RABAT SERVICE LEARNING COURSE SYLLABUS
FALL 2011

SERVICE LEARNING DESCRIPTION

A service learning work experience is considered to be a good practice for students to gain knowledge and professional skills in their field of studies. It allows students to use their academic achievements as well as their personal input in a real training experience to determine a deeper interest in a specific career, build up a network of contacts and apply the "classroom education" to the real world. A service learning abroad offers further opportunities in living this experience in an international framework and adding extra language knowledge to the intern's resume.

PLACEMENT & COURSE OVERVIEW

CAS IP 405: Service Learning Placement (4 cr.) is an academically-directed, for-credit, unpaid training program through which students will gain practical work experience under both an academic and a professional supervision and guidance. One of the main objectives of this program is to help you value yourself and the world of work. Thus, you are expected to fully read and comprehend this syllabus designed to assist you prepare for and conduct your service learning.

There are 2 components to this course, the **placement constituent** through which students are placed in non-governmental organizations NGOs to work collaboratively with locals on mutually agreed-upon activities and during mutually agreed-upon times (approx. 5 – 7 hrs/wk). The **in-class lecture constituent** (or **Pro-Seminar**) of the course involves all students meeting together once every 2 weeks to learn skills that will enable them to maximally gain from their service learning experiences (discussions on reflective writing, learning styles, etc…). The lectures will also include discussions on local issues related to the field of work of the chosen placements (topics ranging from social & cultural movements, humans' rights, education, etc…)

LEARNING GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

- To ground students in the working process of the host culture
- To enable an increased understanding of professional practice
- To experience the world of work and get the opportunity to understand yourself, your future career choices and enforce the education you have been given in the classroom.
- To combine academic experience with practice
- To complete a four-credit course

In addition, students will define **personal learning goals** once the details of their placements have been established.

PREREQUISITES

In order to register for the Rabat Service Learning course, you must have completed at least 60 hours of Standard Arabic - Fus'ha (1 semester).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Although your placement is intended to provide you with practical professional experience, it is also an academic course, during which you are expected to submit assignments regarding your work. These assignments are designed to maximize the service learning experience and integrate your education with real world job opportunities.

You are expected to provide throughout the course comprehensive and personal records of your experience through **Portfolio** entries, as well as an objective scholarly assessment **Final Project Paper**. Both the Portfolio and Project Paper will be graded on content, organization, presentation and the proper attribution of bibliography and footnotes.

The final grade will be based upon the following:

Portfolio	*30%*
Project Paper	*40%*
On-site Supervisor's Evaluation	*10%*
Attendance & Active Participation	*10%*
Oral Presentation and/or defense of work	*10%*

THE PORTFOLIO (30%)

A Portfolio is a set of bi-weekly (every 2 wks) entries of your personal experience in service learning, combining a descriptive record of your daily work as well as a detailed analysis of the workplace, the field of work based on daily informed observations and colleagues' interviews/conversations. The Portfolio is a key element in the placement learning process and the self-assessment of your personal and professional contributions and achievements within your host organization.

The Portfolio must be an in-depth assessment and reflection of the service learning and should include substantive information regarding observations made during your daily work experiences.

Topics to consider when writing your entries:

- Cultural analysis of the service learning experience and the work environment
- Examination of interpersonal workings and communication methods used in the workplace
- Description of the Organization's Structure
- Display a comprehensive knowledge of the Organization and the field of work you are placed in
- Description of your on-site activities
- Evaluate your work contributions to the host organization
- Assess your personal and professional development

The **first entry** in your Portfolio should be an Introduction to your placement experience, including information about your personal and professional objectives. Please, remember to include at the beginning of your entry the name of your hosting organization, the field of work you are placed in and an overview of the organization's mission statement, management structure, and communication characteristics. Discuss what you hope to learn from this service learning and why.

Your **final entry** should be a detailed summary of your work achievements within the organization and a set of recommendations that you would like to share with your employer. Include in your discussion the strengths and weaknesses of the organization that you observed during your placement, the career implications of your experience, detailing the connection between your formal education, your major of studies and the service learning. Based on your experience, what are the main cultural differences between the Moroccan and your country's workplaces? As a conclusion, discuss what professional, academic, and personal impacts the service learning had on you, explaining what you learned about yourself and how you did or did not meet the learning objectives and expectations mentioned in your first entry. Also, discuss whether you would recommend your placement site to future students.

