

Scholars Electives 4400y Capstone: Civic Engagement, Professional Development & Communication

Associate/Vice Deans (Course Committee):

Dr. Karen Danylchuk (karendan@uwo.ca) [Faculty of Health Sciences];

Dr. Joan Finegan (finegan@uwo.ca) [Faculty of Social Science];

Dr. Jeffrey Hutter (jhutter@uwo.ca) [Faculty of Science];

Dr. Doug L. Jones (doug.jones@schulich.uwo.ca) [Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry], and

Dr. Tracy Isaacs (tisaacs@uwo.ca) [Faculty of Arts & Humanities]

Scholar's Electives Program Contact: Rebecca Smith (rebecca.smith@uwo.ca)

Community Engaged Learning Coordinator: Lisa Boyko (lboyko4@uwo.ca)

Class Time and Location: Thursday's 5:30-7:30 pm in TBD

Evaluation: Pass/Fail

Description:

This capstone course encompassing Community Engagement, Professional Development and Communication is designed to capitalize on the knowledge and skills you have learned throughout your undergraduate degrees and challenging you to apply them within a real world setting through workshops, presentations, bi-weekly reflective journal and a community-based project. Students will be required to work under the supervision of community partners to complete projects that meet community identified needs. Student will also participate in reflective practice and several professional development workshops (e.g., conflict resolution, team building, diversity, communication), strategically aligned to relate and contribute to your community engagement component with two longer reflective journals.

Learning Outcomes:

The course will integrate various reflective assignments that will allow students to make connections between their community experiences and the academic work they have undertaken throughout their time at Western. Through this experience, students will enhance their ability to:

- Relate degree/discipline specific content to various fields of research, practice, and policy
- Describe composition of diverse populations and inequalities among those populations
- Enact strategies for building and maintaining reciprocal collaborations and partnerships
- Adapt oral and written communication and/or behaviour to match unique audience/demographic

- Apply content knowledge to real-world settings and contexts
- Manage group projects from vision to completion by employing planning, delegation, prioritizing, time-management, and organizational strategies
- Practice reflective thinking to connect CEL experience with course content and personal values
- Articulate a sense of civic engagement and social responsibility, preparing you for roles as community leaders

Community Engagement:

Curricular Community Engaged Learning (CEL) aims to integrate service in the community with specific course learning outcomes. In this form of teaching and learning, the community projects complement student learning outcomes, while students provide meaningful contributions to community organizations. These partnerships with community organizations help extend Western's reach beyond campus.

Non-profit organizations in the London community are often faced with “wicked problems” that are very difficult to solve due to their complex, contradictory, changing or cross-cutting nature (Weber & Khademian, 2008). Using an approach that blends theory and practice, Scholars Electives students will work in interdisciplinary groups within organizations over the Fall Term to collaborate with organizations to complete a project that helps address a “wicked problem” the organization is facing. Wicked problems posed by partnering organizations can be of a social, economic, ethical, or practical nature. Students will learn about the organization, its challenges, and the factors that contribute to the “wicked problems”. Using their research skills to review literature and identify evidence-based practices, students will inform their understanding of the issues presented. The final project deliverable will be determined by the organization and may look different for each group depending on the specific needs of each partner.

Student Expectations:

- Attend all classes and participate in discussions and workshops;
- In collaboration with your community partner, complete the *Student and Community Partner Expectations Agreement* and submit to CEL Coordinator and designated supervisory Associate/Vice Dean;
- Contribute 2-4 hours per week for 10 weeks toward completion of your community based project;
- Update bi-weekly online reflective entries (one paragraph at minimum every two weeks) describing your personal progress in the course
- these can be combined or summarized with two major reflection journal entries on Diversity in Leadership and the deliverables to Community Partner (see class schedule for deadlines);
- Complete the final deliverable as determined by the community partner and submit it before the end of the term to the Community Partner, appropriate Decanal leader, and CEL office (Lisa Boyko), and

- Present at the end of the term to the community partner, fellow students, and the Associate/Vice Deans about their engagement.

