**Experiential Learning for Social Justice Overview**

Revised: 11/29/2017 Original: 03/18/2010

The Experiential Learning for Social Justice (ELSJ) component of Santa Clara’s Core curriculum cultivates social justice, civic life, perspective, and civic engagement. ELSJ provides Santa Clara students with opportunities for experiencing the gritty reality of the world, thinking critically about the world, responding to its suffering, and engaging it constructively.

Three key elements are necessary for ELSJ credit:

1. Contact: ELSJ involves substantial and sustained direct contact with communities
   * Community-based learning experiences involve typically 16 contact hours over one quarter
   * Immersion trips involve at least 24 contact hours, normally over a five day period (or longer)
   * Other forms of community engagement typically involve 16 contact hours over 2-10 weeks (or longer)
2. Reflection and Integration: Direct community contact will be integrated through reflections and other assignments.
   * ELSJ courses include in-class engaged dialogue sessions
   * ELSJ courses include written critical reflections
   * The written and oral reflections must integrate the community-based learning experiences with the rest of the course content
3. Learning Outcomes and Assignment Mapping: Curriculum (including community-based learning) and assignments in ELSJ courses will be aligned with the following learning outcomes. Students will be able to

1.1    Recognize the importance of life-long responsible citizenship and civic engagement in personal and/or professional activities in ways that benefit underserved populations. (Civic Life, Civic Engagement, and Social Justice)

1.2   Demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the formal and informal knowledge, wisdom, and/or skills that individuals in these communities possess, showing awareness of own and at least one other perspective/worldview. (Perspective)

1.3     Recognize, analyze, and understand the social reality and injustices in contemporary society, including recognizing the relative privilege or marginalization of their own and other groups. (Social Justice)

See the Core Curriculum Guide for courses approved for ELSJ. The web version of the Core Curriculum Guide is updated quarterly. The ELSJ requirement can be fulfilled in two ways:

1. One class, incorporating the key elements, in which all students receive ELSJ credit upon passing the course (units variable).

2.    One non departmental independent study "ELSJ Milestone” class (one unit) in which the enrolled student participates in a pre-approved Ignatian Center immersion during the school break directly preceding the course. Alternately, a student may develop independent study curriculum and direct community engagement activities with a faculty supervisor/mentor that align with the ELSJ requirement (as noted above). To fulfill the ELSJ requirement via the ELSJ Milestone class, the student must also submit a proposal (including syllabus and community engagement description) to the Assessment Manager for Undergraduate Studies (Andrea Brewster) for the ELSJ Milestone **in advance of** beginning the proposed experience. The Assessment Manager will confirm whether the student’s proposal qualifies for ELSJ. Students will submit work products to the Assessment Manager demonstrating the achievement of the ELSJ learning outcomes, following posted guidelines.

When he inaugurated Santa Clara’s sesquicentennial year, Father Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, then Superior General of the Society of Jesus, noted that “Tomorrow’s ‘whole person’ cannot be whole without an educated awareness of society and culture with which to contribute socially, generously, in the real world.” Calling for a new Jesuit educational standard, “to educate the whole person of solidarity in the real world,” he explained: “Students, in the course of their formation, must let the gritty reality of this world into their lives, so they can learn to feel it, think about it critically, respond to its suffering, and engage in it constructively. They should learn to perceive, think, judge, choose, and act for the rights of others, especially the disadvantaged and the oppressed.”1

Best practices in ELSJ Course Design:

1. The community engagement activities should be sustained over the quarter, allowing for community relationships to grow.

2. To fully address Learning Outcome 1.1, ELSJ courses should include content that facilitates students' vocational discernment, esp. with regard to their civic life.

3. ELSJ courses should include both written and oral structured reflection activities.

4. To fully address Learning Outcome 1.3, the community engagement component of the course must provide entry into socially, economically, and/or politically marginalized or oppressed communities.

5. All ELSJ courses must include at least one (1) measurable assignment that allows for assessment of all three ELSJ Learning Outcomes (or more than one assignment that, across the assignments, allows for assessment of all the ELSJ Learning Outcomes). ELSJ FCC Recommendations for this assignment: Assignment is given later in the quarter. Assignment allows student to demonstrate an integrated (conceptual and applied) understanding of subject matter. Assignment design aligns with ELSJ Learning Outcomes (as operationalized within the ELSJ Core Assessment rubric.)

For ELSJ course curriculum design assistance, please contact Undergraduate Studies Assessment Manager, Andrea Brewster.

NOTE: Syllabus submissions (along with a Core Course Syllabus Approval Form) must be made to: [UgradStudies@scu.edu.](mailto:UgradStudies@scu.edu) The ELSJ Faculty Core Committee is responsible for reviewing and approving syllabi.

1 Rev. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., “The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice in American, Jesuit Higher Education,” address at Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, California, October 6, 2000.