

University of Massachusetts- Boston
Department of Women's Studies
WOST 490: Internship in Women's Studies
Spring 2009
T/Th 12:30-1:45
W-1-51

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 11:00-12:00 and by appointment
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****A NOTE RE: EMAIL: While I will always do my best to respond to your email as swiftly as possible, I do reserve the right to set some limits. Thus, while I may respond to your email at any time, I will not *guarantee* a response before 24 hours after the receipt of your message and only during the work week between the hours of 9 AM and 5 PM. Please plan accordingly.

About this seminar:

This seminar has been designed to help students integrate theory and practice in the context of a supervised field placement with a feminist political or cultural organization, an agency offering services to women and/or children, or a workplace in which you have a career interest.

Programmatic Learning Goals for Internship Seminar and Placement

Through locating a placement site, negotiating the responsibilities of your position, seeking supervisory support, identifying and solving problems that come up for you in the workplace in order to meet the requirements of the agency, you will develop self-directed learning skills such as:

- * intellectual flexibility and emotional resilience;
- * ability to collect and use appropriate information for problem solving;
- * critical thinking skills.

Through your internship, you will observe first hand some of the challenges of such organizations, and be better able to:

- * understand how a particular organization or institution does and does not contribute to social change and/or feminist visions for social justice;
- * learn to temper your ideals about working for social change with knowledge of the realities of day-to-day organizational processes and constraints;
- * decide whether you might want to work in this kind of workplace or in one of the social service professions or non-profit sector in the future.

Through reading, discussion, and reflective writing about your internship experience in the seminar, you will:

- * understand how your own experience at your placement relates to predictable patterns of personal growth and development through service learning;
- * gain in self-awareness and self-confidence;
- * clarify your ideas about career goals as a Women's Studies major.

Course Requirements

The Internship Placement (491) is graded on a Pass/Fail basis. (Note: Even if you do not feel completely successful in this placement, your conscientious effort to meet the agency's expectations and do a good job, along with your honest reflections and self-assessment, will ensure that you receive a Pass for the internship placement.)

The Internship Seminar (490) is an informal and cooperative small group meeting designed to discuss placement experiences as well as topics and readings related to feminist service learning experience. Your grade will be based on both required writing and participation in our meetings. Your own self-assessment exercises will help guide me as I determine your final grade for the seminar. Your Seminar grade will be based on:

A. Attendance and participation (20%) in engaged and thoughtful discussion is required at all scheduled meetings. Please notify me by email if an emergency prevents you from attending class. At the end of the term, I will give you a chance to assess yourself in this area and I will consult this self-assessment when I determine your grade.

B. Required Writing Assignments (60%):

1. Three free writing assignments, including goal-setting and self-assessment exercises. Each short essay is worth 10 % of your course grade [total=30%]
2. The Internship Log and Journal is due approximately every two weeks biweekly, beginning Feb. 10. The Log and Journal has two parts. To state the obvious, they are: 1) Log and 2) Journal.

The log includes pin point (a.k.a., bullet point) descriptions of your work at your internship site and approximately how much time you are spending on each task, project, etc. These logs are brief and descriptive: What did you do while on the job? Who did you interact with? (up to 1 page per week). The log is DESCRIPTIVE.

The journal is a place for you to discuss your thoughts and feelings about how the work is going, including any problems you may be noticing. Also, share your thinking about how you are progressing toward your learning goals for the internship. When we are scheduled to discuss readings, comment on what you find most interesting or noteworthy in the readings. And, whenever possible, make connections between past and present readings, class discussions, and your internship experiences. (up to 3 pages per week) The journal is EVALUATIVE.

I will return the logs/journals to you at our scheduled meetings and then for a final time at the end of the term. Your grade at the end of the semester for the logs and journals will be based on how conscientiously you accomplish these assignments. [total=30%]

C. Final Project (20%):

This is a research-based written report (5-10 pages) that has some value to your agency or organization in their future work. Begin by interviewing your supervisor or someone else at the agency about an information need that they have. Once you identify the need, you will then design and complete a small-

scale research project, gathering and assembling this information for them, and presenting it in a practical, useful way. We'll discuss this more during the semester.

NOTE: At the end of the term, you will be expected to, during a class session, briefly discuss your final project AND offer an informal evaluation of your internship experience.

