

**GSU 201, Section B**  
**Poverty at Home and Abroad**  
**Spring 2008**  
**3 Credits**

**Instructor:** Ryan P. Murphy, M.S.  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Saint Joseph's Hall  
[murphyr@chc.edu](mailto:murphyr@chc.edu)  
215.248.7032

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Class Hours:** Monday & Wednesday, 2:30-3:45

**Course Description:**

This seminar course is designed as a service-learning course. Service-learning is an experiential education technique that puts coursework into action through relevant service to the community. These experiences also serve as foundations for classroom discussion and real-world synthesis of academic theory. Beginning in week four (2/11-2/15) and continuing through the last week of classes (5/5-5/9), students will perform at least two (2) hours of community service per week at a service site to augment coursework. Assistance will be provided finding a service site, if needed. All sites **must** first be approved by the instructor.

Topics discussed will be factors surrounding global poverty including: education, trade, employment, hunger and homelessness. By examining these issues through a global lens and drawing from student service experiences in Philadelphia, it is expected that students will connect the poverty issues facing Philadelphia with those of the global community.

**Course Goals & Objectives:**

- Understand and define various types of poverty in our world.
- Critically examine environmental, political, cultural and economic influences on poverty in Philadelphia and the global community.
- Understand the global implications and causes of economic disparity between developed and developing countries.
- Examine issues and connections between education, trade, employment, hunger, homelessness and poverty.
- Understand the role each of us can play in ending poverty through education, civic engagement, social justice and advocacy.
- Regularly examine, comprehend and respond to public debate and dialogue surrounding poverty with informed and educated opinions.
- Regularly read and comprehend news articles and media references to poverty and poverty-related issues.
- Evaluate the progress of the U.N.'s Millennium Development Goals

The goals and objectives of this course support the work of the *Greater Expectations Initiative* at Chestnut Hill College. This semester, we will specifically focus on two of the ten *Learning Outcomes*. These outcomes are:

**I5- Integrative Learning:**

Students will demonstrate the ability to transform information and experience into knowledge and knowledge into judgment resulting in action. Students will be encouraged to make connections within and among academic disciplines, co-curricular activities and pursuits beyond the campus boundaries.

**III- Civic Responsibility and Practice:**

Students will be provided with opportunities to cultivate a sense of social justice, to serve with and for others, to engage in reflection and to foster an appreciation of their roles as citizens in local and global contexts. Students will demonstrate knowledge of societal issues in the analysis of contemporary and historical challenges.

**Required Texts:**

- 1) Griffiths, Robert J. ed. Annual Editions: Developing World 07/08. 17<sup>th</sup> ed. Dubuque, IA: McGraw-Hill, 2007. ISBN # 978-0-07-351624-0
- 2) Ehrenreich, Barbara. Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America. New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 2001. ISBN # 0-8050-6389-7

*\*\*Other course readings will be posted on Blackboard throughout the semester\*\**

**Course Requirements:**

Due to the complex and thought-provoking nature of course topics, several methods of evaluating student learning will be used in this course including, but not limited to: *class participation, writing assignments, reflection papers, group projects, oral presentations and class discussion facilitations*. All students are expected to have read and reflected upon course material prior to coming to class, and be prepared to discuss the material in class. This course will periodically utilize the “*Wisdom Circle*” method for class discussions, where each person brings his or her own expertise and personal experiences to the group. More information on this process will be given throughout the semester.

All written assignments **must** be typed, double-spaced, using Times New Roman, 12pt. font, with 1-inch margins on each side (no creative spacing, please). **All assignments should be free of spelling and grammatical errors and use the standard APA format to cite sources.** Please visit the Writing Center on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Saint Joseph’s Hall if you need assistance with citations and/or APA formatting. Unless otherwise specified, all assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. In some instances, students may use e-mail or Blackboard to submit assignments. Late assignments will be penalized ½ letter grade for each day late, up to four (4) days, after which, the assignment will receive an “F”.

**Response Papers (2-4 pages)**

During the semester, there will be 5 *Reflection/Response* paper assignments. These assignments should be 2-4 pages in length and will deal with topics discussed in class and/or your critical response to assigned readings. These assignments are NOT a summary of the articles or class discussions, but rather your thoughtful response the issue(s) raised. Details about each specific assignment will be given throughout the semester, at least one week before the assignment is due.

**Service-Learning Reflection Papers (1 page)**

To regularly reflect on the community service component of this course, all students will complete weekly 1-page reflection papers examining their experiences serving in Philadelphia in the context of classroom discussions and readings. The paper should be submitted in the “*What? So What? Now What?*” format. Details about these assignments and the format will be given in the first two weeks of class.

