COURSE TITLE: “Spirit, Compassion, and Community Activism” (PARW 7585)
(Open to all programs / all undergraduate and graduate students.)

INSTRUCTOR: Susan Carter, Ph.D. scarter@ciis.edu or susangailcarter@yahoo.com
*Office* Hours: By appointment/phone.

SEMESTER/YEAR: Spring 2015

UNITS: Flexible 1-3 units, with each unit requiring 30 hours* of community service.
(Class offered for 1-3 units, student’s option/according to academic needs (or your department’s guidelines). If you are unsure of how many units you should register for, please check with your academic advisor.) Students are required to complete 30 hours of community engagement per academic credit and the other course assignments.

(*Women’s Spirituality students need to work with a nonprofit organization, as required by the Women’s Spirituality department. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis. Please inquire by e-mailing instructor.)

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE CONTENT

Through selective readings, online class discussion, and personal reflection, this course encourages students to put their spiritual values and beliefs into action in the larger community. The course is offered for 1-3 units with each academic unit requiring 30 hours of community service. *Students may choose to serve in established organizations or create their own project with instructor approval.* **This class is entirely online; begins the first day of classes, Tuesday, January 20; and is offered institute-wide (B.I.S, M.A., Ph.D.) on a Pass/No Pass basis.

SUMMARY OF EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

1. Students have the opportunity to integrate their academic study with personal, practical experience.
2. Students will deepen and broaden their concepts of community, compassion, spirit, and activism; social justice; loss and change; and what is involved in furthering positive social change.
3. Students can explore their educational and lifework goals and visions through community engagement and activism.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: AFTER COMPLETING THIS COURSE, STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Explain/articulate their personal definitions and importance of spirit, compassion, and community activism.
2. Connect the theoretical constructs of the course to their own experience and activities in the community.
3. Have a greater understanding of the roles of community activism and social justice work in relation to self, lifework and professional goals, and the larger community.
LEARNING ACTIVITIES PERCENTAGE OF CLASS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TIME^*

1.  Cognitive/Didactic (e.g., lecture, online discussion) 30%
2.  Experiential (e.g., group process, meditation) 10%
3.  Practical/Applied (community engagement/service) 60%
4.  Other (specify): Please note that the majority of the time required for this course is spent serving in the community: 30 hours of community engagement/service per academic credit is required for the course.

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY:

Instructor: Susan Carter, Ph.D., earned her M.A. in Women's Spirituality and her Ph.D. in Humanities from CIIS. She has formed and directed a 501[c][3] foundation, consulted with other Bay Area and Pacific Northwest educational institutions to help promote community service, and mentored community service practicum projects at CIIS for over a decade.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

Summary (detailed descriptions of assignments follow):

The course is offered “pass/no pass.”

For a passing grade students will complete the following:

- Participate regularly online: read and respond to each assigned “topic posting,” article/reading, and/or experiential exercise and discuss as assigned. Check-in about your service-learning/community engagement work at least once per week;
- Post regularly to personal journal: minimum of seven (7) entries spaced over the course of the semester (this requirement cannot be made up in the last weeks of the course);
- Update your time log journal regularly (approximately once per week)
- Timely completion of written book report (due on or before March 7th);
- Timely completion of final reflection paper (due on or before May 10th);
- Complete the required hours of community service/engagement work with an appropriate organization (or through a self-directed project), approved by instructor; and
- Complete and turn in all four class forms (and have “site supervisor” sign forms as appropriate) as assigned.

(Please also see Guidelines for Written Assignments on pages 6-7 of this syllabus.)

Writing Projects: (1) Book report: 2-3 pages,* due on or before March 7th; (2) Personal Reflection Journal: length and frequency determined by student (minimum of seven substantive entries in journal spaced over the course of the semester)—reviewed by instructor mid-semester and at the end of the semester; and, (3) Final Paper: length determined by degree level of student and number of units for which student enrolled (5-15 pages),* due on or before May 10th.

**SPECIAL NOTE TO WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY STUDENTS:** Completion of this course fulfills the one-unit community service practicum requirement for Master's student in the Women’s Spirituality department. This option still requires active participation and minimal journal postings

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as set forth in the course guidelines. Further, it is a requirement of the Women’s Spirituality department that your work be with a nonprofit organization. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis. Please inquire by e-mailing instructor. Women spirituality students may volunteer with the Women’s Spirituality department for class credit by arrangement. If you have any questions regarding these logistics please contact your academic advisor.

**Other:** Reading and demonstrated comprehension of online Topic Postings, and discussion participation/weekly “check-ins” on online class site. *(For a passing grade, online postings are REQUIRED, please see above and/or check “Guidelines to Written Assignments” provided at the end of this syllabus and on our online class site.)* Articles or websites of interest shared with the class. Completion of required community engagement hours and community service evaluation forms.

