

The MARIST PRAXIS PROJECT for PUBLIC/GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

MINOR IN PUBLIC PRAXIS

Public Praxis for the

Public Good

Students as Civic Citizens

Humanizing our World



Today's real borders are not between nations, but between powerful and powerless, free and fettered, privileged and humiliated. Kofi Annan

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Brochure layout: Elizabeth and Frank Degano

Marist Praxis Project for Public Citizenship

"Knowledge, love and action is what it is all about, or more simply put, heads, hearts, and hands."
Dr. Bruce Luske

The *Marist Praxis Project for Public/Global Citizenship* gives students an academic structure by which to integrate public work, scholarship, and their higher aspirations for public good.

Leaving the comfort of campus, students venture into shelters, soup kitchens, prisons, and other sites where exists social deprivation. Beyond statistics and text books, they glimpse the fuller humanity – abilities, heartbreak, sense of humor – of those struggling for dignity and survival.

A Greek word, *praxis* can be traced from Aristotle through Hegel, Marx, critical theory, liberation theology, and progressive pedagogy. The ideal of *praxis* is for citizens to create the larger community as articulated by Martin Luther King, Jr., "the beloved community" - a community supporting human dignity, socio-political and economic justice, and the well being of each human being.

Bringing together public work with course work, *praxis* students critically reflect on their experiential learning, research and analyze social conditions, and create public documents. Practicing public citizenship, many move toward solidarity with the marginalized, and come to sing with Jewel, "Let's run with the hunted, the untamed, embrace the faceless, the unnamed." This solidarity is the spirit of *praxis* and the *raison d'être* of both King's beloved community and the Marist Praxis Project for Public Citizenship.

A *praxis-oriented* course typically asks students to:

1. Engage in 12-20 hours of public work.
2. Keep an on-going critical journal that integrates public work, scholarship, and critical reflection.
3. Produce a public document informed by course readings, research, and public work, and directed in some form to public consciousness.

The *MPP for Public Citizenship* with the *Minor in Public Praxis* has been honored by the John Templeton Foundation and on the Princeton Review website for promoting public citizenship.

"Action thus takes higher meaning and value in relation to intelligent ethical reflection." Greg Moses, former MPP Projectkeeper, *Revolution of Conscience: Martin Luther King...*

The Minor in Public Praxis

The Minor in Public Praxis requires 6-7 courses (18-21 credits) chosen among 4 categories, underlined below. Capping course required. Core course: Social Inequality with Dr. Luske. Sample courses below:

Public Praxis (3-6 credits)

REST/SOC 320 Public Praxis 1 (waived with prior experience)

REST/SOC 325 Public Praxis 11 (Capping course)

TBA Public/Global Citizenship (alternative Capping)

Human Rights (3 credits)

WMST 320 Feminist Political Thought

*SOC 336 Social Inequality

POSC 213 Politics of Human Rights

POSC 216 Black Political & Social Thought

REST 225 Global Liberation Theology

Affluence & Poverty (6 credits)

SOC 336 Social Inequality

PSYC 222 Community Psychology

REST 230 Religion & Politics

POSC 202 Political Process & Environment

COM 440 Advocacy Journalism

CRJU 314 U.S. Urban Cultures

REST 231 Social Ethics & Economics

REST 244 Prisons, Praxis, & Prisoners

POSC 273 International Politics

Human Values & Choice (6 credits)

SOC 341 Social Change

PHIL 103 World Views and Values (praxis-oriented)

POSC 110 American National Government (praxis...)

POSC 101 Political Issues and Ideas

POSC 103 Introduction to Global Issues

POSC 320 Feminist Political Thought

ENG 353 Ethnic American Literature

REST 208 Judaeo-Christian Scriptures (The Bible)

REST 245 Jesus and Discipleship

REST/SOC 219/220 Sociology of Religion

PHIL 392 MLK & the Philosophy of Nonviolence

ENSC 101 Environmental Issues

"To me it seems that the fundamental question of our lives, and perhaps of our century, is not the discovery of new knowledge or the development of new technology, but whether or not we can commit ourselves as persons and as a society to love and serve each other. Can we, amidst the ideologies and perplexities of our age, rediscover the human face and soul?"
Marc Ellis, *One Year at the Catholic Worker*

Praxis/Public Citizenship Sites

Local: following are examples of 20+ public sites at which students can choose to participate (see website for full list).

Beulah Soup Kitchen: help prepare meals, set up tables, serve guests, lay out donated clothing, clean up. Saturdays.

Political Advocacy: take on political issues working with progressive coalition.

Civic Citizens Watch: discuss critical film; participate in weekly round-table discussion on civic matters of importance; inform wider public consciousness, initiate progressive activism.

Rural and Migrant Ministry: participate in service project and advocacy for migrant workers and their children.

Scenic Hudson: participate in environmental projects.

Global Outreach: travel to Mexico or India for poverty-related Projects, filmmaking, teaching English, art, play.

Global: Calcutta Children's Project: fundraise to alleviate poverty for children living at Calcutta's Sree Durga dump; exchange pictures, letters, phone calls. – work winter/summer Break with Sree Durga kids in Calcutta (Kolkata). Current global sites include Mexico, Kolkata, Kenya.



Picture by Jordan Eck

Annual Praxis Forum – song, open mike, praxis/
Citizenship presentations

Perspectives

"We should educate people so that they will change the world for the better, that's the meaning of education."
Artin Arslanian, Marist College

"We cannot, through theoretical thinking, participate in the final purpose of the world. We can only do this in practice."

Christine M. Korsgaard, Harvard University

".....without community activism the status quo will be expanded and the beloved community never fully actualized or realized. How much time would it really take to truly make a difference in a community that surrounds us?"

Benjamin Brenkert, Marist College 2002

"When will our consciences grow so tender that we will act to prevent human misery rather than avenge it?"

Eleanor Roosevelt

"We need to see in this generation's ordeals the opportunity to transform both ourselves and society."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

"...what shifts take place in the mind as it responds to courses taken and to events weathered through visits to soup kitchens, schools, nursing homes, and prisons?"

Robert Coles

"The world is held together by the love of a few people."

James Baldwin



Citizenship Projects

For Pubic Praxis II, students initiate their own projects, attending to design, research, funding, start-up; they keep critical journals, write related public documents, and contribute to public consciousness. Two *examples below*. *Third example: communal class Project:*

Project Marist Meals – Kristen Roy established the project in partnership with Marist food services, the MPP, and local shelter. Students deliver meals nightly.

Global Outreach – Kristen Laurier initiated GO, working with Campus Ministry and the MPP. Students work with Marist Brothers and local people in Mexico: building a community store and clinic, working on an ecological farm, teaching English.



Darfur Project – students brought a former Sudanese slave and a Harvard abolitionist to speak to an overflow crowd in the theatre on the situation in Darfur. They also did an array of events to raise both Campus and community consciousness re: the genocide there.

