

Syllabus
Field Experience Seminar
College Student Affairs

Spring 2013

Dr. Gregory Blimling, Professor

Room 311 - Graduate School of Education

Gregory.Blimling@GSE.Rutgers.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Course Objectives

This course is designed to help students connect the experiential learning in their field placement to the theory, principals, and practices of the student affairs profession. Specific goals for the course include the following:

1. Integrate professional knowledge and skills to a “real world” setting found in your fieldwork site.
2. Practice specific skills required to work successfully in the field, such as advising, assessment, planning and evaluation. Interpersonal, organizational and communication skills will also be practiced.
3. Gain an overview of the day-to-day operations of a higher education or student affairs unit and an understanding of a variety of professional roles and functions in student affairs.
4. Provide professional service to the unit.
5. Strengthen a personal philosophy and commitment to student affairs work.
6. Provide an opportunity to explore career options.
7. Engage in discussions about how to link theory to practice.
8. Assess the development of students and create programs and interpersonal strategies that promote development.

Course Policies

1. Students should be familiar with current issues in higher education and student affairs that appear in the media. They should be prepared to discuss these issues in class as they arise throughout the semester.
2. Students should come to class prepared to participate. The instructor will call on students whether or not they volunteer to participate.

3. Part of your grade for the course depends on your participation in class discussions. You cannot participate if you are not there. Class attendance is required.
4. The instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus as needed to meet course objectives.
5. Electronic devices, such as cell phones, must be turned-off or silenced during class. Texting, using Facebook, Twitter, or similar social media during class is not permitted.
6. Academic integrity is the first prerequisite for this class and any student who violates the University's *Academic Integrity Policy* will be subject to the disciplinary process outlined in that policy.
7. Because this course will include discussions about students' individual experiences with other students and with student affairs professionals across the University, discussions in this course and journal submissions are confidential. Students are expected to maintain that confidentiality by not disclosing any personally identifiable information or class discussions that may include comments about other students or people with whom they are working in their field placement or internship.

Course Requirements

1. **Site Supervisor Meetings:** You should have regular meetings (approximately once a week) with your site supervisor. Ongoing communication with your supervisor is critical to the learning experience. This is a time to review progress made on assigned activities along with processing observations and reflections about the experience.
2. **Journal:** Maintain a field experience journal (see below). The instructor will periodically (approximately three times) request that you submit the journal for review. The journal entries will be read only by the instructor; it will not be shared with the site supervisor.
3. **Class Participation:** At each class period, students will be expected to present information about their field experience and what they are learning through that experience. The instructor will ask students to connect their field placement experience to theories and best practices in student affairs.
4. **Site Visit:** The field experience requires a site visit by the instructor which you must arrange. The purpose of the site visit is to discuss with your site supervisor your progress

in the site and progress on the site project. You can expect this visit to last between 30 minutes and one hour. It is your responsibility to schedule this meeting at a time convenient to the supervisor and seminar instructor. Given people's busy schedules, you should arrange this session early in the semester. Generally, the site visit should be scheduled between the end February and the middle of April.

5. **Current Events Discussion:** Throughout the semester the instructor may distribute or refer students to current events of interest to the higher education community. Students are expected to read the material and be prepared to discuss the topic in class.

The Field Experience Journal

The journal is a record of your experience in the field placement and your personal reactions to those experiences. The journal should be maintained in an electronic format so that it can be submitted to the instructor easily for review. Handwritten journals will not be accepted. Suggested areas for comment in the journal include:

1. Experiences that have contributed to the development of your professional identity.
2. Observations you have made about your leadership style. What are you learning about the style you prefer and why?
3. Comments about the strengths and weaknesses of your own administrative and organizational skills. Areas where you believe you need to improve or have noted improvement.
4. Organizational values you observe being demonstrated in the organization where you work; consistency and inconsistencies between espoused organizational values and practice. Identification of critical organizational values they seek in an organization.
5. Anticipated transitions you will face from being a graduate student to a full-time professional.
6. Observations on areas of your own expertise, qualities, and skills you possess that will allow you to make significant contributions in the field; areas warranting your attention for further development.
7. Examples of ways in which the knowledge you have obtained in your academic program serves to guide and direct your work activities, e.g., how knowledge gained from readings help you understand the development of your students, the structure of your office, ways that you are facilitating the leadership of your students.

Evaluation and Grading Process

1. Students should seek feedback from their supervisors on an ongoing basis. A formal evaluation process will occur at the end of the semester. The completed evaluation

form should be delivered to the seminar instructor at the end of the semester (see syllabus). It is your responsibility to schedule this session with your site supervisor in a timely manner. One week before the scheduled session, you should complete the evaluation form as a self-evaluation and give it to your site supervisor. You should also give that person a blank copy of the form. (The form for this evaluation is on the <http://csafieldexperience.weebly.com/> web site.)

2. All students have negotiated a project as part of their field experience. A report on the project is included as part of the evaluation. The report should be submitted to the seminar instructor on the date that you give your oral presentation on the project (see syllabus). The form of the report can include any number of work products, such as power point presentations, evaluation questionnaires with results, or whatever is specified in the Field Experience Contract.
3. Grading for this course is “pass or no credit”. Students will pass the course if they have satisfactorily completed each assignment for the seminar with a passing grade. Lack of professionalism in the field experience site, breach of confidentiality, unsatisfactory work performance at the field experience site, or failure to regularly attend the course or the field experience site are grounds for not receiving credit for this course.
4. Standards of conduct at the field experience site should be consistent with what one would find working as a full-time professional. Sample behaviors that demonstrate a lack of professionalism include: consistently being late or absent from either your site or seminar, failure to complete assignments in a timely manner, poor communication with your supervisor or seminar instructor, inadequate interpersonal skills, breach of confidentiality, dishonest or unethical conduct.

Class Schedule

Feb 06	Introduction and discussion of field experiences
Feb 20	Field experience reports and discussions
Mar 13	Field experience reports and discussions
Apr 03	Class presentation of site project and field experience reports
Apr 17	Class presentation of site project
May 01	All Field Experience Journals Due

Class Schedule

Feb 13	Introduction and discussion of field experiences
Feb 27	Field experience reports and discussions
Mar 27	Field experience reports and discussions
Apr 10	Class presentation of site project and field experience reports
Apr 24	Class presentation of site project
May 01	All Field Experience Journals Due