

VISA-X193-F01: Designing Your Life
Professor Daniela Marx
Community-based learning project: Gert Town Community Center

Students will be expected to:

1. Collaborate with Professor Marx on designing an appropriate logo for the Gert Town Community Center. Logo design should be completed by **Tuesday, September 15th, 2009**.
2. Attend an event at the Gert Town Community Center on **Tuesday, September 15th, 2009, at 2:00 pm**. This event may be preceded by a class tour of the Gert Town neighborhood (during the window on September 15th).
3. Work in four approximately equal-sized groups on one of the following projects. Students will be assigned to project groups by Thursday, **September 10th, 2009**. Students will be grouped based on preference and project needs.
 - a. *Signage*: This group will design, create and install basic interior and exterior signage for GTCC and develop a plan for more extensive long-term signage. The signage created and installed by the group should not only help GTCC become more visible in the community, but also convey its mission and services.
 - b. *Flyer/pamphlet*: This group will produce a flyer about GTCC and its services. The primary audience for this flyer will be external (donors, foundations, etc). This group will also produce 100 copies of the flyer and give them to GTCC staff.
 - c. *Information and resource display*: This group will reorganize the way information and resources are displayed at GTCC. The purpose of this project is to help visitors find what they need more easily. This project should include a thorough inventory of the Center's current information and resources. The project may include new signs or labels (in consultation with group #1).
 - d. *Space redesign*: This group will develop a plan to redesign the main room in the community center to give it a more comfortable, welcoming atmosphere (for children as well as adults). Depending on budget and time considerations, this project may involve reorganizing current furnishings, finding inexpensive or donated items to add to the space, as well as decorating and/or painting the space. Regardless of what the group is actually able to execute in the space, the group should develop a long-term space plan to present to GTCC staff.
4. Prepare a proposal for each group project by **Thursday, October 15th, 2009**. These will be presented to GTCC staff during class. GTCC staff will review students' proposals, provide feedback, and suggest any needed changes.
5. Participate in a workday at the Center on **Saturday, November 14th from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm**. This will be an opportunity for each group to implement its project ideas (or participate with other groups in implementing their projects).
6. Submit weekly progress reports on each group project to Professor Marx between **September 17th and November 14th**. Progress reports should indicate what has been accomplished during the week, what still needs to be done or decided, key achievements for the week, and key challenges.
7. Attend an end-of-semester celebration event at the Center on **Saturday, December 5th** (time TBA).
8. Work together to gather or procure any necessary supplies for their projects. The Office of Service Learning will reimburse up to \$50 in project expenses for each group (*only with appropriate receipts*). Any additional funds must be raised or sought from other sources.
9. Interact with Gert Town Community Center staff and participating neighbors in a friendly, respectful way.

10. Dress and act in an appropriate and mature manner during all visits to the Gert Town Community Center.
11. Complete a short reflection assignment on the project at the end of the semester, as well as a peer evaluation.
12. Seek approval for any changes in project timelines and deadlines from Professor Marx as well as Center staff two weeks in advance.
13. Every student who successfully completes the project will receive a transcript notation at the end of the semester.

Staff members at Gert Town Community Center and Catholic Charities will be expected to:

1. Communicate with students, Professor Marx, and the Office of Service Learning in a timely and responsive manner throughout the semester. The primary contact at Gert Town Community Center is Erica Anderson Suarez (eanderson@archdiocese-no.org, 504-488-4818 or 504-256-4832). Additional contacts include Shirley Lachmann (slachmann@archdiocese-no.org) and Brenda Kernell (504-488-4818, bkernell@archdiocese-no.org). The key contact at Catholic Charities Volunteer Services is Steph O'Brien (volunteer@archdiocese-no.org, 504-310-6979).
2. Arrange an event at the Center on **Tuesday, September 15th** at 2:00 pm where students can meet with community members and Center staff. Staff members at the Center will invite community members to the event and publicize it appropriately. This event will be a chance for students to learn about the neighborhood and the Center (its history, mission, programs, and current challenges). Also, at this event, GTCC staff will **review and approve logo design**.
3. Visit VISA-X193-F01 on **Thursday, October 15th at 2:00 pm** to review students' project proposals and provide feedback/approval.
4. Facilitate a class work day at the Center on **Saturday, November 14th** from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.
5. Plan and publicize an end-of-semester celebration event at the Center on **Saturday, December 5th** (time TBA).
6. Consult and coordinate with each group about their projects and events as necessary throughout the semester. Work with students to schedule visits to the Center as necessary.
7. Provide feedback to OSL and Professor Marx at the end of the semester on the performance of each group. Center staff will help evaluate the quality of project outcomes.
8. Consult with OSL, Professor Marx, and students about any changes to event dates and/or project timeline two weeks in advance.

Professor Daniela Marx will be expected to:

1. Integrate students' projects into class discussions and create connections between course material and student projects.
2. Give students some class time to plan and work on their projects.
3. Consult with OSL, Center staff and students about any changes to deadlines or project timelines two weeks in advance.
4. Facilitate an in-class visit by Center staff on **Thursday, October 15th**.

5. Assist students in planning and executing their projects. Assist students in seeking necessary project supplies.
6. Review feedback from GTCC staff, community members, and OSL on an ongoing basis throughout the semester.
7. Review weekly progress reports and monitor students' adherence to deadlines.
8. Review the finished products for all projects.
9. Assign and review final reflection assignments and peer evaluations.
10. Assign student grades for the service learning project on the basis of #6, #7, #8 and #9. Grades on the service learning project will count for 30 % of students' final grades in the course.

The Office of Service Learning will be expected to:

1. Consult and coordinate with students, Professor Marx, and GTCC staff throughout the project and provide support as necessary.
2. Attend one class session to distribute and collect liability waivers.
3. Consult with Professor Marx about reflection assignments and peer evaluations. If requested, draft, distribute and collect these items for Professor Marx' review.
4. Review the outcomes of all group projects. If possible, attend on-site events at GTCC and class visits by GTCC staff.
5. With submission of appropriate receipts, reimburse up to \$50 in expenses associated with each project.
6. Help facilitate transportation and distribute RTA tokens and/or gas cards.
7. Ensure that every student who successfully completes the project receives a transcript notation at the end of the semester as a record of his/her service learning work.

Transportation details:

- Any student who volunteers to use his/her personal vehicle throughout the semester to drive small groups to the Gert Town Community Center will be given a \$10 gas card to reimburse fuel costs. The Gert Town Community Center is located at 3425 Audubon Court, New Orleans, LA 70125, about 2 miles from Loyola, approximately a 10-minute drive. (See directions for details.)
- Gert Town Community Center is also accessible from the #39 bus (Tulane) and the #27 bus (Louisiana). Students can pick up the #39 bus by taking the St. Charles Streetcar OUTBOUND (toward Tulane) to the last stop at Carrollton and South Claiborne. The #39 bus picks up at Carrollton and Claiborne approximately every 20 minutes. Students should exit the #39 bus at Olive St. (between Earhart and Washington) and walk approximately 6 blocks down Olive St. to 3425 Audubon Court. Students can pick up the #27 bus by taking the St. Charles Streetcar INBOUND (toward downtown) to Louisiana Avenue. The #27 bus picks up approximately every 30 minutes at the intersection of Louisiana and St. Charles. Students should exit the #27 bus at Clio St. or Broadway St. and walk approximately 3 blocks to 3425 Audubon Ct. Students can get free RTA tokens in the Office of Service Learning. This trip may take up to 1 hour, depending on traffic and RTA schedules.

