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Center for the Advancement
of Service-Learning Excellence

Mississippi State University

Service-Learning Course Designation Form

Existing Courses. Faculty need to submit this form and the accompanying course syllabus to the Center for the Advancement of Service-Learning Excellence (CASLE) at courses@servicelearning.msstate.edu. Please direct questions to Dr. April Heiselt, Director of the Center for Service-Learning Excellence at 662-325-7919 or april@ext.msstate.edu. Visit the CASLE website at <http://servicelearning.msstate.edu/> for further information and sample forms.

New Courses. Faculty must submit this form in conjunction with the required UCCC (University Committee on Courses and Curricula) Cover Sheet (see <http://www.uccc.msstate.edu/corecoversheet08.pdf>) and proposal (http://www.uccc.msstate.edu/GuideandFormat_2012.pdf), and appropriate course syllabus to the Center for the Advancement of Service-Learning Excellence (CASLE) at courses@servicelearning.msstate.edu.

Contact Information

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College: Arts and Sciences

Department/Unit: History

Course Information

New Course

Existing Course

Proposed Course Number: 3343 (course proposal submitted and under review)

Existing Course Number: 4990

Course Title: Delta History Service and Experiential Spring Break

Community Partner(s): Approximately 8-10 (see responses)

1. Describe how the engagement of your students will be of value to the community partner(s), their stakeholders, and in meeting community needs. How are these needs identified? Is the service-learning project being done "to" the partner (i.e. the partner is waiting for the class to come and meet their needs) or "in conjunction with" (i.e. reviewing the community partner's assets and working in conjunction with the partner to develop the service-learning project)? How is this addressed?

The course allows students to work directly with a variety of community partners, from grassroots educational initiatives to sustainable agriculture and wellness programs. During the course of the Spring Break trip, students engage in structured service-learning activities that include not only the opportunity to "do work" but also to learn from and engage in dialogue with representatives of the various agencies.

Every service-learning project is collaboratively planned in advance by each Community Partner (CP) and the Office of Student Leadership and Community Engagement (SLCE) in order to maximize the interactive and instructive components of the experience. Beginning in November the preceding year, SLCE meets each CP to collaboratively reflect and evaluate previous service experiences, assess existing CP's assets and needs, and define CP-specific service objectives. This extensive preparatory process ensures that the service-learning projects 1) meet the needs and desires of the CP and 2) reinforces or expands what students have learned during the class lectures and learning activities.

The service-learning planning information is captured and refined through drafts of a CP Service Agreement that is finalized two to four weeks prior to the spring trip. During this final meeting the CP and SLCE will discuss critical components to include during the service engagement, including: 1) a CP-led Site Orientation: welcome and introductions, CP history and mission, linkage between CP mission and Delta's history and contemporary life (15 minutes - 2 hours); 2) service work (3 - 5 hours); 3) CP-led reflection on value of service completed and its significance to the CP and the Delta (15 - 30 minutes).

After the spring trip, the dialogue continues when weekly class meetings consist of presentations and discussions with representatives of regional and statewide agencies that engage similar issues. Additionally, each CP completes a CP-satisfaction survey to capture their feedback; understand how the service-learning project has benefited the CP, its stakeholders, and the Delta; plan for needed program revisions and service-learning projects for the following year.

2. Give a description of the ways in which the service experience will be integrated with the course content and support the academic focus of the course. In other words, describe the specific service-learning activities included in your course. What will the students "do" for their service-learning? Who will be your community partner(s)?

The course is structured to integrate the academic and service components of the Delta ASB initiative. HI 4990 is broken into three sections-Pre-Trip, Trip, and Post-Trip. The focus of the first section is primarily historical and academic, providing an overview of the Delta's history and the major themes, problems, and issues facing the region. The Trip component blends an ongoing academic focus with experiential learning and service experiences. The post-trip emphasizes the application of the first two sections of the course to contemporary issues and public policy challenges. Through a series forums and presentations with nonprofit founders, community activists, and government agencies, students can dig deeper into the issues that they have not only studied and discussed in class but observed firsthand during Spring Break.

Issues and themes that are prominent during the class and integrated into the service experience include: environment-human relations, economics and civics of Delta communities; food security and systems, education, poverty, youth development, and human capital. Students will work with about eight different community partners that host a total of about 15 service experiences.

The students' service-learning experiences are determined by the needs expressed by CP and include: designing, constructing, and planting of raised bed gardens at elementary schools and the library; cleaning and painting in educational and municipal facilities; constructing/painting signage for CP's and municipalities; installing landscape plants at educational and municipal facilities; cleaning and organizing sustainable poultry farm; demolishing and removing abandon buildings; weeding and harvesting produce at sustainable farms; constructing and filling composting bins; constructing and maintaining hoop-houses (greenhouses), cleaning debris from river, streams, and landscape; and constructing storage racks.

