ENG 4953: Community Engagement

Description and Goals

The purpose of this course is to engage in collaborative learning about what it means to study not only in a University, but in a community that extends beyond the walls of a single institution. We will take the time to reflect on the many communities that we as human beings, students, family members, and more are constantly influencing and are being influenced by. Rather than pretend the English classroom can be abstracted from what is happening in the world, this class will help all of us create a collective space for learning and reflection by pausing and engaging with each other, with our histories and lived experiences, as well as with the multiple communities and histories surrounding us. Through collective reading, storytelling, listening, and collaboration, this course will help you answer questions such as:

- What does community engagement mean to different audiences in various contexts?
- What is my own definition of community engagement, and how does this definition align with my own learning and career goals?
- How do I navigate my life as a student and a professional in relation with others in my city/local community?
- How do I collaborate as a writer and designer with organizations and communities in ethical and justice-driven ways?
- How can I use my skills as a writer, storyteller, designer, and humanist to work with/in communities?
- What is my responsibility as a member of a community?
- How do privilege, power, and positionality influence community relationships and circumstances?

In order to answer these questions, we will: 1) read scholarship about community engagement from multiple perspectives; 2) share stories and experiences about our own communities and backgrounds; 3) learn about our shared communities in Gainesville and at UF; 4) learn about and collaborate with members of our community to write and design tools for community support and engagement.

Materials and Course Delivery

We will meet for class in person on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10:40-11:30AM.

Most of our course readings will be available as PDFs on Canvas. However, you will need to purchase two books for this course:

1) [The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative by Thomas King](#)
2) [Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change Changing Worlds by adrienne maree brown](#)

Class Policies

As a community working and learning together, our shared learning space is interdependent, which means that we all need to rely on each other in order to establish a community learning space that works for all of us. I expect every member of our class community to be present when and how you can, and to do your best to communicate with me and let me know how I can make the class more accessible for you given everything that will undoubtedly change throughout the semester. Please do your best to let me know if you cannot make it to our synchronous meetings. If you are sick, get sick, or need to caretake, please prioritize your needs in the moment and speak with me when you can so that we can make a plan for completing your coursework.

In general, all work is due on the day indicated on the course calendar and on Canvas. Generally, I do not accept late work. Within the scope of these policies, I also understand that things happen outside of our own control. Please make an appointment to speak with me so that we can ensure you have everything you need to be successful in this course during this difficult time.

No two people learn exactly the same way. If you find that the materials are difficult for you to absorb, don't assume right away that you don't understand the material. Perhaps you prefer to process information through speaking or listening, but all I am providing are written handouts, making it difficult for you to process. Please speak with me if you would like to think through other options for engaging with the material and activities in the course.

Disabilities are visible and invisible, documented and undocumented: I do not distinguish between these designations. If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, I encourage you to speak with me as soon as you can about your learning needs and how I can best accommodate them. If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement, please speak with me and register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) as soon as possible.

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out.

The Student Health Care Center at Shands is a satellite clinic of the main Student Health Care Center located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health @Shands offers a variety of clinical services and is located on the second floor of the Dental Tower in the Health Science Center. For more information, contact the clinic at 352-392-0627 or visit the website at https://shcc.ufl.edu

Crisis intervention is available 24/7 at the Alachua County Crisis Center, 352-264-6789. Visit http://www.alachuacounty.us/DEPTS/CSS/CRISISCENTER/pages/CrisisCenter.aspx

Do not wait until you reach a crisis to schedule an appointment. Get the help needed to work through stressful situations that impact your personal life and academic performance. You are not alone.

Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC) 352-392-1575 offers a variety of FREE and low-cost services such as psychological assessment, intervention and assistance for math and test anxiety. Visit the website for more information. Online and personal assistance is available.

Assignments

This course will be organized into three overlapping sections: 1) Frameworks and orientations to community engagement; 2) Land/place-based learning; and 3) Storytelling and participatory design. Each section will have a major assignment. Weekly mini-assignments and reflections will all build up to and be included in the major assignments.

