

Projects & Seminar Groups

SEMINAR/PROJECT GROUPS

In this program students will be actively involved in developing and participating in projects. Hirsh and Char will each supervise a number of project areas. Students participating in the projects being supervised by one faculty will comprise your seminar group and your project/seminar faculty will write your evaluation.

A "project" is defined here as a sustained activity undertaken by individuals or groups of students to achieve a clearly perceived goal, e.g. a community event, an exhibit, a performance, a new curriculum, a children's book, etc.

Many have espoused the value of student involvement in educational projects. For example, an educational method called project approach was introduced and articulated by progressive American educators (J. Dewey in 1890s, W. H. Kilpatrick and E. Collings in 1923), and has been further developed by Reggio Emilia schools in Italy since 1960. Used primarily in kindergarten and early childhood education, the project approach can also be used successfully in higher education. The benefits of working on educational projects include passionate educational inquiry, collegial work, community building, practical applications of theoretical study, work across significant differences -- in short, a list similar to Evergreen's five foci of learning.

As members of the Silk Roads program we can envision ourselves in projects work as a mercurial medium connecting people and cultures and facilitating projects leading towards peace, understanding, healing, and renewal.

While you will have a primary project with a particular emphasis, you may also support other projects, including those in the other project/seminar group, and thereby be part of entirely different projects if you choose.

Also, regardless of which seminar group you are in and which project(s) you select, you will be involved with children in an educational setting. Specifically, you will 1) select the school and age group, 2) make contact with the teacher/care provider, 3) observe/participate on at least four occasions, 4) create a lesson/activity, 5) carry out the lesson/activity, and 6) create an assessment

Finally, everyone will give a presentation to the entire class at the end of the quarter, which will include your project activities. More detailed information will be provided about expectations for the presentation.

IMPORTANT: Activities that "count" for project hours include – areas on the project list, other project areas agreed upon by faculty, K-12 classroom & curriculum work, presentation

Preparation. Areas that ARE NOT PROJECT ACTIVITIES include: preparation for classroom and homework time on assigned texts, research and writing of papers, etc.

PROJECT STRUCTURE & EXPECTATIONS

For 7-weeks (Week 2 - Week 8) you must spend an average of at least 7 hours per week on project activities, with a total of at least 49 hours. This is required for the 3 education/community service credits awarded for this part of the program. **Please understand that you will not receive full credit if you do not complete the project hour requirement (49 hours total).**

You must complete a (1) WEEKLY project log that includes the date, time spent, activities undertaken, and any practical questions that have arisen. You will summarize the time spent that week AND you will keep a running total of all the time you have spent to date. You will also complete a (2) WEEKLY project reflection that discusses your discoveries, learning and musings as well as your observations from your work in schools. These will be posted weekly to your personal Web page (within the program Web page).

Those of you traveling a half hour or more to project location may also include travel time in your project time. Remember, too, that you will need to coordinate your own transportation to and from your project site. Your faculty (or in some instances, a "project buddy") can help facilitate this if needed but, ultimately, it is your responsibility. E-mail is a valuable way to communicate about transportation matters.

CHOOSING A PROJECT

Choose one or two of the project areas listed below. Each person will have a primary project for which you are fully responsible. If you wish, you may have second, helper roles as well. You may choose a primary project with Char and a secondary project with Hirsh or vice versa. You may also choose a primary and secondary project with the same faculty. Oh yes, you can simply choose one primary project too!

You may choose a project area in which you already have expertise or an area in which you would like to develop expertise. In the latter case, you might need to participate in a training workshop or carry out independent research. Your training/research time counts as project time. You must organize and arrange it. Your faculty or your "project liaison" will be happy to give ideas and direct you toward resources. This will help to orient you.

During Week 2, everyone needs to get started. Tonight you will receive a project request form that you will need to fill out and return by Saturday (you can also turn it in tonight if you are ready). It is not necessary for you to be sure of what you want to do at this time. Your general ideas will help us make suggestions.

To be both successful AND happy with either of these projects, you must be able to take general ideas and turn them into concrete proposals and specific actions. You must be able to seek out Char, Hirsh (or your other project "liaisons") and ask your questions. You must be willing to take initiative but also be flexible if your ideas are not adopted exactly as you hoped (or at all!). You must be independent and yet put out the effort to collaborate with others and work as a team. You must manage your time well. You must carry your load and stay on top of things, without slacking.

