



# YFE 211 – Foundations: Civic and Community Engagement

Penn State Brandywine  
Online -- Spring 2008



*“Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference.” -- Thomas Ehrlich et al. (2000), Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*

## **COURSE GOALS**

- provide a foundation for orientation to public scholarship, civic engagement, and the relationship between learning and democratic practice
- introduce a range of ways that citizens participate in democratic decision making and practice some of these forms
- learn about models and opportunities to engage in public scholarship at Penn State

The course will use virtual lectures, case studies, panel discussions and online exercises to provide a foundation for students’ orientation to public scholarship, civic engagement, and the relationship between learning and democratic practice. Core concepts about democracy in America, the land-grant university’s historic mission, and how everyday citizens collectively can build a strong democracy will be introduced. Students will be introduced to the ways citizens engage in democratic decision making and have civic engagement as a learning outcome.

## **COURSE INSTRUCTOR**

Dr. Laura Guertin (aka “Dr. G”)      TMZKO 102 (610) 892-1427      UXG3@PSU.EDU

Lecture:      all virtual lecture materials are online in ANGEL. You must attend the four lectures for the spring 2008 Clarence D. Bell Public Service Lecture Series. The final class presentations will be Monday, April 28 from 6:10PM-8:40PM in a room TBD.

Website:      all online course materials are available through ANGEL

Textbook:      there is not a required text for the class, but readings will be assigned through ANGEL

## **Note to students with disabilities**

In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act of 1990, it is Penn State's policy to provide reasonable academic adjustments for students with documented disabilities. If you have a disability-related need for modifications in this course, contact Sharon Manco, 610-892-1461, 203A Main Building, sam26@psu.edu. This notification should occur by the end of the first week of the semester. Students may visit [www.equity.psu.edu/ods/](http://www.equity.psu.edu/ods/) for complete information.

## **How We Will Learn Online**

This is a collaborative learning class. One principal learning/teaching method for our collaborative learning will be a process whereby people "listen" (carefully read) the ideas, feelings and experiences of their peers. This will sometimes be done one-on-one, where only the faculty and student exchange information, and sometimes within a larger class context where the discussion forum postings are viewable by everyone. This process has been found to help people think more clearly, learn more effectively, and build relationships with all kinds of people.

Each of you already has talent and passion to succeed in this class. Even if you are used to learning and being assessed in traditional academic (classroom) methods, there are many opportunities in this online course to show your talents and ability to think and learn. However, you are cautioned that in order to succeed in this course, you must make the time in your life to do the work. This is not a course you can complete the work and submit online the day assignments are due. Each day, you should spend some time thinking and reflecting about the course content. This not only helps your learning but helps you grow personally as an engaged citizen.

- **Deadlines** -- Yes, as you can see in the syllabus, very clear deadlines have been set for each assignment. The days and times for assignment submissions are firm and must be followed – no late submissions will be accepted under any circumstances unless prior written (email) approval has been obtained from Dr. Guertin. The deadlines are meant to keep you immersed in the course material every week throughout the semester. You must spend the time learning the information contained in each unit before going on to the next unit.

Assignments must be submitted to the correct week drop box and in MS WORD format from Office 2007. These files usually end in the extension '.docx'. All drop box entries without submitted files, or with submissions that will not open, are blank, or are Word Perfect (.wps) or HTML (.htm), the assignment will earn a permanent grade of 0...just as it would if you never submitted an in-class assignment, or turned in an assignment written in a language unable to be read by your PSU Instructor and classmates. **Given that you are graded on exactly what you submit, it is in your best interests to double-check all ANGEL drop box submissions to ensure your work has been successfully uploaded, can be opened and read on a campus computer, and is the version of the assignment you intended to submit.**

Please note, if you are feeling stressed or overwhelmed by the work in this class at any point, please contact Dr. Guertin via ANGEL email, by calling her office, or by making an appointment to see her in her office. I want to work with you however I can to see if we can make arrangements or find you the help that you need.

- **Getting started** -- In the WEEK 1 folder in ANGEL, there are several introductory exercises to make sure you know how to utilize the technology ANGEL provides to succeed in your learning. If you have any difficulty at any time accessing the virtual lectures, audio files, discussion forums, etc., please contact Dr. Guertin immediately.

