

New York Institute of Technology
Interdisciplinary Studies, Manhattan

Instructor's Information

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Course information

Term: Fall 2009 Date of syllabus: August 2009

Course number and section: IDSP 310 Credits: 3

Course title: Interdisciplinary Studies 310: Foundations of Interdisciplinary Research

Meeting times: Thursday 02:20PM - 05:20PM

Building and room number: West 61st Street, Room 821

Prerequisites and co-requisites: None

Course description from catalog: Interdisciplinary Studies 310 introduces students to the historical context of interdisciplinary studies and the development of academic disciplines.

Course goals and objectives

This seminar in Fall 2009 will use the field of tourism studies as a gateway to interdisciplinary research and understanding. Students will read cutting-edge scholarship on tourism from a variety of disciplines; develop their own interdisciplinary projects about New York tourist sites; and participate in class field trips with the instructor.

By the end of the class students will have achieved the following learning outcomes:

1. The student will be able to discuss the nature of interdisciplinary research and the development of academic disciplines.
2. Students will be able to write clearly about subjects from a variety of disciplinary perspectives.
3. Students will understand the value and practices of interdisciplinary research.
4. Students will have an increased knowledge base in tourism studies.
5. Student will understand how to design and complete an interdisciplinary project.

Grading Formula

Reading Notes: 10%

In-Class Writing Assignments: 30%

Notes from Field Trips: 20%

Final Project (30-page paper) or Service Learning: 20%

Participation: 20%

Attendance Policy

All students must arrive within 5 minutes of the scheduled starting time of the class in order to be counted as present. This class meets only once a week so it is imperative that students attend all classes. Early departure from class (without permission) will also be counted as an unexcused absence. *Each unexcused absence will result in a loss of five points from the final grade.* All excused absences must conform to NYIT guidelines. Only documented illness is an acceptable reason for missing class (and all notes will be verified).

No cell phone use or laptop use during class. Please turn them off when you arrive. This prohibition includes incoming and outgoing calls or text messages. Use of a cell phone during class will reduce your grade.

Withdrawal Policy: This course adheres to all NYIT policies on withdrawals; see the current course catalog for details.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism policies

Each student enrolled in a course at NYIT agrees that, by taking such course, he or she consents to the submission of all required papers for textual similarity review to any commercial service engaged by NYIT to detect plagiarism. Each student also agrees that all papers submitted to any such service may be included as source documents in the service's database, solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of all or part of someone else's works (such as but not limited to writing, coding, programs, images, etc.) and offering it as one's own. Cheating is using false pretenses, tricks, devices, artifices or deception to obtain credit on an examination or in a college course. If a faculty member determines that a student has committed academic dishonesty by plagiarism, cheating or in any other manner, the faculty has the academic right to 1) fail the student for the paper, assignment, project and/or exam, and/or 2) fail the student for the course and/or 3) bring the student up on disciplinary charges, pursuant to Article VI, Academic Conduct Proceedings, of the Student Code of Conduct.

The complete Academic Integrity Policy may be found on various NYIT Webpages.

Participation

Participation is required in every class. Participation counts for **20% of the final grade** and *does not include attendance*. You must contribute at least once every class in order to receive any participation credit for that day. Effort counts in participation! *Bring your books to every class as we will be referring to them during class.*

Writing Assignments

All students will keep a journal. This journal should be a binder with removable pages that can be submitted for evaluation. In this journal, over the course of semester, students will collect the following documents:

1. Reading notes. Students will be expected to take full notes on weekly reading assignments. Notes will be graded by the professor and are worth **10% of the final grade**.
2. In-class writing assignments. Students will write the answers to a short series of questions at the beginning of each class. These assignments are worth **30% of the final grade**.
3. Notes from field trips. These notes will be taken while touring the city. These are worth **20% of the final grade**.
4. Final Self-Assessment describing what student has learned from course.
5. Final Project (30 page paper) and Presentation Materials worth **20% of the final grade**. This can be fulfilled by participating in Service Learning (see end of syllabus for full directions)

Students will submit their binders with all completed materials at the end of the semester. Failure to keep all previous notes and work will result in failure.

All students will prepare a final project. The project, an exercise in interdisciplinary analysis (including an annotated bibliography), will be described in more detail at the first meeting.

