This brand-new course combines the development of historical skills with structured service-learning in the community.

- Students develop a historian’s skills in reading, writing, editing, oral history, archival science, and historical analysis.
- Students develop real-world skills in fundraising, grant-writing, marketing, professional correspondence.
- Targeted at advanced undergraduate History majors, but open to others with instructor permission
- 7 students registered for the inaugural version of the course

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
- Describe the difference between primary and secondary historical sources, and be able to identify and categorize them.
- Explain the different types of writing that historians do, and the appropriate occasions for each (e.g., notes, reviews, summaries, historiography, annotated bibliographies, essays).
- Conduct research in order to determine community needs, and devise a real solution to a real problem for the community partner.
- Improve ability to revise and edit written assignments, recognizing that multiple drafts and peer suggestions may be necessary to improve the quality of the work.
- Gain an understanding of the goals, challenges, and strengths possessed by the chosen community partner.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE
The Community Service Act of 1990 described service-learning in this way: “a method under which students or participants learn thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of a community; is coordinated with an elementary school, secondary school, or community service program, and with the community; is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the community service program in which the participants are enrolled; and provides structured time for the students or participants to reflect on the service experience.”

Modeled upon Diana Archibald’s successful course on simultaneously sharpen students’ historical skill set and service the Lowell community. In consultation with the instructor, students will design a project (or projects) of mutual benefit to be completed by semester’s end.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS
Current community partners include:
- Tsongas Industrial History Center
- Whistler House
- Lowell Catholic High School
- Cambodian Mutual Assistance Society
- Center for Lowell History
- National Archives and Records Administration

STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS
Students will complete a variety of different assignments, including journal entries, workshop documents, oral presentations, a reflective essay, and a final portfolio.

SAMPLE PROJECTS
- Oral history of Lowell Catholic High School alumni
- Qualitative and quantitative analysis of one decade of Lowell H.S. sports (the 1950s)
- Reorganization of the library of Whistler House Museum of Art
- Pamphlet on the benefits of the UTEACH program
- Processing of Navy records and creation of a finding aid for other users
- Analysis of the family and personal papers of Lowellian Butler Ames

LESSONS LEARNED
1) Start early. Student assignments should be finalized in the first two weeks; placement portfolios should be completed within first three weeks, so that students have sufficient time to do substantive work for their community partner.
2) Guest Lecturers. We learned about fund-raising, marketing, media relations, etc. from experts both inside and outside the university.
3) Professional Training. Students like this course because it helps them to answer the question “What will I do with a History major after graduation?”

Potential community partners include:
- Community Teamwork, Inc.
- Lowell Historical Society
- Pawtucketville Congregational Church
- American Textile History Museum

APPLICATION and EXTENSIONS
Service-Learning exists across the University, but there is opportunity to do so much more. Current service-learning initiatives at UML include:
- 42.32I, Community Writing I & II (FAHSS, English)
- SLICE (Service Learning in the College of Engineering)
- 10.304, Chemical Engineering and Heat Transfer (College of Engineering)
- 81.416 Climate Change: Science, Communication, and Solutions (College of Sciences)
- 62.496, Marketing for Non-Profits (Manning School of Business)

RESOURCES


UMass Amherst Service Learning Center: http://cesl.umass.edu

National Service Learning Clearninghouse: http://www.servicelearning.org/slice

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