3. Please indicate the number of hours of direct service, advocacy work, or project-based service-learning that will be required of each student in the course.

25

4. List the kinds of critical thinking, structured reflection strategies (i.e. writing, assignments, discussions, presentations, or journals) that you will require of your students.


In addition to the survey evaluation process described below (Question 5), the students complete structured written reflections on a weekly basis. During the trip, students complete structured written reflections in a daily journal, which they use to complete a formal paper assignment immediately after they return to campus. During class meetings and the trip itself, students participate in structured group discussions, collaborative presentations, and dialogues with a variety of experts and practitioners. The course also has an intensive focus on digital media, and students will have an opportunity to record and disseminate their reflections and presentations via the course website and a Delta ASB documentary film.

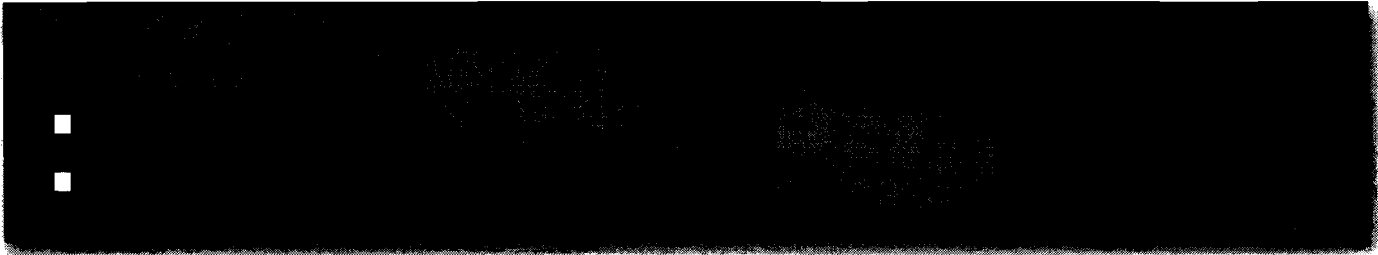
5. While service is an integral part of the course, academic credit is given for demonstrated learning. With this in mind, how do you propose to assess the service-learning component of the course in relation to both the academic and service expectations (i.e. what will be your formative and summative evaluation pieces)?
Four times—at the beginning of the course, immediately prior to the trip, immediately after the trip, and at the end of the course, students complete a thorough survey that helps the instructor of record and the SLCE staff assess the student's knowledge of the Delta, their articulation of the impact of service-learning, and their stake in the region's ongoing history. In addition, students are required to design a final research project based on a pressing public policy problem or social issue. This assignment evaluates the course's integrated themes of historical knowledge, service-learning, and their applicability to addressing contemporary problems.

By checking the boxes below, you indicate that you have read and reviewed the following requirements.

- My students will receive a service-learning orientation conducted either by the Center for the Advancement of Service-Learning Excellence (CASLE) staff or myself.
- My students will be asked to complete the MSU Service-Learning Student Course Evaluation.
- I will report end of semester data to the Center for the Advancement of Service-Learning Excellence (CASLE).
- My course syllabus is attached to this form.

Faculty Member Signature:  Date: 8/16/13

Department Chair Signature:  Date: 8/16/13



HI 4990 – Special Topics in History
Delta History Service and Experiential Spring Break
Mondays, 4:00pm-5:15pm, South Hall 407

HI 4990 is a companion course for Mississippi State University's 2014 Alternative Spring Break program. In addition to participating in the Spring Break service-learning trip to the Mississippi Delta, students must participate in the weekly class in order to receive course credit. The purpose of the in-class component of this semester-long experience is to provide students with an introduction to historical and contemporary issues facing the Mississippi Delta region. Dr. Ward, who has lived, worked, and conducted research in the Delta, will facilitate the weekly classes before and after the Spring Break trip. In addition, students will hear from guest speakers, including the author of the course's featured book, who will provide insight into the Delta's ongoing history.

REQUIRED READINGS

Chris Myers Asch. *The Senator and the Sharecropper: The Freedom Struggles of James O. Eastland and Fannie Lou Hamer* (UNC Press, 2011)
James C. Cobb. *The Most Southern Place on Earth: The Mississippi Delta and the Roots of Regional Identity* (Oxford University Press, 1994)

ASSIGNMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

Regular attendance, class participation, and timely completion of assignments are all essential for success in this course. Students should complete all weekly reading assignments by class on Monday and bring those assigned readings to class each week. Students who miss class regularly and neglect their reading assignments should expect their grade to reflect their lack of engagement. And while participating in the Spring Break trip is mandatory for passing credit in the course, going on the trip does not guarantee a passing grade.

