EL 94a Syllabus  
Fall 2012  
(Two-credit Experiential Learning Practicum Course)  
Immigrant Support Services Practicum (ISSP)

Class meeting time: Wednesdays from 1:00 – 1:50 p.m. starting Wed Sept 12, Location TBA  
Instructor: Marci McPhee, International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life  
   mcphee@brandeis.edu x67744  
Office: ASAC 311  
Office hours – 3:30 – 4:30 W & Th, or by appointment – contact Barbara: ethics@brandeis.edu  
Visit Marci's office hours google doc to sign up for a time (link in my email signature line)  
No office hours on Wed Sept 26, Wed Nov 14, or Th Nov 15  

Peer Assistants (PAs):  
   Sarit Friedman ’13  Office hours Wed 2:15 – 3:15 pm SCC Atrium, or by appointment  
   Ilana Rosenbaum ’15 Office hours Mon 10 – 11:00 am in Mandel Atrium, or by appointment

Associated four-credit base class:  
ANTH 1A: Intro to the Comparative Study of Human Societies – M,W,Th 11 – 11:50 am in Olin Sang 101

Faculty on Record: Professor Sarah Lamb

ANTH 1a course description:  
Examines the ways human beings construct their lives in a variety of societies. Includes the study of the concept of culture, kinship, and social organization, political economy, gender and sexuality, religion and ritual, symbols and language, social inequalities and social change, and globalization. Consideration of anthropological research methods and approaches to cross-cultural analysis.

EL 94a Practicum course description:  
The EL 94a Immigrant Support Services Practicum (ISSP) is a 2-credit course that may be taken in conjunction with ANTH 1a. This supplemental course is designed to provide students with hands-on experience with community work and applying some of the frameworks and analysis methods they are learning about in ANTH 1a. The practicum is also intended to provide students with an opportunity to realize a social justice aim by collaborating with an organization that is addressing needs of immigrants, and other social justice/social policy issues of interest to the student.

The combination of the base course and the EL 94a should contain the following four elements:  
1. Direct or hands-on experiences that engage students intellectually, creatively, emotionally, socially, and/or physically, to enable them to experience the theories they learn and discuss in class.  
2. Unknown outcomes allowing students to learn from natural consequences, mistakes, and successes. (We are all co-learners: Instructor, Peer Assistant (PA), and EL94 students.)  
3. Opportunities for students to take initiative, make decisions, and be accountable for the results.  
4. Structured assignments and processes that enable students to reflect on their direct experiences critically and to connect theory and practice.
In order to develop their reflective skills and to enable faculty to assess their progress, students in EL 94a will present their EL experience in written and oral form. Students’ papers and presentations should focus on the learning process through their direct experience in the community organization, as it connects to their learning in the base course.

**Time Commitment:**

a. 1-hour weekly class meeting with the Instructor, Peer Assistant, and other 94a participants to workshop, reflect, troubleshoot, etc.

b. An additional at least 3 hours per week of individual or group work on project/practicum. Activities will include work on the practicum activities listed above, such as identifying an organization with which to work, collaborating with the organization’s staff to develop a plan for an activity or product, and implementing the activity or product. The 3 hour per week time commitment also includes the final presentation.

**Grading:**

1) Work with the community organization: 50%
2) Attendance/participation practicum class: 20%
3) Written assignments: 20% (5% per reflection for 4 assignments). See below for grading rubric.
4) Final presentation: 10%

Extra credit option: Attend one or more events related to the themes of the practicum and write a 2-3 page reflection connecting the event to the coursework and your community experience. Well-written reflections may bring up your grade. One or two extra credit papers will be accepted.

**Class Attendance and Punctuality:** Regular attendance is crucial to the successful attainment of the course objectives in this small, discussion-based seminar. Particularly because the class meets only once a week and class time is so short, **punctuality is essential.** Missing any part of class will be considered a full absence.

One absence will be considered a warning. Two or more absences will affect your attendance/participation grade by one letter grade for each subsequent absence. In cases of an accident, illness, etc. you must notify the instructor as soon as possible. Excessive absences will have a negative impact on your class participation grade and will seriously affect your ability to achieve the practicum learning objectives.