Community Engagement Positionality Statement (150 points total)	This is a major course project with several pieces that you will work on throughout the semester. In this assignment, you will: 1) provide your own definition of community engagement drawing on scholarship we read in this course as well as on what you learned through our guest lectures; and 2) provide examples of your own community engagement work. This can include examples that you created in this course as well as those created in other contexts. Your reading reflections, community journey box, community mapping project, community collaboration project, and other assignments can be incorporated into this statement. The statement will include both visual and written components and will be submitted in a digital format (using a content management system like Squarespace, Wordpress, etc.). You will present your community engagement positionality statement to the class at the end of the course.
Community Mapping Project (100 points total)	This is a major course project that asks you to conduct research about our local community to better understand how immigration, racism, colonization, and community organizing play a role in the

	makeup of our community today. Using resources such as the [Native Land app](), the "Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County" report, [A Way Forward Report](), [The Haitian American Dream Timeline](), several local organization websites, and research on the History of Gainesville and surrounding areas, you will create a "map" of the community. This map does not have to be only geographical; it can include different resources, landmarks, institutions, organizations, spaces, and places based on your own research and on our collective conversations. You will want to zoom in and be specific rather than just provide a general map of the area. The map can (and should) be both historical and contemporary. For example, you can create a map of bilingual schools in Gainesville, a map of how the city of Gainesville uses prison labor, a map of youth-oriented organizations in Gainesville, a map of the different languages spoken in Florida, a map that illustrates racial and class disparities in and beyond Gainesville, a map tracing specific immigrant narratives and experiences in Gainesville, etc. These maps will be research-based and include both writing and visuals. Consider using a digital mapping tool such as [Coggle]().
Weavetales Interviewing, Writing and Design Collaboration (150 points total)	As part of a community engagement course, we will not only read about and discuss but will also contribute to community engagement efforts by working with a local organization, [Weavetales](), to conduct interviews with immigrant and refugee storytellers, write stories based on these interviews, publish these stories on the Weavetales site, and host an end-of-semester celebration. This project will require you to practice your participatory design and research skills to learn about an organization, listen to and apply feedback, and reflect on how to improve your collaboration strategies based on a community's interests and goals.
Weekly mini assignments and reading reflections (100 points total)	Each week, you will submit a mini-assignment and/or reading reflection that will be a building block for the three major course assignments. See the course calendar for descriptions of each mini assignment.
Total Possible Points	**450**

Grading and Course Evaluation

Grades will be assigned on each project and your final grade will be assigned cumulatively based on your scores on each assignment. If you are concerned with your grade at any point in the semester, please come see me during office hours. I will not discuss grades via email

at any point, though I am happy to schedule a meeting to discuss your grade with you before finals' week. The table below outlines grade percentages and their corresponding letter grades.

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:
http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#grades

https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

Percent	Grade
93.0-100.0	A
90.0-92.9	A-
87.0-89.9	B+
83.0-86.9	B
80.0-82.9	B-
77.0-79.9	C+
73.0-76.9	C
70.0-72.9	C-
67.0-69.9	D+
63.0-66.9	D
60.0-62.9	D-
0-59.9	F

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/

Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

Schedule

This schedule will fluctuate throughout the semester. Please check the schedule on Canvas on a daily basis and be on the lookout for change announcements via email.

Week	Date	Due
Frameworks and Orientations: Civic Engagement, Community Engagement, and Service Learning. Where do we stand?		
1	1/5	Class Begins; read syllabus and familiarize yourself with course materials.
	1/7	Discuss: Native Land Apps Territory Acknowledgement "Responsibility, Reciprocity, and Respect: Storytelling as a Means of University-Community Engagement" by J. Estrella Torrez **Submit reading reflection to Canvas by 11:59pm:** What are the differences between Civic engagement, community engagement, and service learning? How do you orient yourself to these definitions? What are land acknowledgments, and when should you make a land acknowledgement?
2	1/10	Discuss: "Suspending Damage: A letter to communities" by Eve Tuck
	1/12	Discuss: "Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance" by bell hooks
	1/14	Start Community Journey Box Assignment: "A journey box is literally a box (e.g., suitcase, trunk, chest, cardboard container) that contains a themed set of photographs, selected artifacts, literature, informational texts, entries from travel journals, and maps that combine to tell a first-hand story of time, place, and culture" (Labbo & Field, 1999, p. 177). A Community Journey Box tells the story of the communit(ies) in which you are a member and how they shaped you as a person and researcher/teacher/designer. **Submit to Canvas by 11:59pm:** What is "damage-based research?" Research two businesses or organizations in Gainesville (I will provide examples in class). Would you say they practice civic engagement, community engagement, service learning, and/or damage-based research?

