

Writing and Community: Staying Connected Through Stories and Action (CCBLA)

Fall 2020

Variable credit options! (8-16 credits)

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Class Standing: sophomore–senior

Description: Offered in collaboration with Evergreen’s Center for Community-Based Learning and Action (CCBLA), this program will support students who wish to connect with community through writing/storytelling projects or engage in internships or projects with community organizations. The program consists of *two components*:

- a) 6 credits of academic work (the “program core”), which will include readings, seminar, reflection, and workshops that explore the relationship between the stories we tell and our actions in our communities; and
- b) 2 to 10 additional credits of a writing/storytelling project (individually or in collaboration with others) OR a community-based in-program internship developed with guidance and support from faculty and the CCBLA. Writing and storytelling projects (in English and/or Spanish) may include personal narrative, fiction, poetry, or collaborative writing. Internships can involve any focus, such as immigration, adult literacy, food security, homelessness, cooperative development, or public health. Collaborative projects could involve oral history, working with community members (elders, artists, laborers, community organizers, etc.), or designing a community action plan to address a particular challenge or need.

This program is ideal for responsible, self-motivated students who value collaborative learning, are enthusiastic about shaping a community of co-learners, and who value learning from and with community organizations.

Please note that “program core” meetings will be conducted entirely online, with a combination of synchronous and asynchronous activities via Zoom and Canvas to share experiences and learning; students will need access to a computer and stable internet connectivity for this program. Student project and/or internship work may be carried out online or in-person, to the degree permitted by the Governor's COVID-19 social distancing protocols.

Key Questions: Under the ongoing pandemic, the very notions of community and community-based work are at once heightened as a value and thrown into crisis, with each person's actions impacting collective health and wellbeing, even as long-standing social inequities come into stark relief. How do we keep connected to our communities and take action as we navigate the challenges of this moment and centuries-long histories of struggle and resilience? What defines "community" now-- longstanding notions of family or group identities, physical proximity, common work, or emergent ties forged during the crisis? How might writing enable connection to both our immediate community and to communities that may be distant from us in space and time (including ancestors or communities of origin)? What does it mean to work and learn in community, whether in class or in collaboration with community-based organizations?

Schedule

The schedule below is for the program core portion of our program, when we will meet together as a group via Zoom. Students are expected to develop a consistent schedule for both internships and independent projects, and to communicate that schedule to faculty and field supervisors by the end of week 1.

Tuesdays (on Zoom)	Thursdays (on Zoom)
9:00-10:30 Skill-building workshops 11-12:30 Check in	9:00-11:30 Seminar Looking back, Looking forward

Variable credit works as follows:

Academic component		PLUS Internship or Project		TOTAL
6 credits (6 hours of class + readings and assignments)	+	2 – 10 credits → 5 – 25 hours per week (2 credits = 5 hours of work per week) Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2-credit internship or project = 5 hrs/wk= 50 hrs/ quarter ● 4-credit internship/project = 10 hrs/wk = 100 hrs/ quarter ● 10-credit internship/project = 25 hrs/wk = 250 hrs/ quarter 	=	8 – 16 credits (20 – 40 hours of work per week)

You will enroll in the program for the TOTAL number of credits you aim to earn. Please pay attention to credit and hour equivalencies when developing your internship or project, and be cognizant of how much time you have to dedicate to your work before choosing how many credits to enroll in. For internships, your credits at the end of the quarter will depend on how much time you spent at the site. For projects, your credits will depend on how much time you spent on the project and whether you fulfilled your proposed schedule.

Next Steps: Students should figure out what kind of internship or independent project they want to engage in before the fall quarter begins. We will send a summer letter with next steps and resources to begin developing your projects or internships. The letter will include a questionnaire asking for more details about the particular internship or project you are thinking about doing. Students interested in working with community organizations can contact Ellen Shortt-Sánchez at the CCBLA to explore internship possibilities.

Assignments: will include weekly reflections on seminar readings, creative and critical writing assignments, reflective writing on projects and internships, and final presentations.

Readings: readings will provide vocabulary to frame our experiences in the community, challenge us to think more deeply about the relationships we are building, and invite us into continual reflection on our work. Topics for readings will include: ethics, empowerment, assets-based thinking, personal identity, and the impacts of race, class and gender as constituents of our own and community experience. More details on texts will be included in the summer letter.

Please be on the lookout for a summer letter -- you will need to respond to the letter **by September 15, 2020.** Our first meeting is **Tuesday, September 29 at 9:00 am on Zoom (we will send a link in advance).**