The five assignments are due no later than 12 noon on Fridays (dates below). Please plan ahead for weekend travel, personal circumstances, etc. In fairness to all students, late assignments will receive a lower grade.

**Community Work Hours:** Log your community service hours weekly at [http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/communityservice/awardandtrackinghours/index.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/communityservice/awardandtrackinghours/index.html). Please indicate what you did in the final box that reads “If you would like to include additional information about your community service hours please use the space below.” Be sure you click the box that reads “Send me a copy of my responses.” Then forward that email to the instructor and PA. Do not include time spent doing the homework for the ANTH 1a course or the practicum (readings or writing assignments). However, time spent preparing for the final presentation should be included.
Potential Partners for your community work:

1. Charles River Public Internet Center
   154 Moody St. 781-891-9559
   http://www.crpic.org/
   Judith Webster jmwebster@crpic.org

   “Changing the World, One Checkbook at a Time” (Financial Literacy)
   Student volunteers will tutor participants in a 3-4 session workshop series taught by Charles River Public Internet Center (CRPIC) staff, to be offered on Monday or Wednesday evenings in October and November. The workshop will cover basic financial literacy (basic budgeting, how to pay bills online, understanding loans, credit scores, etc.). In preparation for this workshop series, students will meet individually with CRPIC clients at their convenience, to do “intake interviews” and assess needs. Students will receive coaching in how to teach basic financial literacy.

2. Waltham Family School
   510 Moody St. 781-314-5696
   http://www.walthampublicschools.org/fam.cfm
   Britta McNemar, BrittaMcNemar@k12.waltham.ma.us

   ISSP students working with Waltham Family School (WFS) will serve as tutors/teaching assistants in classes with adults taking English as a Second Language classes and Life Skills classes. Students must be available for at least 3 hours a week during the following time blocks: T, Th, or Fri 9-12 a.m.

3. Casa Guatemala
   http://casaguatemalaboston.org/
   Mayte Lara mayte2381@hotmail.com

   To ensure a better future without forgetting the past, Casa Guatemala aims to preserve and celebrate Guatemalan culture and at the same time empower all Latino youth to become the future leaders of tomorrow. Depending upon need, ISSP students may help with after-school tutoring of middle and high school students on Monday and/or Thursday from 2:30 – 4:30 at McDevitt Middle School, 75 Church Street (off Main Street, across from Moody Street). Or ISSP students may be involved in planning a Brandeis campus visit and/or developing an afterschool or weekend Latino Leadership Program, to help Casa Guatemala youth imagine themselves as successful college students, and gain valuable skills that will prepare them for success.

   Other organizations are possible on approval, but these are strong partners that we recommend.
**Transportation:** Students are responsible for their own transportation to and from the community partner site. If you need help with transportation, consider the resources at the Experiential Learning (EL) website: [http://www.brandeis.edu/experientiallearning/forfaculty/transportation.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/experientiallearning/forfaculty/transportation.html) Particularly notice the ZipCar grant. You must register about 2 weeks ahead of time, and your registration will cover you as long as you are a Brandeis student engaging in EL activities.

**Assignments:**

- **Assignment 1: Practicum Learning Goals and Workplan**
  
  **Due:** Sept 28 (Friday) by 12 noon
  
  **Description:** Within 2 weeks of beginning your practicum, you must submit a 2-3 page reflection (double-spaced) in which you describe the work you have done so far on your practicum, goals you have set with your organizational partners, your personal learning goals, challenges you have encountered so far, and ways you foresee overcoming them. Or, in short, what would you need to accomplish by the end of the semester to feel that you’ve done what you wanted to do, and learned what you wanted to learn? Your paper also should connect 1-2 experiences in your community work to your ANTH 1a class learnings.

- **Assignment 2: Desert Roots Reflection**
  
  **Due:** Oct 12 (Friday) by 12 noon
  
  **Description:** Read the introduction to Mitra Shavarini’s book *Desert Roots: Journey of an American Dream* (available on Google docs). Write a 2-3 page (double-spaced) response paper connecting Mitra’s story to
  1) a concept or theory in ANTH 1a, **AND**
  2) an experience from your community work
  At the end of your paper, list the questions you wish you could ask the author.