Course Policies

A) Disability Accommodations

Curriculum modifications and adaptations will be made for students with documented disabilities. Students may obtain adaptation recommendations from the Lillian Semper Ross Center for Disability Services, located in Campus Center, 2nd floor, Room 2010 (617-287-7430) and (TTY 617-287-7436). If you have a disability and require accommodation, please notify me **by the end of ADD/DROP**, and seek assistance from the Ross Center.

B) Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Below is an excerpt from “University Policy on Academic Standards, Cheating, and Plagiarism,” which can be found in the *Undergraduate Programs Catalogue for 2005-2007* (p. 352).

Students are expected to conform to all regulations of the university, of the college in which they are enrolled, and of the classes in which they are registered. It is further expected that all examinations, tests, written papers or other assignments completed as a part of academic programs are the product of the student’s own work and effort.

*This means that students may not solicit or use unauthorized material or assistance for their own benefit and may not offer or give such assistance to another student. **Every written report or similar class assignment must indicate fully the sources from which the information used is obtained, and any verbatim quotations or paraphrases must be clearly indicated as such and properly credited to the source from which they were extracted or adapted.*** [emphasis added]

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty violate the university’s Code of Student Conduct and are strictly prohibited. I will pursue cases of suspected plagiarism and other violations of academic dishonesty in accordance with university policy. Therefore, I strongly urge you to familiarize yourself with 1) the “University Statement on Plagiarism and the Documentation of Written Work” (351-352) and 2) the section on “Student Rights and Responsibilities” (pp. 355-362) in the *Undergraduate Programs Catalogue for 2005-2007*. In particular, please note the section on “Academic Honesty,” subsection VI, which includes definitions of violations, procedures to be followed when violations are suspected, and sanctions that can be imposed, including failing the course and expulsion from the university (pp. 356-357).

C) Late Work

I will not accept your log/journal or essays by email, except in certain pre-arranged situations, and will not accept late papers—same goes for your final project. In short, everything must be turned in on time if you want credit for your work (and of course you do).

D) Grades of Incomplete

In accordance with university policy, a grade of Incomplete at the end of the semester will only be considered for a student who fails to turn in the final paper because of serious illness, etc. To be considered for an Incomplete, the student must have completed all other work for the course and must be passing the course, not including the final paper. To receive an Incomplete, the student must sign an agreement with the professor specifying the date by which the final paper will be completed.

E) Doing Discussions

Since discussion will be the backbone of this course, it is imperative that we agree to some ground rules to ensure that our time together is productive, efficient, and above all, challenging yet safe. **Remaining in this class means that you are willing to abide by these ground rules, so please consider them carefully and be certain you are comfortable with them.** I will hold all us—and that includes me—to these rules. . The ground rules (written by Professor Lynn Weber) are:

1. Acknowledge that prejudice and discrimination based on gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, religious tradition, physical appearance and ability does exist.
2. Acknowledge that all of us have learned misinformation about our own group and about members of other groups, whether we belong to a majority or minority group.
3. Agree not to blame ourselves or others for the misinformation we have learned in the past, but accept responsibility for not repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
4. Assume that people--both those we study and those in this class--do the best they can.
5. Never demean, devalue, or in any way "put down" people for their experiences, backgrounds, or statements. This does not mean that you can't disagree, only that when you disagree, you must do so respectfully.

Course Schedule

- Jan. 27 Introductory meeting. Discuss goals of internship placement and seminar, assignments, and format of seminar meetings. Placement problems?
- Jan. 29 *Topics:* Discussion of internship placements: short initial self-assessment, getting started on-site, and "dealing with your supervisor."
Read: Excerpts from *Internship Success: Real-World, Step-by-Step Advice on Getting the Most Out of Internships* by Marianne Ehrlich Green (1997)
- Feb. 3 *Topic:* Setting practical goals for Women's Studies service learning.
Read: "A Student Guide to Field Learning Experiences" and "Inventory of Knowledge, Skill, and Attitude Objectives."
- Feb 5 NO CLASS
- Feb. 10 *Log/Journal due.*
Topic: Discussion of log/journals
Come to class prepared to reflect on your log/journal—not only the contents but also the *process* of keeping this ongoing record and engaging in active reflection-while-doing
- Feb. 12 *DUE: Essay 1:* After reading through the "Inventory of . . . Objectives," (reading assigned for Feb 3) choose two specific learning objectives from each of the three areas (knowledge, skill, and attitude). Write a 2-3-page essay reflecting on your personal hopes for what you will learn in the placement experience. Explain *why* you've selected the specific learning objectives from each category of the Inventory

