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Pilot Course: Educating the Whole Person

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Educating the Whole Person: Materials from Our Mini Course

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Educating the Whole Person: Materials from Our Mini Course

Instructor Reflections

Dr. Michelle Hayford

I've long wanted to work with the Reentry Center of Montgomery County, and this seemed like the perfect marriage of content and purpose to bring to them. I reached out to Jamie Gee, Manager at the Reentry Center, and proposed the opportunity to work together, bringing UD students interested in exploring vocation together with Reentry Center Academy participants who are doing the same, under very different circumstances. The examination of vocation, and our life's purpose, is a human endeavor that all of us must grapple with over the course of our lives. How we model for UD students the exploration of life's purpose as an ongoing discernment process that never ends, is critical to their appreciation for honoring their vocational journey. Having faculty negotiate a community partnership that elicits new vocational directions and interests for their own teaching and research is a productive way to model commitment to vocation in real time. Additionally, having UD students explore vocational themes in community with Reentry Center Academy participants enables them to see both the universality of human experiences of social responsibility and spirituality, in addition to understanding their relative privilege as citizens who have not been ensnared by the prison industrial complex. The use of applied theatre methods to aid this exploration enhanced the empathic experience of this collaboration.

Dr. Megan Donelson

As an instructor who was curious about community engaged pedagogy but not sure where to begin, I jumped at the chance to learn how to build community partnerships with institutional support and guidance. I was lucky to be paired with a colleague who had already established a relationship with a community partner and had a clear idea of how both the students and the community partner could benefit; I had the good fortune to learn how complex this work is, how time consuming, and how personally invested faculty must be, without having to start the process from square one.

Ethical collaboration requires clear communication about the needs, goals, and resources both parties bring to the table. This allows for creative thinking about how to build a mutually beneficial relationship. In our case, we were able to help the Reentry Center create marketing materials they can use to help showcase the work they are doing for the community. Our students had the honor of being entrusted with the participants' personal stories and perspectives as they reflected on the transition from incarceration to rejoining public life. In our own class time, students reflected on how their experiences may have been vastly different from

those of the RCAA participants, but their challenges are quite similar: finding their identities as they seek a place in the world, working to live in alignment with their values, and seeking out ways to use their gifts to serve others.

Teaching Activities

Applied Theatre

We utilized applied theatre explorations in imagery theatre and theatre of the oppressed tableau and characterization after participating in workshops with the Reentry Center Academy participants in order to process and debrief those experiences. Image theatre has students sculpt their peers into a physical shape to depict a scene that exemplifies an idea or a moment from a personal reflection that we heard. Theatre of the oppressed exercises have student directors similarly shape their peers into a still image tableau and then give those characters voice to hear the interior monologue of any individual character in the scene. It was helpful in debriefing the personal stories that were shared at the Reentry Center, to physicalize and depict those stories theatrically, literally putting ourselves into characters and relationships to better empathize with those experiences.

Some selected photos of these activities can be found [here](#).

Required Readings

The course also had the following required readings to prepare for and contextualize our experience in the workshops at the Reentry Center with Academy participants, all of which resulted in robust reflection and discussion in class:

"Service Learning and Community Based Learning"

"The Vocation of Advocacy: Enacting a More Just World"

"Overturning for the Common Good: Membership and Mutuality in a World of Markets and Meritocracy"

"Queer Vocation and the UnCommon Good"

Creative Writing

As part of the reflective activities on our final class day, students composed blackout poetry (description and history of this genre can be found [here](#)). Source texts were provided, including criminal justice and legal textbooks, sections of Ohio State Code pertaining to prisons and criminal justice, and several statements of human rights by international organizations. Students used these texts to create their own blackout poems – a few examples are shared below.

CONSTITUTION OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION¹

THE STATES Parties to this Constitution declare, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, that the following principles are basic to the happiness, harmonious relations and security of all peoples:

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.

The health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security and is dependent upon the fullest co-operation of individuals and States.

The achievement of any State in the promotion and protection of health is of value to all.

Unequal development in different countries in the promotion of health and control of disease, especially communicable disease, is a common danger.

Healthy development of the child is of basic importance; the ability to live harmoniously in a changing total environment is essential to such development.

The extension to all peoples of the benefits of medical, psychological and related knowledge is essential to the fullest attainment of health.

Informed opinion and active co-operation on the part of the public are of the utmost importance in the improvement of the health of the people.

