



smc public policy institute

Experiential Learning Program

AGENCY AGREEMENT

The Institute—Santa Monica College’s Public Policy Institute provides nonpartisan community programs exploring key economic, social, and political issues and a rigorous academic program in the state of California’s only Associate in Arts Degree and Certificate of Achievement in Public Policy. Led by its founding director, former State Senator Sheila Kuehl, and its associate director, SMC political science professor Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein, the Chair of Excellence, Philosophy and Social Science, the Institute offers free, informative discussions on the policy issues that affect our daily lives.

For the latest details on SMC Public Policy Institute activities and academic schedules, please visit our website www.smc.edu/ppi. For information contact tahvildaran-richard@smc.edu or **310-434-3541**.

Academic Programs—The Associate Degree and Certificate of Achievement in Public Policy are interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and practical courses of study presenting a comprehensive overview of public policies affecting the lives of local, regional, and state citizens. These programs equip graduates with the skills and resources necessary for successful participation in civic life, including critical evaluation and analysis of policy options, policy development and effective implementation strategies, and the opportunity to work directly with governmental and nongovernmental leaders in their organizations and agencies.

Partnerships for Experiential Learning—The SMC PPI is looking for governmental and non-governmental agencies to host students and provide an opportunity to them so that they can be successful in their academic goals and objectives. By providing experiential learning opportunities for SMC students you provide an invaluable education experience to a student in your community. Specifically students are required to successfully complete 30 hours of experiential learning for both the Associate Degree and the Certificate of Achievement in Public Policy. ***Please consider partnering with the Institute and join in the important policy conversations in our civic community.***

The Course—*Political Science 95, Public Policy – Experiential Learning* is a core course in the student’s program of study. Specifically, this course builds upon the content of *Political Science 31, Introduction to Public Policy*, to provide the student with field experience in the discipline. This course addresses the theoretical underpinnings of democratic civic engagement and is a practicum in public policy in a local setting. In this hands-on course, the student will engage in experiential learning through various governmental and nongovernmental agencies which have a role in developing and/or implementing public policy. The student will develop a reading list, customized to his/her particular agency’s focus and complete a minimum of 30 hours of volunteer work with that agency. The course exposes the student to organized, meaningful public policy research and implementation in substantive policy arenas and will be supervised in his/her off-campus experiential learning project pertaining to the development of public policy.

The Agreement—The purpose of this agreement is to establish a good faith working relationship between the Public Policy Institute Experiential Learning Program (ELP) of Santa Monica College and non-profit community service and public service agencies seeking service learning students, volunteers, or interns (from herein referred to as “students”). The intent of the PPI Experiential Learning Program Agreement is to help establish a few basic and mutually understood standards of cooperation that will help ensure the success of our voluntary relationship.



smc public policy institute

Experiential Learning Program

AGENCY AGREEMENT

Santa Monica College Experiential Learning Program Expectations of Community Agencies

In order to insure the maximum educational and personal development benefits to students, the PPI Experiential Learning Program expects that community agencies receiving Santa Monica College volunteers will assist us in the following way **(please initial each section and sign the contract on the reverse side)**:

___ A. The proper supervision and training for the Santa Monica College volunteers will be provided. This includes an initial orientation on the overall purposes of the agency, the clientele it services, and what its basic policy goals are. Training on specific duties should be sufficient so that the volunteers will be able to carry out duties and responsibilities being requested of them.

___ B. The Santa Monica College volunteers will be considered for responsibilities and duties, as much as possible that commensurate with their educational background and para-professional potential. While the overall purpose of our program is to serve the community, we hope that the community agency will also take into account that this is an educational experience for the student and that opportunities for learning new skills and gaining exposure to the development and implementation of public policy and new experiences is an important feature of their involvement.

___ C. That a system of scheduling and documenting volunteer hours will be established if one does not exist. This system would include a daily Sign-In/Sign-Out system to verify days and hours worked for each student volunteer and having that system accessible by or available to the SMC staff for program documentation purposes (forms are available from the PPI Experiential Learning Program office for this purpose if an agency lacks its own system).

___ D. That each community agency will agree to immediately inform the ELP of any difficulties arising from the work of an assigned volunteer (e.g. attendance, attitude, accidents, etc.). This is to allow SMC to help make a determination of the possible alternatives for a student prior to any major problems arising.

___ E. That each community agency expects and receives periodic on-site visits or phone calls from an ELP coordinator. EPL coordinators are responsible for following up directly with the students, ensuring that once they are placed that they remain satisfied with their field placements.

___ F. That community agencies agree to assist the PPI Experiential Learning Program in completing semester performance evaluations on every student they receive. Volunteers/interns are those volunteers who are receiving academic credit for their work in the field. These evaluations need to be completed by an immediate supervisor and serve as a partial requirement for the course work (forms are available from the PPI Experiential Learning Program office for this purpose if an agency lacks its own system).

___ G. That community agencies provide accident and liability insurance for the students' protection while they are involved in agency related activities. If an agency is unable to provide insurance, they must contact the ELP office.

___ H. That those agencies (or programs based in agencies) who receive students through referrals from the ELP have 501(c) or 501(c)3 status as a public or private non-profit organization.



smc public policy institute

Experiential Learning Program

AGENCY AGREEMENT

What you can expect from the PPI Experiential Learning Program

A. Our office recruits its student volunteers each semester using classroom presentations, recruitment tables set up on campus walkways, and general PR posted throughout the campus, and through booths and tables at college related events. The main benefits promoted to students are an opportunity to help the community, while at the same time gaining valuable work and learning experience.

B. The ELP assigns its volunteers to community agencies based on individual students' interest and requirements specified by the faculty. ELP will provide prospective volunteers with preliminary background information provided to us as stated on the agency's Volunteer Request Forms and any additional materials submitted along with it.

C. Once a student's interest in a particular agency has been established, the students will initiate contact with that agency's site supervisor (the individual assigned to work with our volunteers) to set an appointment to interview the prospective volunteer. Once the interview is concluded and mutual interest is confirmed, a work schedule can be agreed upon and the volunteer can begin service.

D. ELP will assign a staff person who will be the agency's main contact with our program concerning all matters having to do with our assigned volunteers. This staff person will be the main person in taking periodic site visits, making follow-up phone calls, and making sure that any volunteer performance evaluations that are required to be processed in a timely manner. This person will also be available to assist the agency with any problems that may arise concerning the volunteers assigned.

If the above expectations are agreeable to you, please sign below.

Agency Name: _____

Supervisor's Name: _____

Site Supervisor's Title: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

For office use only: __Completed __ Agency entered __ In review