

Guidelines for Service Learning Project and Paper

The purpose of this project is to work with classmates in applying principles of human behavior to an advocacy effort. Over the course of this semester, you will learn about a variety of topics that are relevant to advocacy, including techniques for capturing the attention of your audience, avenues for persuasion and attitude change, principles of shaping human behavior, methods for harnessing the power of conformity to promote a cause, positive responses to stress, and healthy models of coping. You will apply this scientific knowledge to a real-world cause, with the aims of (1) understanding the ways in which psychological science can be useful in making positive changes in our environment, (2) promoting a positive change in culture on the College of Charleston campus, and (3) learning how to advocate effectively for a cause. The project consists of two parts: (a) The group initiative (worth 75 points) and (b) an individual paper (worth 75 points) that highlights the ways in which your initiative utilized principles of psychological science to effect social change.

Group Project Initiative – 75 Points

Your group should develop a campus-wide (or, even better, community-wide or even nation-wide) initiative to advocate for a group or cause. You can choose from a wide array of advocacy projects, including things like environmental issues, human rights, health, safety, etc. As one example, consider the development of a campaign to end the inappropriate use of the word “retard.” We will review this example in class. Other examples might include campaigns to end texting while driving, promote positive body image, increase recycling or conservation efforts, support victims of crime or disaster, or find a cure for a disease. Your group must work together to select a campaign topic, and you must get approval from me. Once you decide upon a cause, you should use what you have learned in class about human behavior to determine your methodology. You can sell t-shirts, make posters, produce a video, create a website, make arm bracelets, write a play, develop a campus event (e.g., invite a speaker from Special Olympics, host a dunking booth to “drown out the word retard”), etc. Whatever you do, you need to be able to justify your methods with scientific data. If you are ambitious, there are potential funds to support such projects (e.g., <http://www.dosomething.org/grants>). These are small sources of support (e.g., \$50 - \$500), and you must apply for them. Of course any efforts to secure external support will reflect positively on your initiative grade.

Your PROJECT will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Impact: How big was the impact across campus and beyond? This might be measured in a variety of ways – e.g., for a website or online video - how many hits; for t-shirts – how many were sold and what were the profits used for; for an event – how many attended; for posters – were they visible across campus? Any event that attracts local or national media attention (positive attention!) will receive bonus points for impact.
2. Application of Psychological Science: There should be evidence that you have applied the principles of human behavior and information processing in designing and implementing your initiative.
3. Creativity and Innovation: In what ways does your initiative go beyond current efforts? What is new and noteworthy about your initiative?
4. Extent of the Project and Presentation: How much time and effort was involved in the project? Was the presentation to the class clear, interesting, and compelling? Were all project members involved?

Peer Evaluation Form

Please complete a separate form for each team member

Your name _____

Names of others in your group _____

Type of project completed _____

Name of person you are evaluating _____

Check the item that best describes this team member's role on the project:

____ This person was the project leader (or one of the leaders). S/he was significantly involved in the development of the concept for the project, and facilitated the execution of the project.

____ Although this person was not the project leader, s/he was significantly involved in the project and effectively completed every one of his/her assigned tasks. S/he may have helped to organize the group, or took responsibility for an important component of the project.

____ This person was reasonably effective in executing his/her portion of the project. This person was not a team leader or organizer, nor did s/he assume responsibility for a significant part of the project. Nonetheless, this person did contribute something meaningful contribute to the project.

____ This person contributed quite minimally to the project. S/he may not have attended all the meetings, and his/her contribution to the project was relatively minor.

____ This person did not contribute at all to the project.

____ Other (please describe) _____

If you were grading this person with respect to the completion of his/her portion of the project, what numeric grade would you give (on a 100 point scale, with 90+ as an A, 80+ as a B, etc.)?

Guidelines for Service Learning PAPER – 75 Points

Once your service learning project is complete – or nearly complete – it is time to put your paper together. Each student is to write his or her own individual paper. **Group effort is not allowed for the paper.** Please follow all of the guidelines below, including those for format and content. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a lower grade.

Each student on each team will write an individual paper that details the ways in which the project utilizes principles of psychological science. You should make an effort to integrate research discussed in class and in your book from the various disciplines in psychology (social, conditioning and learning, attention and memory, clinical, etc) and highlight the various ways in which your initiative capitalized on this research to effect social change. **All papers must be stapled** and turned in at the beginning of class on November 25th. Papers will be penalized 5 points for every day they are late. All students must write their own papers and strictly adhere to the honor code. You will receive an individual grade for your paper.

FORMAT (10 points)

--Cover page. All papers should include a cover page with the name of the project, your name, and a list of all group members.

--Main text. The main body of your paper should be 6-10 pages in length, double-spaced, with one inch margins. All font should be 12 pt. **Please do NOT include an extra space in between paragraphs** (note: MSWord inserts this space automatically, so be sure to remove it).

--Staples. Be sure your paper is stapled!!

--Peer ratings. Please include a separate peer rating sheet for EACH member of your group. Be sure to use the format included with this handout.

CONTENT (65 points)

The first section of your paper should provide a detailed overview of the nature of your project. Do not list the number and time of planning meetings, but do describe the steps that were necessary to execute the project. For example, if you organized a walk, please describe the steps involved in organizing the walk, including permits, advertising, route development, fees, number of walkers, what was done with the proceeds, etc. Alternatively, if you created a website, be sure to discuss the items included on the site, the rationale for including them, the number of hits, your strategy for website promotion, and a link. If you opted to create posters, please describe in detail the design process (how/why did you select your design), how the posters were printed, how many posters you created, where they were hung, and how you assessed impact. If you opted for a different kind of project, use the above guidelines to determine the nature of the information that should be included for the project description. Part of your grade will be determined by the nature and extent of your project (15 points).

After your project description, please include the rationale for your selection of methodology – why did you choose your particular technique or method of advocacy? What principles of psychology influenced your selection? Please describe in detail the ways in which psychological science motivated your project design. For example, if you chose to create a walk, why did you do so? What have you learned about human behavior (e.g., attention, perception, attitude change, modeling, conformity, operant and classical conditioning) that influenced your project design? **Give specific examples for the ways in which psychological science influenced your project development and execution.** Discuss the underlying scientific principles on which you based your

design, and evaluate whether or not they were effective in application. For example, if you set up a table on Cougar Mall, what techniques did you use to attract people to your table? Did those techniques work? If not, please discuss why you think they did not work, and what you might do differently in the future. Did you learn anything new about psychological science as a result of the project? Were some of your expectations confirmed? Were some contradicted? Part of your grade will be determined by the extent to which your approach incorporated the science of human behavior, and your critical discussion of your efforts (45 points).

Finally, please include at least one paragraph describing the ways in which this experience impacted your own attitudes and perspectives. What did you learn about group projects? What did you learn about advocacy? Did participation in this project impact your views about your cause? (5 points).