Come to class prepared to discuss your essay.
- Feb 17 *Topic:* Graduation, Work, and Career Goals.
Read: Nicholas Lore, *The Pathfinder*, ch. 16, "Goals and Projects."
Log/Journal ret'd
- Feb 19 *Topic:* Career Goals, cont'd

Come to class prepared to share a rough list of your life goals, including, but not limited to your career goals, using some of Lore's suggestions (reading assigned for Feb 17) to get you started. As a group, we'll discuss this process of sorting out personal goals based on our values, individual personalities, family histories, etc. Bring your list of goals to class with you (you will not turn this in to me)

- Feb 24 *Topic:* Feminist Organizations and Feminist Movements
Read: Jane Mansbridge, "What is the Feminist Movement?"
- Feb 26 *Log/Journal Due*
Topic: Feminist Organizations and Feminist Movements
Read: Barbara Brehm, "Knowledge Is Power: *Our Bodies, Ourselves* and the Boston Women's Health Book Collective"
- March 3 *Log/Journal Ret'd*
Topic: Stages of Growth in Feminist Organizations.
Read: Stephanie Riger, "Challenges of Success: Stages of Growth in Feminist Organizations"
- March 5 *Topic:* Stages of Growth in Feminist Organizations, Cont'd
Read: Amy Farrell, "'Like a Tarantula on a Banana Boat': *Ms.*, 1972-89
CB will hand out letter for mid-semester conversation with supervisor
- March 10 In-class mid term course evaluation and discussion
- March 12 Final Project brainstorming. Bring your ideas for your Final Project to discuss with the group.
- March 17 & 19 SPRING BREAK. NO CLASSES
- March 24 NO CLASS but Essay 2 due: Look back at the goal setting exercise you wrote earlier in the semester, and review your logs and journals to date. Think also about your mid-semester conversation with your supervisor. Then write a 2-3-page essay assessing your own success in meeting your goals through the work you have done so far. If you find your goals have changed, what are your new goals for the remaining weeks of the semester?
Please submit this assignment over email (as an MS word attachment)
- March 26 NO CLASS
- March 31 *Log/Journal Due*
Come prepared to report on the status of your internship—what's going well? What's not? What can be done to make the most of the remaining weeks at your site?
- April 2 *Topic:* Organizational development and management issues; dealing with job-related stress and balancing workloads and other responsibilities.
Read: Visit the website of Management Assistance Group (MAG):
<www.managementassistance.org>. Click on the link "MAG's Organizational

Development Tools” on the left side of their homepage and read “Organizational Life Cycles: Revisited,” by Susan Gross, Karl Mathiasen and Nancy Franco (1998)

- April 7 *Topic:* Organizational Development and Management Issues, con'td
Read: “Managing People: The Most Common Pitfalls” by Susan Gross (1988).
- April 9 *Log/Journal Ret'd*
Topic: Stress on the Job
Read: “Women’s Ways of Coping with Employment Stress: A Feminist Contextual Analysis,” by Bonita C. Long and Robin S. Cox (ch. 6 in Healey Library on-line book *Coping, Health and Organizations*, edited by Philip Dewe, Michael Leiter, & Tom Cox (2000).
- April 14 Workshop with Shannon Seaver-Rojas of the UMB Career Services Center (Topic TBA)
- April 16 Essay 3 due: Write a 2-3-page essay about your own previous positive and negative experiences working in a particular organization or business. What were your best learning experiences on the job? What frustrations or problems have you had, and how do you explain why these happened? What do you see as your own strengths and weaknesses as a working member of an organization? So far, how are your strengths and weaknesses evident in your work at the internship placement? The point of this essay is to show connections and departures between your past work experiences and your current internship placement. Can you detect patterns? Have you grown? What is different now and what is the same?
- Come to class prepared to discuss this essay.
- April 21 Log/Journal due.
- April 23 *Topics:* Fundraising
Read: Kim Klein, excerpts from *Fundraising for the Long Haul*.
- April 28 *Log/Journal ret'd*
Topic: TBA
- April 30 Presentations
Letter from CB to supervisors and final self-assessment exercise handed out.
- May 5 Presentations
- May 7 Presentations
- May 12 Wrap Up Discussion
Log/Journal due for the final time

Final Projects (5-10 pages) due in my mailbox no later than Tuesday, May 19, 2008, at 5:00pm.