There will be four formal writing assignments due throughout the semester. For the first two short papers, each student will complete a 4-page essay that responds to questions and themes covered in the reading and class discussions. Detailed instructions for both essays will be provided in class before the due date.

The third short paper will be due after the Alternative Spring Break trip to the Delta. In this 4-page essay, students will discuss the link between their service-learning experiences in the Delta and the historical issues discussed during the first half of the course. Written reflections completed during the trip itself—which will count towards the course participation grade—will serve as a guide for this assignment. As with the previous two short essays, detailed instructions for the third essay will be provided in class well in advance of the due date.

For the term paper, each student will investigate a contemporary problem facing the Mississippi Delta and connect that particular dilemma to the region's history. This final project, which

should result in a paper of 8-10 pages, should incorporate sources from on-campus libraries and archives. Students will develop their term paper in consultation with Dr. Ward and library

GRADING BREAKDOWN

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|---------------|-----|------------------------------|-----|
| Short Paper 1 | 15% | Term Paper | 25% |
| Short Paper 2 | 15% | Written Reflections | 30% |
| Short Paper 3 | 15% | * 15% weekly and 15% on trip | |

GRADING SCALE

A 100-90.0 B 89.9-80.0 C 79.9-70.0 D 69.9-60.0 F 59.9 and below

HONOR CODE

Mississippi State University has an approved Honor Code that applies to all students. It reads: ***“As a Mississippi State University student I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.”***

Cheating or plagiarism of any kind will result in an automatic F on the assignment as well as disciplinary action by the university. For further information regarding MSU’s Honor Code and penalties for Honor Code violations, please visit: <http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/1207A.html>

SPECIAL NEEDS AND ACCOMODATIONS

Course professors will make any and all accommodations necessary to assist students with special needs. You must first acquire appropriate verification from Student Support Services detailing any special accommodations required. Contact SSS at 01 Montgomery Hall, 662-325-3335.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 – COURSE INTRODUCTION

WEEK 2 – THE PLANTATION FRONTIER

- Readings: Cobb, *Most Southern Place on Earth*, pp. 1-46 (chp. 1-2)

WEEK 3 – CREATING A COTTON KINGDOM

- Readings: Cobb, *Most Southern Place on Earth*, pp. 47-124 (chp. 3-5)

WEEK 4 – COTTON AND CULTURE

- Readings: Cobb, *Most Southern Place on Earth*, pp. 125-183, 277-305 (chp. 6-7, 12)

- Due: Short Paper 1

WEEK 5 – AT THE CROSSROADS

- Readings: Asch, *Senator and Sharecropper*, pp. 1-98 (prologue, chp. 1-3)
Cobb, *Most Southern Place on Earth*, pp. 184-208 (chp. 8)

WEEK 6 – RIGHTS AND RESISTANCE

- Readings: Asch, *Senator and Sharecropper*, pp. 99-166 (chp. 4-5)
Cobb, *Most Southern Place on Earth*, pp. 209-229 (chp. 9)

WEEK 7 – FREEDOM STRUGGLES

- Readings: Asch, *Senator and Sharecropper*, pp. 167-220 (chp. 6-7)

WEEK 8 – POWER AND POVERTY

- Readings: Asch, *Senator and Sharecropper*, pp. 221-298 (chp. 8-10)
- Due: Short Paper II

SPRING BREAK

- Refer to Spring Break Trip manual for itinerary and guidelines

WEEK 9 – THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Guest: Dr. Richard Coupe, U.S. Geological Survey
- Readings: TBA (MyCourses)
- Due: Short Paper III

WEEK 10 - EDUCATION AND PUBLIC POLICY

- Guest: Sanford Johnson, Mississippi First
- Readings: TBA (MyCourses)

WEEK 11 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LABOR

- Guests: Karen Senaga, Mississippi State University
- Readings: TBA (MyCourses)

WEEK 12 - FEATURED AUTHOR VISIT

- Guest: Dr. Chris Myers Asch, author, *The Senator and the Sharecropper*
- Readings: TBA (MyCourses)

WEEK 13 – LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Guest: Greg Claus, City of Greenville
- Readings: TBA (MyCourses)

WEEK 14 – WRAP-UP / DISCUSS TERM PAPER

- Readings: TBA (MyCourses)

TERM PAPER DUE