**ONLINE PARTICIPATION:** Reading and demonstrated comprehension of online Topic Postings, and discussion participation/weekly “check-ins” on online class site. *(For a passing grade, online postings demonstrating comprehension of class topic postings are REQUIRED per Detailed Weekly Syllabus).*

**Absence from Online Class Site:** I remind you of the CIIS Registrar’s policy that “students who miss more than 20% (1/5) of a course will not be able to pass the course.” Thus, absence for more than two weeks automatically lowers a student’s grade and jeopardizes passing the course. Students who fail to participate during 3 of the 15 weeks of this course without excused absence and who do not make up missing posts (while those pages are still available for posting) will automatically fail the course.

Late postings and late submission of written assignments will also adversely affect grades. Dated discussion pages from past weeks will be frozen (within two weeks following the date range), and further comments will then not be able to be added.

**Building Community/Maintaining Respect:** Students are expected to cooperate with the CIIS/Women’s Spirituality Principles of Community (which will be made available online), and maintain a respectful classroom learning environment.

**Course Evaluation:** There will be an opportunity to provide feedback on the course at two separate intervals during the semester: at mid-semester and at the end of the semester through a link provided by the CIIS online coordinator’s office. There will also be an opportunity to provide feedback more informally on the class site (or through e-mail to the instructor) at mid-semester.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

There will be several topic posting readings on the online class site for your review throughout the semester, which are required reading, but no required texts. *Instead,* please choose one appropriate text from the recommended reading list below (or another text with instructor’s approval) that you feel would complement your community work and/or areas of interest to read for your class book report.

**RECOMMENDED READINGS**


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**SPIRIT, COMPASSION, AND COMMUNITY ACTIVISM**

*(PARW 7585)*

**SPRING SEMESTER 2015**

**GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNMENTS**

**ONLINE PARTICIPATION:** Reading and demonstrated comprehension of online Topic Postings, and discussion participation/weekly “check-ins” on online class site. *(For a passing grade, online postings demonstrating comprehension of class topic postings are REQUIRED per Detailed Weekly Syllabus).*

**Absence from Online Class Site:** *I remind you of the CIIS Registrar’s policy that “students who miss more than 20% (1/5th) of a course will not be able to pass the course.” Thus, absence for more than two weeks automatically lowers a student’s grade and jeopardizes passing the course.* Students who fail to participate during 3 of the 10 weeks of this course without excused absence and who do not make up missing posts (while those pages are still available for posting) will automatically fail the course.

Late postings and late submission of written assignments will also adversely affect grades. Dated discussion pages from past weeks will be frozen (within two weeks following the date range), and further comments will then not be able to be added.
PERSONAL REFLECTION JOURNAL: Keep a personal reflection journal in a manner that best suits your needs. Length and frequency of entries is up to you, but some writing is required: there is a minimum requirement of seven entries in your journal spaced over the semester (i.e., one cannot “make up” this requirement by writing seven entries at the end of the semester). It can be in longhand or be computer generated. Entries might include observations about your community work and your reflections and reactions to it—about successes and celebrations, as well as frustrations, complaints, and longings unfulfilled. You might also include thoughts and responses to our discussions. It is also a good place to practice articulating new ideas. During the semester, and particularly during the week of Week 8, I will review online journals, and ask to see excerpts from your journal if you are not keeping it on our class site. (Note: If you are keeping your journal in your computer, please cut and paste or attach on our site or into an e-mail.)

TIME LOG: Please keep track of your community engagement hours on your time log page online in any fashion that serves you. I suggest that you note the date and time, and nature of activity. There are a number of reasons I ask that you keep a time log—to make certain that you don’t forget about hours already served, and to stay on track for completing hours during the semester—or to be able to use it as a tool somewhere down the line, particularly if your project(s) tends to be self-directed. It can sometimes be surprising how one activity takes much more time than originally planned, while another takes less. Many students have found time logs useful for time management and future projects undertaken. I will review your time log on an ongoing basis, and particularly during Week 8 and again nearer the end of the semester.

BOOK REPORT: The book report is on a book of your choosing from the list provided at the end of the general syllabus (see syllabus)—or from a book of your choosing (with my approval). The report is a short (2-3 pages maximum)** write-up describing the main points of the book and your responses to it. Feel free to include personal voice, relating its content to your interests—and briefly explain why (or why not) it helped to inform your ideas around your community engagement and topics of the class. My hope is that your report will help other students to decide if the book would be a worthwhile “read” for them. Please double-space and, as appropriate, use proper citation practices (as directed by your department)—and include which style you are using at the top of your report (MLA, APA, or Chicago Style). Please post book reports to our online site so everyone can share (required). Due (posted to the designated page online) on or before March 7th.