Required Textbooks (available at the NYIT Bookstore)

Andrew Holden, *Tourism Studies and the Social Sciences*

Nicholas Dagen Bloom, *Adventures in Mexico*

Course Schedule

September 10: Introduction and Service Learning

September 17: Historical Geography and Tourism

Reading: Holden, Chapter 1; Bloom, Introduction and Chapter 8

September 24: Sociology and Tourism

Reading: Holden, Chapter 2; Bloom, Chapter 9

October 1: Architecture and Tourism

Reading: *Architourism* (reading to be distributed in class)

October 8: Political Economy and Tourism

Reading: Holden, Chapter 5; Bloom, Chapter 3

October 15: Anthropology and Tourism

Reading: Holden, Chapter 6; Bloom, Chapter 6

October 22: Literature and Tourism

Reading: Bloom, Chapters 2 and 4

October 29: History and Tourism

Reading: Bloom, Chapter 1

“Open-Air Museums and the Tourist Gaze,” *Visual Culture and Tourism* (reading to be distributed in class)

November 5: Psychology and Tourism

Reading: Holden, Chapter 3; Bloom, Chapters 5 and 7

November 12: Arts and Tourism

Reading: “Artists as Drivers of the Tour Bus” and “North and South,” *Visual Culture and Tourism* (reading to be distributed in class)

November 19: Environmental Studies and Tourism

Reading: Holden, Chapter 7

December 3: Project Reports

December 10: Project Reports

Service-learning option for Interdisciplinary Studies 310: Foundations of Interdisciplinary

What is service-learning?

Service-learning is a teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. As a form of experiential education, service-learning is a triad partnership between student, college, and community partner with responsibilities of each clearly articulated in pre-defined learning objectives. Facilitated and guided practice, reflection and evaluation are all essential components of this transformative method of learning.

How is service-learning related to this course?

Students who participate in service-learning will complete assignments connected with their service-learning experience. Students who choose the service-learning option will complete an orientation, a reflection, 28 hours of active service in a community agency, and a journal. They will be exempt from writing a final 30 page research paper.

Service-learning will help students “to develop the informed judgment, imagination, and skills that lead to a greater capacity to contribute to the common good” (Honnet, E. P., & Poulsen, S. J. *Files: Corporation for National and Community Service*. Retrieved June 17, 2009, from Corporation for National and Community Service: www.nationalserviceresources.org/files/Principles-of-Good-Practice-for-Combining-Service-and-Learning.pdf, May 1989). Participation will help students better understand their roles as citizens and how to actively participate in their communities.

Why is service-learning being offered?

Service-learning is being offered because it satisfies NYIT core competencies and course learning objectives and seminar guidelines:

1. Active learning
2. Information literacy
3. Understanding of interdisciplinary research and the term discipline
4. Communication
5. Literacy
6. Critical/analytical thinking
7. Interdisciplinary mindset and skills
8. Ethical/moral and citizenship appreciation
9. Global perspective/world view
10. The process and nature of sciences and arts

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3 Part Service-Learning Project

Part One: Service

Service Hours: 30 hours required. Included in this is an orientation and reflection (1 hour each). This breaks down to approximately 2 hours of service each week in the remaining fourteen weeks. *Students must select a service-learning project by week two.*

Part Two: Service-Learning Assignments

Weekly in-class writing assignments connecting course material to service-learning placement:

Week 3: Historical Geography - Consider your service-learning organization and this week's readings regarding historical geography and tourism. What effect has history had on your organization's clients? Why does your organization exist? Have border changes or other historical events related to your organization's location influenced your organization's mission, structure, or operations? How?

Week 4: Sociology – To what degree do you see your organization as responsive to community concerns? To what degree is NYIT responsive to community concerns? To what degree are you responsive to community concerns?

Week 5: Architecture – Try to find the history of the building you are serving in or other building in the area of NYC you are working in. How have these buildings changed through the years to accommodate their different uses? Why did your organization choose this building? Did your organization make any changes to the building?

Week 6: Political Economy – Take a public policy issue of concern to you. How does it relate to your service-learning organization? Is the organization within which you serve organized to address this public policy issue? How? How can you contribute positively to this issue in your chosen major or fields of interest?

Week 7: Anthropology – What cultural history has been transmitted through history that impacts your organization? How has human behavior effected your organization? How do different groups in society view your organization and its mission? What societal groups do you belong to? How does your societal group view other societal groups? How do others' views of your group impact you or influence your behavior?