Governments have a responsibility for the health of their peoples which can be fulfilled only by the provision of adequate health and social measures.

ACCEPTING THESE PRINCIPLES, and for the purpose of co-operation among themselves and with others to promote and protect the health of all peoples, the Contracting Parties agree to the present Constitution and hereby establish the World Health Organization as a specialized agency within the terms of Article 57 of the Charter of the United Nations.

~~forty soldiers. . . We are informed that each swift chariot was accompanied by 75 footmen or infantry, and each heavy chariot by 25 footmen, so that the whole army could be divided up into a thousand battalions, each consisting of two chariots and a hundred men.~~

~~with provisions enough to carry them a thousand li,~~

~~178 modern li go to a mile. The length may have varied slightly since Sun Tzu's time.~~

~~the expenditure at home and at the front, including entertainment of guests, small items such as glue and paint, and even spent on chariots and armour, will reach the total of a thousand ounces of silver per day. Such is the cost of raising an army of 100,000 men.~~

~~When you engage in actual fighting, if victory is long in coming, the men's weapons will grow dull and their ordnance will be damaged. If you lay siege to a town, you will exhaust your strength.~~

~~The greatest good in war is the speedy ending of the war, and every means to that end, so long as it is not reprehensible, must remain open.~~

~~General Helmuth von Moltke "On the Nature of War"
(1880)~~

~~3. Again, if the campaign is protracted, the resources of the State will not be equal to the strain.~~

~~Commerce diminishes the spirit, both of patriotism and military defense. And history sufficiently informs us, that the bravest achievements were always accomplished in the non-age of a nation. . . . The more men have to lose, the less willing are they to venture. The rich again generat~~

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¹ The Constitution was adopted by the International Health Conference held in New York from 19 June to 22 July 1946, signed on 22 July 1946 by the representatives of 61 States (*Off. Rec. World Health Org.*, 2, 100), and entered into force on 7 April 1948. Amendments adopted by the Twenty-sixth, Twenty-ninth, Thirty-ninth and Fifty-first World Health Assemblies (resolutions WHA26.37, WHA29.35, WHA39.6 and WHA51.23) came into force on 3 February 1977, 20 January 1984, 11 July 1994 and 15 September 2005 respectively and are incorporated in the present text.

(1) When fire breaks out inside the [redacted]
[redacted] at once with an attack from [redacted] without.

(2) If there is an outbreak of fire, but the enemy's
[redacted] hide your time and do not attack.

8. (3) When the force of the flames has reached its
height, [redacted] with [redacted] that is practical;
[redacted] you are.

(4) If [redacted] [redacted]
[redacted] [redacted] [redacted]
[redacted] [redacted] [redacted]

(5) When you see a fire, be to windward of it.
[redacted] from the leeward.

II. [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]
[redacted] [redacted] [redacted]

[redacted] [redacted] [redacted]
with fire [redacted] be known, the movements of the
[redacted] [redacted] [redacted] for the [redacted].

13. [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]
[redacted] intelligence, those who [redacted] [redacted]
[redacted] attack gain [redacted]

[redacted] [redacted] [redacted]
[redacted] [redacted] robbed of all [redacted] belonging [redacted]

15. Unhappy is the fate of one who tries to win
[redacted] [redacted] succeed in his aims [redacted] without cultivating
[redacted] spirit of [redacted] [redacted] or time
[redacted] [redacted] stagnation.

Chapter 12

BURGLARY AND RELATED OFFENSES

12.0 Burglary Defined

12.1 Statutory Modifications

12.0 Burglary Defined

The common law offense of burglary was defined as breaking and entering the dwelling house of another, in the nighttime, with intent to commit a felony therein. Each element of the offense is discussed in the following paragraphs.

A. *Breaking*

The element of breaking originally conveyed the idea that there had to be some type of forcible entry as the term, in its common usage, implies. Modern court decisions have somewhat extended this concept. Of course, if an accused breaks open a window or door of a dwelling house, this will satisfy the element, as it would if the accused merely had to turn a knob or twist a handle. There was some disagreement in the earlier cases as to whether pushing open a door that was already slightly ajar was sufficient to meet this requirement. Most later cases hold this is a sufficient breaking. The opening of a closed door or window will suffice regardless of whether it is locked. The modern test seems to be that, if force is used to remove or put aside something material that constitutes a part of the dwelling house, which is relied on to prevent intrusion, there has been a breaking. Pushing open a door that is ajar or tearing a screen over a window or opening a screen door all would constitute breaking within the legal definition.