The Portfolio entries should be electronically submitted every 2 weeks to your Academic Supervisor. Write your name, the host organization's name and the date at the beginning of each entry. It is up to you whether you write your entries on a daily or a weekly basis, as long as you submit a 3 to 4 pages in total for each entry, **Times font, double-spaced, 1" margins**. Portfolios will be graded on content, spelling, grammar, and presentation. Portfolios should be submitted to your Academic Supervisor every 2 weeks (dates to be determined at the beginning of the course), including hard copy supporting materials.

Company literature, PR releases, newspaper articles, meeting reports and samples of your own work could be all used in your Portfolio to help the reader gain a better understanding of the hosting organization. You may include these documentations as accompanying attachments to your electronic entries, or hand directly to your Academic Supervisor if you only have hard copies. It is your responsibility to gain permission from your organization for the use of these documentations. You may assure your placement organization that those will only be used for educational purposes and will be kept confidential, as the grader will only review them in order to grade your Portfolio.

THE PROJECT PAPER (40%)

By the end of the program, you are expected to submit a final Project Paper, a scholarly essay based on a main topic that you previously discussed and agreed upon with your Academic Supervisor. **The Project Paper must not be an extension of your Portfolio or a personal compilation of the service learning**. The paper should be relevant to your host organization and its field of work and must be supported by academic research and a bibliography. You may use interviews with your colleagues as research materials which have to be properly cited in your bibliography. Other academic sources you have to include in your paper are books, journals or periodicals **properly cited in the bibliography and footnotes.** The Project Paper should be 10 – 15 pages long, Times font, double-spaced, 1" margins.

ON-SITE SUPERVISOR'S EVALUATION (10 %)

Your on-site supervisor and Placement Coordinator will be both submitting regular reports on your work to your Academic Supervisor who is required to write two-pages evaluation of your internship by the end of the program. **The evaluation will be an assessment of your on-site performance, based on your professional competence, attendance, attitude, communication skills, respect of punctuality and employer's**

regulations, and respect of an appropriate dress code. The evaluation will also be based on your active participation and attendance to the Pro-seminar/in-class lectures and the timely submissions of the required written work.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION (10 %)

Attendance at the service learning and pro-seminar hours is **rigorously monitored and required**. There could be no arrangements made to allow students to take time off for traveling or other personal activities. Some classes will involve guest speakers and discussions and therefore cannot be compensated for by obtaining students' notes afterward. If a student finds that they have a legitimate reason for having to miss a class, they should contact the course instructor either in anticipation of the absence if known or as soon as possible following the absence. Students may be asked for documentation. Any unexcused absences will systematically result in a lower grade, if not to the failure of the course.

While your final written project, portfolio and participation count for 80% of the final grade, your attendance, performance and attitude are very important and constitute a large part of the supervisor's evaluation which is 10 % of the course overall grade. **You are expected to practice and maintain a professional behavior at work, including respect, manners, timeliness and appropriate dress code.** You are required to actively participate in all the course components and are solely responsible of requesting office hours with your professor and program staff.

ORAL PRESENTATION / DEFENSE OF WORK (10 %)

The oral presentation will be a moment for you to talk about important and interesting aspects of your service learning experience in an engaging way. This is when you can share your feelings and your personal thoughts in the presence of the people you have worked with. You will have a specific time slot to present your project, make people interested in your work and what you have achieved in an informative and creative way. Visual aids are strongly encouraged, as well as the use of Arabic language.

LIST OF PRE-REQUIRED READINGS:

- Howe, Marvine. Morocco: The Islamist Awakening and Other Challenges. Oxford University Press, 2005.

- UNDP National Report on Morocco (2005): 50 Years of Human Development & Perspectives to 2025
  http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/national/arabstates/morocco/nhdr_2005_morocco-en.pdf

Please, note that additional readings will be assigned at the beginning of the course based on the chosen field of work in placements.

OTHER REFERENCES:

- UNDP. Human Development Report 2010. The Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development:
  http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2010_EN_Complete_reprint.pdf

- Mason, Jennifer. Qualitative Researching. London: Sage Publications, 2002