FINAL PAPER: The final paper is the opportunity to draw upon the readings, discussions, and experiences of the class and your community work, and to combine them in a meaningful way—to articulate your resulting (and emerging) ideas. I encourage the use of personal voice and reflection about your particular community engagement/service; current working definitions of “spirit,” “compassion,” and “community activism,” as well as thoughts from topic postings and other course readings and discussion. Please also include academic citations and a bibliography. Please state at the top of your paper (or on a cover page if you decide to include one) which citation practice you are using (MLA, APA, or Chicago Style). Length depends on degree and number of units for which you enrolled. General guidelines:** BIS 5-6 pages, M.A. 7-10 pages, and Ph.D. 8-15 pages. Due Date on or before May 10th (paper is required, of course, but posting online to share with the class is optional).

Other (required of all students): Articles or websites of interest shared with the class. Completion of required community engagement hours and accompanying community service evaluation forms.
Institute Policies

Class Attendance Policy
Students are expected to attend all class meetings regularly and punctually. Students are assigned an F (Failure) or NP (No Pass) grade if they are absent for more than 20 percent of a course. This maximum includes both excused and unexcused absences. Three instances of tardiness or leaving early are considered equivalent to one absence. Instructors may permit a student to deviate from this rule on the grounds of illness necessitating confinement for 24 hours or more, a death in the family, or other extreme emergencies. The instructor may request verification of these circumstances by a letter from a medical professional, the Dean of Students, or the Academic Vice President as appropriate. Due to the nature of some courses, individual programs, departments, and instructors may enforce stricter policies than these. Check the program handbook and/or the syllabus of a course to see these policies.

Academic Integrity
Creative and original scholarly research is at the heart of the Institute’s academic purpose. It is essential that faculty and students pursue their academic work with the utmost integrity. This means that all academic work produced by an individual is the result of the individual’s efforts and that those efforts acknowledge explicitly any contribution by another person. Reproducing another’s work and submitting it as one’s own work or without acknowledging the source is called “plagiarism,” or stealing the intellectual property of another, which is the antithesis of scholarly research. Any use of other ideas or others’ expression in any medium without attribution is a serious violation of academic standards. If confirmed, plagiarism subjects a student to disciplinary action.

Policy on Incompletes
Students anticipating being unable to complete a course may request permission from the instructor to receive an “I” (Incomplete) grade; students who have not completed the work required for a course are not to be given a passing grade in the course without completing the required work. CIIS courses are expected to be organized in a way that allows work to be completed during the semester the course is being offered. Below are the policies related to incomplete grades:

1. Permission to be given an “I” grade is given only in the following circumstances:
   a. medical reasons documented by a health-care professional;
   b. a family emergency verified with supporting documentation; or
   c. decision by faculty member based on exceptional pedagogical reasons.

2. The instructor has the right to refuse to grant an “I” grade.

3. The Registrar’s Office does not record an “I” grade without receiving an Incomplete Grade Request Form signed by the student and the instructor by the grade submission deadline. This form stipulates what coursework is remaining and its due date.

4. The instructor, not the student, determines the deadline for the remaining coursework. This deadline cannot exceed two semesters (including summer) from the last day of the semester in which the course took place, and can be earlier. (For example, if the course is in fall 2011, the student has until the last day of summer 2012 to submit the work unless the instructor specifies an earlier deadline.) The maximum deadline for an Incomplete given for exceptional
pedagogical reasons is one semester. This deadline is not extended for students who are on a leave of absence, become inactive, or refrain from registering for any semester while the work remains outstanding.

5. If the student does not submit the coursework by this deadline, the “I” grade converts to an “IN” (Permanent Incomplete). An “IN” is irreversible.

6. Students may not graduate with an “I” grade on their record even in an elective course. Students may graduate with an “IN” grade on their record, provided that if the IN was for a required course, the student later successfully repeated the course.

7. The submission of an “I” grade by an instructor does not imply that that instructor will be a CIIS employee in a subsequent semester. It is the student’s responsibility to maintain current contact information for this instructor.

8. Students may not sit in on a subsequent semester’s offering of the same course in order to make up the coursework.

9. When submitting the remaining coursework, the student must include a signed Grade Change Form. The instructor uses this form to notify the Registrar’s Office of the final grade.

**Student Disability Services**
A student with a permanent or temporary disability may request accommodations by contacting Student Disability Services (SDS), a service of the Dean of Students Office, at studentaffairs@ciis.edu. The Student Disability Services Coordinator works with students to provide reasonable accommodations that will allow for full access and participation in the academic environment. The student must provide documentation from a licensed healthcare professional. The Student Disability Services Coordinator will communicate with the student’s faculty only after receiving a written request from the student; the nature of the disability is never disclosed. More information about registering with Student Disability Services can be found in the Student Life tab of MyCIIS, or at https://my.ciis.edu/ICS/Student_Life/Student_Disability_Services.jnz.