### **Online Classroom Etiquette and Respect**

Let's work together on this one. We will be discussing many topics this semester – some sensitive, some personal. We will be doing a lot of self-exploration about the reasons we do service, how we “rank” who deserves assistance more than others, etc. There will probably be a lot of disagreement during our message board discussions on these topics. There may be sensitive thoughts and emotions shared with others within online class, and it is important that people not be victimized or abused during this process. Therefore, I ask that you agree not to treat others differently, blame them, or hold or use what they say in online discussions against them outside the class. Let's keep these conversations “in the classroom” and not share personal information around campus with any peers, faculty, or staff not involved with YFE 211. It is so important to respect the integrity of the relationships established in this course.

### **Academic Integrity**

All students are expected to act with civility, personal integrity; respect other students' dignity, rights and property; and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their own efforts. An environment of academic integrity is requisite to respect for self and others and a civil community.

Academic integrity includes a commitment to not engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty include cheating or copying, plagiarizing, submitting another persons' work as one's own, using Internet sources without citation, fabricating field data or citations, “ghosting” (taking or having another student take an exam), stealing examinations, tampering with the academic work of another student, facilitating other students' acts of academic dishonesty, etc.

Students charged with a breach of academic integrity will receive due process and, if the charge is found valid, academic sanctions may range, depending on the severity of the offense, from F for the assignment to F for the course.

The University's statement on academic integrity, from which the above statement is drawn, is available at: <http://www.psu.edu/dept/oue/aappm/G-9.html>

### **Grading**

Your grade for the semester will be based on miscellaneous exercises, reflective statements, the design of a service project, and the final exam. All grading will be

completed in ANGEL and posted in the ANGEL Grade Book (located under the “Manage” tab). Comments made by the instructor on discussion forum postings can be viewed in the Grade Book. Comments made by the instructor on assignments can be viewed by going back to the form/drop box where you submitted each assignment. Although the forms/drop boxes become hidden after the deadline, they will reappear once the material is graded, typically in one week. The total point value for each week is listed below. Specific point values and submission deadlines are laid out later on in the syllabus with the detailed weekly descriptions.

**Note that we will be utilizing the APA style for formatting references (see <http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>). I reserve the right to implement a 1 point penalty for every spelling, grammar, typographical or minor APA 5<sup>th</sup> ed. citation style error in any and all of the assignments.**

20 pts – WK 1: Introduction to the course  
53 pts – WK 2: Martin Luther King, Jr. unit  
70 pts – WK 3: Democracy, Government and Citizenship unit  
32 pts – WK 4: WHY? seminar unit  
64 pts – WK 5: Mandatory Service and the Law unit  
46 pts – WK 6: Ethics and Confidentiality unit  
91 pts – WK 7: Project Planning and Assessment unit  
32 pts – WK 8: White Dog Community Enterprises seminar unit  
49 pts – WK 9: Faith-Based Service unit  
45 pts – WK 10: Engaging Through the Media unit, Part A  
32 pts – WK 11: National Liberty Museum seminar unit  
40 pts – WK 12: Engaging Through the Media unit, Part B  
15 pts – WK 13: Peer Support for Project Proposals unit  
32 pts – WK 14: Treevitalize seminar unit  
200 pts – WK 15: Project  
125 pts – Final Exam

TOTAL point value for course = 946 points

The final grades will be assessed at the end of the semester as follows:

A = 96% to 93% (880 pts); A- = 92% to 90% (879 to 852 pts); B+ = 89% to 87% (851 to 824 pts); B = 86% to 83% (823 to 786 pts); B- = 82% to 80% (785 to 757 pts); C+ = 79% to 77% (756 to 729 pts); C = 76% to 70% (728 to 663 pts); D = 69% to 60% (662 to 568 pts); F = 59 and below (567 pts and lower)

***\* Do not expect me to drop any grades, curve any grades, or round up any grades on individual assignments during or on the final average at the end of the semester. Extra credit is not available.***

## **Breakdown of topics covered during each class “meeting”**

- *note that this syllabus is subject to change with prior notification*

Readings will be placed in ANGEL – it is your responsibility to check the folders in ANGEL corresponding to each week for the readings and assignments.



