

Instructor: David Scobey  
Email: [scobey@umich.edu](mailto:scobey@umich.edu)  
Phone: 764-7480 (Architecture)  
615-0609 (Arts of Citizenship)  
Office hours: M 2-4

Seminar meetings: W 2-4  
Seminar room: Reader Center  
Nichols Arboretum  
Projects Coordinator: Rebecca Poyourow  
Email: [poyourow@umich.edu](mailto:poyourow@umich.edu)

## UC 312: COMMUNITY PROJECTS IN THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

This course is an experiment in community-based teaching and learning. On the one hand, it is a practicum for collaborative public projects in the arts and humanities; on the other hand, it is a seminar that explores the significance of culture in community life and the promise and problems of collaboration between universities and communities to create new cultural goods.

**The Projects Practicum:** The course will sponsor eight projects, all organized or supported by the UM Arts of Citizenship Program. Each of you will work on one project of your choosing for the whole term; project teams will typically have from two to five students on them. All the projects have faculty supervisors or project coordinators, and most have both. In addition, Rebecca Poyourow will help me to coordinate the logistics of all the projects in the course. All the projects bring student teams together with community or professional partners, and many involve graduate student and staff co-workers as well. Although the projects are varied in their partners, themes, and products, all of them involve the collaborative creation of cultural resources: new K-12 curricula, radio documentaries, historical exhibits, dramas, Websites. Your project work will require you to combine various academic skills—research, teaching, writing, interviewing, design—to create public goods useful to the larger community. Nearly all the projects will require you to travel to off-campus sites, but you do not need to have a car or van-training to take the course. The projects are described in the last part of this syllabus.

**The Weekly Seminar:** The course will also meet as a whole for a two-hour weekly seminar; the seminar is essential to the goals of UC 312, and your attendance and participation are required. These meetings will both reflect on the larger themes of community-based cultural work and discuss the progress and problems of the projects. You will have short assigned readings for the seminar meetings, and the teams will occasionally be asked to report back on their work.

**Credit-Hours and Work Expectations:** You may take UC 312 for either three or four credits, and my expectation is that you will commit three hours a week of work time (including seminar meetings and readings) for each credit-hour. With two hours a week in seminar, and one-two hours a week of class reading and writing, my expectation is that you will be working on projects for 5-9 hours a week, depending on your level of credit-hours.

**Readings:** The seminar readings average 50-75 pages a week; they are meant as brief but significant explorations of the themes of the course. Please come to class having read and thought about them and prepared to talk about them. The readings include four books available at Shaman Drum bookstore:

Jane Addams, Twenty Years At Hull-House

Harry Boyte and Nancy Kari, Building America  
Dolores Hayden, The Power of Place  
Nadia Wheatley and Donna Rawlins, My Place

Other reading assignments include Website materials and photocopied materials that will be available at the Arts of Citizenship office, 232C West Hall.

In addition to the seminar readings, each project will have some reading of its own. All project teams will receive an introductory packet of materials in the first weeks of the term, and Julie Ellison's Poetry of Everyday Life project has two additional required books available on the UC 312 shelf at Shaman Drum.

**Project and Seminar Writing:** UC 312 asks you to do two, equally valuable types of writing. First of all, each project is oriented toward the collaborative production of some sort of publicly useful product: for instance, a curriculum guide for a third-grade environmental education unit; a traveling exhibit on the history of the Underground Railroad; or a script for a radio piece on coming of age in Detroit in the 1960s. At the same time, I would like you to keep a course journal in which you write reflectively about your experience on your project and your engagement with the themes of the course. The journal will work best for you as a tool for exploration if you make the writing straightforward but analytically serious, neither 'academic' nor casual: think with it. You will be required to complete and submit four 2-3 page journal entries over the course of the term—although you may write as much as you like, of course--and to culminate the journal with a 6-8 page "think-piece" analyzing and assessing your project work at the end of the term.

**Grading:** Both your project work (60%) and seminar work (40%) will be taken into account in your grade. My assessment of your project work will include the effectiveness of your work with your team, your collaboration with other project partners, and the quality and timeliness of the product you create. My assessment of your seminar work will include both your journal and your class participation.

