COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
AAAS 480S / ENG 450P
4 Credits
Gen Ed: J (C & O)

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In this exquisitely connected world, it’s never a question of “critical mass.”
It’s always about critical connections.
Grace Lee Boggs, American philosopher, writer, activist

Community Engagement cultivates and supports students with a passion for service and self-development. Drawing on principles of “critical service learning” and an ethos of social justice, this is a course for students who recognize value in the narrowing the gap between the “academy” and the “community,” between the university and the people it serves. Students will develop intensive research projects that address aspects, histories, or needs of immigrant communities that have been marginalized or missing in public discourse. Projects can take on a range of intellectual and creative forms and are developed in consultation and collaboration with members of campus and local communities. Class sessions frequently involve interviews/dialogues with scholars, filmmakers, authors, teachers, librarians, historians, community leaders and advocates. Some sessions involve site visits to local libraries, archives, agencies, or schools. This class will be especially enriched by content or sample cases related to Asian and Asian American communities. The course ends with student-led projects that 1) are presented at a public event that includes both campus and community audiences 2) educate the public about some aspect of immigrant communities and their needs 3) include reflection and insight into the process of researching the project 4) can be published or accessed by the academic body and general public via a database, journal, or website. Projects that are sustainable and can be utilized in the public domain are strongly encouraged.

Course Objectives:

--Research Project: Produce a semester-long research-intensive project that will be presented to both campus and community audiences. The project should be portable and publicly accessible in the long term, web-based or web-friendly, and could be used in the public domain for educational purposes. This work entails
learning how to access and use resources for research, different approaches and methods for research, and ways to effectively present research. This work also entails productively learning about and advocating for issues in immigrant and diverse communities in an interactive and collaborative environment.

-- Oral proficiency: Learn to critically listen, ask productive questions, thoughtfully respond, and effectively critique presentations. Learn to articulate ideas clearly and establish rapport with audiences. Finish the course with 1) Proficiency in oral presentations 2) Ability to improve oral presentations in response to critiques 3) Skill in listening to and critiquing oral presentations.

-- Writing: Finish the course by understanding course content through formal academic writing; constructing effective prose that demonstrates critical thinking and advances sound conclusions; demonstrating the ability to revise and improve their writing in both form and content.

-- Critical reflection and thinking: Practice self-reflexive critical thinking and writing about identity, the self, and one’s social location in relation to others. Put this into practice with the completion of reflective/reflexive writing assignments and guided participation in this course.

**Week 1 The Democratic Classroom**

Overview of Themes and Syllabus

In Class Exercise: “Personal Inventory” – An informal description of strengths, skills, cultural knowledge, related courses (guided by questions provided by the professor, 1 page)

Directed Reading and Discussion:


Class Visit: To Center for Community Engagement

Homework:
Reading Assignment

3) "The Power of Collective Expression: College Students and Immigrant Women" by Kathleen Yep (Pitzer) in *Pitzer Collection of Engaged Faculty* (2014) (pp. 39-44)

4) “Race Matters in Civic Engagement” by Jean Wu (Tufts) in *Asian American Studies Now* (Rutgers UP, 2010) (especially pp: 584-625)

Writing Assignments Due Next Week:

Baseline Writing: “Personal Expectations”: 1) A self-introduction 2) Preliminary ideas of what I expect to contribute to this course (2 pages single-spaced)

Response Assignment: Reflect upon articles (2), (3), and (4). What appears to be the role of students in these articles? Select one or two quotes from each article to provide your answer. What are your thoughts or reactions? Why? (3 pages single-spaced)


**Week 2 Race, Gender, and Civic Engagement**


Directed Viewing and Discussion:


Professor Parag Khandhar, University of Baltimore Law Clinic, on gentrification and immigrant communities [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJmm30JicX8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJmm30JicX8) (Parag has come to BU to visit and was an early supporter and mentor for CEP students. He was a Public Service Scholar at Washington College of Law and an attorney at the Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center in Washington DC, before joining U Baltimore. He also spent ten years in advocacy work in New York City, where he was director of policy and planning for the umbrella organization
Asian American Federation of New York, where he spearheaded post 9/11 relief and advocacy for affected communities of NYC.)

Homework:
Reading Assignment
“From Nothing, a Consciousness” Chapter One of Asian American Dreams by Helen Zia (Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2000)

“Beyond Racial Identity Politics: Toward a Liberation Theory for Multicultural Democracy” by Manning Marable (Columbia) Beyond Black and White, Rev. ed. (Verso, 2009) (pp.185-202)

Film Assignment
American Revolutionary: The Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs (Documentary Film, 2007).