- **Assignment 3: Informal Immigrant Interview**
  
  **Due:** Nov 16 (Friday) by 12 noon
  
  **Description:** Interview an immigrant. Ideally this will be an immigrant you have met in the course of your community work. Write his/her story in 2-3 pages (double-spaced), or submit original artwork, a short video, photo essay with captions, or other product. If you choose something other than a paper, please submit a short narrative of explanation and commentary. Your interview product may be considered for inclusion in the Waltham Public Library archive collecting immigrant stories as part of the history of Waltham. **See below for more information about this assignment.**

- **Assignment 4: Final Reflection**
  
  **Due:** no later than Dec 14 (Friday) by 12 noon
  
  **Description:** Write a 3-5 page (double-spaced) reflection, which summarizes your experience working with the organization, planning and implementing an advocacy product or activity, and working with the practicum, by addressing the following questions:
  - What did you learn about yourself through this experience?
  - What were your greatest challenges?
  - How did this experience affect the way you experience ANTH 1a?
  - What connections have you made?
*Educational/Theoretical
*Professional
*Social

1. How do you feel that your work with your 94a practicum supports or challenges the information you have learned in ANTH 1a?
2. What conclusions can you draw about the intersection of learnings from ANTH 1a and Immigrant Support Services in Waltham?
3. Did your work actually meet the needs of immigrants in Waltham? How do you know?
4. What suggestions do you have for future participants?

**Final Presentation:**
Wed Dec 12 from 1-2:30 in Lurias, Hassenfeld (upper Sherman): Full presentation (lunch included, open to the public)

**Description:** Present your project or summary of your work and experience throughout the semester. Feel free to be creative! Some ideas for final presentations might be: a video or slide show, a poster, a booklet, a scripted skit, the possibilities are endless! However, all presentations should include advice for future participants, and quotes or observations from both the ANTH 1a course AND your community work. Students who worked together on their practicum may work together on final projects.

**Readings:**

**Required reading:**
1. Selections from “Massachusetts New Americans Agenda,” (8 pages) available on Google docs. The entire report is downloadable at [www.mass.gov/ori](http://www.mass.gov/ori)
3. *Placing Ourselves at the Center of Student Learning: Service-Learning as a Case Study,* by Andrew D. Stelljes (7 pages) available on Google docs.

**Suggested reading (optional):**
**Notice to students with disabilities:**

If you are a student who needs academic accommodations because of a documented disability, please contact me and present your letter of accommodation as soon as possible. If you have questions about documenting a disability or requesting academic accommodations, you should contact Beth Rodgers-Kay in Academic Services (x6-3470 or brodgers@brandeis.edu). Letters of accommodation should be presented at the start of the semester to ensure provision of accommodations. Accommodations cannot be granted retroactively.

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W Sept 12</td>
<td>INTRODUCTIONS, structure &amp; expectations, forming teams for contacting community organizations. Choose day for ISSP Intensive – 2-3 hour training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| W Sept 19  | Class  
Before this class you should have read Selections from “Massachusetts New Americans Agenda,” 8 pages, available on Google docs. |
| TBD        | ISSP Intensive – 2 hour training                                      |
| W Sept 26  | NO CLASS – Yom Kippur holiday                                         |
| F Sept 28  | Assignment #1 due by 12 noon – Practicum Workplan  
By this date each student should have had an individual mtg with Instructor |
| W Oct 3    | Guest speaker – Prof. Lamb on academic connections to ANTH 1a        |
| W Oct 10   | Class                                                                |
| F Oct 12   | Assignment #2 due by 12 noon – Desert Roots reflection                |
| W Oct 17   | Class                                                                |
| W Oct 24   | Guest speaker – Mitra Shavarini, author of Desert Roots              |
| W Oct 31   | Class                                                                |
| W Nov 7    | Guest speaker – Andrew Flagel on immigrants and college access      |
| W Nov 14   | Class  
Guest speaker about the field of service learning. Before this class you should have read the third required reading, available on Google docs |
| F Nov 16   | Assignment #3 due by 12 noon – Informal immigrant interview           |
| W Nov 21   | No class – Thanksgiving holiday                                       |
| W Nov 28   | Class – preparation for presentations                                |
| W Dec 5    | Guest speaker – Prof. Lamb on academic connections to ANTH 1a        |
| W Dec 12   | Presentation in Lurias, Hassenfeld (upper Sherman) – open to the public  
ANTH 1a particularly invited. Will be advertised as an Ethics Center event. |
| no later than F Dec 14 | Assignment #4 due by 12 noon – Final reflection |
DATES TO KNOW ABOUT:

