

## CHLD 209: Child, Family and Community

### Service Learning Project

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<p>2. Discuss the benefits, limitations, and biases of the diverse communication formats one must acknowledge in order to establish cooperative relationships that respect the diversity and uniqueness of all families.</p> <p>7. Understand that early childhood programs serve as a catalyst within the larger community context to bring family members and community agencies together to create and support quality care and education programs.</p>
<b>DEC Recommended Practices</b>	<p>F13 Practices, supports, and resources are responsive to the cultural, ethnic, racial, language, and socioeconomic characteristics and preferences of families and their communities.</p> <p>PP 17 Students participate in activities in which they acknowledge their own biases and recognize their own culture as being one of many which have equal validity.</p> <p>PP20 Students participate in activities in which they learn to recognize the potential “power” differential that may exist between them and the families they serve and learn about issues that may be of concern to specific groups (e.g. racism and prejudice)</p>
<b>NAEYC Standards</b>	<p>2c. Involving families and communities in their children’s development and learning.</p> <p>6c. Engaging in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice.</p> <p>6e. Engaging in informed advocacy for children and the profession.</p>

You will be designing your own **Service Learning Project** for the semester and getting your instructor’s agreement before you begin. Choose a program that will expose you to a diverse group with which you have no direct experience. The purpose is to help you become acquainted with a program that is *new to you*.

#### **To prepare for your service project:**

- The United Way of McLean County offers the community’s only online volunteer center. You can register on the website and view more than 80 opportunities listed. Register at [www.uwaymc.org](http://www.uwaymc.org) and then click on the Volunteer tab and Volunteer Now. Choose something that will get you involved with the families of children who are culturally, linguistically or ability diverse – not the young children themselves. If you live outside McLean County, you can probably find similar United Way services in your area.
- You may also consider selecting an option from the HCC Alternative Spring Break Programs. Your course faculty will have a list of current Spring Break Program opportunities.
- The 10-hour time requirement can be divided into increments that fit your schedule and the needs of the agency. Complete your service requirement early enough in the semester so you have time to prepare for the poster session.

- Write up a proposal of what you would like to do and email it to your instructor. If needed, s/he can help facilitate entrance into the organization and make a preliminary contact on your behalf.
- Contact your chosen agency and explain your class assignment, your desire to serve their agency, and find out what you can do to help them. Be certain the plan is clear to both you and the agency so you share the same expectations.

### **During your Service Project:**

- Roll up your sleeves and get to work.
- Each of the students completing this assignment will have very different and unique experiences; therefore we cannot foresee what guidance you might need. Contact your instructor with any questions or concerns that may arise.
- Remember the things you have learned about ethical standards and other professional guidelines. This may be the first time that you are identified as an early childhood professional and involving yourself with the larger community. Act professionally.
- Remember too that you are representing Heartland Community College to the expanded community. We want the numerous people that you come in contact with to respect you personally and to form a favorable impression of HCC students.
- Collect photos, brochures, newspaper clippings, etc. relevant to your specific social service.
- Keep a Double-entry Log of this experience.
  - Part One will be your observation notes recording objectively what you experience. There should be an entry for every volunteer session.
  - Part Two will be your reflections of the experience. For this particular assignment include some soul searching as you recognize some of your own mistaken ideas, biases, prejudices, lack of understanding or empathy for experiences different from your own. You can also share your opinions about the particular community resource and how well they meet their mission.
  - Submit the Double-entry Log by the end of the semester. If you complete the project early, you may submit your Log at any time during the semester.
- Print a copy of the “**Field Experience Verification Form**” handout. This form will need to be signed by a staff person at the location of your Service Learning Project.

### **After your Service Learning Project is complete:**

- Submit the Double-entry Log and include an explanation of how this activity helped you accomplish Course Learning Objectives 2 and 7 listed above.
- Construct a display/report (for the Discussion Board for on line courses, and for class in traditional courses) to share what you have learned about this agency, the services that they provide, and the role you played while you were volunteering for them. You will want to save brochures and flyers from the agency (you can scan these to yourself to insert online) and document your work with photos to make your display/report more interesting for your classmates. Also share with your classmates the value of this project to you personally.
- Submit the signed copy of the “**Field Experience Verification Form.**”