Class Schedule:

September 15: Introductory Class

- Introduction to 4400Y syllabi – discuss course structure, schedule, reflective journal entry frequency and types and evaluation
- Introduction to Community Engaged Learning and Reflective Practice
- Determination of CEL Interdisciplinary groups (students to negotiate based on Project Opportunity Sheets)

September 22: Community Partner Introduction and Orientation

- Community Partners of the CEL Component will visit the class
 - Partners will provide brief (5-7 minute) presentations to describe their organization, the CEL project, and the outcome deliverables they are looking for
 - Last 30-45 minutes of class student groups will meet with their Community Partner and further discuss the project
 - 1st of the bi-weekly brief reflective journal entries

September 29: Conflict Resolution/Team Building

- Conflict Resolution/Team Building Workshop
 - Drawing on the first 2 classes and student's experiences negotiating their CEL groups and their first meeting with their community partners, students will participate in a Conflict Resolution and Team Building Workshop covering the following topics:
 - Different types of conflict, sources of conflict, and recognizing conflict
 - Methods for dealing with conflict (i.e., communication tools)
 - Methods for rebuilding a team after conflict
 - Tuckman's Stages of Group Development – Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing
- Q & A period to clarify expectations for the course and the CEL component

November 3: Diversity in Leadership

- **REFLECTION Journal #1 completion DUE** – Final entry in this Reflection Journal will include a focus on answering questions related the impact of diversity on their CEL experience (diversity materials will be provided on OWL at the beginning of the class to refer to)
- Diversity in Leadership Workshop
 - Drawing on their experience with CEL thus far, students will participate in a facilitated discussion about diversity covering the following topics:
 - How to capitalize on diversity and differences
 - Four dimensions of diversity and provide relevant examples from CEL experience

- Ways to experience diversity and be open
- Strategies for discovering and responding to needs of others (group-mates, community partners, community members)
- Undisputable value of diversity
- Check-in regarding CEL progress and Q & A period to provide assistance

December 8: Wrapping up the CEL Engagement

- Presentation Preparation
 - What to include in final presentation and length
 - Presentation styles and tips for strong presentations
 - Technology expectations for presentation day
- Communication Workshop (connecting discussion to CEL experience and final presentation)
 - How to communicate effectively to various audiences
 - Providing constructive feedback to peers and community partners
- Methods for Wrapping Up CEL Experience with Community Partner
 - Final debrief meeting
 - Submitting final deliverable
- Final check-in regarding CEL project progress and Q & A period to provide final assistance

January 19: Final Presentations (2 hour class)

**Note: Classes officially begin January 5th*

- Students give 15 minute final presentation and discussion
 - 10 minute presentation, 5 minutes for questions
 - Presentation must include information about the organization, the project and deliverables produced, and connect experience to their learning
- Community Partners invited to attend
- Refreshments will be served

➤ Submit final project deliverables to Community Partner

REFLECTION Journal #2 DUE – The conclusion Reflection Journal will include a focus on answering questions related how their CEL experience connected with their undergraduate education and the skills that they developed/enhanced as a result of participation

March xx, 2017: Three-Minute Thesis (3MT) – TBA

Originally developed by The University of Queensland as a competition for graduate students, 3MT (Three Minute Thesis) is a communications challenge in which students have a maximum of three minutes to present their research and its impact to a panel of non-specialist judges and peers. Western University has been running a 3MT (Three Minute Thesis) event as a competition for graduate students since 2010.

As the final requirement for Scholar's Electives 4400Y, you will draw on your previous experience in the program to make a research presentation in the 3MT format to a multidisciplinary audience of your Scholar's Electives peers and Associate Deans. You will therefore need to distill your topic down to its most important points and convey them effectively to a non-specialist audience.

Rules:

1. A **single static PowerPoint slide** is permitted (no slide transitions, animations or 'movement' of any description).
2. To facilitate transitions between speakers, we will **upload all slides to a single laptop** at the beginning of the session (please come early to test that your slide displays correctly – particularly for those using an Apple computer).
3. No additional electronic media are permitted (unless there is clear justification with **prior approval by the course instructors**).
4. No additional props (e.g., costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment) are permitted (unless there is clear justification with **prior approval by the course instructors**).
5. Presentations are limited to a **maximum of 3 minutes**.

See http://grad.uwo.ca/current_students/3mt/ for more details and advice for preparing your presentation.

Each presentation will be “judged” by the instructor(s) and fellow students present. Criteria considered include those from the graduate competition:

Communication

- Was the thesis topic communicated in language appropriate to a non-specialist audience?
- Did the speaker use sufficient eye contact and vocal range, and maintain a steady pace?
- Did the speaker avoid jargon, explain terminology, and provide adequate background information to illustrate points?
- Did the presenter spend the right amount of time on each element of the presentation – did the presenter elaborate for too long or rush?
- Did the slide enhance, rather than detract from, the presentation; was it clear, legible, and concise?

Comprehension

- Did the presentation help the audience understand the research?
- Did the presenter clearly outline the nature and aims of research?
- Did the presenter clearly indicate what was significant about this research?
- Did the presentation follow a logical sequence?

Engagement

- Did the presentation make the audience want to know more?
- Was the presenter careful not to trivialize or 'dumb down' the research?
- Did the presenter convey enthusiasm for the research?
- Did the presenter capture and maintain their audience's attention?
- Would the audience want to know more about the speaker's research?