

MCB 292 Experiential Learning

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the course students will be able to:

- construct a relevant and meaningful bridge between the MCB curriculum and social issues.
- communicate effectively with stakeholders, supervisors, peers, mentors and clients about needs, issues, and problems as well as offer insights, observations, and personal and societal impact statements.
- identify social and historic issues in science or a chosen field or career and envision their role in shaping the future of those issues.
- apply the scientific method to the experience to gain a deeper understanding of the societal issues and their role in them, both currently and in the future.

Process:

Students will select an organization with which they intend to volunteer for an average of 5-10* hours per week over the course of the semester. Selection of the organization is flexible. The experience should be a new one (with an organization the student has not previously worked with) OR should represent a substantial change and/or increase in responsibility or activity if continuing an ongoing interaction. Students must draft and submit a proposal in the semester **prior** to their enrollment term. The **proposal** should include the following:

1. Name of the organization
2. Contact person's (Supervisor) name and contact information for the organization
3. A written description of how the experience relates to the student's MCB education or future career goals.
4. **If applicable**, a description of how the involvement represents a substantial change from previous work within the same organization.
5. A list of goals for the experience.

Proposals must be emailed to Dr. Shawna Naidu (shawna@illinois.edu) no later than 5PM, the Friday before finals begin, in a given semester. Submission of a proposal is not a guarantee that approval will be granted for enrollment in MCB 292. Proposals will be reviewed and students notified of acceptance or rejection by the last day of finals in a given semester. It is highly recommended that you meet with Dr. Naidu to discuss and/or submit your proposal **BEFORE** this date, so that you have time to make any revisions necessary to enhance the likelihood of acceptance.

Grade (S/U): Students will be graded on the following items in the course (Satisfactory work will require regular participation and contribution at the experience and thoughtful and

*The expected time commitment depends on the number of credits enrolled with 1 credit equal to approximately 5 hours per week. MCB Honors students **MUST** enroll for 2 credits (a 10 hour/week commitment) in order to use MCB 292 to satisfy one of their MCB Honors requirements. Other students may choose 1-2 credits.

comprehensive work on the proposal, the reflections and the final presentation of the experience.):

- Proposal (10%)
- Regular, weekly participation at the organization (30%)
 - Qualified participation and the recording of such will be determined by MCB staff and the experience supervisor.
- 7 written reflections in response to prompts (30%)
 - Week 3: Describe your basis for choosing this particular experience. **OR** Describe your initial expectations for what you will do and what you may learn.
 - Week 5: Describe the knowledge or information you bring to this experience. **OR** If your experience seems comfortable or easy so far, describe how you can challenge yourself to move beyond that comfort.
 - Week 7: Discuss a difficulty or obstacle that you have encountered so far and explain how you have overcome that. **OR** Identify whether or not your initial expectations match your experience. If not, please describe. If so, please elaborate.
 - Week 9: Describe how this social issue is of concern for you and how it relates to your current career choice. **OR** If your experience involves working with others, explain how you relate to those people, how your approach is similar and how it is different.
 - Week 11: Writer's choice.
 - Week 13: Describe the effect that this experience has had personally and how it has affected your career aspirations. **OR** Reflect on how your experience directly relates to your major or career choice.
 - Week 15: Describe how this experience will impact you as a professional. Identify the least and most satisfying aspects of your experience and what you could have done differently, if anything. Describe what you learned about yourself. Identify how your experience differed from your initial expectations if it did. Finally, detail the most informative aspect of your experience.
- Final project with checkpoints in the format of the student's choice (30%)
 - Short, written description of chosen format for final project (week 8)
 - Outline (week 10)
 - Rough draft (week 12)
 - Final presentation/submission of final project (week 14)