

Prerequisites

Permission of course directors.

Time commitment

The expectation is 4 hours per week for each credit hour enrolled. This includes travel time, time spent at home or the library working on your project, or time spent on contact tracing. Students should follow the operating calendar of the agency that they serve. If a community partner is performing normal operations on a day that conflicts with a student's personal schedule (or UC's schedule), the student is expected to serve on that day (or to negotiate with the agency to make up the time in a mutually agreeable way).

Electronic communications policy

Online brainstorming sessions are available everyone Monday at 4:00 pm via the webex link on the homepage for this class on Canvas.

Academic integrity

The University Rules, including the Student Code of Conduct, and other documented policies of the department, college, and university related to academic integrity will be enforced.

Special accommodations

If a student requires a special accommodation they should contact the course director as soon as possible.

Pass/fail option, audit policy, and withdrawal policy

There are no pass/fail or audit options for this class. Withdrawal procedures follow U.C. guidelines.

Grading

Table-1: Grading 2020-2021

Weekly assignments	10%
Written progress report (Fall) Written final report and oral/poster presentation (spring)	30%
Community partner evaluation of student performance	60%

Grading scale:

A	94-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	0-59
A-	90-93	B	84-86	C	74-76	D	64-66		
		B-	80-83	C-	70-73	D-	60-63		

General information about what to expect during the course

- **COVID-19 precautions.** On-site activities at your outside agencies continue to be allowed, as long as you and your community partner are able to adhere to standard safety protocols: mask wearing, hand washing, social distancing, and any other specifications required by the agency. If you are not comfortable being on-site you can work with your agency supervisor to implement the remote contingency plan that you developed in Fall semester. Contact tracing has moved to a paid position format for Spring semester, so it is no longer available to community service volunteers. UC policies for the return to campus can be found at the following site: <https://www.uc.edu/publichealth.html>.
- **Online assignments.** Since this is the final leg of your capstone, your focus is on finishing your independent projects, critically evaluating the outcome, and preparing a written final report and poster presentation. To help you to avoid leaving this until the last minute, we will be taking a scaffolding approach to the communication of your project outcomes in written form. You will be challenged to submit various segments of your final written report by specific deadlines, in a form that is close to being finalized. This will enable you to compile the pieces at the end of the semester, perform some minor edits, add any late-breaking results, and submit an excellent document as your final capstone report.
- **Brainstorming sessions (in-class).** We have found that students appreciate hearing from their peers about shared problems at their agencies. To facilitate this, we have reserved a Webex meeting every Monday from 4:00-4:55. As in Fall semester, these online sessions are combined with the MEDS 3050 community service rotation students since many of the issues encountered by capstone students are shared by the rotation students. Attendance at these sessions is optional for students in the 5051 capstone, with the exception of the sessions on 01/25 and 3/15 where there is a group check-in. For each of the other weeks, I will be present online at 4:00 pm in order to answer any questions and brainstorm issues that may arise during the course of the semester. All MEDS 5051 students are welcome to be a part of the discussion.
- **Agency activities (in-person and remote).** Work on-site is to be arranged by the student in consultation with their supervisor. As in Fall, your work at the agency will continue to involve two components:
 - **Weekly community service.** This includes any routine activity that you do on a regular basis to assist the agency. For example, tutoring students, making phone calls, delivering food, mailing brochures, trash cleanup, etc.
 - **Individual project.** This is a continuation of the project that you developed in Fall semester.

Spring semester syllabus (5051)

Table-3: Spring semester syllabus (anticipated) 2021

WEEK	DATE	ASSIGNMENT
1	01-11	Assign 1
2	01-18	Assign 2
3	01-25	Project update check-in (required)
4	02-01	Assign 3
5	02-08	Assign 4
6	02-15	Assign 5
7	02-22	Assign 6
8	03-01	Assign 7
9	03-08	Assign 8
10	03-15	Project update check-in (required)
11	03-22	Assign 9
12	03-29	Assign 10
13	04-05	Assign 11
14	04-12	Assign 12
15	04-19	Final written report due

Guidelines for the preparation of written and oral/poster presentations.

Your written progress report will be in the following 3 sections:

Part I: Community service responsibilities

This is your opportunity to show case any routine weekly duties that you had at the agency that were not necessarily part of your individual project. It can be a bulleted list, as long as there is sufficient explanation of what the activities entailed.

Part II. Individual project

A suggested template for the written project is below. The number of suggested pages are for double spacing and can be adjusted, depending on what it takes to tell you story.

1. **Abstract** (250 words or less)

In Fall semester, you wrote a proposal abstract that outlines what you planned to do. At the end of this semester you will modify that abstract to reflect the outcome of the project (like a journal article).