**Policy Paper (5-7 pages)**

At the end of the semester, all students will submit a 5-7 page policy paper examining a topic covered in class. In this paper, students will critically analyze and evaluate an issue influencing global poverty and will make formal recommendations to the United Nations on this particular issue in the context of eliminating poverty. This paper is not designed to be a research paper, but rather a carefully planned, persuasive and logical argument. This paper is due at the beginning of the last class period, 5/7.

**Oral Presentation**

All students are required to give a 7-10 minute oral presentation during one of the last few class periods, outlining his/her policy paper. These presentations should be both informative and reflective, and must include some sort of visual aid (PowerPoint, poster, photographs, video, etc.)

**Course Grading**

Class Attendance & Participation	25%
Response Papers	20%
Service-Learning Reflection Papers	15%
Policy Paper	30%
Oral Presentation	10%

\*\*Punctual attendance and active participation are *vital* to success in this course.

Unexcused absences (more than 2 class periods) and tardiness may negatively affect the final grade\*\*

**Grading Scale**

<b>93-100 A</b>	<b>78-80 C+</b>
<b>90-92 A-</b>	<b>75-77 C</b>
<b>87-89 B+</b>	<b>72-74 C-</b>
<b>84-86 B</b>	<b>69-71 D+</b>
<b>81-83 B-</b>	<b>66-68 D</b>
	<b>65 &amp; Below F</b>

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism or cheating in any form is wrong and will not be tolerated. Whenever you take someone else's original text, quotes, ideas and/or close restatements, you **MUST** cite the source. Since students are expected to back up arguments in all assignments with other evidence, you should be familiar with the Academic Integrity and Responsibility Policy, found in the Student Handbook. (Note: While Wikipedia may be great to get quick information on music, movies, pop culture and to help you win Trivial Pursuit games, it is **NOT** an appropriate academic source and should not be relied upon for assignments). Again, all citations should be made in the standard APA citation format. Please ask me and/or visit the Writing Center on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Saint Joseph's Hall if you need assistance with citations- **DON'T GUESS**, or worse, **OMIT** a citation.

Students found guilty of plagiarism will receive a minimum penalty of an "F" for the assignment and the possibility of an "F" for the course. All penalties are assessed on a case-by-case basis and are determined at my discretion. Again, **PLEASE ASK** if you are unsure, I am happy to help!

## **Blackboard Site**

This course uses Blackboard (<http://chc.blackboard.com/>). The course syllabus, announcements, assignments & supplemental readings will be posted to Blackboard. You are expected to check Blackboard regularly for announcements and updates. If you do not currently have access to Blackboard, please contact the Help Desk ([helpdesk@chc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@chc.edu)) as you will need access for readings.

## **Special Accommodations**

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please see your academic advisor for more details.

## **Tentative Course Schedule**

### **Week 1: Introduction**

- **1/21-** Introduction & Course Overview
- **1/23-** What is Poverty? How do *you* define it?  
In-class Assignment: "What Is Poverty" (Parker)

### **Week 2: The Media, Poverty & Abundance**

- **1/28-** In-class videos: MTV's "My Super Sweet 16" vs. "True Life: I'm Dead Broke"
- **1/30-** Live8, MTV and the Media's Impact on Global Poverty  
Readings: Annual Editions-  
Unit 1 Introduction: "Understanding the Developing World"  
Article 2: "Can Extreme Poverty Be Eliminated?" (Sachs)

### **Week 3: The United Nations and Millennium Development Goals**

- **2/4-** Guest Speaker: Wayne Jacoby, Global Education Motivators  
**Response Paper 1 Due**

- **2/6-** U.N. Millennium Development Goals **Partner Presentations**

**Week 4:** The U.N. and Foreign Aid- Are we helping? What are the barriers? Justice Issues?

- **2/11-** Foreign Aid and Poverty Reduction Efforts  
Readings: Annual Editions-  
Article 1: “How To Help Poor Countries” (Birdsall, et al.)  
Article 3: “Today’s Golden Age of Poverty Reduction” (Bhalla)  
“The Eight Commandments” (The Economist) [**On Blackboard**]
- **2/13-** The U.N. and Foreign Aid, continued  
Readings: Annual Editions-  
Unit 2 Introduction: Political Economy and the Developing World  
Article 6: “Climbing Back” (The Economist)  
Article 7: “Social Justice and Global Trade” (Stiglitz)  
“Bono, Foreign Aid and Skeptics” (Kristof) [**On Blackboard**]

**Week 5:** Foreign Aid, continued

- **2/18-** Guest Speaker: Jessica Moran, Saint Joseph’s University  
Readings: Annual Editions-  
Article 9: “The Protection Racket” (Panagariya)  
Article 10: “Cotton: The High Moral Issue” (Eshelby)
- **2/20-** Political and Ethical Issues  
Readings: Annual Editions-  
Article 11: “The \$25 Billion Question” (The Economist)  
Article 19: “The End of War?” (Easterbrook)  
Article 38: “Malaria, The Child Killer” (Joffe-Walt)  
Article 39: “The Price of Life” (Glennerster, et al.)  
**Response Paper 2 Due**