Response Assignment Due Next Week
Grace Lee Boggs emphasizes creativity and consciousness, and she talks about social change as “small revolutions.” What does she mean by “small” and “local”? How does one effect social change, according to Grace Lee Boggs? What are the strengths but also weaknesses of this activist and thinker? Provide your thoughts and reflections on Grace Lee Boggs, her philosophy, and her life journey (2 pages single spaced).

Writing Assignment Due Next Week:
In “From Nothing, a Consciousness,” Helen Zia introduces the term “MIH: Missing in History.” Why is MIH a critical concept for youth consciousness and democratic engagement? (2 pages single-spaced)

Research Assignment Due Next Week:
Select one of the community sites that were discussed or listed in class. Conduct preliminary background research on this community organization or institution, using a guided questionnaire that will be generated in class. Prepare questions for your visits (4 pages, questionnaire)

[Recommended but not required viewing:
Bill Moyers Journal: Interview with Grace Lee Boggs (PBS, 2007)
Video: http://vimeo.com/33217407

“What Does It Mean to Be Asian American?” Asia Society 2007]
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ykawff5_XTc
Week 3 & 4 Bridging Dialogues and Launching Research

Site visits for dialogues at community organizations and institutions. Interviews with practitioners, scholars, artists, local historians, educators, librarians, etc. who are working on outreach, literacy, education, advocacy, community research. In past, visits included Broome County Public Library, American Civic Center, African Road Elementary, among others, and Museum of Chinese in America (NYC), among others. Plus, guest visitors to class, starting this week but also during the remainder of the semester.

Past dialogues have included:

Lisa Wise, Director of the Broome County Public Library
Gerald Smith, Broome County Historian
Heather Bogart, Teacher, African Road Elementary
Andrew Baranowski, American Civic Association
Sera Chung, Associate for Gender and Racial Justice, Presbyterian Church USA (Headquarters)
Emily Burns, AmeriCorps-FEMA Corps
Diane Wong, PhD Program, Department of Government, Cornell
Amy Somchanhmavong, Associate Director, Service-Learning, Cornell University
Peter Van Do, Director of Pan Asian American Community House, U. Pennsylvania
Parag Khandhar, U. Baltimore Law Clinic, Advocacy in Immigrant Communities
Sylvia Wong Lewis, Documentary Filmmaker, Harlem
Johnny Thach, Program Manager at Project FIND (NYC agency for the elderly poor)
Christie Zwahlen, Assistant Director, BU Center for Civic Engagement
Ed Shephard, BU Librarian for History
David Vose, BU Librarian for Government, Census, NY State, Documents
Ben Andrus, BU Librarian for Sociology, Education, Student Affairs
Professor Dina Maramba, CCPA
Professor Cynthia Marasigan, DAAAS
Audie Chang, BU Alumni Sponsor for Community Engagement
And many others...

Sites and visitors will be announced in class.

Homework
Reading Assignment: Youth Consciousness and Participation
Selected Chapters by Zukin (Rutgers), Keeler (Marquette) and Andolina (DePaul) in A New Engagement?: Political Participation, Civic Life, and the Changing American Citizen (Oxford UP 2006)
Research Assignment Due By End of Week 4: Propose 2-3 possible project ideas and obtain feedback from the class. Use the format and guidelines provided by the professor. Collect and summarize the feedback on your ideas. Obtain formal approval from the class to proceed. Propose to your prospective community partners and obtain approval. (3 pages)

**Week 5 & 6 Research Underway**

Joining Us:
Community Engagement Alumni and Affiliates

Your Presentation (PowerPoint):
You will be assigned presentation dates for the rest of the semester. Present your ongoing research, project goals, method, outline, sources, timeline, expected outcome. Collect and summarize the feedback on your presentation.

Workshop on Abstracts
Class workshop on composing abstracts, submitting to publications, conferences, and BU Research Days

**Homework**
Research Assignment Due:
Bibliographic Essay “Perspectives, Sources, and Research Challenges for the Project” (3 pages) plus project outline and timeline (2 pages). This assignment should include the detailed list of contacts, sources, texts, and visuals for your project.

Research Assignment Due:
A draft abstract for submission to the CCE Institute and BU Research Days

**Week 6 & 7 Research Ongoing**

Your Second Presentation Due (PowerPoint):
Present your ongoing research, project goals, method, outline, sources, timeline, expected outcome. Collect and summarize the feedback on your presentation. The second presentation must demonstrate significant progress from the first presentation.

