



Volunteering and Civil Society: Academic Perspectives and Reflective Practice (48822)

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Tentative syllabus

Course Overview:

This course is designed for international students participating in a summer volunteer program in Israel. It provides an academic framework for understanding volunteering and the role of civil society while integrating a reflective component throughout. Students will engage with theoretical perspectives and real-world data to analyze diverse volunteering modalities and contemporary trends, and they will continuously reflect on how these insights relate to their own volunteer experiences.

Course Objectives:

- Introduce and analyze various definitions and dimensions of volunteering
- Examine the role of civil society in promoting volunteer initiatives
- Compare different styles and modalities of volunteering
- Evaluate the multifaceted impacts of volunteer work on individuals, communities, and society
- Discuss contemporary shifts and trends in volunteering practices
- Integrate reflective practice to connect academic content with personal volunteer experiences

Course Structure:

- **Duration:** 7 sessions (each 90 minutes)

- **Format:** Lectures, discussions, and interactive sessions
 - **Reflective Component:** Embedded throughout the course, encouraging continuous self-reflection and critical analysis of volunteer experiences
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Session Outline:

- **Session 1 – September 3rd: Introduction & Course Orientation**
 - Course overview, objectives, and structure
 - Introduction to the reflective practice component and participant introductions
 - **Defining Volunteering:** Examination of academic and practical definitions of volunteering
- **Session 2 – September 7th: Civil Society and Volunteerism**
 - Analysis of the role of civil society in fostering volunteer work
 - Comparative insights between Israeli initiatives and practices in the US/Canada
- **Session 3 – September 9th: Impacts of Volunteering and Motivation**
 - Evaluation of the benefits and challenges of volunteer work
 - Discussion of impacts on the volunteer, beneficiaries, community, and society
 - Why do people volunteer? An exploration of volunteer motivation theory
- **Session 4 – September 11th: Global Trends and the Impact of Conflict**
 - Review of current data on volunteering in Israel and globally
 - Discussion on how conflict influences volunteer practices and community responses
- **Session 5 – September 15th: Volunteering Styles and Fields**
 - Overview of different volunteering modalities (e.g., online, one-time, family, long-term)
 - Presentation of case studies and models for diverse volunteer engagements
 - Equity, diversity and inclusion in volunteering

- **Session 6 - September 21st: The dark side of volunteering**
 - The possible negative implications of volunteering
 - Discussion of ethical boundaries and diverse perspectives
 - **Session 7 – September 28th: The new breed of volunteers**
 - Exploration of how social, political, and economic trends are reshaping volunteering
 - Analysis of shifts in volunteer profiles and expectations
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Reflective Practice Component:

The course integrates reflective practice as a core element. Students are encouraged to continuously examine their volunteer experiences, personal growth, and the broader impact of their work, as reflected by the studied material and in general. This reflective process will help bridge academic theories with practical realities, fostering deeper insights into both individual and societal change.

Assessment:

- Active participation in class discussions and interactive sessions
- Continuous engagement in reflective practice throughout the course

This format provides a concise yet comprehensive outline of the course topics and highlights the integration of reflective practice, suitable for university submission.

Please Note: Students have the option to receive 1 academic credit for their participation in this course. To do so, they must complete the final assignment, as detailed in the next paragraph. This is optional, and students who choose to receive credit will be required to submit the assignment to the instructor.

Participants may choose to receive a pass/fail grade for the course or, if they complete the final assignment and earn academic credit, they will receive a numeric grade.

Final Assignment:

The final assignment will integrate your volunteer experience with the academic concepts covered in the course. The assignment should be concise yet insightful, allowing you to reflect on personal growth while connecting your practical experience with theoretical frameworks.

Assignment Requirements:

- The assignment should be a reflective essay: A written paper of 1,000-2,000 words.
- You should integrate at least 3 papers from the course reading list, in part 2 of your essay (Theoretical Connection)

Assignment parts:

1. Personal Reflection:

- Describe your motivations for volunteering and your overall experience in Israel.
- Reflect on how your experiences align with or differ from your expectations or from your previous experience in volunteering

2. Theoretical Connection:

- Link your personal observations to key course topics such as definitions of volunteering, the role of civil society, different volunteering styles, and contemporary trends.
- Incorporate insights from the core readings and discussions held during the sessions.

3. Impact Analysis:

- Analyze the effects of your volunteer work on yourself, the community, and society at large.
- Discuss any challenges encountered and lessons learned. Discuss any ethical issues you encountered, or any dark side you observed.

4. Future Implications:

- Conclude with recommendations or ideas on how volunteer practices can be improved.
- Reflect on how this experience might influence your future engagement in volunteer work or your future career.

Course reading list:

Hustinx, L., Cnaan, R. A., & Handy, F. (2010). **Navigating theories of volunteering: A hybrid map for a complex phenomenon.** *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 4(4), 410–434.

Wilson, J. (2012). **Volunteerism research: A review essay.** *Nonprofit and voluntary sector quarterly*, 41(2), 176-212.

Dekker, P. (2008). **Voluntary associations, volunteering and the ideals of civil society.** *Boletín CIES*, 59, 1-18.

Chen, J., Wang, C., & Tang, Y. (2022). **Knowledge mapping of volunteer motivation: A bibliometric analysis and cross-cultural comparative study.** *Frontiers in psychology*, 13, 883150.

Nichol, B., Wilson, R., Rodrigues, A., & Haighton, C. (2024). **Exploring the effects of volunteering on the social, mental, and physical health and well-being of volunteers: an umbrella review.** *Voluntas: international journal of voluntary and nonprofit organizations*, 35(1), 97-128.

Eimhjellen, I., Steen-Johnsen, K., Folkestad, B., & Ødegård, G. (2018). **Changing patterns of volunteering and participation.** In *Scandinavian civil society and social transformations: The case of Norway* (pp. 25-65). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Eisner, D., Grimm Jr, R. T., Maynard, S., & Washburn, S. (2009). **The new volunteer workforce.** *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 7(1), 32-37.

Hustinx, L. (2001). **Individualization and new styles of youth volunteering: An empirical exploration.** *Voluntary Action*, 3(2), 57-76.

Haas, B., & Moinina, V. (2021). **Inclusive Volunteering for Global Equality—Linking Decolonisation & Diversity.** *Inclusive Volunteering for Global Equality*, 2.

Hustinx, L., Grubb, A., Rameder, P., & Shachar, I. Y. (2022). **Inequality in volunteering: Building a new research front.** *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 33(1), 1-17.