### **Week 1** (January 14) – Introduction to the course

Unit is worth 20 points

The course will begin with an introduction to topics to be covered during the semester, the CIVCM minor, an introduction to each other, and sharing of previous service/volunteering experiences. We will do an exercise on the typology of service, discuss the meaning of some classic (and not so well-known) quotes about service, and review the format of reflective writings.

**ASSIGN:** Pre-course survey (not graded), reflective statement on service (20 pts)  
**(DUE: 11PM Sunday, Jan. 20)**



### **Week 2** (January 21) – Martin Luther King, Jr., and social justice

Unit is worth 53 points

This unit is an exploration of Martin Luther King, Jr., and what he did for our nation, and what he would think about race relations in our nation today.

**Answer:** Check Your Knowledge on Civil Rights... (not graded but required)

Subfolder: Biographic Information on MLK **(DUE: 11PM Friday, Jan. 25)**

**Answer:** King’s vision for the USA (5 questions, 5 pts each)

Subfolder: Readings and Questions about MLK **(DUE: 11PM Friday, Jan. 25)**

**Answer:** Questions relating to the readings (3 questions, 3 pts each)

Subfolder: Penn State and MLK Day of Service **(DUE: 11PM Friday, Jan. 25)**

**Answer:** Thoughts About PSU and MLK Day (3 questions, 3 pts each)

**Quiz Form to Answer:** Final Thoughts About Martin Luther King Jr. (2 questions, 5 pts each) **(DUE: 11PM Sunday, Jan. 27)**



**Week 3** (January 28) – Democracy, Government and Citizenship  
Unit is worth 70 points

Enter the folder on Democracy, Government and Citizenship in ANGEL. This unit covers the basic elements of government, politics, and democracy. Students will view online a 30-minute video by Annenberg/CPB and answers questions on “Democracy in America,” take an abbreviated version of the U.S. Citizenship Exam and participate in an online discussion board about the exam, read a passage and answer questions relating to America’s core democratic values, and listen to and summarize a Justice Talking broadcast. The unit is worth a total of 60 points.

Subfolder: Democracy in America **(DUE: 11PM Friday, Feb. 1)**

Answer: Questions to start thinking about... (4 questions, 2 pts each)

Answer: Survey questions after viewing online video (6 questions, 3 pts each)

Post: Final question for open comment (1 question, 5 pts)

Subfolder: U.S. Citizenship Exam **(DUE: 11PM Friday, Feb. 1)**

Answer: Sample U.S. Citizenship Exam (not graded but required)

Answer: Post-citizenship thoughts... (3 questions, 3 pts each)

Post: Discussion board (1 question, 5 pts)

Subfolder: Final Discussion on core values of American Democracy **(DUE: 11PM Friday, Feb. 1)**

Post: Final discussion (1 question, 5 pts)

Subfolder: Justice Talking **(DUE: 11PM Friday, Feb. 1)**

Dropbox: Justice Talking reflection statement (20 pts)

To prepare for the first of our Clarence D. Bell Public Service Lectures, enter the folder for “Bell Seminar: WHY Y” in Week 4. Complete the assignment.

**ASSIGN:** Pre-seminar readings and questions in Week 4 folder

Answer: WHY Y/Public Television questions (4 questions, 3 pts each)  
**(DUE: 11PM Sunday, Feb. 3)**



**Week 4** (February 4) – Clarence D. Bell Public Service Lecture, Kerri Hanlon, Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, WHY Y (Philadelphia’s public television station)  
Unit is worth 32 points

The seminar is linked at the bottom of this week’s ANGEL folder.

**ASSIGN:** reflective statement based on speaker presentation

**DUE (11PM Friday, February 8):** reflective statement based on speaker presentation



**Week 5** (February 11) – Mandatory Service and the Laws for Volunteers

Unit is worth 64 points

This unit explores the ideas of requiring community service for high school graduation requirements to the service of jury duty and serving in the military. Readings will focus on laws that protect and do not protect volunteers. As President George W. Bush has called upon all Americans to volunteer and serve, there is much debate as to what we “should” do and can be “required” within the scope of the Constitution.