Breaking, as required in the crime of burglary, must be trespassory;

Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners

Adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 45/111
of 14 December 1990

1. All prisoners shall be treated with the respect due to their inherent dignity and value as human beings.
2. There shall be no discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
3. It is, however, desirable to respect the religious beliefs and cultural precepts of the group to which prisoners belong, whenever local conditions so require.
4. The responsibility of prisons for the custody of prisoners and for the protection of society against crime shall be discharged in keeping with a State's other social objectives and its fundamental responsibilities for promoting the well-being and development of all members of society.
5. Except for those limitations that are demonstrably necessitated by the fact of incarceration, all prisoners shall retain the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and, where the State concerned is a party, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol thereto, as well as such other rights as are set out in other United Nations covenants.
6. All prisoners shall have the right to take part in cultural activities and education aimed at the full development of the human personality.
7. Efforts addressed to the abolition of solitary confinement as a punishment, or to the restriction of its use, should be undertaken and encouraged.
8. Conditions shall be created enabling prisoners to undertake meaningful remunerated employment which will facilitate their reintegration into the country's labour market and permit them to contribute to their own financial support, and to that of their families.
9. Prisoners shall have access to the health services available in the country without discrimination on the grounds of their legal situation.
10. With the participation and help of the community and social institutions, and with due regard to the interests of victims, favourable conditions shall be created for the reintegration of the ex-prisoner into society under the best possible conditions.
11. The above Principles shall be applied impartially.

Student Reflections

Arabella Loera

When I began this class, I had no idea what to expect. Based on the description, I knew there would be some theatre elements as we worked with formerly incarcerated members of our community. I knew I had to keep an open mind. So, that's what I did. I came to class each week open to learning and being engaged. This course inspired me from beginning to end and I am sad that it is coming to an end.

My experience was different from week to week, which kept it exciting. We started off by discussing the common good (and the uncommon good), vocation, and advocacy. These are all aspects of my life that I put a lot of focus on and really enjoy talking about. In my mind, these individual aspects fit together like pieces of a puzzle. We all have to work together to achieve the common good for everyone. I consider my vocation to be just that. I have always felt called to serve others. My future career as a lawyer is dedicated to the care and concern I feel for people being treated justly in every aspect of life. That is where advocacy comes in. It's the way I will use my voice and actions to serve all people. This course has been a good reminder of our responsibility to lift those around us up. It has refueled my fire.

Toward the end of the course, I was especially moved during our sessions at the reentry center. Throughout the various topics discussed with the returning citizens, anyone in the room could feel the shift. It is sort of hard to describe, but you could feel it when different people were struggling during a certain part of the session or when they were excited. All of these feelings were overwhelming, yet very impactful to me as a student. What I will leave this reflection with is my words for returning citizens everywhere because I have no idea where I would be if I never heard or don't often hear these words:

You got this. I have been inspired by you. I believe in you. I am rooting for you. I love you.

Aija Cason

In this class I learned so much about myself and other people as well. We learned lots about social justice and vocation. Before this mini course I didn't really think about the hardships and struggles of people that are reentering the world from prison. During our visits to the re-entry center, it truly opened my eyes to all different kinds of people and to not judge people because you don't know what they have been through. It gave me a chance to feel empathy for these new people I was meeting and listening to them and their stories. I will never judge someone that has been to prison again. This mini course was so eye opening for me because to be frank I have never talked to someone that had been to prison so hearing their opinions were and the stories of what they have been through as well. I also realized that there are so many more ways to get involved in Dayton's community and also help people in the social justice system. At the beginning of this course when I first learned what we would be doing in this course I was very hesitant if I belonged in this class but I have enjoyed this course and learned a lot as well. The class really forced me to do things out of my comfort zone and I'm thankful for that.

Jada Gee

No person can be completely “whole”; we need each other to fill in the missing pieces. These missing pieces can include a lack of experience, knowledge, and understanding. Without these pieces, no one knows the world’s full story nor how it would function with someone of a different caste. One might be biologically human, but personhood is internal. Taking this minicourse is a step toward getting those pieces back.

This minicourse was more than a take-your-child-to-work day. It was a group of people diverse in thought trying to collect understanding - to tap in and find another piece of themselves for the common good. I had some understanding of the Office of Re-entry, but I thought it was more of a factory, trying to fix people so they are consumable for the world. Then I realized that we are all broken. We are all in need of repair, nurturing, and healing. I have become more of a person by fully immersing myself in this experience and connecting these stories.

