

**UNIV 292 International Service Learning:
Urban Popular Culture, Inclusion and Service in Peru**

(Approved to fulfill the Core “Promoting Civic Engagement” Values Area)

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Course Description

This course provides an opportunity to learn about the cultural and political practices of popular sectors that shape popular *barrios* (Shantytowns) in Lima while participating in ongoing community-based programs.

Shantytowns were formed by migrants or the children of migrants from the country’s rural regions, who brought with them diverse communal traditions. They organized themselves to lay claims on the land, construct their homes, and obtain the State’s legal recognition and the provision of basic services. This process of organization, political struggle, and negotiation created new identities and shaped people’s aspirations and ideas of progress and development.

This course will explore these aspects of urban popular culture. We will analyze, from an anthropological perspective, popular social organizations and the development of strategies for inclusion (particularly those related to health and education services). We will pay attention to ideas about “development” that now form part of both popular and academic discourses, and analyze them with relation to students’ experiences in community service.

For this reason, the in-class portion of the course is designed as a seminar, to bring together community experiences and conceptual thinking. On one hand, the readings will provide us with concepts and theoretical frameworks to analyze the information obtained through the students’ community service. On the other hand, the students’ hands-on experience in the communities, translated into questions and arguments, will allow us to think critically about the theoretical material presented in the course.

Students will begin their five-week service-learning experience by participating in projects that respond to community-defined needs. These projects were implemented by PEBAL, a Jesuit NGO that works with communal and grassroots organizations in situations of extreme poverty in Pamplona Alta, located south of Lima. Students will choose from projects related to health, education, or social service, such as:

- Assisting with the provision of medical attention at a PEBAL-sponsored general hospital.
- Joining a team that focuses on disease-prevention, and visiting individual households as part of health education campaigns.

- Being part of a team that conducts follow-up visits, household by household, to monitor drinking water quality.

Students will work approximately 14 hours weekly during five weeks (About 70 hours of service work). They will meet with the professor for 4 hours weekly to discuss academic readings and what is occurring at their service placements. (About 20 hours during the five weeks).

In the Orientation Week prior to the beginning of this work in Pamplona Alta, students will visit various Jesuit community development projects, as well as, working-class or low-income neighborhoods and other parts of the city. In this way, students will have a frame of reference for their community work.

Course Objectives

The course is designed to accomplish three goals: (i) to provide students with an understanding of Peruvian urban popular sectors, with some specific attention to popular organizations and leadership; (ii) to discuss different understandings of development, in relation to extreme poverty; (iii) to generate awareness of the political and ethical dimensions of “service” .

In pursuing these goals, students will achieve the following learning outcomes:

- To explore what it means to think about the concept of development in popular urban contexts in the so-called developing countries.
- To examine the everyday lives of children, youth, women and men, as they develop strategies for social mobility.
- To use some ethnographic and reflective tools to evaluate possibilities for civic engagement
- To interrogate the notion of “service” and the students’ motivations for participating in it.
- To develop team-building skills

Expectations and Grading

Students are expected to (i) take part in community service responsibly; (ii) complete assigned readings before class; (iii) participate actively in the in-class portion that accompanies this service; (iv) keep a journal of the service experience that will help you to formulate questions for discussion; (v) write a final paper that links conceptual themes discussed in class with your service work experiences.

The final grade will be divided into three portions:

Participation in discussions	20%
Journal-writing and questions for discussion	40%

Final paper

40%

Grading Scale

A	93-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D	60-69
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	F	below 60
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72		

The in-class portion of this course will be conducted as a seminar; active student participation is required. Each class period will be divided into two parts: in the first part, we will discuss the assigned readings and identify the most significant points. In the second part, two students will lead the discussion, relating the observations they have recorded in their journals with the important points of the reading. This will be a graded assignment. All students are expected to contribute to the class by sharing their reflections and participating in the class discussions.

Assignments

- 1 **Leading Discussion:** For this part of the assignment, students should formulate questions to facilitate a one-hour discussion. In no more than 15 minutes, they will propose some questions for discussion. Then, they will lead the discussion, interjecting with questions, observations and counter-arguments when appropriate. The discussion leaders are not expected to do all of the talking; the more others talk about issues they bring up, the better.
- 2 **Journal:** Students will keep an ongoing field journal to record their observations about the site where they are conducting their work. Each weekly entry will have two parts: (i) a description of a significant event; and (ii) your reflections about whether or not the class readings relate to this real-life event. Further instructions will be given to help you with the observations. The weekly journal must be two (single-spaced) pages in length and will form the basis of your contribution to the class discussion.

Depending on the student's level of Spanish, in the third week of community service, he or she will be asked to interview local residents about their organizing experience and members of the host-institution about their way of linking their work with "development". These should be recorded in detail in the journal in order to be shared in class. (Further details will be given in class)

- 3 **Final Essay:**

As a final assignment, students will write a 10-page paper in response to two questions: i) what is the relationship between poverty and development? (ii) who is served in Service Learning? To write the paper, students should refer to their

field journal entries, the class discussions, the readings, and, as a larger frame of reference, the work done for the course “Contemporary Peru: Politics and Society”.

	<i>Topics for Discussion</i>	<i>Readings</i>
1° Week	Popular organizations and the construction of the city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meanings of Citizenship in Latin America by Dagnino
2° Week	Different understandings of development and Poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Invention of Development by Escobar • Power of Development by Crush • Development by Esteva • Poverty by Rahnema
3° Week	Grass-roots organizations, health and education public services: strengths and weaknesses	T.B.A.
4° Week	The role of Civil society organizations in health and education services	T.B.A. (Role of Civil Society) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Unheard Voices: Community Organizations and Service Learning by Sotecker
5° Week	Poverty and Development in the Margins of the State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where are the Margins of the State by Asad

Bibliography

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Rahnema, Majid:

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