

SOC 525: Media and Images of Inequality (Winter 2009 Brayton)
Service Learning Option Handout
Worth 30% of your final mark (replaces Major Research Essay)

INTRODUCTION

As a participant in the Ryerson Faculty of Arts Service Learning (SL) program, you have chosen to engage in an exciting and challenging learning opportunity, which asks you to link the formal course content of SOC 525 with the teaching and learning practices at the Danforth Collegiate and Technical Institute. Our twinned class is with Mr. Marcos De Silva, who teaches *Grade 11M Introduction to Anthropology, Psychology and Sociology*.

As a Service Learning student in SOC 525, you have committed to a series of events this term that will allow you different opportunities to engage with high school students and share your knowledge of social inequality and mass media as well as developing your understanding of teaching practices. These include:

1. An orientation session
2. Danforth students visiting Ryerson and participating in a SOC 525 lecture
3. A group visit to Danforth Collegiate and Technical Institute.
4. Scheduled placements with Danforth Collegiate to work with Mr. De Silva.

For your service learning option, you will have two main areas of focus for your evaluation. The first is an annotated bibliography on the topic of teaching pedagogy and barriers to education (worth 10%). The second is self-reflective writing (20%) that will allow you the opportunity to critically and analytically reflect upon the experiences you have had with the Twinning Initiative and SOC 525.

A: Annotated Bibliography (10%)

You are expected to research the area of teaching practices, education pedagogy and real world barriers to education. You will create an annotated bibliography with 4 references. 2 references should be around the general practices of effective teaching and educational pedagogies. 2 should be more specific to real world barriers for accessing education (high school and university level). As an annotated bibliography, you must reference the materials, and then provide a small write-up about each reference resource. This should be in 2 paragraphs maximum, single spaced. The first will outlined the nature of the resource and what it conveys to the reader. The second is a commentary on the strengths, relevance and possible weakness of the material. This may be done in APA or MLA style. You do not need to utilize entire books – chapters from textbooks, articles from anthologies and scholarly journal articles are all acceptable. However, these must be academic scholarly references.

For more information on annotated bibliographies, please check the Writing centre handout entitled, “An Annotated Bibliography,” found online at:

<http://www.ryerson.ca/writingcentre/students/handouts/index.html>

As well as the University of Toronto’s web site on annotated bibliographies:

<http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/annotatebib.html>

DUE DATE: February 17th

B: Self-Reflective Writing Evaluation (20%)

You are expected to write 2 self reflective pieces throughout the term. You will also write a final self-reflective piece at the end of term that is slightly larger in scope and addresses the overall experiences you have had throughout the Service Learning High School Twinning Initiative with SOC 525. These self-reflection assignments should connect your personal experiences in Service Learning with what is learned in SOC 525, and linked to your annotated bibliography.

You are more than welcome to bring me your writing-in-progress for feedback and evaluation throughout the term – and I encourage you to do so!

WHAT IS SELF-REFLECTIVE WRITING?

At a basic level, self-reflective writing is an iterative process, which means there is an on-going process of reflection. Your initial thoughts as expressed in first two self-reflective assignment writing will probably change across the term as you develop your understanding theoretically and experientially. You will need to have evidence to support what you are discussing in your self-reflective assignments, which may include scholarly research done for the annotated bibliography, integration of academic concepts and sources from SOC 525 with experiential learning, and demonstrating a clear ability to communicate with your audience. Overall, these should be analytical in approach, not descriptive.

Throughout the process of self-reflection, you will want to address your own assumptions and articulate how service learning helps you unpack and understand your own assumptions and our commonly held societal beliefs and stereotypes surrounding learning, teaching and the diversity of learners.

SELF REFLECTIVE WRITING COMPONENT

On **Blackboard**, under **Assignments**, I have posted a 2 page PDF on what is critical self-reflective writing provided by the Service Learning Team. Please print this out and use. The file is called: ***SL: Student Critical and Self Reflective Writing***.

In addition, you will want print out and read the uploaded file called ***Thick Description***, which is part of self-reflective critical writing. This details how to be analytic in observation of social groups and the complexity of the social world while being interpretative of the social actions.

In general, the purpose of the mini-reflection is for you to critically examine your personal and group experiences, challenges, and observations. Your reflections will be kept in confidence -- I will not share your reflections with others unless you grant permission to do so.

FORMAT

The first two self-reflective writing assignments should be at least a minimum of two full page of writing. All assignments are to be typed, double spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins. You are certainly encouraged to write more (up to four typed pages),

The third and final self-reflective writing assignment should be at least four typed pages (up to six typed pages) and analytically bring together and address the significant themes, highlights, concepts, and experiences of service learning, educational design, teaching practices, and community bridging from across the term.

Self-Reflective Writing Assignments

You will be asked to complete 3 self-reflection assignments throughout the term:

- 1) Milestone moments: *Completion of the introductory session, lead up to scheduled group visit to Danforth Collegiate.* Given the themes and content of SOC 525, what challenges and opportunities do you foresee in connecting the course material to the Danforth students, and engaging them in the course material? How might you overcome these challenges or build on these opportunities? What assumptions or stereotypes do you possibly hold about the student learners at Danforth and the challenges they might face within education? What do you understand Service Learning to mean at this stage – how did the introductory session and the available Service Learning resources ?

DUE DATE: February 24th (worth 5%)

- 2) Milestone moments: *Completion of Danforth's visit to Ryerson, and our visit to Danforth Collegiate.* How does the character of Danforth Collegiate's physical and social environment influence – help or challenge – learning and teaching generally? Did the physical layout of the classroom or the school make you think about teaching and learning differently? How did this compare to the environment fostered by Ryerson University and SOC 525 teaching practices? What were your impressions of the Danforth students generally, and specifically with our twinned class, the challenges they face. How has this impression influenced your thinking about the Service Learning experience? Did your personal experiences with the students challenge/reinforce the beliefs you held about this body of learners?

DUE DATE: March 9th (worth 5%)

- 3) Milestone moments: *Completion of scheduled placements at Danforth Collegiate.* Having completed the placements at Danforth Collegiate, in what ways were you being personally challenged or inspired by this experience? What have you learned about your own awareness of the complex and dynamic challenges that students confront in high school? What do you understand now about how the social and economic status of students may exist as barriers to their learning experiences? What types of teaching practices were being used in the classroom? Were they effective or could the content have been presented in different ways to engage these students? Give an example of a positive teaching moment that you feel demonstrates the connection between teaching practices, barriers to education, and what we have learned about social inequality and the media in SOC 525.

DUE DATE: April 14th (worth 10%)

Rubric for Self-Reflective Assignments in Service Learning

Criteria	Evidence	Comments
<i>Description</i> of an observation or milestone moment (Minor component)	Sufficient information about the milestone moment and the surrounding contexts are provided for the reader to assess the quality of the analysis as “thick”.	
<i>Analysis</i> of the milestone moments (Major component)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to interpret and make meaning of the milestone moment is demonstrated. • The context and circumstances surrounding the milestone moment are taken into account in the interpretation/ meaning-making. • Aware of the influence of one’s perceptions and bias on interpretation is demonstrated. • Linkages are made between the milestone moments and course concepts from SOC 525. • Key questions about SOC 525 concepts in relation to the real world are raised and explored. 	
Course concepts and scholarly evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to use SOC 525 concepts to analyze the real world and identify solutions to barriers to education. • Analysis is undertaken within the disciplinary framework of SOC 525. • Integration of annotated bibliography references into self-reflective writing. 	
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity, logic, and flow of the writing. • Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and structure of sentences and paragraphs. • Proper use of citations. 	