Anna Kopsick

This mini-course and its related field experiences have been the highlights of my semester. This course covered a variety of topics related to vocation and social justice, and each meeting sparked deep discussion and introspection. Our trips to the ReEntry Center allowed us to see the words in our readings come to life, and gave great context for some of the conversations we had had. I know that for me, this was an incredibly impactful experience. It's no secret that UD students often remain in the UD bubble, and are have difficulties breaking out into the Dayton community. Empathy is one of the more important traits a person can have, and I believe that this mini-course has deeply improved my empathetic skills. Though I do a lot of work in my personal life to remove implicit biases, I am not perfect. Interacting with the diverse population that works with the ReEntry Center has shown me how important it is to reach out to others, and that creating positive systemic change is one of the most important issues in our world today. I do not have all of the answers, and I will never pretend that I do. It would be incredibly inappropriate for me to enter a space and assume that I know what's wrong, and that I have all the solutions to fix it. Rather, this mini-course has encouraged in all of us a more asset-based perspective: rather than thinking that we are the solution, we need to look at the assets that already exist and are doing work in our community, and extend our skills and resources to where they say we should go. Engaging in this experience with UD peers, faculty, and staff has reinforced the beauty of empathetic response, and reminded me of how we are called to pursue the common good in all aspects of life, especially those that we do not directly experience. By engaging with people who have different beliefs and experiences than us, we are able to have a more global mindset, and make our pursuing of the common good more authentic and representative.

Catherine Forrest

On the tail end of this class, I find myself reflecting on the art of advocacy as the simplest of rituals, as common, vital and rhythmic as breathing. In this liminal space of higher education, it is all too tempting to fortify the limits, to fashion an echo chamber, to build with ideologies and

buttress with endless syllables that would fail any stress test beyond the hyperbaric limits of the system we create. We forget how to breathe the same air as the oppressed and convince ourselves that our high pressure chamber where the voice of advocacy is born.

If we left this space, we might realize we are wheezing, whispering brittle platitudes. We forgot how to roar, to raise up other voices that build with painful memories and buttress with hope of something better.

We might remember how to be thankful that we are still alive. We might see us in them and them in us and us together, and remember that we need each other. We might find that our integrity can only grow, our ideologies can only improve, our syllables can be filled with more meaning.

We might find that we can move between worlds, with breath in our lungs, with the voice of advocacy as simple, as common, as vital as the air we breathe.

Caroline Herling

Empathy was an essential pillar in the manner in which I was raised. I particular moment in my empathetic development took place when I was 17 years old and a popular classmate (who I did not get along with) was murdered in a robbery attempt gone wrong. I was suddenly in a position where I could not relate directly to what my peers were experiencing, but I could understand their pain without directly experiencing it myself.

Additionally, after taking an intro to community arts seminar course in the fall of 2022, I met several artists who have worked within the prison system doing art therapy. So, the potential of working with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated folks was suddenly on my radar prior to taking UDI 115 02. As a storyteller myself, I know firsthand that the first step to reaching proficiency in storytelling is by listening— a lot and listening well. Walking into the Reentry Center, I wasn't sure what to expect, which in a way, made it easier to go into the experience without any previously conspired expectations.

The reentering citizens' stories certainly did not disappoint. There was one moment— one story— that struck me in particular. Mickey Jr., after his father spoke of his religious life, opened up about how deeply his social life had to change in order to escape the cycle of incarceration. In order to do so, he had to break off a best friendship of over 15 years. Personally, I have never been in a position where I've had to break off and grieve relationships built over the majority of my life, but I can understand the pain and grief that comes along with losing someone by choice— and this is where empathy plays in.

Empathy is essential, in my opinion, for genuine human connection. There is immense beauty in the bravery that empowers one's willingness to be vulnerable enough to open up to another in an open accepting way. I think, in order to honor one's vulnerability— empathy is the only mindset to carry. I think this is a major reason why I was able to go into my experience with the

reentry center without any expectations and ready to listen. Half of being empathetic and emotionally open to receive the experience of others is to really listen. In doing so, while listening to Mickey's experience, I could feel the pain and betrayal he expressed through his voice and words about the immense loss he's experienced along with his hope for the future in his ability to build himself back up. Moreover, in my opinion, being empathetic is the only way to truly live.