Week 8: Literature – What books, articles, or other written materials exist related to your organization's mission? How does your organization contribute to the body of literature related to its mission? What can you do to stay informed and keep others informed of written materials related to your organization and its mission?

Week 9: History – What is the history of your organization? What event, circumstance, or policy prompted the founders to create your organization? What historical problems that have been dealt with through policy, law, or non-profit organizations still exist today? How was your organization involved with reshaping history? What historical events are important to this organization? What history is your organization trying to preserve through its activities? What historical event is most significant to you? Are we still feeling the effects of that event? How will you contribute to either preserving this history or working to reshape it?

Week 10: Psychology – What kind of psychological impact do tourists visiting your organization or the locations associated with your organization experience? What does your organization do to create experiences that tourists want to have? What kind of psychological experiences do you seek when you are a tourist? How can you challenge people's judgments or preconceived thoughts about the organization you are serving at or your organization's mission?

Week 11: Arts – How does your organization use the arts to draw tourists to its location or other locations related to the organization's mission? How has your organization confirmed or challenged your thoughts on the

importance of art? What actions can you take to ensure that art is preserved and shared in your community or your organization's community?

Week 12: Environmental Studies –What effect does the environment have on your organization or its operations? How does your organization impact the environment? What does your organization do to decrease its negative effects on the environment? What can you do to decrease your negative effects on the environment?

Journaling

Keep a **weekly journal** to record service time and observations. This will help you successfully document learning and answer the **guided journal questions** outlined below. Use Ed Zlotkowski's "Three Part Journal Entry" approach for your weekly entry.

Each weekly journal entry must include the following sections from Dr. Edward Zlotkowski's "Three-Part Journal Entry":

- Description of what you did during your service-learning assignment this week. This section should be different each week. Pay attention to significant detail. This section should be objective.
- Your feelings, thought, judgments, and what you can learn about yourself and your assumptions from your experience. What made you uncomfortable? What surprised or challenged you? Did you stretch your comfort zone or hide within in? Discuss how your experience has influenced your understanding of your community partner and the public issues/social problems you are trying to deal with. Make sure you answer the questions: Why? What else? What next?
- Connect your experience with recent class readings and discussions. Do not write about what you did and do not focus on your reactions (as you did in the previous two sections). Demonstrate your skill in making connections between your service-learning experience and concepts in class to analyze and illuminate your experience. You should show your experience illustrates or challenges course topics.

The guided journal questions- These four questions will be answered in your journal. Notice that question one should be answered at the end of the first month, question two at the end of your second month, and so on. Your weekly entries will help you answer these end-of-month questions designed to help you reflect on your learning experience.

1. What are some of the community problems your service site seeks to address? What are the organization's mission, governance structure and funding base? In what ways is the organization with which you serve connected with government, foundation, and corporate policies and regulations? – **Due at the end of September**
2. Exploring ONE of the community problems (identified in question number one) through an interdisciplinary lens, identify how it is a result of, or is affected by tourism? Support your answer using a scholarly and reliable source. Be sure to cite properly. - **Due at the end of October**
3. Considering the definition of civic engagement and the excerpts from *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education* below, (edited by Thomas Ehrlich, published by Oryx Press, 2000), what is your role in addressing this problem? Do you have a responsibility to address this problem? Why or why not? Explain. – **Due at the end of November**

Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.

- *Preface, page vi*

A morally and civically responsible individual recognizes himself or herself as a member of a larger social fabric and therefore considers social problems to be at least partly his or her own; such an individual is willing to see the moral and civic dimensions of issues, to make and justify informed moral and civic judgments, and to take action when appropriate. -*Introduction, page xxvi*

4. How might this problem be solved? Interview community members served by the organization and community partner employees or volunteers. Research and cite a possible solution proposed by a reliable source and then argue your own solution. – **Due at the end of the semester (Dec.)**

Part Three: The Presentation

Students will deliver a 5-10 minute in-class presentation using some creative element (PowerPoint, video, filmed interview, structured dialogue, pictures, etc.) to share documented learning. Refer to your weekly 3-part journal entries in preparing for your presentation. The objective is to impart your learning and show the connections you've made between your service experience and class content and goals.