Subfolder: Volunteering, the Law, and the President **(DUE: 11PM Fri., Feb. 15)**

Answer: Your thoughts on... (3 questions, 3 pts each)

Subfolder: Jury Duty **(DUE: 11PM Friday, Feb. 15)**

Post: Jury selection (1 question, 5 pts)

Subfolder: A Mandatory, Military Draft? **(DUE: 11PM Sunday, Feb. 17)**

Answer: Should there be... (5 questions, 5 pts each)

Subfolder: Volunteering Requirement for High School Students **(DUE: 11PM Sunday, Feb. 17)**

Answer: Mandatory high school service (5 questions, 5 pts each)



**Week 6** (February 18) – Ethics and Confidentiality

Unit is worth 46 points

Online activities include discussions of case studies, forming guidelines for ethical student behavior during community involvement, and ethical issues on college campuses.

Subfolder: Community-Based Service Ethics **(DUE: 11PM Friday, Feb. 22)**

Answer: Hypothetical ethical scenario (7 questions, 3 pts each)

Post: Additional scenario (1 question, 5 pts)

Subfolder: Journal of College and Character **(DUE: 11PM Sunday, Feb. 24)**

Dropbox: Ethical issues on campus reflection statement (20 pts)



**Week 7** (February 25) – project planning and assessment

Unit is worth 91 points

This unit introduces students to the process of how to plan and assess a civic engagement activity. This activity will lay the foundation for the final semester project where individually students will design a civic engagement project.

Subfolder: Making Civics Real – Civic Engagement **(DUE: 11PM Fri., Feb. 29)**

Answer: Questions to start thinking about... (4 questions, 2 pts each)

Answer: Survey questions after viewing online video (6 questions, 3 pts each)

Subfolder: How to plan a civic engagement project

Subfolder: Practice project development **(DUE: 11PM Monday, March 17)\*\*\*NOTE THIS DUE DATE**

Answer: Overseas Coupon Program Suggestions (65 points)

**ASSIGN:** begin your own project planning

To prepare for the second of our Clarence D. Bell Public Service Lectures, enter the folder for “Bell Seminar: White Dog Community Enterprises” in Week 8. Complete the assignment.

**ASSIGN:** Pre-seminar readings and questions in Week 8 folder

Answer: White Dog questions (4 questions, 3 pts each)

**(DUE: 11PM Sunday, March 2) \*\*\*NOTE THIS DUE DATE**



**Week 8** (March 3) – Clarence D. Bell Public Service Lecture, Ann Karlen, Fair Food Director, White Dog Community Enterprises

Unit is worth 32 points

The seminar is linked at the bottom of this week’s ANGEL folder.

**ASSIGN:** reflective statement based on speaker presentation

**DUE (11PM Friday, March 7):** reflective statement based on speaker presentation

\* remember, the ConKerr Cancer Project Suggestions from Week 7 is due at 11PM on March 17!



**Week 9** (March 17) – Faith-Based Community Service

Unit is worth 49 points

Students will explore different faith-based organizations and their commitment and successes with community service and civic engagement. Students will read articles on the connections an individual has with religion and community service, and

how the federal government works with and clashes with religious organizations when it comes to providing social services.

Subfolder: Faith-Based Organizations **(DUE: 11PM Saturday, March 22)**

Answer: three discussion forums (3 questions, 3 points each)

Subfolder: Religion and Civic Engagement **(DUE: 11PM Saturday, March 22)**

Answer: Religion, Civic Engagement and You (reflective essay, 20 points)

Subfolder: Faith-Based Initiatives **(DUE: 11PM Monday, March 24)**

Answer: Faith-Based Initiatives (4 questions, 5 points each)

**ASSIGN:** What is your project proposal for the course going to be on? Post a one-paragraph description of your idea for all instructors and students to see! (not graded but REQUIRED) **(DUE: 11PM Monday, March 24)**



**Week 10** (March 24) – Engagement Through the Media, Part A

Units is worth 45 points

A discussion of print media – newspapers, newsletters, and magazines. This unit focuses on how newspapers are connecting to citizens and their communities, and how print media gives a voice to the voiceless.