These events may be of interest to your Waltham community contacts, or to you for extra credit (see above). PRELIMINARY details follow – for the latest information, please check www.brandeis.edu/ethics/events

---

**Playback Theatre & Desert Roots: Journey of an Iranian Immigrant Family**

**Friday, September 7, 2012**

Time: 5:00 - 7:30 pm  
Location: Laurie Theater, Spingold

Experience migration’s triumphs and defeats, losses and gains as an Iranian immigrant family pursues that familiar hunger called “the American dream.” Celebrate the launch of Mitra Shavarini’s new book *Desert Roots: Journey of an Iranian Immigrant Family*, a deeply personal narrative chronicling her parents’ remarkable journey to America and then back to Iran. Featuring faculty respondent Kristin Lucken (IGS) and student respondent Leila May Pascual ’15, who will perform a song in her native Tagalog, written in response to the book.

In response to the audience’s reactions to the readings, a professional Playback Theatre group formed by Brandeis alumni Will Chalmus ’07, Nathan Porteshawver ’09, and Etta King ’10, with others, will be performing, offering this powerful theater technique to explore themes drawn from the book. **Persian refreshments will be served.**

Shavarini is a lecturer at Brandeis University in Women’s and Gender Studies and Peace, Conflict, and Coexistence Studies, where she teaches the fall Sorensen Fellowship writing course. This event is cosponsored by the Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Dean of Arts and Sciences, Education Department, Sociology, Women’s and Gender Studies, Women’s Studies Research Center, and the Ethics Center. For more information contact Mitra Shavarini, shavarini@brandeis.edu, or visit desertroots.net.

---

**National Cohesion in Insecure States: Experiences from Africa**

Michel Noureddine Kassa, Country Team Leader for the Initiative for a Cohesive Leadership in the Democratic Republic of Congo  
**Distinguished Visiting Practitioner** Residency: October 15-19, 2012

Mistrust, rivalries, and manipulation of the legacies of the past are among the hurdles societies face after conflict
on the way to national cohesion and peace. How can we pursue sustainable and ecologically responsible
development in a globalized and exposed puzzle of nations, networks and interests?

Keynote Address: Thursday, October 18, 2012
Time: 5:00 - 6:30 pm
Location: Rapaporte Treasure Hall, Goldfarb Library

For a full schedule of events (coming soon) and more information about Michel Noureddine Kassa, click here.

Questions? Contact ethics@brandeis.edu or visit our Facebook page on the Kassa's residency and keynote address (RSVP optional).

(THIS IS OUR FINAL PRESENTATION.
WE CAN SHAPE THE FOLLOWING PLACEHOLDER TITLE & DESCRIPTION TOGETHER.)

*Immigration Support Services Practicum Presentation
Learnings from a Semester in the Community

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Time: 1:00 – 2:30 pm
Location: Lurias, Hassenfeld Conference Center (upper Sherman)

A city where over a dozen languages are spoken at home, Waltham presents an array of opportunities and
challenges for a substantial community of immigrants. Join the students in the Immigration Support Services
Practicum, taught by Marci McPhee, as they share their learnings from a semester of working with organizations
in Waltham supporting immigrants. Contact ethics@brandeis.edu. RSVPs appreciated on Facebook.
In your work with your community organization, you are likely to meet and build relationships with several people who have migrated to this country. When you feel that sufficient trust is established, approach someone and ask if they would be willing to share their story with you.

Ideally the immigrant will be someone in your community organization. If necessary, you can interview someone on campus (student, faculty, or staff). S/he must be an immigrant: someone who was born in another country and now lives in the US. If you’re unable to locate an appropriate person to interview, you may interview a professional who works with immigrants. In this case you will gather stories of immigrants with whom s/he works. Then you’ll complete the assignment as if you had interviewed the immigrants yourself. This may result in a composite product, i.e. combining stories of various immigrants into a single story.

