Chapter 18: “Collaborative Civic Engagement: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Teaching Democracy with Elementary and University Students” by Crigler, Goodnight, Armstrong, and Ramesh

Political Science 420, Practicum on Youth Representation and Advocacy
Spring 2017

Professor Ann Crigler
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Class meeting: Tuesdays 2-4:50
Room: VKC 160
Office hours: Mondays 5-6:30 pm and by appointment.

Politics and representation are important in everyday life—not just during elections or in the halls of government. This course studies the ways in which young people’s preferences are represented, discussed, and advocated in the civic arena. We will do this through community based research and learning with children in local elementary schools.

The class will be combining theory and practice to study how youth deliberate as representatives to make policy decisions, to advocate for change, and to participate in their communities. Taking the lead, students in this class will work with many people and organizations to implement the pilot program for the USC Penny Harvest in Los Angeles elementary schools. The Penny Harvest is “a school based service-learning program that civically engages children in gathering pennies, making grants, and taking action in their neighborhood. It builds strong ties between students and caring adults and between isolated schools and their surrounding community.” The goal of the Penny Harvest is to involve children (aged 4-14) in identifying and addressing needs in their neighborhoods and across the globe and to teach them civic skills.

Students in the class will take initiative to be entrepreneurial leaders as we adapt to make the program and class run smoothly. Your thoughts and research will contribute significantly as we implement and evaluate each step of the process—ourselves as well as others.

The goals of this Practicum class are to:

- Reflect on the significance and meaning of youth participation in political and civic life.
- Conduct a community based research project.
- Facilitate youth deliberation, representation, advocacy and service.
- Work collaboratively as well as independently.
- Present your ideas convincingly both orally and in writing.

Course Requirements and Grading:

In order to accomplish these goals, students will keep a journal of reflections and participate in three collaborative projects: a school team, a research project group and the Leadership Academy. The school teams are responsible for assisting coaches in the elementary schools and recording field notes on the progress of the program in each school. The research project groups conduct original community based research on one aspect of youth participation and the Penny Harvest in Los Angeles. The class will also work together to create a Leadership Academy for the Penny Harvest Roundtable student leaders. To make sure we can get all these projects done, electronic devices may only be used when indicated by the instructor.

Grades will be based on the following percentages:

Due Dates:
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>Every week</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Academy</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>March 21 and 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fieldwork and School Team Report</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Each week in schools (Final April 25)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal Reports (10% and 10%)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Each week (February 7 and April 18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Project Topic &amp; CITI</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>January 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Project Draft</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>February 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Research Project &amp; Presentation</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>April 25</td>
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**Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Plagiarism** – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* [https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions](https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions).

Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, [http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

**Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university.** You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* [http://equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu) or to the *Department of Public Safety* [http://admissionsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety](http://admissionsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety). This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The *Center for Women and Men* [http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/](http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/) provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage [http://sarc.usc.edu](http://sarc.usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

**Help with Disabilities:** The *Office of Disability Services and Programs* [http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.

**Help during Emergencies:** If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* [http://emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu) will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

**Readings and Schedule of Classes:**

Because of the intensive field research in this class, the weekly reading assignments have been adjusted to maximize time for your fieldwork and research. The multi-disciplinary readings are available electronically through the library’s webpage or will be distributed to the class. Suggested readings are provided for additional guidance and interest.

**January 10**  
**Introduction**

No required readings.
January 17  Growing Civic Citizens: The Penny Harvest in LA

How does democracy grow and prosper? During this session, we will compare hierarchical and organic approaches to developing strong communities. We will also learn about the USC Penny Harvest, how it is working to raise civic awareness among LA’s youth, and how we will be working in the schools.

Required reading:

Suggested reading:

January 24  Research Session I: Identifying Topics and Ethical Research Practices (Guest: Professor Susan Rose, Executive Director, USC Office for the Protection of Research Subjects)

During this session, we will discuss creating field research projects and conducting ethical research with human subjects, especially children. This week is essential preparation for our work in the schools and on the field research projects.