PROJECTS WITH HIRSH

Defining Identity: A group of 5-6 students to meet with Hirsh after class to plan and facilitate the World Café settings for the Liberal Arts Forum on Oct. 11, (week 3)

New Year Peace Art Show: The show will open on Dec. 15. A group 6-8 dedicated students will organize community art workshops, maintain contact with the artists and receive the art works, jury and hang the show, and at the end of the show, in February, return the work. Also possible work in labeling the show, creating a catalog and creating/maintaining a web site for the show.

Other Projects with Schools: Project groups should consist of at least 2 people working towards a common goal.

Participation in "optional" activities listed in the calendar

PROJECTS WITH Char

What Are You Afraid Of? Images of Iran and Jordan: Traveling photography/poetry exhibit. Development of DVD and workshop. Community debut or exhibit will be from 5 – 10 p.m. Oct. 5 at Olympia Arts Walk. A couple of students of small group will hang the exhibit, develop and implement an interactive activity or workshop to accompany the exhibit. After Arts Walk, students develop a DVD of the exhibit and a workshop, and will work with schools/community organizations/businesses to schedule and host the exhibit and workshop.

Ramadan and High Holy Days: The most important holidays in Islam and Judaism overlap this year, beginning on Sept. 22 and for the next month. Students are to attend worship services at the mosque and synagogue. There are two student groups on campus, one interfaith and one Jewish, which also may be planning events that you may attend. Students choosing this option should also create and implement a Ramadan/High Holy Days activity for the Silk Roads students and faculty to participate in.

Children's Book: A single student or pair of students to write and illustrate a children's book on a Silk Roads theme. The finished product could be part of students' K-12 work and made available to local schools and libraries.

Asian Games: This multi-sport international competition is to take place in Qatar Dec. 1-15, and is open only to athletes from Asian countries. Faculty Char Simons will be covering the Games for Saudi Aramco World magazine. Silk Roads students will design and implement a project incorporating sports and the Asian Games into our program curriculum.

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PRINCIPAL ASPECTS OF ALL PROJECTS

1. Select & Work on project – Seek to understand the project, read associated materials. Meet with partners. Plan a schedule and goals for the quarter and include them in your first project reflection. Start work. Project work can include BOTH hands-on work and related research. Maintain weekly project logs and project reflections. Continued project reflections consist of learning & discoveries that result from your activities. The final project reflection includes self and partner evaluations and learning highlights.

2. Contact a school and a specific teacher – Establish schedule for observations, sign classroom contract, submit lesson/activity plan, facilitate lesson or activity, receive feedback and design assessment. Arrange for student colleague to be present, photograph and give feedback also.
3. Prepare Power Point or Web page presentation to share with the class at the end of the quarter. (More information will be given later).
4. Final Presentations: Week 9 & 10

RECOMMENDED PROJECT SCHEDULE

Week 1, Wed: Meet projects, and select project(s) (or indicate general interests)

Week 2: Start project work. Contact school, sign contract, set up schedule. Post project assignments to Web (Log & Reflections).

Week 3: Continue project work. Start school observations. Post project assignments to Web. Turn in signed classroom contract (Wed, 19 April).

Week 4: Continue project work, continue observations, start planning lesson/activity. Post project assignments to Web.

Week 5: Continue project work, continue observations, complete draft of lesson/activity – give to classroom teacher or equivalent and your faculty. Post project assignments to Web.

Week 6: Continue project work, continue observations, prepare lesson/activity for next week. Post project assignments to Web.

Week 7: Carry out lesson/activity this week. Post project assignments to Web.

Week 8: Evaluate experiences. Prepare presentation. Post project assignments to Web. Turn in presentation outline (Wed, Nov. 29).

Week 9: Wednesday, Nov. 29: Finish preparing presentation. Give presentation on Sat of week 9 or Wed. week 10. Post project assignments to Web. Turn in teacher evaluation Week 9, Sat. Dec. 2. Post final project log and reflections to Web, Sat. Dec. 2. (In reflections, include learning highlights and evaluation of your own and any group members' participation.) Also complete summary of learning post it on www and turn in hard copy by Sat., Dec. 2)

Week 10: Presentations.