SSW 692 Seminar in Jewish Communal Leadership

Instructor: Dr. Andrea Siegel (ansiegel@umich.edu)

Wednesdays, 5-8pm 4684 SSWB (Winter 2015)

2 credits [additional 1-credit available for students who wish to pursue a Special Study]

Office Hours: by appointment

Course description (from SSW catalogue):

The professional seminar in Jewish communal leadership provides a critical space within the Jewish Communal Leadership Program curriculum in which students can integrate the very different approaches to knowledge, skills and experience – acquired in their SSW and Judaic studies courses and in their board and field placements – into a coherent whole. The seminar also serves as a setting for the exploration of general societal concerns from the perspective of Jewish communal interests and traditional values, and for bringing the perspectives and skills that are a part of Social Work study and practice to addressing Jewish communal concerns. The seminar serves as the intellectual home for the Jewish Communal Leadership Program, providing the forum in which students will grapple with understanding the Jewish community within its broader societal context. The seminar will also provide a setting for students to apply their Judaic training and their practical skills in evaluation, data analysis, and social relationships to developing analytical approaches to current problems that will be presented by communal agencies for the consideration of JCLP students.

Course content (from SSW catalogue):

This course provides opportunities for participants to meet with relevant professional and lay community leaders, to explore the relationship of personal and professional identities, to work collaboratively on soliciting and addressing communal problems gathered from the field, to participate in generating public programming related to Jewish communal issues, to consult with SSW faculty about the application of Social Work approaches to Jewish communal problems, and to gather peer feedback and establish relationships with each other.
Course objectives:

Students who complete this course will be able to:

1. Draw connections among historical accomplishments of the field of Jewish Communal Service and leadership challenges facing today’s diverse Jewish communities.

2. Articulate how the ideas raised in Social Work and Judaic Studies courses inform their own practice of the Jewish Communal Service profession.

3. Reflect upon their own leadership strengths and challenges and engage in self-correction behaviors, particularly vis a vis fundraising, facilitating challenging conversations, and communications for Jewish leadership.

4. Compare the functions of various local, national, and international Jewish institutions across diverse Jewish constituencies.

5. Discuss best practices in interfaith issues.

6. Exhibit selected Jewish cultural competencies through reference to specific vocabularies of Jewish values and ethics.

Course design:

Each meeting will emphasize skill development in structured lessons, often with guest experts. Meetings will consist of multiple parts, flexible as appropriate per lesson plan. During the semester each student will offer a 45 minute teaching to the cohort.

Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:

Multiculturalism and Social Diversity is addressed through our focus on developing cultural competencies for intra- and interfaith work.

Social Justice and Social Change is addressed through our review of Israeli and American Jewish history, current events, and coalition building.

Behavioral and Social Science Research is addressed through readings students will encounter online about Jewish demography and education, as well as articles from the field of Leadership Studies and Development.

Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation is addressed through students’ work on individualized projects.
**Relationship to Social Work Ethics and Values:**

This course will emphasize the importance of human relationships for effective leadership. The profession of Jewish Communal Service requires professional knowledge, obtained not only through experience in the field but also through the cultivation of life-long learning. Deliberative discussion is a key component of this course.

**Intensive Focus on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity, and Social Justice:**

This course provides a space for students to engage with issues of pluralism – addressing the place of Jewish community in a diverse society and the challenges of diversity within the Jewish community. We will highlight the power of Jewish philanthropy, ethics of communication, recent rises in anti-Semitism around the world, and the import of the biblical statement *tzedek, tzedek tirzof* to Jewish communal professionals.
Course Requirements
Note: you’ll post some of your work to C-Tools, and some you’ll turn in as hard copy in a course portfolio due by Monday, April 27 (exam period). I’ve noted this for each assignment.

Student Teaching
Each student will design and teach a 45 minute activity to the cohort. Topic: something you are passionate about that is useful to others for professional development. Please include your lesson plan and any other relevant materials (i.e., if you use in-class handouts, slides, etc.) in your hard-copy course portfolio that you will hand in at the end of the semester (see below).

Project Idea Statement
To build your leadership training for Jewish communal service, you will draft a short statement about a Jewish-related project you might like to launch within the next 1-3 years. Please be clear about the unmet need you wish to address. The project can be local, regional, or national. As you imagine the project, keep in mind that it should be doable. The budget should roughly fall between $5,000 and $100,000 (including staff salaries, if need be). You will take the draft of your idea through several revisions due on C-Tools (unless otherwise noted) by the following dates:

- 1/14/15: an initial statement (1-2 pages), written according to your own passions and without doing much (if any) research
- 1/28/15: a revised statement (2-3 pages) based upon online research you do about existing or past related programs; while you research, list four names of people whom you could contact who have worked on related programs (in Jewish or other contexts)
- 3/11/15: a revised statement (3-4 pages), based upon at least two conversations you have had (from your list of four possible, above) as well as relevant data and studies you have found (for instance, in the Berman Jewish Data Bank); include a rough budget and at least two links to the studies that inform your work
- 3/18/15: you will workshop a particular question you still have about your project with hevruta in class, according to Design Thinking methodology [no need to post this on C-Tools; rather, include your in-class notes/sketches in your hard-copy course portfolio]
- 4/8/15: [Note: only if you are doing the Special Study]: you will make a formal oral presentation (5 minutes) about your idea to our class and receive feedback [post to C-Tools any relevant material, i.e., a presentation outline, any slides or handouts, etc.]
- 4/15/15: [Note: only if you are doing the Special Study]: you will have brief one-on-one conversations about your idea with community members, JCLP alumni, and donors to receive feedback
- 4/27/15: [Note: only if you are doing the Special Study]: a revised statement (3-5 pages), having taken into account all the feedback; this is not meant to be a fully detailed plan but rather your best thinking to this point
Readings

For some class meetings you will have readings to prepare: articles/documents assigned at the request of the guest instructor or an overview of Jewish values / ethics. I have carefully chosen these readings to strengthen your professional development and Jewish cultural literacy. The following constitute preparation of readings for full credit:

- Print a hard copy.
- Mark the hard copy up by hand (asking questions in the margins, connecting main ideas or noting paradoxes as you read, etc.).
- After you read, type no more than one page per week* to address:
  - a brief list or paragraph of your “takeaways”
  - at least one question you are left with after the reading
  - a reflection about how the lessons (especially on Jewish values/ethics, when relevant) might impact you personally or professionally.
  - date the page so it’s clear when you did the assignment

Please complete readings and writing by the date due listed in the syllabus, then put the material in your hard-copy portfolio to turn in at the end of the semester.

*Please note exception of reading assignment due Feb. 11.

Adapting an Assignment in another Course to the Field of Jewish Communal Service

Look at your syllabi for your other courses at the beginning of the semester. In consultation with me, identify one major assignment that could be fulfilled with reference to contemporary Jewish communal concerns. Complete the assignment. Add an explanation (approximately one page) in which you explain how the assignment is relevant to contemporary Jewish communal concerns and/or your professional development in the field of Jewish communal service. Post the assignment and explanation to C-Tools by Monday, April 27 (exam period).

In addition

- You will participate in one site visit in Ann Arbor with a focus on local work in small Jewish communities (recommended but optional for continuing students); date TBD in consultation with students and local leaders. No post-reflection write up.

- Please meet with me individually during the week of 1/12 or 1/19. At this meeting we will brainstorm: a) your 45 minute teaching idea, b) your Project Idea, and c) your “adapted
other course” assignment. Please bring your syllabi for other courses you are taking this semester.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

This approved syllabus language is taken from: http://ssd.umich.edu/article/syllabus-statement

“If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; http://ssd.umich.edu) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.”

Plagiarism

Please review the School of Social Work’s information about plagiarism

- http://ssw.umich.edu/msw-student-guide/section/1.12.02/plagiarism
- http://guides.lib.umich.edu/swintegrity

Rabbinic sources place a high value on the importance of quoting an idea in the name of a given person, through a revered chain of transmission. Please honor this tradition with the highest integrity during your time in JCLP.

Course Materials

- selected readings on C-Tools
- presenter bios: please read on C-Tools in advance when we have guest presenters
Course Schedule

The seminar consists of theme-based, skill-building, month-long units.

January: Money Matters for Jewish Leadership
1/7 Fundraising, Part 1 (guest: Dan Ginis, Dir. of Development, U-M Ford School)

1/14 Grant writing and Jewish foundations (guests: Beth Margolin and Susan Slabotsky, Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit; Margo Pernick, Exec. Dir., The Jewish Fund)

First Student Teaching (45 min.): Haviva Rome

Jewish values/ethics reading due for 1/14: Jonathan Sacks, “Charity as Justice.” In: To Heal a Fractured World: The Ethics of Responsibility p. 30-43.

Also due: initial statement of your Project Idea (1-2 pgs.)

1/21 Listening to donors’ motivations and values for giving (guests TBD)

Second Student Teaching (45 min.): TBD

Jewish values/ethics reading due for 1/21, choose at least one:

a) Jewish values/ethics: “Soliciting and Motivating Others to Give” (Joseph Telushkin, A Code of Jewish Ethics Vol. 2, 221-231)

b) Online communications: “Crowdfunding 101 for the Jewish World” (webinar; just include your notes in the hard copy course portfolio)

c) Jewish history (including halacha): “Jewish Philanthropy in Early Modern and Modern Europe: Theory and Practice in Historical Perspective” (Berkovitz, Toward a Renewed Ethic of Jewish Philanthropy, 93-122)


1/28 Fundraising, Part 2 (guest: Dan Ginis, Dir. of Development, U-M Ford School)

Third Student Teaching (45 min.): TBD

No readings due.