Due: Research Topic and completed certificate for CITI/IRB Training. Training can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/admin/oprs/citi.

Required Reading:
Guidelines for Writing Research Papers: http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide
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Finding Sources:  http://libguides.usc.edu/content.php?pid=83009&sid=616086
Forming Research Question:  http://libguides.usc.edu/content.php?pid=83009&sid=618412
Literature Review:  http://libguides.usc.edu/writtringguide/literaturereview

Suggested Reading:

**January 31  Field Trip to Boyle Heights**
We will visit the area around several of the schools in the Penny Harvest. Arrangements for transportation will be made in class. Be sure to meet promptly at 2 at the designated meeting point.

Required Reading:

Suggested Reading:

**February 7  Developing Social Capital in Civil and Political Society (Guest: Robert Labaree, VKC Library)**
Vital civic associations have been one of the hallmarks of American democracy. Civic engagement through these associations is often the entry point for citizens’ participation and advocacy. This week, we will examine different theories that explain who participates in politics and civic life, who doesn’t and why. How can children learn to be “citizens”? In addition, the librarian will assist in developing your research topics and literature searches.

**DUE: Week 1-4 Journal Compilation.**

Required reading:
Tocqueville, Alexis de. “Of the Use of Which the Americans Make of Public Associations in Civil Life.” In Barber, Benjamin and Richard Battistoni (eds.) *Education for Democracy,*
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Suggested reading:


February 14 Representation and Advocacy (Guest: Lou Calanche, Executive Director of Legacy LA)

Representing and advocating for the public follows many different patterns. How can theories of representation and activism be used to help the children as they seek to represent the issue priorities of the school in the Philanthropy Roundtable discussions?

Required Reading:


February 21 Research Session II: Collaboration Meetings
We will spend this class session working in research teams to develop your research projects, specific hypotheses and appropriate methods. Come prepared to spend the class period setting specific goals and working to achieve them. During this time, we will go over research methods that may be used by different teams.

DUE: Research Project Draft.
Required reading: Complete summaries for readings relevant to your research paper.

February 28 Research Session III: Final Preparations for Leadership Academy.
Class will make final preparations and conduct a “dress-rehearsal” for the Leadership Academy.

DUE: Detailed Schedule, Script, Lesson Plans and Exit Survey for Leadership Academy

Required Reading:
Students find and read research pertinent for your Leadership Academy lessons.

March 7 Leadership Academy

DUE: Final Schedule, Lesson Plans and Exit Survey for Leadership Academy

March 14 Spring Break, No Class.

March 21 Deliberation and Decision-Making
Politics is largely about debating and making difficult choices. We will discuss and role-play group deliberations and consider how to promote children’s deliberation and decision-making.

Required Reading:
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Suggested Reading:

Tips for teaching children to make good decisions:

**March 28** Political Socialization: Schools and Families

This week, we will consider the importance of the context in which children engage. Communities, schools and families play key roles in developing children and teaching them about the political and civic world. The USC Penny Harvest and its Leadership Academy are part of the socialization process. The class will brainstorm the mission and goals for this year’s Leadership Academy and assign initial responsibilities for USC students.

Required Reading:

Suggested Reading:

April 4  
**Protest Politics (Guest: Dr. Michel Martinez)**

Power in democratic governments is said to rest with the people, but which people? When democratic governments fail to represent constituents, protest is an important way to open up debate and to give voice to unrepresented interests.

Required Reading:
Chenoweth, Erica. The success of nonviolent civil resistance: Erica Chenoweth at TEDxBoulder
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJSehRlU34w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJSehRlU34w)

Additional readings TBA.

April 11  
**Youth Advocacy and Philanthropy (Guest: Dr. Denise McCain-Tharnstrom)**
This week, an expert on youth philanthropy and policy will speak with us about youth advocacy and philanthropy in California. What are the costs and benefits when philanthropists rather than governments try to address social problems?

