As a service provider, your work in the community is much like that of the participant-observer researcher or ethnographer. Throughout the course of the semester, you will observe and participate in the daily activities of those you meet at your service site. These journal questions are designed to help you in the process of writing up “field notes” that document your experiences and prepare you for writing your service-learning project.

As soon as possible after leaving the “field” (i.e., your service site), write down as much as you can recall about your experiences. Use these journal questions as prompts to guide your field notes, but go beyond the prompts, writing about whatever seems important to you about your service experience – especially that which is related to the issues of poverty and diversity. While they may seem time-consuming now, these notes will serve as crucial sources of “data” for the required service-learning project (due on the last day of class). Therefore, the more you write now, the better your paper later!

You are only required to turn in responses to the questions below. However, you are strongly encouraged to take comprehensive field notes throughout the semester. (Note that field notes can also serve as a personal journal/record of your experiences.)

Please be respectful of the community and mindful of the limits of your experience and knowledge. Avoid generalizations and psychological explanations of behavior; in other words, do not make arguments that assume you know how someone else thinks or feels or use these assumptions to explain the way people act or their circumstances. Instead, focus on writing detailed and concrete accounts of people, social settings and conversations (including direct quotes, when possible).

Alternate Question
If your experience at your JEP site does not allow you to adequately answer a Reflective Question, you may substitute the question with the ones listed at the end of this document. Note, however, that you are required to answer Weeks One and Eight.

YOUR WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS
The core parts of each Reflection Question (which you need to focus on) are highlighted in bold. Use the additional parts of the question to guide/supplement your answer. Please refer to the PA agreement you received in training for instructions regarding journal due dates and format requirements.

WEEK ONE - First Impressions at Your JEP Site
Describe your initial experience at your JEP assignment. Include a detailed description of the responsibilities and activities involved in your particular assignment. What are your most vivid impressions of the site? What were some of your expectations prior to beginning your assignment? How do your experiences during Week One compare to your expectations?

WEEK TWO: 1:1 Chats: Discuss Questions, Issues, and Concerns
This week you will be meeting one-on-one with your Program Assistant to talk about your experiences in JEP. In place of a full-length journal assignment this week, we ask that you take a few minutes to write down any questions, comments or concerns that you have about your JEP assignment so far. For example, what are your tasks at the site and how are
you adjusting to your new role? How are you relating to the people at your site? Are you having any problems with any of the logistical aspects of your assignment (e.g., schedule, transportation, Blackboard access, etc.)? Please submit your comments (approximately a paragraph) the same way you would submit any other journal through Blackboard. Rather than providing written comments, your PA will discuss the issues with you during your “chat.”

WEEK THREE – Race/ethnicity and Inequality in Schools

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Am (not Hispanic) 7.3</td>
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<td>African Am (not Hispanic) 10.7</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Asian 7.7</td>
<td>Asian 3.7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Latino 32.6</td>
<td>Latino 73.2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>White (not Hispanic) 15.1</td>
<td>White (not Hispanic) 8.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiple or No Response 3.4</td>
<td>Multiple or No Response 2.1</td>
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<th>Pupil : Teacher ratio 21:1</th>
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<td>Average class size 25.6</td>
<td>Average class size 25.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Year Drop out rate (%) 18.9</td>
<td>4 Year Drop out rate (%) 21.0</td>
<td>4 Year Drop out rate (%) 26.4</td>
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<td># of Students Per computer 4.4</td>
<td># of Students Per computer 4.6</td>
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<td>% students receiving free or reduced price meals 53.0</td>
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<td>% students receiving free or reduced price meals 75.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% students receiving CalWorks (welfare)* 12.7</td>
<td>% students receiving CalWorks (welfare)* 18.1</td>
<td>% students receiving CalWorks (welfare)* 22.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: LAUSD and the California Department of Education
* Source: 2000 US Census Data

What do the data in the table indicate about the relative status of students in the Los Angeles Unified School District, compared to the student population at the County and State levels? Go to the California Department of Education website and look up information about your JEP site:

[http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/](http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/)

(If you hare at a non-LAUSD school site, select of one of the USC “Family of Schools.” A list of the schools is available at: [http://www.usc.edu/ext-relations/ccr/programs/fos/](http://www.usc.edu/ext-relations/ccr/programs/fos/))
• For box #1 select “school”
• For box #2 select “create your own report” at the bottom of the drop down list
• Click the “submit” button
• Check the boxes for relevant School Data, such as class size and pupil-teacher ratio, Socioeconomic Indicators, the Student Data for African Americans, Hispanics, Asians and whites and any other variables that interest you.
• Scroll to the bottom of the page and make sure that the correct school is highlighted in the Select Agency box. (See note below.)
• Click “Submit”

(Note that not all data points are available for all school for all years. Also, you can change the year to see change over time and to see if data is available for different years)

Look at the information provided about the school. How does the school compare on the socioeconomic and educational issues summarized in the table above? What other interesting information do you find? Based on your knowledge of the neighborhood and what you’ve learned so far PPD 372, what do you think might account for any discrepancies that exist between the school and the LAUSD as a whole?

WEEK FOUR- Data about your School

Please note: this week you have two options.

Option One: What is the primary community served by your school or organization? Are there physical or geographic boundaries that clearly demarcate the community? Can you identify any non-physical boundaries (e.g., social, legal, psychological, etc.) that are significant in establishing the “catchment” area of the organization? How are these boundaries used in defining the mission of the school or agency and/or the scope of its potential impact?