## WEEKLY SEMINAR

### **Sept 6: Introductions**

### **Sept 13: Community, Culture-Making, and Place: A Model**

Nadia Wheatley and Donna Rawlins, My Place

**By the end of this week, you should be firmly committed to a project team**

### **Sept 20: How? Community Projects As a Way of Learning**

Introductory reading packets for project teams

### **Sept 27: Why? The Crisis of Public Life**

Harry Boyte and Nancy Kari, Building America, 1-32, 78-94, 112-147

**By the end of this week, your project should have finished its orientation and training**

**Oct 4: Who? Boundary Crossing, Social Change, and Personal Transformation**

Jane Addams, Twenty Years At Hull-House, 3-76

**Oct 11: Where? Building Bridges Between the University and the Public**

“Wingspread Declaration On Renewing the Civic Mission of the American Research University” (<http://www.compact.org/news/Wingspread.html>)

David Scobey, “Putting the Academy In Its Place”

**Oct 18: Where? The Contested Terrain of Community Life**

Addams, Twenty Years At Hull-House, 77-104

Dolores Hayden, The Power of Place, 14-43

**Oct 25: Works in Progress**

Reports from project teams about progress and problems

**Nov 1: How? The Politics of Collaboration**

Guest speaker: Liz Lerman, Artistic Director, Liz Lerman Dance Exchange

**Nov 8: Projects: Community History and Research**

Hayden, Power of Place, 139-87

**By now your project team should be planning or working on your final term products**

**Nov 15: Projects: Writing With and For the Public**

Guest speaker: Tamar Charney, reporter, Michigan Radio

**Nov 29: Projects: Community-Based Teaching With Younger Students**

Website, West Philadelphia Landscape Project ([www.upenn.edu/wplp/](http://www.upenn.edu/wplp/))

**Dec 6: Project forum**

**Dec 13: Project forum**

## PROJECTS

- 1) **The Underground Railroad in Washtenaw County:** This project explores the history of the Underground Railroad, antislavery activism, and African-American community life in the Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti area. Students will join a university/community research team, work in research archives at the Bentley Historical Library, Eastern Michigan University, and the Ypsilanti Historical Society, and help to create a traveling exhibit to be displayed in February in conjunction with a play about the Underground Railroad by Wild Swan Theater.  
Faculty Supervisor: Joyce Meier  
Project Coordinator: Carol Mull
- 2) **Emerging Voices: Life Stories and Youth Theater:** This partnership with Detroit's Mosaic Youth Theater, the Charles H. Wright Museum of African-American History, and the Residential College explores what it has been like to come of age in Detroit over the past several generations. Students will help Mosaic Youth Theater create a play about growing up in Detroit in the 1940s, do interviews and research to provide supporting materials, and write an accompanying curriculum guide. Mosaic's play will be performed in summer, 2001 as part of the Detroit 300 civic celebration.  
Faculty Supervisor: David Scobey  
Project Coordinator: Pilar Anadon
- 3) **Emerging Voices: Creating a Radio Documentary:** In addition to the drama project, Emerging Voices will work with Michigan Public Radio to create two radio documentary pieces about coming of age in Detroit during the era of the 1967 riot. Students will work the public-radio professionals to do interviews, research, and script-drafting for the pieces, which will be broadcast in Winter Term, 2001.  
Faculty Supervisor: David Scobey  
Project Coordinator: Pilar Anadon
- 4) **Southwest Detroit: A Multicultural Community:** Part of a longer-term community project on the history and culture of Southwest Detroit, the city's most ethnically diverse area, this group will do archival and oral-history research on the history of the neighborhood.  
Faculty Supervisor: Robert Self
- 5) **Students On Site: A Community History Curriculum (4-5 students):** This team of UM students will teach a five-six week local-history curriculum to 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms in the Ann Arbor schools, as well as helping to complete a curriculum guide for the unit.  
Faculty Supervisor: David Scobey  
Project Coordinator: Fiona Lyn
- 6) **Students On Site: A Community History Website (3 students):** This project will help to research, write, and complete an online collection of historical materials about Ann Arbor's community history. You can view the Students On Site Website in its current stage of development at [www.artsofcitizenship.umich.edu/sos](http://www.artsofcitizenship.umich.edu/sos). No computer expertise is required.  
Faculty Supervisor: David Scobey  
Project Coordinator: Michelle Craig

- 7) **Students On Site: The Poetry of Everyday Life (8 students):** This project combines research into the role of poetry in everyday community life with a writing and art curriculum working with 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students at Bach Elementary School. The project team will create chapbooks and design an exhibit for display at the Ann Arbor District Library in January.  
Faculty Supervisor: Julie Ellison
- 8) **Environmental Legacies (4 students):** This group will work Ann Arbor teachers and local environmental educators to revise and complete a 4-week pilot curriculum, aimed at 3<sup>rd</sup> graders in Ann Arbor, that combines local history with environmental education. Students will complete a curriculum guide and perhaps test the unit with a collaborating pilot class.  
Faculty Supervisor: David Scobey  
Project Coordinator: Erin Gallay