2. **Background/significance** (3-5 pages, with at least 25 references from the primary literature): Using your literature search that you did early in the semester as a foundation, write a literature review that provides the reader with a background into the issues that confront your agency. For example, if the agency focuses on addiction, you need to explain:
 - What defines addiction? What types of substance abuse does your agency deal with?
 - What is the problem of addiction from a 'big picture' perspective (ie nationally, or worldwide)?
 - What is the scope of the problem locally?
 - Why does this problem exist (i.e. what are the economic or societal factors that contribute to this situation?). Are there any health disparities that impact the problem?
 - What solutions are needed? – this last section on what solutions are needed should lead the reader directly into the next section (your project aims). i.e. your project aims should help to address a small part of what you have stated to be an important need.
3. **Project aims** (1/2 page): List 1-3 aims that you pursued during the semester. Use strong verbs that can be linked to clear outcomes. For example: “create, design, assemble, select, determine, apply, demonstrate, calculate, explain, write etc”. Avoid vague language such as “know, appreciate, hope, understand, appreciate, etc”. It is OK if your aims changed, just explain why they were modified. Example: X% of the Cincinnati population are illiterate. The purpose of this study is to improve the reading skills of clients at the Cincinnati Literacy Network by accomplishing the following aims:
Aim 1: Develop a learning strategy to increase the ability of illiterate adults to read X
Aim 2: Implement a learning strategy to increase the ability of illiterate adults to read Y.
4. **Approach** (1-2 pages): What methods did you use to accomplish each aim? For example, if it involved meeting with people, indicate clearly the nature and scope of those interactions and what your role was. Did the project involve statistical analysis? If so, what kind?
5. **Results** (2-3 pages): Describe the final outcome. Indicate what objective criteria you used to conclude that the project was a success or not. If the project was not a success, explain why you think it did not work. If the project had to be changed along the way that is ok, just explain why and how it was changed. Example: All 10 clients were tested by the National Center for Adult Literacy to determine their level at the start of the semester. At the conclusion of the training, each client was tested again and 9 of the 10 clients succeeded in improving by one level
6. **Obstacles encountered**: Describe any obstacles you met along the way and how you addressed them.
7. **Limitations and future directions**: What were the limitations of the project and what should be done to follow up on this study? If you could do this project over again, what would you do differently?
8. **Skills developed**. Were there any hard or soft skills that you developed as a consequence of this experience? A hard skill is technical in nature, like web design or surgery. A soft skill is related to interpersonal skills that predict how you may fit into a workplace environment. Employers highly value soft skills and they look for evidence of this in job applicants. Soft skills fall into categories like communication, self-motivation, leadership, responsibility, teamwork, problem solving, decisiveness, working under pressure/time management, flexibility, and conflict resolution. [soft skills in health care link](#). It is important to take the time to think about what your soft skills are now, and specifically how your experiences have shaped them, so that you can clearly articulate these when asked during future interviews.
9. **Contact tracing**. If you volunteered to continue with contact tracing in Fall semester, you may include this in your final report. Were there any soft or hard skills that were refined by this experience?
10. **References**. Aim for at least 25 references

Note regarding individual projects that involve literature reviews for the agency: Some of you may be tasked by your agency to write a literature review as part of your individual project. The goal of this is to take advantage of the extensive UC library resources that are not available to the agency in order to provide a comprehensive literature review that will be of use to agency staff. This would be distinct from the final written report.

Part III. Contact Tracing Activities

If you chose to continue with contact tracing activities this semester, you can highlight these activities in this section (maintaining the privacy of your cases of course). How many cases did you handle? What was the biggest challenge of your contact tracing activities and how did you meet those challenges? How has this experience affected you personally? As you think back on this experience, were there any soft or hard skills that it helped you to improve upon (see above for discussion of soft and hard skills)?

Part IV. Marketing brochure for future recruitment to your agency (end of spring semester only).

We often hear from students and their supervisors that the agency would benefit from having a continual flow of volunteers to promote continuity of a project or a service after a student departs. To assist with this, you will be asked to upload a separate "poster flyer" (no more than one page) that can be used to recruit other students who might be interested in your agency. This is your opportunity to show case the importance of your agency and its mission so that other students may follow in your footsteps. This flyer should include the following:

- The title of your agency.
- A brief overview of the agency mission.
- A "job description" that describes what volunteers do at the agency. This would include any routine weekly duties, as well as any current or future individual projects that your supervisor would like to see accomplished. For example, it could be a continuation of something that you set up.
- A photo that captures some aspect of the agency. Note: the identity of minors must be kept anonymous (ie, use photos from the back of the classroom).
- A marketing statement that would attract the interest of the type of student you would like to see recruited to your agency. For e.g. "If you like working with children..."

Guidelines for the final poster presentation (if applicable)

Use the same sections described above for the final written report, condensing them into the format of a powerpoint presentation or a poster. The challenge is to be very clear and concise in order to convey the goals and outcome of the project to an audience of peers and faculty.