

**UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
SOCIAL CONCERNS SEMINAR**

**Latino Communities Organizing Against Violence
CSC 33959 / THEO 33959 / SOC 33062/ILS 33959
Fall 2013**

General Course Information

Meeting Time/Place

Time: Tuesdays 6:00-7:30

Location: Geddes Hall, Room 135

Instructors

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Course Overview

This seminar examines current efforts by activists and organizations working on violence prevention and intervention, with a specific focus on Chicago's and South Bend's Latino communities. Students in this seminar will gain a deeper understanding of community organizing and the consequences of youth exposure to and participation in violence. As an active participant, during a five-day immersion, students will explore the rich cultural heritage of Chicago and South Bend and interact with numerous groups and individuals engaged in responding to and reducing gang violence. Site visits and discussions with local stakeholders will encourage reflection on the challenges and opportunities that youth face in the city. The seminar is a one-credit hour course graded "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory."

Learning Goal

Students will engage with the challenges that are presented by violence through class readings, discussions, and community-based learning in Chicago's and South Bend's Latino community with government institutions and local organizations.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Understand and evaluate the role of the person, family, community organizations, church, and government in violence prevention and intervention.
2. Use Chicago and South Bend's Latino communities as a case study of these general processes.
3. Describe the historical and sociological facets of the Latino communities in Chicago and South Bend.
4. Apply the foundations of Catholic social teaching to understand their implications for respecting and working with cultural diversity.

5. Reflect on the connections between theory in class and practice on the streets.
6. Integrate course readings and community-based experiences to answer a research question of interest to you concerning violence in urban communities.

Big Picture Questions

Three over-arching questions are intended to serve as guideposts to give structure to reoccurring themes and issues we encounter.

1. Why does violence occur and what are its consequences?
2. What roles do various institutions and organizations play in protecting youth from the negative impact of violence?
3. What are the implications of our learning for broader social justice concerns?

Course Expectations

The seminar is a one-credit course graded “Satisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory.” To earn a satisfactory grade, you will:

1. Participate in the preparatory classes and one follow-up session
2. Complete assigned readings and corresponding blogging assignments prior to class
3. Contribute to the classes and the activities in Chicago
4. Participate in a re-entry experience in South Bend
5. Journal during the immersion and re-entry experiences
6. Complete the final project

Course Assignments

Blogging

For the purposes of the blog posts/responses, seminar participants will be split into two groups (A and B). Each week, one group will be responsible for posting short reflections (2-3 paragraphs) on the course blog based on the assigned readings by noon prior to class. All seminar participants must read these blog posts before each class, and you may comment on your classmates’ postings before each class. Following class discussion, the second group should post comments to at least two of the original posts within 48 hours of the completion of each class.

Trip Journal

During the immersion in Chicago and South Bend, you should write thorough reflections on your experiences from the day, integrating these experiences with readings and broader course themes. You are also encouraged to use your journal as a “field notebook” to jot down observations, quotes, conversations, and other notes from field sites. These reflections and field notes will be helpful for your final project. We will provide journals prior to the trip, and entries will be graded for completion, not content.

Final Research/Reflection Project

Before leaving for the immersion, you will come up with a research question to guide your experience at our community sites. Research questions are meant to be narrower than big-picture questions and tailored to each student’s interest. To effectively answer your research question in the final project, you will have to analyze their experiences and integrate them with course and/or outside readings. Sample research questions include, but are by no means limited to:

- How does poverty encourage and perpetuate violence in these communities?
- How does the experience of violence differ by gender?
- How do schools work with other actors to address youth violence? What makes their efforts more or less effective?

The final project can take a form that reflects your strengths, such as a 5-page paper, an article in the *Observer*, a campus presentation, etc. The instructors will share more details of the final project later in the semester.

Schedule of Class Meetings and Course Readings

Class 1

Tuesday, September 17, 6:00–7:30 p.m. Geddes Hall, Room 135.

- *Topic:* Introduction, syllabus overview, group introduction

Class 2

Tuesday, September 24, 6:00–7:30 p.m. Geddes Hall, Room 135.

- *Topic:* Roots of Violence – Individual and Social Impact and Implications
- *Readings:*
 - Aisenberg & Herrenkohl 2008: *Community Violence in Context*
 - Safe School / Healthy Kids Spotlight: *Parent Involvement Conference Brings Community Together*
 - Dominick, Corazon *Bring Together Community for Ceasefire Week 2010 in Cicero*
 - Sampson, Robert J., Stephen W. Raudenbush, and Felton Earls. 1997. “Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy.” *Science* 277: 918-924.
- *Assignment:*
 - Group A blog posts due by noon on Monday, September 16
 - Group B comments due by 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 18
- *Guiding Questions:* (TBD) – these are really to get at Learning Objective #1
 - Why does violence happen?
 - What are some of the underlying causes of violence that may not appear on the surface?

Class 3

Tuesday, October 1, 6:00–7:30 p.m. Geddes Hall, Room 135.

- *Topic:* Government and Community Organizations for Violence Prevention & Intervention
- *Reading:*
 - Cheryl Honey, “The Past, Present and Future of Community Organizing”
 - Tom Wolff, “Power-based vs. Relationship-based Social Change”
 - The New York Times, “Little Village Getting School it Hungered For”
- *Assignment:*
 - Group B blog posts due by noon on Monday, September 23
 - Group A comments due by 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 25
- *Guiding Questions:*
 - What models do citizens use to organize for social change?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of each model?

Class 4

Tuesday, October 8, 6:00–7:30p.m. Geddes Hall, Room 135.

- *Topic:* Racial Residential Segregation and Latino Communities in Chicago
 - Presentations on the community partners and organizations
- *Reading:*
 - Bennett, Koval and Spirou, “Latino Communities and Neo-Regionalism in Metropolitan Chicago”
- *Assignment:*
 - Group A blog posts due by noon on Monday, September 30
 - Group B comments due by 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 2
- *Guiding Questions:*
 - How have urban policy and immigration changed the social and cultural context of Chicago over time?
 - What challenges do Latino communities in Chicago face today?

Class 5

Tuesday, October 15, 6:00–7:30p.m. Geddes Hall, Room 135.

- *Topic:* Personal Reflection and Connecting to the Community
 - Students present initial research questions
- *Readings:*
 - Compendium on Common Good (TBC)
 - Hollenbach on Tolerance (TBC)
 - Reflective Practitioner (pp. 3-6. 17-23)
- *Assignment:*
 - Group B blog posts due by noon on Monday, October 7
 - Group A comments due by 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 9
- *Guiding Questions:*
 - How does Catholic Social Teaching relate to what we have been talking about?
 - How far does tolerance extend?

Tuesday, October 16, 4:30 p.m. at Geddes Hall Chapel

- Seminar Send-Off Mass and Dinner

FALL BREAK

Sunday, October 20 – Thursday, October 24

- Immersion experience in Chicago
- *Assignment:* Trip journals

Friday, October 25

- Immersion experience in South Bend
- *Assignment:* Trip journals

Class 6

Tuesday, November 5, 6:00-7:30 p.m. at Geddes Hall, Room 135

- *Topic:* Research, Reflections, and Questions
- *Assignment:* Bring your plan for the final project and course feedback

Sunday, November 24 by 11:59 p.m. FINAL PROJECT DUE