours, <http://www.aprovecho.org/lab/index.php>). I pursued this opportunity because of the ARC's long standing work to design, produce and disseminate high efficiency stoves in the developing world. I wanted to learn about the need for such technology, and about the design, production and dissemination challenges that the ARC has encountered over their nearly three decades of work. I learned that Aprovecho is one of a number of organizations trying to develop and disseminate high efficiency stoves, each with a different organizational/business model. A key general insight I gained was that distribution of appropriate technologies is as much of a challenge as design and production.

Collage

Your cover page should include your title, abstract and a collage of images illustrating your internship organization, and the problem/s that it works to address. Include at least four images, and provide a 2-4 sentence explanatory caption. Put references for images in your bibliography. An example is here:

<http://sustainablebydesign.wikispaces.com/High+EfficiencyWood%20Stovey+s>

Body

SECTION 1: Opening

* You should start the internship report with a “thick description” or story illustrating your internship experience. Tell the story, then explain what it suggests about your internship overall.

* Then provide a brief description of where you interned, what you did and for how long (much like in your abstract).

* Conclude this section with a brief overview of what will follow.

SECTION 2: The Intern Organization, Its Mission and Project

* In the first sub-section here, you should describe the founding of the organization, how it has developed since then, and its key (though perhaps evolving) mission. Include a brief description of the organization's location, explaining how this shapes the culture or workplace dynamics of the organization. Also describe the built environment in which the organization works. Does it promote collaboration? Is it comfortable, healthy and sustainable?

* The next subsection should describe how the organization is staffed and directed, funded and evaluated (perhaps internally, perhaps by the media or funders). Make sure to explain what kinds of expertise the organization employs. Does the organization employ people with accounting or media expertise? Does it employ natural scientists, or people capable of assessing and engaging with different kinds of stakeholders?

* A third sub-section should describe the project/s the organizations supports, concluding with a description of the project/s you were involved with. Make sure to describe all the stakeholders in the projects, and how they are involved and affected (positively or negatively).

* A fourth subsection should describe the challenges the organization has faced, its successes, and its failures – from your point of view, and from the point of view of people you worked with.

SECTION 3: The Broader Context

* In the first sub-section describe the social, cultural, political and economic conditions that produced the problem that the organization's work addresses.

* In the second sub-section, describe the social, cultural, political and economic dynamics that shape the way the organization operates, is funded, and is able to achieve its goals (or not).

* In both these sections (as well as others), you should draw information from the articles and books you have annotated.

SECTION 4: Social Science and Humanities Significance

In this section, describe the general knowledge you gained about the way organizations, and society more broadly, works (and fails!).

SECTION 5: Conclusion

End the report with a brief recap of what you learned –

- about the problem your internship organization addressed
- about the ways your internship organization works, succeeds and fails
- about organizations more generally
- about contemporary society, culture and politics
- about your own priorities and values

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX

Annotations and resource list