**Week 6:** The Universe Story and Environmental Issues

- **2/25-** Video: “An Inconvenient Truth”
- **2/27-** Guest Speaker: S. Kathy Duffy, SSJ  
Readings: [**All on Blackboard**] “Women, Earth and Creator Spirit” (Johnson)  
“At Home in the Cosmos” (Toolan)  
“The Universe Story” (Swimme and Berry)

**Week 7:** The Universe Story and Environmental Issues, continued.

- **3/3-** The Universe Story, continued
- **3/5-** China’s Dams and Water Issues  
Readings: [**All on Blackboard**] “China’s Growing Pains” (The Economist)  
“Amid China’s Boom, No Helping Hand for Young Qingming” (Kahn and Yardley)  
“As Dam on Yangtze Closes, Chinese Tally Gain and Loss” (Eckholm)  
“China Urges Cleanup of Yangtze Pollution” (Wall Street Journal)  
“Rivers Run Black and Chinese Die of Cancer” (Yardley)

**Week 8:** Hunger, Homelessness & Education

- **3/10-** Hunger Issues

Readings: Annual Editions-

Article 15: “Food Sovereignty: Ending World Hunger in Our Time” (Mousseau & Mittal)

Article 37: “Help the Hungry More Efficiently” (The Economist)

“Homeless Jitters in Chestnut Hill” (Rubin) [**On Blackboard**]

“A Lifesaver Called ‘Plumpynut’ (Cooper) [**On Blackboard**]

**Response Paper 3 Due**

- **3/12 – No Class, Spring Break**

**Week 9: No Class, Spring Break**

**Week 10: Poverty, Education & Politics**

- **3/24- No Class, Spring Break**

**3/26-** Video: “Born Into Brothels”

Readings: Annual Editions-

Article 44: “Educating Girls, Unlocking Development” (Levine)

Article 46: “Healing Powers” (Hammer)

“Growing Up: As States Tackle Poverty, Preschool Gets high Marks; New Lobbying Strategy Fuels National Move For Universal Classes” (Solomon) [**On Blackboard**]

**Week 11: Poverty, Education & Politics, continued**

- **3/31- Politics and Poverty**

Readings: Annual Editions-

Article 18: “Without Consent: Global Capital Mobility and Democracy” (Faux)

“Joseph Stiglitz: ‘Politicians Like Blair and Brown Have Given Global Poverty New Prominence’” (Vallely) [**On Blackboard**]

“Union Man” (Nina Easton, et al.) [**On Blackboard**]

- **4/2- Guest Speaker: Rick McKelvey, Staff, New Jersey State Legislature**
- **4/4- United Nations Trip**

**Week 12: Public Policy, Poverty & Philadelphia**

- **4/7- Politics & Public Policy**

Readings: [**All on Blackboard**] “Down Germantown Avenue” (Anderson)

“Going To Extremes” (Shaffer)

- **4/9- Readings:** Annual Editions-

Article 40: “Reversal of Fortune” (Krishna)

In Class Assignment: “Planning a Budget”

**Response Paper 4 Due**

**Week 13: The Working Poor and Undocumented Laborers**

- **4/14- Readings:** “An American Tragedy” (Taussig) [**On Blackboard**]

Nickel & Dime- Introduction and Section 1 (pp. 1-49)

- **4/16- Guest Speaker: Lori Boccuzzi, Chestnut Hill College**

Readings: “Two Views of ‘Illegal’ (Aizenman) [**On Blackboard**]

**Week 14: The Working Poor, continued**

- **4/21- Nickel & Dime**

- Readings: Nickel & Dimed - Section 2 (pp. 51-119)
- **4/23-** Nickel & Dimed
- Readings: Nickel & Dimed - Section 3 and Evaluation (pp. 121-221)

**Week 15:** Wal-Mart, Big Business and Factories

- **4/28-** Wal-Mart, Big Business and Factories
- Readings: [**All on Blackboard**] “Down and Out In Discount America” (Featherstone)  
“What’s Right About Wal-Mart” (Welch)  
“Forget Going Upscale—Wal-Mart Should Serve Needs of Poor, Seniors” (Crain)
- Response Paper 5 Due**
- **4/30-** Wrap Up & Policy Presentations

**Week 16:**

- **5/5-**Wrap-Up & Policy Presentations
- **5/7-** Wrap-Up & Policy Presentations

**Final Exam: TBA**

**\*\*This schedule may be altered to meet the needs of the course\*\***