New Orleans Service Learning Experience – Spring 2014

“The City that Care Forgot: The Roots, Ruin, and Rebirth of New Orleans”

Macaulay Honors College and Baruch College in partnership with Rebuilding Together New Orleans and Operation Nehemiah

COURSE INFORMATION

Title: “The City that Care Forgot: The Roots, Ruin, and Rebirth of New Orleans”
Number: SOC/ANT/BLS/LTS 3130H

Instructor: Professor Ted Henken
Location: Macaulay Honors College, 35 West 67th Street
Time: Fridays, 11:10 a.m.–2:05 p.m.

Enrollment: Students will be allowed to register for the course according to campus registration schedule after acceptance into the course. A successful application must be submitted to guarantee acceptance to the course. (See below.)

Applications are due by Monday, November 11.

Limit: 24 students

New Orleans Service Learning Experience – 1
COURSE DESCRIPTION

Building on the success of previous “alternative spring break” service-learning experiences between April 2007 and April 2013, Macaulay Honors College and Baruch College are planning another service-learning course and trip to New Orleans in Spring 2014. While the course itself will take place during the spring semester, students will travel to New Orleans for 12 days during CUNY’s Spring Break, Friday, April 11 – Tuesday, April 22, 2014.

This is an interdisciplinary honors course taught from historical, cultural, and sociological perspectives that will revisit the week of August 29, 2005, when Hurricane Katrina devastated the city of New Orleans and the wider Gulf Coast region. Our goal is to understand what unfolded during those days and during the subsequent weeks and months, linking those events to the city’s storied past and still uncertain future. The course will focus on how human inaction transformed a natural disaster into an ongoing socioeconomic, political, and humanitarian catastrophe. During the course, we will uncover specific lessons that can be gleaned from Katrina using a variety of disciplinary/intellectual perspectives, including public policy, urban planning, levee engineering, hurricane science, environmental protection, as well as local, regional, and national history, economics, politics, and social structure.

Apart from becoming knowledgeable about New Orleans’s unique culture and history, in the course itself students will be required to develop both a general fluency in the various debates surrounding the Katrina disaster and New Orleans’s future, and demonstrate specific expertise in a single area related to the city and the storm.

Note: This course is limited to honors students, including Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors who have completed either Macaulay Honors College Seminar II, “The Peopling of New York,” or an Introduction to Sociology, Anthropology, Black Studies, or Latino/Latin American Studies course. Students will receive course credit after completion. Macaulay Honors College students may receive community service credits and are able to apply to their Opportunities Fund to cover most expenses. Non-honors students may apply under special circumstances upon consultation with Professor Henken. Only students who demonstrate a special interest, maturity, and evidence of past scholarship/service in their applications will be admitted.
Students will complete 4 written assignments and do 2 in-class presentations:

**Assignment #1**: Critical review and in-class presentation of a single background reading of students choosing (to be prepared in two-person teams; 4-5-page paper & 15-minute presentation).

**Assignment #2**: “The river and its city”: A paper on the unique history, culture, and geography of the city of New Orleans.

**Assignment #3**: Blog/journal/reaction paper to tours, guest lectures, documentaries, and the week of volunteer work (6-8 pages).

**Assignment #4**: “New Orleans since Katrina”: A 3-person research project and presentation focusing on a single issue or theme, chronicling how that issue has fared since 2005 (options include: education, levee protection, environmental conservation, city demographics, housing, medical care, crime and security, economy and employment, the arts and culture, etc. (10-12 pages; 25-minute presentation).

While in New Orleans, we will focus on the substantial service learning components of the course, including an opportunity for students to engage in a *collective rebuilding effort*. On weekend days, we will undertake a series of city and regional tours in order to better understand and appreciate the peculiar “geographies” unique to the city of New Orleans, including geological, engineering, socioeconomic, racial/ethnic, historical, and cultural elements.

These tours will begin with a focus on the socioeconomic and historical distinctions among New Orleans’ neighborhoods led by Tulane geographer Richard Campanella. Next, Tulane geologist Stephen Nelson will give us a tour of New Orleans’s levee system. Our third outing will focus on environmental concerns in Louisiana’s wetlands and/or include a comparative tour of the Mississippi Gulf Coast (Date: TBA). We also have the luck to be in New Orleans during the French Quarter Music Festival.

We will return to New York as a group on Tues., 4/22, resuming class that same week.

**NOTE**: This time period encompasses two major religious holidays, Passover and Easter. The instructor will make reasonable efforts to accommodate students who observe them. **The trip is required for all students in the course.** Qualified students from **all CUNY campuses** will be accepted for the course through an application process. Students under 18 years of age will need parental permission.
ESTIMATED COSTS

Program cost: $1,100*
This includes airfare ($450), 11 days room/board ($450), and in-city group transportation ($200). Students should also bring $200-300 from personal reserves for incidental costs.

Tuition: $680 (NYS resident). Covered for Macaulay Honors College students.

NOTE: Macaulay Honors College students may submit Opportunities Fund requests up to the yearly limit to cover the program costs and airfare. These students can submit their Opportunities Fund request as a reimbursement during the Spring 2014 period in order to cover the program costs. *Partial scholarships are available to students without access to honors or other special funds. Indicate your need for such financial aid in your application.