Required Reading: TBA

Suggested Reading:

April 18 Trust, Cynicism, Apathy, Self-Efficacy and Political Knowledge in Youth

Political trust and self-efficacy are often seen as prerequisites for civic participation, deliberation and decision-making in democratic societies. Can trust, efficacy, cynicism and apathy be reconciled?

DUE: FINAL CUMULATIVE JOURNAL.

Required Reading:

Suggested Reading:

April 25 Student Presentations of Final Projects

DUE: SCHOOL TEAM REPORTS, RESEARCH TEAM FINAL REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS.
Assignment Details:

**Participation (15%)**: Participation in class discussions, school team field-work, research committee duties, Leadership Academy, and evaluations of program are essential to the class. Come prepared with questions for guest speakers and reflections about readings, field work and research. **Due: each week.**

**Field Work and School Report (10%) Due: each week with Final Cumulative School Report due April 25.**

Each student will be responsible for working approximately 2 hours per week at your school. The number of weeks will depend on the school. Towards the beginning of the semester, students will sign up for one of the elementary school teams. For each visit to the school, students will use the provided template to write up field notes which will be integrated into a cumulative school report. The School Report provides vital feedback for the pilot project and will be used by Penny Harvest staff and students as we implement the program.

The School Report is a cumulative summary of your field work observations. The field work reports should be written during and/or promptly after each school visit based on what happened during that visit. If there are multiple USC students in a school, you may share responsibility for creating and maintaining this record of what has happened at your school. Enter your weekly record of observations into the existing school template. For the weeks when you are not at the school, enter the date and explain why (e.g. Testing in the school, USC vacation, No Philanthropy Roundtable meeting, etc.).

The **School Reports** should include a **detailed** description of your school experience with specific examples and anecdotes. Writing detailed school reports will be crucial to drawing connections between the theoretical material and your field experiences as you reflect on your experiences in your weekly journal entries. Address the following points found in the template with as much detail as possible:

- What activities/lessons are accomplished in each meeting
- What challenges and triumphs did you face in terms of student participation and engagement
- Provide specific examples of what the children said or did (share their stories here)
- How USC students are involved in the meetings
- Coach preparedness, engagement and confidence in the program and areas in which the coach/school may need further support from us
- What changes would you recommend to solve any problems that arose or to make the Penny Harvest work better?

In your **final school report** include a concluding summary and reflections on your overall experience with the Penny Harvest program at the school. This grade will be based on the overall thoroughness of observations and analysis of civic engagement in your school through the Penny Harvest.

**NOTE:** JEP will be coordinating the field work in the schools. Every student needs to register with JEP and complete the requirements for volunteering in the schools, including: getting a TB test and a background screening. TB screenings must be done over two days and will be available at the student health center on campus. Dates will be announced in class. **ALL VOLUNTEERS IN LAUSD SCHOOLS**
MUST HAVE A CURRENT TB TEST CERTIFICATE. If you have had a test within 2 years, you may submit those results to satisfy this requirement.

Weekly Journal Entries: Due: each week. For grading: Week 1-4 Journal due February 7 (10%) and Final Cumulative Journal due April 18 (10%). (Observations based on fieldwork, in-class discussions, readings, your research projects, and your own experiences). Students are responsible for keeping a weekly journal throughout the semester. Your journal entries, along with class readings, will serve as a basis for class discussions and a reflective, qualitative evaluation of your experiences.

Each journal entry should be no more than 2-3 pages long (double spaced) and should include reflections on 3 areas in roughly equal proportions:

- Reflections on readings and research projects;
- Evaluations/reflections on the meaning of your own: 1) life experiences, 2) field experiences in the schools, and 3) team research experiences; and
- Reflections on how the readings help you to understand these three experiences and vice-versa.

For each entry, record your name, the date and week of the report. Some weeks, I will ask you to comment on a particular question. Other weeks, you may write on your own or raise questions in class that students will want to address in their journals. You are free to comment on any aspect of the readings and your experiences that you encounter.

Submit journals each week to PA and me so that we may review and provide constructive comments and suggestions for revising. PA will not give grades, but will keep a record of your assignments and their comments. I will read all journals and comments regularly and grade them twice. This grade will be based on individual student work.

