

SOWK 487 Social Work with Immigrants and Refugees

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Course Description

This course will utilize on-line resources, speakers and hands on work with immigrants and refugees to demonstrate the scope and complexity of international migration and its implications of this global issue on a national and local level. It will provide a framework to understand transmigration and acculturation, analyze aspects of current immigration law and examine the role of various service organizations in the Harrisonburg community.

This is a blended-learning course that would require on-line watching of videos, participation in and creation of a final project that may include use of multi-media. Additionally, 20 hours of service in an agency that serves the local immigrant community is required.

Teaching Methods

Experiences with immigrants and refugees living in Harrisonburg, movies, readings, guest speakers and discussions will provide the platform the learning experience. Each of you comes to this course with unique histories and interests that will complete the learning environment be it on-line or in the classroom. I look forward to gaining insight from your perspectives and sharing some of my own, cultivated from years of working overseas, hosting immigrants and refugees in my home, and studying displaced populations.

Community Service course objective:

Provide service learning opportunities to engage personally with immigrants and refugees living in Harrisonburg in order to enhance:

- services in Harrisonburg community
- academic learning,
- critical thinking,
- sense of civic responsibility,
- ability to engage with immigrant and refugee population

Community Service Expectations

Direct work with an immigrant or refugee in the community is a hallmark of this course. Service learning is designed to enhance your academic and personal growth as well as to contribute substantively to the individual and agency. You will sign up for an agency on the first day and contribute 20 hours of time over the next 16 weeks. Pace yourself and monitor your time. Your skills for the assigned task will develop as will your understanding of the context in which the individual (partner) or group with whom you are working. There will no doubt be many needs you would like to assist with as you get to know your partner. Remember you are representing that agency and need to check with your agency contact for anything you might wish to do outside of your assigned task. Please copy me (Prof. Hunter) on any communication you have regarding extra tasks. Be on-time, be present to the person (ie. not on your phone) - that is what matters to people.