Go to the “American Factfinder” section of the U.S. Census Bureau’s website and look up demographic information about the community served by the organization: http://factfinder.census.gov/. Enter the zip code (or the city or county, if that is more relevant) for the catchment community and click “go.” If you are placed at a school or another organization that serves a small neighborhood, click on the “search by address” link in the box with the zip code you entered and enter the address of your site (or an address relevant to your particular project). A Census tract link will appear near the top of the page, under the “Fact Sheet” header. Review the demographic information and explore the map features available in the chart that appears. What are some of the more interesting or surprising statistics about the community? How does the community fare compared to Los Angeles County? How do these findings about the community relate to or inform your work at your JEP site?

Option Two: What is the primary community served by your school or organization? Are there physical or geographic boundaries that clearly demarcate the community? Can you identify any non-physical boundaries (e.g., social, legal, psychological, etc.) that are significant in establishing the “catchment” area of the organization? How are these boundaries used in defining the mission of the school or agency and/or the scope of its potential impact?

Go to Google Maps to learn more about the physical content and conditions of the community served by the school or organization: http://maps.google.com/maps. Enter the address of your site (or an address relevant to your particular project) and click “search maps.” Play around with the “satellite” or “hybrid” views and zoom in for a closer look at the community. Click on the “street view” and move around the human figure that appears to see various locations from the ground level. What types of buildings are present in the neighborhood and how would you describe their apparent condition and purpose (e.g., single- or multi-family residential housing, commercial -- and what types of businesses, etc.)? How much land appears to be used for community purposes and of this land, how much is private (shopping centers, restaurants, some hospitals, some churches, professional and some social service agencies, etc.) and how much is public (schools, community centers, libraries, police and fire departments, government offices, city parks, etc.)? How much green and/or open space is available, if any? How pedestrian-friendly is the community (e.g., for children walking to school)? How do these findings about the community relate to or inform your work at your JEP site?

WEEK FIVE – Service and Mutual Aid

In part III of the course, you examined how American society, historically, has responded to the plight of disadvantaged groups in society. You also examined the culturally based differences in the practices of service and caring among various
ethnic and culture groups. **What are the traditions of service and mutual support for the particular cultural group with whom you are working (e.g., transnational familial support, assistance to new immigrants, links to the church)?** (Note: if you are working for an agency with a diverse population, focus on one of the cultural groups present. Also, If you have trouble finding out about traditions of service and mutual support for the people served by your site, you may want speak with some of the site staff.) Based on your experiences at your site, what evidence do you see of these traditional forms of communal support (i.e., are they integral to the agency’s primary service goals and/or structure, or are they mostly limited to the efforts of individuals at the site)? What are the apparent motivations of community members to get involved at the site – as staff, volunteers, and/or recipients? How does the site cultivate, maintain and/or draw upon community and cultural resources?

**WEEK SIX – Inequality and Diversity**

How does the site at which you are working address issues of socioeconomic inequality and diversity? Are these issues primary to the agency’s agenda (e.g., supporting immigrant-workers’ rights, the education of children from low income families in a diverse community, etc.)? If so, what is perceived as the source of the problem(s) and what kinds of programs are in place to remedy the problem(s)? If not, how do economic inequality and diversity impact the main goals of the organization (e.g., the education of children in a diverse community)? What kinds of additional resources, supplemental programs, etc., are needed to address these issues? Whether primary or secondary to its purposes, how does diversity inform the mission of the agency site?

**WEEK SEVEN – Critically Assessing Service**

Based on your experiences in class and in the community over the course of the semester, critically assess the mission and programmatic structure of the site. Is the site’s mission oriented more toward providing charity or promoting social change? How closely do site staff work with those served by the site to identify needs and develop programmatic goals? Regardless of how they are established, how well do you think the organization meets its goals? What are the strengths and limitations of the site’s approach? What alternatives could be proposed at the site level? What broader changes in public policy/society might further address this issue?

**WEEK EIGHT – Review**

According to USC’s mission statement, “The central mission of the University of Southern California is the development of human beings and society as a whole through the cultivation and enrichment of the human mind and spirit. The principal means by which our mission is accomplished are teaching, research, artistic creation, professional practice and selected forms of public service”. ([http://www.usc.edu/private/factbook/USCRole_and_Mission_Statement_1993.pdf](http://www.usc.edu/private/factbook/USCRole_and_Mission_Statement_1993.pdf))

Consider this statement in light of your experiences in JEP. **Do you think public service-and specifically your service-learning experiences in the community via JEP-have helped to “cultivate” or “enrich” your “mind” and “spirit” and/or those of the community members with whom you worked?** If so, how? If not, why not? Please describe in detail what you have gained from your experiences through JEP from an intellectual, spiritual and/or ethical perspective. **How have your experiences in JEP compared to what you expected to get out of the program?**

**ALTERNATE QUESTION – Inequalities and Public Space**

As you have learned, social inequalities take a variety of forms and are sometimes played out in terms of access to space. For instance, last year, Undergraduate Student Government debated passing legislation that would alter the terms of public space at USC by potentially banning “recycling gatherings” on campus ([read: http://tinyurl.com/m9zdmb](http://tinyurl.com/m9zdmb)). **What parts of USC and the surrounding neighborhood would you describe as public space? Why do you think these areas are or should be public space?**

USC has recently hired 22 privately contracted “security ambassadors” to patrol the area north of campus. ([read: http://dailytrojan.com/2009/08/25/usc-contracts-security-force-to-patrol-area/](http://dailytrojan.com/2009/08/25/usc-contracts-security-force-to-patrol-area/)). **What effects do you think this could have on access to public space?** How does who is part of “the public” change at different times of the day? That is, does how different people in the community are looked at or surveilled change from 9am to 1am? If you have had any interactions with these “security ambassadors,” have seen them interacting with students and/or other members of the community, or have heard stories about how they work, feel free to include this “evidence” in your response. **If you were going to follow up on the effects that this form of enforcement has on access to public space, what would you want to know?** Who would you need to talk to?