Community Based Team Research Projects:

Students will work in teams to address a key question about an aspect of the Penny Harvest program that is a challenge for the Penny Harvest program in LA and of interest to the team. Possible topic areas include:

- Parent Outreach and Assessment
- Community Organization Outreach and Assessment
- Deliberation and Participation Differences across Students
- Create your own (Some possible topic areas might include: an analysis of the opportunities for children in community organizations; developing a child friendly advocacy training; describing and assessing efficacy of Penny Harvest model at university level.)

The project consists of three parts:

1) Research Topic and List of References (5%) Due: January 24. The team will submit the research question and a compiled list of sources that are relevant to the research topic. Sources need to be scholarly research based rather than from the popular press. Aim for 5-
10 unique sources per individual in the group. Use University of Chicago format for the list of references

Each student will also submit CITI certificates for completed human subjects training.

2) Research Paper Draft (10%) Due: February 21. The team will submit a rough draft of the first part of your final paper. Include completed text of sections a-c, and g (the detailed timeline of responsibilities) as well as a detailed outline for sections d-f.
   a. A clear statement of your research question(s) and why it is important to study,
   b. A literature review that discusses the main arguments in past research that have motivated your project and helped to generate some particular hypotheses that you are testing. Explain how you will build on and contribute to what is already known. This section should be based on the material from the initial reference list and include specific hypotheses.
   c. A detailed description of the methods you are using to study your question and test your hypotheses along with an appendix that includes any specific measures that you will use,
   d. Appendix with original data you have collected and/or materials that you have created.
   e. An analysis and discussion of the research you have done. What did you find in your study? How does it contribute to past research and to meeting the goals that you set?
   f. A draft of your conclusions.
   g. A timeline for completing the research that details who will be responsible for completing each task.

3) Final Paper and Presentation (30%) Due: April 25. While the research project needs to be conducted with your team, students may choose to work in groups or individually to write the 12-15 page final research paper. The final paper will report the findings of your study. Final papers will be presented during the last class with visuals- powerpoint or prezi.

The final community based research paper should include the following sections:

- Introduction: a description of the project and its significance,
- Literature Review: a review of the existing literature and discussion of what your research will contribute to this literature,
- Hypotheses: (based on what you might expect to find given what past research has found),
- Research Methods: a detailed explanation of the research methods and protocol you used to conduct the research. (Include an explanation of the trade-offs you had to make in the design of your study. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the research design?) Provide a copy of specific research measures (e.g. questionnaire, focus group protocol, leadership academy schedule) in an appendix.
- Analysis: analysis of the data, reporting of findings (What did you find in your data? Are the hypotheses supported or not?)
Discussion: what your findings mean and how they compare/contribute to past literature

Conclusion

Figures and Tables (presenting your findings)

References (use University of Chicago Style manual format to cite all sources you used for your paper, including books, articles, webpages, interviews, focus groups, etc).

Appendices (include all original data, research protocols (e.g. interview questions, survey) and materials you created (e.g. brochure, video, powerpoint or prezi etc.)

The final paper should be drawn from your earlier assignments that have been edited and re-worked based on my comments and your further thinking. The remaining sections of the paper will report what you found in your study and discuss how this relates to past work on the topic. Conclude with a discussion of the meaning of the research for youth in the practice of democracy. What have you learned from your research? What could have been done better? What are avenues for further research?

This is a research paper, so assigned readings and additional scholarly books and articles need to be used to develop the arguments and provide supporting evidence. These materials, as well as all electronic resources, must be cited in the text where appropriate using parentheticals (author year, page) for quotations and (author year) for paraphrased ideas. List all sources in a complete reference section. I encourage students to consult with me at any stage of the process.

All written assignments must be paginated, double-spaced with regular fonts and margins, proofread, and spell-checked. All written assignments are due electronically AND in hard copy at the beginning of class on the assigned dates. Any unexcused late assignments (if they are accepted) will be graded down one full grade per day. Missing assignments will be counted as zero points.