

INTER-ACTION SYLLABUS

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Course Descriptor

“Inter-Action” is a marriage of service-learning and self-directed study for juniors and seniors. The semester is spent exploring a particular passion and connecting intellectual pursuits in school to the outside world. The course is one part academic research – reading, writing reflections, meeting with academic advisors and participating in a public demonstration of the semester’s learning and experiences. The other part is action-based – students forge a relationship with a nonprofit organization, volunteering on a consistent basis, and sharing about their experience with other Inter-Action students every other rotation. In this way, students learn about contemporary problems and how to approach them as a scholar and an activist.

Students design their Inter-Action course outline and develop their service plan with a chosen faculty advisor and Ravi Lau in the Center for Civic Engagement.

Course Outcomes

"Few will have the greatness to bend history, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events. And in the total of all those acts will be written the history of a generation."

- Robert F. Kennedy

Students will experience how knowledge of the field in which they are doing their service allows them to contribute more to the organization where they are volunteering, hopefully with greater impact. Combining knowledge and community activism is the true catalyst for social change.

How Will I Get There?

Semester Meetings: Marriage of Intellectual Pursuit and Service Experience

1st Meeting: Introductions (Students)

September 8

Students need to have chosen, asked, and confirmed their advisor for the semester before the first meeting. Students attend the first meeting to share the topic they will be delving into, go over syllabus, plan for semester, and discuss public demonstration of learning at the end of the semester.

2nd Meeting: Establishing Service Work (Students)

September 22

Students need to have their service experience arranged, preferably with at least one day at the organization already having occurred.

Q: What specific topics are you studying this semester that you think will enhance your service experience?

3rd meeting: Service work underway (Students)

October 8

Q: Share out about the organization where you are volunteering (atmosphere, co-workers or volunteers, cause you are supporting, area of the city, etc...). What do you anticipate (or that you are already experiencing) to be the greatest challenges and rewards of your service experience?

4thth meeting: Theories of Change (Students)

October 20

Q: The organization that you are working for, what is their theory of change? In your study, what have you learned that supports or refutes the theory of change?

5th meeting: Mid-semester Check-in (Students and Advisors)

October 28

Each Inter-Action student will informally present a specific topic that they have been studying and how it directly relates and informs the work they are doing in their service (and hopefully enhancing the experience). Advisors and CCE faculty will have the opportunity to respond and ask questions

6th meeting: Landscape of Change (Students)

November 5

Q: What other organizations are trying to address the same social issues that your chosen organization is in the Bay Area? How are the organizations similar, how are they different?

7th meeting: Getting Ready for Presentations (Students)

November 17

Q: What has been your biggest “ah-ha” of the Inter-Action experience? How are you going to share the experience with others?

8th meeting: Public Demonstration (Students, Advisors and Invited Others)

December 8

Each student will have a 20-minute block to formally present (including Q & A) the relationship between the intellectual passion they explored and their service work. Students are responsible for inviting two peers, their advisor, another faculty/administration representative, their service mentor and parent(s) to the presentation.