IDS 215: Willamette Academy Service Learning (.5 credit)

Course Overview

Course Description
This service learning course introduces students to issues of educational access and equity in the Salem-Keizer community. Students volunteer at Willamette Academy (WA) and, in turn, learn from and with the WA students, families, and staff. Tutoring will be on-site, covering basic academic subjects such as reading, math, science, and social studies. Mentoring involves hosting WA students on the Willamette campus for academic and social events. Additional volunteer opportunities will be available, subject to instructor’s consent, based on volunteers’ strengths and interests, and WA needs. Weekly class sessions, in general, will have two components: students will debrief their service experiences and study substantive topics dealing with educational access and equity, with specific attention to issues that historically underrepresented students face in gaining access to higher education. This course can be taken up to two times for a total of one course credit.

Student Learning Outcomes
In this course, students will:
1. Gain a preliminary understanding of the historical, social, structural, and economic factors underlying contemporary education in the United States.
2. Engage in academic service learning that applies and tests theoretical ideas in sociology.
3. Develop professional skills in communication, program development, grant writing, marketing, tutoring, and/or mentoring appropriate for Willamette Academy students, families and staff.
4. Contribute to the success of the long-term partnership between Willamette Academy and the Willamette University Sociology Department

Course Requirements
To achieve the learning outcomes listed above, students will:
1. Attend 90 minute weekly class sessions.
2. Do readings as assigned.
3. Attend an orientation, if necessary, at Willamette Academy.
4. Volunteer four hours per week at Willamette Academy.
5. Keep a weekly journal.
6. Attend 2 on-campus or off-campus education-related events.
7. Write a five-page critical reflection/praxis paper that applies sociological ideas to increase understanding of the volunteer experience.

Evaluation Criteria
This is a graded course and students’ performance will be evaluated based on course requirements listed above.

Attendance Policy
Two or more unexcused absences from either the weekly class sessions or the WA volunteer sessions are grounds for dismissal from the program. When you must be absent from class, notify Professor Heuser. When you must be absent from your scheduled volunteer session, notify the WA volunteer coordinator and find a substitute volunteer (email the listserv: <wa-staff@willamette.edu>). You should then make up the tutoring session by substituting for someone else later in the semester.