3	1/17	MLK Day-No class
	1/19	Discuss: *Emergent Strategy* pages 1-83
	1/21	In class presentations of your community journey box. **Submit to Canvas by 11:59pm:** What is Emergent Strategy? (How) do you see this concept intersecting with your own work?
Land and Place-based Learning and Research		
4	1/24	Discuss: *Emergent Strategy* pages 83-167
	1/26	Discuss: "Fugitive State" by Jillian Hernandez
	1/28	Discuss: A Way Forward: <u>UF Race Scholars on Support, Obstacles, and the Need for Institutional Engagement</u> **Submit to Canvas by 11:59pm:** How do you see the history of Florida reflected, or not reflected at UF?
5	1/31	Discuss: <u>The Haitian American Dream Timeline</u>
	2/2	Discuss: "La biblioteca es importante": A case study of an emergent bilingual public library in the Nuevo U.S. South" by Alvarez, S., & Alvarez, S.P.
	2/4	**Submit to Canvas by 11:59pm:** What are three things you learned about Haitian Migration from the Haitian American Dream Timeline?
6	2/7	Discuss: the <u>Weavetales</u> website. Start community mapping project.
	2/9	Discuss: Part I of *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post Coloniality* by Sarah Ahmed
	2/11	**Submit to Canvas by 11:59pm:** Choose two stories to read on the Weavetales storyboard: <u>https://www.weavetales.org/storyboard</u> What resonates with you in the stories? What else would you like to know?
7	2/14	Discuss: <u>"Family Separation and the Sunshine State" by Smith et al</u>. <u>"Understanding Racial Inequity in Alachua County"</u> <u>Common Data Set UF Enrollment Data 2017-2018</u>
	2/16	Discuss: "Cultivating Land-Based Literacies and Rhetorics" by Gabriela Raquel Ríos
	2/18	**Submit to Canvas by 11:59pm:** What are land-based literacies? What does land-based learning mean for us as people living in Gainesville?
8	2/21	Discuss: "Chicanas Making Change: Institutional Rhetoric and the Comisión Femenil Mexicana Nacional" by Kendall Leon
	2/23	Discuss: <u>Design Practices: Nothing about us without us</u> By Sasha Costanza-Chock

	2/25	**Submit to Canvas by 11:59pm:** Update on your community mapping project
9	2/28	Discuss: [An Educational Program for Nurses to Improve Culturally-Appropriate Mental Health Assessment for Nigerian Immigrant Youth in Central Florida](#) by Blessing A. Onyekachi
	3/2	Discuss: [An Educational Program for Nurses to Improve Culturally-Appropriate Mental Health Assessment for Nigerian Immigrant Youth in Central Florida](#) by Blessing A. Onyekachi
	3/4	**Submit to Canvas by 11:59pm:** What did you learn about Nigerian migration through the readings this week? How did our previous research on damage-based research and "consuming the other" impact how you read this work?
10	3/7	Spring Break-no class
	3/9	Spring Break-no class
	3/11	Spring Break-no class
Participatory Design: How do we collaborate without doing harm?		
11	3/14	Discuss: [Nigerian American Ethnic Roots: The Land, history, People, and Culture](#) by Kaly Ogbaa
	3/16	Discuss: [Languages in Florida](#) "Co-Designing for Development" by María Rogal and Raúl Sanchez
	3/18	**Submit to Canvas by 11:59pm: Community Mapping Project**
12	3/21	Discuss: "Interviewing Sideways, Crooked and Crip" by Price and Kerschbaum
	3/23	Discuss "Toward Projects in Humanization" by San Pedro and Kinloch
	3/25	King, *The Truth About Stories*
13	3/28	King, *The Truth About Stories*
	3/30	King, *The Truth About Stories*
	4/1	King, *The Truth About Stories*
14	4/4	Work on community collaboration project
	4/6	Work on community collaboration project
	4/8	**Submit to Canvas by 11:59pm: Community Collaboration Project**
15	4/11	Work on positionality statements
	4/13	Work on positionality statements
	4/15	Work on positionality statements
16	4/18	Work on positionality statements

	4/20	**Classes End** **Submit to Canvas by 11:59pm: Community Engagement** **Positionality Statement**
	4/23	**Final Exams**