

**Psychology 495**  
**Field Placement in Psychology**  
**Spring 2011**  
**N-107**

Instructor: Elizabeth D. Cordero  
Office: Faculty Offices East, 137  
Office Hours: Friday 2:30PM – 4:30 PM and by appointment  
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**Course Description**

From the SDSU course catalog, p. 392:

“Students will be assigned to various community agencies and work under joint supervision of an agency supervisor and course instructor, attend class meetings, and staff conferences. May be repeated with approval of psychology undergraduate coordinator. Maximum credit six units. No more than nine units of Psychology 491, 494, 495 may be counted toward the major and no more than 12 units of courses numbered Psychology 491, 494, 495, 497, 499 may be counted toward the major.”

As part of this course, students volunteer at a community agency for approximately 4 hours per week throughout the semester. The student chooses the agency, but it must be one where she or he will be paired with a client and establish a helping relationship. By the end of the semester, students will...

- experience what it is like to be a helper
- utilize basic listening skills
- identify issues pertaining to the administration of their agencies
- gain knowledge about their clients' challenges
- articulate their activities within a group of students

Prerequisites: Psychology 350 and three units from Psychology 230, 340, or 351.

**All volunteer placements must be approved by the instructor. Do not begin a volunteer placement unless you receive approval from the instructor first.**

**Course Requirements**

Meetings – Students are required to attend four group meetings with the instructor to discuss and process their volunteer activities. These meetings are mandatory. If your schedule does not allow you to attend *all* the scheduled meetings you should not enroll in this course. **Tardiness to (late more than 15 minutes) or absence from one meeting (or more) will result in a no-credit for the course.**

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Hour</u>	<u>Room</u>
Wednesday	January 26	2PM-4PM	N107
Wednesday	February 23	2PM-4PM	N107
Wednesday	March 23	2PM-4PM	N107
Wednesday	May 11	2PM-4PM	N107

Volunteer Job Description - You must turn in to the instructor the following forms by Friday, February 4, 2011 by 4:30PM:

- a) A description of your volunteer activities for the semester that is signed by your supervisor.
- b) A completed Service Learning Agreement (download the form from Blackboard)
- c) A completed Learning Activities Site Questionnaire (download the form from Blackboard)
- d) A WWRL signed by you (I will supply this).

Final Paper - The final paper for this course should be 10 pages long (one-inch margins, 12 pt Times New Roman font) and it should provide a description of the agency at which you volunteer and types of clients served, description of your activities and the particular client you work with, characteristics of the relationship you have established, what you have accomplished in your volunteer work, any problems you have had, and what you feel you have learned from this experience. **Do not include pages of information on your agency downloaded from the Internet or anywhere else.** The final paper is due Wednesday, May 18, 2011 at 8:00AM (e-mailed to instructor as a Microsoft Word attachment).

## Grading

The course is offered for credit/no credit and students will receive a credit grade for completion of the following requirements:

1. Completion of volunteer hours at an approved agency
2. Attendance at all group meetings
3. Submission of the Volunteer Job Description **on time**
4. Submission of a final paper at the end of the semester with all the elements present which are listed in Final Paper section above

If you do not meet the four requirements listed above, you will not receive a credit grade.

Please read the following official statement from the university:

"This course requires students to participate in field trips, research, or studies that include course work that will be performed off-campus. Participation in such activities may result in accidents or personal injury. Students participating in these events are aware of these risks, and agree to hold harmless San Diego State University, the State of California, and Trustees of the California State University and Colleges and its officers, employees, and agents against all claims, demands, suits, judgments, expenses and costs of any kind on account of participation in the activities. Student using their own vehicles to transport other students to such activities should have current automobile insurance."

Please let me know if you encounter any difficulties with completion of the course requirements. I'd like to facilitate you having as much of a positive experience as possible. Additionally, students who need accommodation of their disabilities should contact me privately to discuss specific accommodations of which they have received authorization. If you have a disability, but have not contacted Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473, please do so before making an appointment to see me.

## Cheating and Plagiarism

In order to preserve academic integrity and encourage students to make responsible choices, all students found cheating or plagiarizing will receive an automatic fail for the course and will be sent to the appropriate administrative body for review. Please review the university's definition of plagiarism in the SDSU General Catalog.

## Course Outline

The majority of the time students meet with the instructor will be spent debriefing about their volunteer placements. Students are asked to share their experiences, including their challenges and their triumphs. Students are also asked to be courteous and respectful of other students' while they talk about their thoughts and feelings.

Time will be set aside during each meeting for icebreakers and/or discussion about issues pertaining to helping. The purpose of the icebreakers is for students to get to know each other in order to facilitate an atmosphere of comfort and trust for sharing about volunteer experiences. Additionally, activities related to helping are designed to promote critical thinking about the concept and practice of helping and enhance each student's knowledge and skills pertaining to helping.

Meeting 1 1/26	Introduction Syllabus Overview Icebreaker: Class Bingo Discussion of Volunteer Placements
Meeting 2 2/23	Icebreaker: Clarifying the Helper's Values Discussion of Volunteer Placements Discussion and Group Activity: Confidentiality
Meeting 3 3/23	Icebreaker: How's the Semester Going? Discussion of Volunteer Placements Discussion and Group Activity: Nonverbal Communication
Meeting 4 5/11	Icebreaker: How's the Semester Going? Discussion of Volunteer Placements Discussion of Final Paper Discussion and Group Activity: Basic Helping Skills
Wed., 5/18	<b>Final Paper Due - Email to Instructor by 8:00AM</b>

Courtesy Note: Students will be exposed to various cultures, lifestyles, and worldviews during this course, some of which might be very different from their own. Students are asked to be respectful of all ideas and information presented; disrespect or intolerance will not be tolerated. Please turn off all cell phones and pagers to "silent" mode during class. The instructor will keep her cell phone on the "silent" mode in order to be reached in the case of campus emergencies.