Service Learning for *Introduction to Globalization* (GEOG 123/ SIS 123): An outline of what it entails by Professor Matt Sparke

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Service learning provides a wonderful way to enrich your university education in general and your learning in *Introduction to Globalization* in particular. One of the key lessons of my course is that while globalization has created powerful interdependencies that connect the lives of people right around the planet it has not done so in ways that create equal life chances everywhere. In other words, there is no global level playing field and the world has not suddenly become ‘flat’ as a result of economic integration. This can be demonstrated in a thousand different ways in lectures, but there is no better way of learning about the inequalities and uneven development of today’s world than by volunteering for organizations that serve the poor, sick and dispossessed. Furthermore, this Fall of 2006, when all UW freshmen are reading in *Mountains Beyond Mountains* about Paul Farmer’s work in Haiti, it makes even more sense to work with community service and advocacy groups that have some public health component to their missions. It is for these reasons that I have worked with the Carlson center to create about 40 service-learning positions with local Puget Sound groups, most of them dealing in some critical way with an important local or global health issue. The paragraphs that follow explain how to apply in one of these positions, and what you then need to do to qualify for the 40% of the 123 grade normally allocated in the class for the research report on a TNC.

*Application for a service learning position*

**a.** Ideally you should be enrolled in Sections AM or AT which are both being taught by Teaching Assistants with experience and knowledge of global health issues. Given that nearly all 25 students in these two sections will be doing service learning work, it will be possible to devote much more time in section sessions to discussing and processing what you are learning through your volunteer work. (Having said all this, we may be able to create a few service learning positions for students for students enrolled in other Sections. Please contact the lead TA, Caroline Faria, cvfi@u.washington.edu, if you want to do this).

**b.** Talk to your TA about what sort of position, what type of organization and what location would enable you to contribute most wholeheartedly to the service learning work. This discussion should be based on the organizations and positions developed for this course and listed on the Carlson Center web site at www.depts.washington.edu/leader. Please click on Autumn 2006 from the front page, and then on GEOG/SIS 123.

**c.** Register for a position on the Carlson Center website by Thursday, October 5th. Registration instructions will be provided in class during the service learning presentation.
Assignments to be completed for 40% of 123 grade

a. Conduct about 3 hours of service learning work a week for a total of at least 20 hours during the quarter. Some organizations may require a commitment of more than 20 hours (but no greater than 40 hours) over the course of the quarter. Positions are developed based on both the need of the organization and the learning objectives for this course.

b. Write 4 response papers which must be handed in to be graded by the TA. These papers must respond to the four sets of questions listed below.

c. Make a powerpoint presentation to your section at the end of the quarter that sums up your service-learning experience. The presentation can freely use material and ideas you have developed in the course of writing the 4 response papers.

Your 40% grade for the service learning will be comprised of 6% for each response paper (24% total), and 16% for the presentation.

QUESTIONS FOR RESPONSE PAPER 1 (must be handed in to TA by Oct 5th)
As you prepare for your service learning work, reflect on what you expect it to involve, what you hope to accomplish, and what difference you think you can make through your volunteering. To do this, read as much of Mountains Beyond Mountains as possible, and then read the short teaching notes about the book and service prepared by UW professor Ron Krabill (at http://depts.washington.edu/ctcenter/krabill.htm). Then write 3 paragraphs that answer the following three questions.

i) Do you agree with Paul Farmer that charity always presupposes and thus perpetuates a division between the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’?

ii) Do you think that Paul Farmer’s own commitment to offering palliative care in the central plateau in Haiti provides a model of how to go on with service work all the while acknowledging that it is sometimes just a band-aid and not a solution to the underlying causes of suffering?

iii) By committing to doing a minimum of 20 hours of service work in the course of your studies, do you believe you can avoid the dangers of ‘activism for the activist’s sake’ highlighted by Ivan Illich in the quote used by Professor Krabill?

QUESTIONS FOR RESPONSE PAPER 2 (must be handed in to TA by Oct 19th)
By week 4 of class you should be in a good position to offer a preliminary assessment of the organization in which you are doing your service learning work. Write 3 paragraphs that answer the following 3 questions.
QUESTIONS FOR RESPONSE PAPER 3 (must be handed in to TA by Nov 16th)
As part of your own service learning you must attend the Community Engagement Fair being held at UW on Nov 13th, as part of Dr. Farmer’s presentation in Kane Hall. Here you will have the chance to either help represent the organization for which you are working, or help Carlson center staff make the event as interesting and inviting as possible for other students. After the event reflect on what you saw and answer the following three questions.

i) In what ways did the Fair succeed?
ii) In what ways did the Fair fail?
iii) Do you think that students who never considered service learning before approached the Fair as if it was a giant cafeteria of personal choices or as a more profound commentary on the complicated community-university relations in which our lives as academics are implicated?

QUESTIONS FOR RESPONSE PAPER 4 (must be handed in to TA by Nov 30th)
You can use this paper to reflect on what you have learned from your nearly 10 weeks of service learning.

i) How much of a difference do you think you have made?
ii) How have your views on the suffering of others (both locally and globally) changed as a result of your service learning work?
iii) How do you plan to approach your future as a result of what you have learned?