Due: revised statement of your Project Idea (2-3 pgs.)
February: Engaging in Challenging Conversations in Jewish Community

2/4  **Sharing Our Stories** (guest: Manal Yazbak Abu Ahmad, Visiting Lecturer from Sakhnin College for Teacher Education)

Fourth Student Teaching (45 min.): TBD


2/11  **Preparing Communities: Jewish Values for Challenging Conversations**

Fifth Student Teaching (45 min.): TBD

Jewish values/ethics reading due for 2/11, choose one according to your interest (from Telushkin, *A Code of Jewish Ethics Vols. 1 and 2*, except Humility text):

a) “Anger”
b) *Humility* sections of Moses Hayyim Luzzato’s *Mesillat Yesharim* (Hebrew/English text)
c) “Humiliating Others”
d) “Fair Speech” (on lashon hara)
e) “Considerate Behavior / Civility”
f) “Love Your Neighbor as Yourself”
g) “Judging Others Fairly”

Note: if you are not doing the Special Study, choose one reading and prepare it in the usual way. If you are doing the Special Study, instead of the usual way of doing reading assignments, bring to this class meeting a fully written lesson plan (including relevant handouts) for a 1-2 hr. workshop with high school students, young adults, and/or adults. We will review all of the lesson plans together in class and compile them in a manual for possible distribution. Incorporate at least one Jewish text study activity into your workshop. An example of how to write a lesson plan:
http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/teaching/lesson_plans/pop2f.cfm

2/18  **Intermarriage in Contemporary Jewish Life** (guest: Keren McGinity, Research Affiliate, Brandeis University)

No student teaching this week.

In-class meeting for Communal Conversation preparation (45 mins). (First-year students will have an alternative discussion topic.)

Reading due 2/18: Chapter by McGinity, TBD
2/25  Why Is It So Hard for American Jews to Talk about Israel?

Sixth Student Teaching (45 min.), TBD

Reading due 2/25: Letters One and Two (plus a single page from Letter Six) from Hillel Halkin, *Letters to an American Friend: A Zionist’s Polemic*

Additional reading due 2/25: case study on C-Tools “A Sign of Division” (approx. 5 pages). Print, read ahead of time, and bring to class so that we can do the case study in small groups in class.

[Winter Break]

March: Effective Communication for Jewish Communal Service

3/11  Using Accurate Data to Build Your Case (guest: Harlene Appelman, Covenant Foundation)

Seventh Student Teaching (45 min.), TBD

Reading: Covenant Foundation materials

Due: revised statement of your Project Idea (3-4 pgs.)

3/18  Design Thinking

Eighth Student Teaching (45 min.), TBD

No reading due.

Identify one aspect of your Project Idea you think might need redesigning. Come to class with the sentence, “I might want to redesign how participants experience X in my Project Idea.” Don’t think about potential solutions yet. Hevruta in class.
3/25  **Running and participating in effective meetings** (guest: John Tropman, U-M)

Ninth Student Teaching (45 min.), TBD


April: Conclusions

4/1  **Debriefing the Communal Conversation; preparation for graduation and final class meeting** (guest: Rachel Levy, via Skype)

Tenth student teaching (45 min.), TBD

Communal Conversation debrief (30 min.)

Preparation for graduation (30 min.)

Preparation to speak with community members /donors about Project Ideas (45 min.)

No reading due this week.

4/8 (Pesach) **Student oral presentations: Project Ideas**

Eleventh Student Teaching (45 min.), TBD

No reading due this week.

4/15  **One-on-one conversations with donors to discuss project ideas** (guests TBD)

Graduation speech drafts: second years review with first years in hevruta (30 min.)

Discussions with community members / donors about your Project Idea (1 hr.)

Wrap-Up (45 min.)

No reading due this week.

Due on 4/15: Second year students only-- bring to class a draft of your graduation speech.
Course Grading:

a) Project Idea Statement Work: 125 points
   1/14: 25 points
   1/28: 25 points
   3/11: 50 points
   3/18: 25 points
   4/8: [if you are doing the Special Study]
   4/15: [if you are doing the Special Study]
   4/27: [if you are doing the Special Study]

b) Student Teaching: 150 points

c) Preparation for Each Class: 200 points (evidence includes hard-copy portfolio, each reading 20 points)

d) Active Class Participation: 425 points. (This includes demonstrating focused presence, asking penetrating questions and, likely, taking notes. If missing class becomes a habit we will need to discuss. Please: no texting, email, Facebook, etc.)

e) Adapted Assignment for Jewish Communal Service: 50 points.

f) Additional activities: 150 points
   a. Site visit, assisting second-year students with Communal Conversation and Graduation Preparation

Total: 1000 points.

Please note: in order to create clearer standards for class this semester, I ask that you indeed prepare assignments on time. Late assignments will be deducted 10 points per day.

   (810-849: B-) (780-809: C+) (750-779: C) (710-749: C-) (650-709: D+) (less than 650: E)
For Students Registering for Special Study (1 credit):

For the Special Study, students will:

- Prepare the lesson plan for 2/11 on Jewish values for challenging conversations.
- Continue developing the individual Project Idea for the April 8, 15, and 27 deadlines.

Grading for the Special Study will be determined as follows:

- 2/11 assignment: 25% of your final grade
- April 8 assignment: 25% of your final grade
- April 15 assignment: 25% of your final grade
- April 27 assignment: 25% of your final grade