Write his/her story in 1\textsuperscript{st} person or 3\textsuperscript{rd} person, as a narrative, poem, short performance, essay, etc. If written, your paper should be 2-3 pages (double-spaced). Non-written products might be original artwork, a short video, photo essay with captions, etc. The writing or art must be done by you as the student interviewer, not by the immigrant. Depending upon the work, the final product may be part of the archive being created at the Waltham Public Library to preserve Waltham history and community knowledge.

In most cases you’ll want to change the name of your interviewee in your writing. If you’re including photos or video, you’ll probably want to take the pictures in such a way that the identity of the subject cannot be identified.

Of course, it is essential to build a level of trust with the person before you conduct the interview. Suggestions include reassuring them that their identity will be protected, and allowing them to comment on your product before you submit the assignment.

Possible interview questions might include questions such as these. These are ideas only; conduct the conversation in the way you feel is best, with respect for the person being interviewed as the top priority (NOT getting the story as the top priority).

- What was it like when you were growing up in [country]? Or what have people told you it was like in [country] where you were born?
- How did it happen that you, or your family, moved to the US? Why did you want or need to leave? Why did you want or need to come to this country in particular?
- What happened? Tell me your story.
- What would make you feel like justice was done in this situation?
- What were you looking for in healing? What would healing mean?
- What did you bring with you from your home country, and why? Is there a particular object relating to your story that you kept?
- What are your hopes for the future, for yourself and for your children?

In your opening paragraph, describe in 2-3 sentences how you know the person, your process in conducting the interview, and whether the paper is an individual story or composite story, fact or fiction (i.e. what an immigrant might have experienced, but not an actual interview). If you choose something other than a paper, please submit a short narrative of explanation and commentary.
## Assessment Rubric for Student Reflections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Reflective practitioner | **Clarity:** The language is clear and expressive. The reader can create a mental picture of the situation being described.  
**Abstract concepts are explained accurately. Explanation of concepts makes sense to an uninformed reader.**  
**Relevance:** The learning experience being reflected upon is relevant and meaningful to student and course learning goals.  
**Analysis:** The reflection moves beyond simple description of the experience to an analysis of how the experience contributed to student understanding of self, others, and/or course concepts.  
**Interconnections:** The reflection demonstrates connections between the experience and material from other courses; past experience; and/or personal goals.  
**Self-criticism:** The reflection demonstrates ability of the student to question their own biases, stereotypes, preconceptions, and/or assumptions and define new modes of thinking as a result. |
| Aware practitioner      | **Clarity:** Minor, infrequent lapses in clarity and accuracy.  
**Relevance:** The learning experience being reflected upon is relevant and meaningful to student and course learning goals.  
**Analysis:** The reflection demonstrates student attempts to analyze the experience but analysis lacks depth.  
**Interconnections:** The reflection demonstrates connections between the experience and material from other courses; past experience; and/or personal goals.  
**Self-criticism:** The reflection demonstrates ability of the student to question their own biases, stereotypes, preconceptions. |
| Reflection novice       | **Clarity:** There are frequent lapses in clarity and accuracy.  
**Relevance:** Student makes attempts to demonstrate relevance, but the relevance is unclear to the reader.  
**Analysis:** Student makes attempts at applying the learning experience to understanding of self, others, and/or course concepts but fails to demonstrate depth of analysis.  
**Interconnections:** There is little to no attempt to demonstrate connections between the learning experience and previous other personal and/or learning experiences.  
**Self-criticism:** There is some attempt at self-criticism, but the self-reflection fails to demonstrate a new awareness of personal biases, etc. |
| Unacceptable            | **Clarity:** Language is unclear and confusing throughout. Concepts are either not discussed or are presented inaccurately.  
**Relevance:** Most of the reflection is irrelevant to student and/or course learning goals.  
**Analysis:** Reflection does not move beyond description of the learning experience(s).  
**Interconnection:** No attempt to demonstrate connections to previous learning or experience.  
**Self-criticism:** Not attempt at self-criticism. |

Developed by Steven Jones, Coordinator, Office of Service Learning, IUPUI