**Homework**
Writing Assignment Due:
Draft First 5 Pages of the Project

Research Assignment Due:
A polished abstract for submission to the CCE Institute and BU Research Days

**Week 8 Engagement Conference**
Your Third Presentation Due (PowerPoint): The Short Version
Sharing Your Work on A Panel at The CCE Institute (Conference)

Homework:
Reflection Due: Summary of Your Experience at CCE and the Audience Response to Your Project (1 page)

Writing Assignment Due:
Draft First 8 Pages of the Project

**Week 9 Newspapers/Journals that Shape Community**
Dialogue with city newspapers, campus newspapers and magazines, and a research journal: What is the role of journals and newspapers in civic engagement? What is the mission of the publication? How does a publication address and shape a community of readers and vice versa? How do editors describe their goals and roles? What is "good" writing? How does publication produce or shape public opinion and representation? How can you publish your work?

Homework:
Reading Assignment:
*The Evolving Citizen: American Youth and the Changing Norms of Democratic Engagement* by Jay P. Childers (Penn State UP, 2012) (selected chapters)

Writing Assignment Due:
Draft First 12 Pages of the Project

Research Assignment:
Design Your Research Poster or Video

**Week 10 Research Ongoing**
Draft Your Research Poster or Video and provide an update as to your ongoing research, project goals, sources, timeline, outcome. This update must demonstrate that enough progress has been made so that polished completion of the project is feasible by week 13.

Homework
Prepare for your upcoming presentations at BCPL and BU
Writing Assignment Due: Polish First 12 Pages of the Project

**Spring Break:**

Homework
Proposals: Propose your work for publication. See the list in Week 13.

**Week 11 Publication**

Prepare for your presentation next week

Proposals or Submissions for Publication Due
Approximately 800-1200 words (or longer, depending on the journal)

(recommended journals and newspapers)

_Binghamton Undergraduate Research Journal of Research and Creative Activity_  
http://www.binghamton.edu/undergraduate-research-center/callforpapers.html

_Penn State Undergraduate Journal of Service Learning and Community Based Research_  
http://www.bk.psu.edu/Academics/35996.htm

_Columbia International Undergraduate Journal for Service Learning, Leadership, and Social Change_  
http://www.columbiasc.edu/service-learning-journal

_Reflections_  
http://reflectionsjournal.net/

_Binghamton Press Sun Bulletin_  
http://www.pressconnects.com

_Asian Outlook_ (BU magazine)  
http://issuu.com/asianoutlook

And other campus magazines

Option: Publish in reputable webzines. *You must submit the titles of these publications or websites to the class by spring break to get approval.

**Week 12 Present Your Research Poster or Video**
Your Fourth Presentation (Formats available: poster or video): At BU Research Days
Collect and summarize the feedback on your presentation (1 page)

**Week 13 Completion of Your Project**

Final opportunity for feedback and adjustments to your final project

Writing Assignment Due:
Reflection at End of Course: “Then and Now: Self Description and Expectations” (3 pages)

**Week 14 Growth, Reflection, Assessment**

Where You Started, Where You Are Now: Lessons and Projections for the Future
Self-Evaluation and Evaluation of Your Peers
All Final Projects/Papers Due

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1) Writing Assignments: Responses, Reflections, Class Critiques 25%
2) Oral presentations: 25%
3) Final Project: 50%

All components are required and must be completed to pass the course. In class, members will be asked to participate with comments, feedback, critiques, and questions. Oral presentation dates will be assigned to each class member. Attendance is required. A full grade deduction will be levied on your final course grade for every absence beyond two absences. Four absences result in an automatic F for the course.

**O Component in this Course:**
Three in-class oral presentations and three public presentations
Three consultations with the PSL-Public Speaking Lab: Required
All components are required and must be completed to pass the course. In class, members will be asked to participate with comments, feedback, critiques, and questions. Oral presentation dates will be assigned to each class member.

**Tools:** Daily access to the Internet and to Blackboard is required. PowerPoint is
required for presentations. You are encouraged to learn skills for digital humanities and design your project in a format that is interactive and easily accessible to students and the public. If needed, you will be pointed to campus resources for this.

*University guidelines for credit hours:* This course is a 4-credit course, which means that students are expected to do at least 12.5 hours of course-related work or activity each week during the semester. This includes scheduled class lecture/discussion meeting times as well as time spent completing assigned readings, studying for tests and examinations, participating in lab sessions, preparing written assignments, and other course-related tasks.

*University guidelines on plagiarism*
This course adheres to university guidelines. Please see the documents below:
Library support on how to avoid plagiarism
http://libraryguides.binghamton.edu/honesty
Academic policies for all students, including honesty code
http://www.binghamton.edu:8080/exists/rest/lists2011-12/2_academic_policies_and_procedures_all_students/academicPoliciesAndProceduresAllStudents.xml?_xsl=/db/xsl/compose.xsl