Answer: Your personal news media audit (not graded but required)

Answer: What would YOU do in print? (1 question, 5 pts) **(DUE: 11PM Friday, March 28)**

Answer: Improving your campus newspaper... (reflective essay, 20 points) **(DUE: 11PM Friday, March 28)**

Answer: Questions on civic journalism (4 questions, 5 pts each) **(DUE: 11PM Sunday, March 30)**

To prepare for the third of our Clarence D. Bell Public Service Lectures, enter the folder for “Bell Seminar: National Liberty Museum” in Week 11. Complete the assignment.

**ASSIGN:** Pre-seminar readings and questions in Week 11 folder

Answer: National Liberty Museum questions (4 questions, 3 pts each) **(DUE: 11PM Sunday, March 30)**



**Week 11** (March 31) – Clarence D. Bell Public Service Lecture, Marilyn Cohen, COO and Director of Education, National Liberty Museum

Unit is worth 32 points

The seminar is linked at the bottom of this week's ANGEL folder.

**ASSIGN**: reflective statement based on speaker presentation

**DUE (11PM Friday, April 4)**: reflective statement based on speaker presentation



**Week 12** (April 7) – Engagement Through the Media, Part B

Unit is worth 40 points

A discussion of other forms of media to facilitate active citizenship.

Subfolder: Radio (**DUE: 11PM Friday, April 11**)

Subfolder: Talk Shows. Answer: The format of... (1 question, 5 pts)

Subfolder: Music. Answer: The impact of Sweet... (1 question, 5 pts)

Subfolder: Television (**DUE: 11PM Friday, April 11**)

Subfolder: Public Access TV. Answer: Could public... (1 question, 5 pts)

Subfolder: Saturday Morning Cartoons. Answer: A new... (1 Q, 5 pts)

Subfolder: Computer Bulletin Boards (**DUE: 11PM Sunday, April 13**)

Answer: Future of Newspapers (4 questions, 5 points each)

**DUE (11PM Sunday, April 13)**: Project Proposal posted as attachment in the discussion forum in Week 13



**Week 13** (April 14) – Peer Support for Project Proposals

Unit is worth 15 points

Students have posted their project proposal (the MS Word document) for all of their peers to review. You must review and comment on the three other students proposals to which you have been assigned to review.

**ASSIGN**: Project Proposal Drafts and Comments (3 peer comments, 5 pts each)

**DUE (11PM Friday, April 18)**: All comments on proposals

**DUE (11PM Sunday, April 27)**: Your finalized project write-up, PowerPoint, all due in ANGEL drop boxes -- WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED LATE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES

To prepare for the final Clarence D. Bell Public Service Lecture, enter the folder for “Bell Seminar: TreeVitalize” in Week 14. Complete the assignment.

**ASSIGN:** Pre-seminar readings and questions in Week 14 folder

**Answer:** TreeVitalize questions (4 questions, 3 pts each)

**(DUE: 11PM Sunday, April 20)**



**Week 14** (April 21) – Clarence D. Bell Public Service Lecture, Patrice Carroll, Project Director, TreeVitalize, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

Unit is worth 32 points

The seminar is linked at the bottom of this week’s ANGEL folder.

**ASSIGN:** reflective statement based on speaker presentation

**DUE (11PM Friday, April 25):** reflective statement based on speaker presentation



**Week 15** (April 28) – Group presentations of service project plans, 6:10PM-8:40PM, Monday, April 28, location TBA.

**DUE (11PM Friday, May 2):** reflection on your own project and presentation



**FINAL EXAM (take home, due in ANGEL no later than Noon, Thursday, May 8)**

- complete post-course survey (not graded)
- 3-4 hypothetical and/or authentic situations, how would you apply what you have learned



*“Civic engagement means creating opportunities for civic learning that are rooted in respect for community-based knowledge, experiential and reflective modes of teaching and learning, active participation in American democracy, and institutional renewal that supports these elements.” -- John Saltmarsh, NERCHE*