Applications and further information can be obtained through Macaulay Honors College, Baruch Honors, or by e-mailing Professor Henken. An application form is also appended to the end of this document. Completed applications should be submitted by Monday, November 11 either in hard copy or via e-mail to:

Professor Ted Henken, (t_henken@yahoo.com)
Department of Sociology, Box B4-260
Baruch College
One Bernard Baruch Way
New York, NY 10010

Application deadline: Monday, November 11
Preliminary acceptance decisions: Friday, November 15
Accepted students must confirm participation: Monday, November 18
Spring term – our first class meeting: Friday, January 31
Departure for New Orleans: Friday, April 11
Return to New York: Tuesday, April 22
Last class meeting: Friday, May 9

New Orleans Service Learning Experience – 4
Tentative Trip Schedule

Friday (4/4): Mandatory Orientation in New York at MHC (2:15-3:45 p.m.)
Friday (4/11): Travel to New Orleans; tour of the New Orleans levee system by Steve Nelson
Saturday (4/12): Tour of New Orleans’ cultural geography by Richard Campanella
Sunday (4/13): Walking tour of the French Quarter & Garden District by Ted Henken

Mon-Fri (4/14-18): Service learning project at various work sites around the city organized by Rebuilding Together New Orleans, Habitat for Humanity, and Grow Dat! New Orleans.

Saturday (4/19): Tour of Barataria Nature Preserve
               Evening – Group dinner and/or crawfish boil
Sunday (4/20): Free day

Monday (4/21): Finish service project
Tuesday (4/22): Travel back to New York

Our tentative partner for room, board, and local transportation is Operation Nehemiah, a faith-based organization aiming to “rebuilding the walls of people’s lives.” Operation Nehemiah provides simple dorm style shared facilities (http://operationnehemiah.com/). Our partner in service is Rebuilding Together New Orleans, a local affiliate of a nationwide organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of low income homeowners, particularly those who are elderly, disabled, or single head of households with minor children, through home repair and revitalization (http://www.rtno.org/). We may also partner with Habitat for Humanity and Grow Dat! Youth Farm, as we have done in years past.

- Tentative Daily Schedule (Monday-Friday):
  - 6:00 am to 7:45 am: Breakfast and pack bag lunch
  - 8:00 am: Depart to worksite
  - 12:00 pm: Lunch at worksite
  - 4:15 pm: Return to volunteer facility
  - 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm: Dinner
  - 7:00 pm: Reflection, guest speaker, documentary, or outing
  - 8:30 pm – 10:00 pm: Free time, quiet time after 10:00 p.m.

- Possible Work Duties: Students will work each day in teams of 10-12 people. Worksites can include new construction, rehabilitation of existing homes, and environmental projects. Trained staff will be on-site to supervise students.

- Things to Consider: Service learning and volunteer community work is NOT for everyone. The work can be very challenging both physically and emotionally. This is an opportunity to make a positive impact and to get to know your fellow scholars in a whole new environment.

New Orleans Service Learning Experience – 5
New Orleans Service Learning Experience – Spring 2014

APPLICATION FORM

1. STUDENT INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (as appears on government ID)</th>
<th>Affiliation (circle appropriate category)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Macaulay Honors College Other: ___</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Security Number</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Campus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Class of (e.g. 2013, 2014, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please list any dietary restrictions/allergies:

Current Contact Information (Please provide us with your most current mailing address)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Address &amp; Apartment Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Preferred Email Address (Please print clearly)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Telephone Number</th>
<th>Cell Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Emergency Contact (Name/Relationship) Phone
2. **FINANCIAL AID**
   
   - Mark this box if you are requesting scholarship assistance to defray the program costs.

   Also indicate how much of the $1,100 you are able to cover on your own. $ ___________

3. **TRAVEL PLANS** (Please check one)

   - I am planning on traveling together with the entire group via plane (Fri., 4/11–Tues., 4/22).
   
   - I need to make arrangements to travel on alternate days.

4. **STATEMENT OF INTEREST**
   
   Please attach a two-page statement describing your interest in this activity. Please address (1) why you want to participate, (2) what you hope to gain, and (3) what unique skills, interests, or background you would bring to the program. (Macaulay Honors College students note: If you are submitting an Macaulay Honors College Opportunities Fund application, it may be possible to use your statement of justification for both applications.)

5. **RESUME**

   Submit a one-page professional resume.

6. **LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

   We request that a brief letter of recommendation be written by a current or former teacher or faculty member, an employer, or another individual who can comment on your strengths, skills, work ethic, professionalism, ability to responsibly commit to projects, etc. as related to this experience.

7. **STUDENT SIGNATURE** (Note: No application will be considered without original signature)

   I understand that all the information I have provided on this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that, if selected, I will bear any costs not covered by Macaulay Honors College or other grants.

   Signature: ________________________________  Date: ________________

   Printed Name: ________________________________

   **Applications are due by Monday, November 11, 2013 at 5:00 p.m.**