

.Rutgers- The State University
Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts & Sciences

Course Title: Community Psychology and Community Mental Health -- Fall, 2011

Course No. 01:830:394:01

Meeting Times: Tuesday 8:40-11:40

Place: Tillett Hall, Room 204, Livingston Campus

Instructor: Maurice J. Elias, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: By arrangement via email

Course Description: Community psychology is the branch of psychology most closely associated with how our society produces competent or dysfunctional citizens. It is especially concerned with the socialization institutions through which our children and youth pass (such as schools and families) and with the systems we have set up to help people when they have difficulties (i.e., mental health centers; psychiatric hospitals and other clinical services). Community psychologists seek to improve community mental health through research and social intervention programs such as prevention, citizen participation, environmental change, and influencing public policy. This course will introduce the background and content of community mental health and community psychology, present the key concepts involved and, through the use of examples and "lab activities," acquaint students with the methods community psychologists use. There will be a particular emphasis on our emerging understanding of cross-cultural competence and the influence of this on community psychology and community mental health interventions.

Because this is an RU/CESEP (Civic Engagement and Service Education Partnerships) course, the perspective taken throughout the course will be one that focuses on the processes that lead to competence, strength, and resilience, and how these are necessary if children are to grow to become productive citizens in a democracy. We look especially at the role of environments in fostering this growth and how the relevant issues should become matters of public concern and policy. Finally, there will be an emphasis throughout on services for children and adolescents and the nature of volunteer and professional applied work, such as field work, field research, applied, school, and community psychology internship experiences, and involvement in community service and advocacy.

Course Objectives: The goals of the course are that students:

1. Understand the role of social, political, and economic factors in the development of community approaches to mental health care, with a focus on civic engagement
2. Develop a working knowledge of different approaches to prevent psychological disorder and promote community mental health and begin to think about how these can be practically implemented, especially in cross-cultural contexts.

3. Understand the application of ecological, developmental, and systems theories and community psychology values to the study of interpersonal adaptation and critical community problems such as child abuse and neglect; achievement gaps in education; substance abuse; delinquency; poverty.
4. Develop familiarity with various skills necessary for community-related work, including force field and policy analysis, program planning, and public communication.
5. Interested students can register for a one credit Public Scholarship and Service Internship/field accompaniment that provides an opportunity to integrate course learning with a community service placement at Middlesex or Monmouth County Head Start Centers in New Brunswick, Perth Amboy, Red Bank, Keyport, or other sites in Central New Jersey. This will involve being assigned to a specific preschool classroom for one morning or afternoon per week for about 10 weeks of the semester. ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE FINALIZED IN CLASS IN THE NEXT WEEK OR TWO, AND REGISTRATION WILL TAKE PLACE VIA SPECIAL PERMISSION. There are a large number of openings, but criteria for selection will include a confirmed scheduling match with the openings. There are also requirements for a background check, fingerprinting, and a recent TB test and students must attend the CESEP orientation, this semester on Sept. 9 at 2:00 at the Cook Campus Center. Students who have done the Head Start/ CESEP program before may repeat; you will be in a special, "Advanced Head Start/CESEP" recitation and you may have somewhat more advanced responsibilities than you had previously.

Connection of the Course to 21st Century Learning Goals

Through the Internship and Seminar, you will develop skills in the following areas related to 21st Century Learning goals and challenges:

Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experiences of and perspectives on the world.

Analyze a contemporary global issue from a multidisciplinary perspective.

Apply concepts about human and social behavior to particular questions or situations.

Examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production.

Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience.

Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry.

Analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.

Please Note:

It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism, which is becoming all too common, intentionally and accidentally, in this age of digital, cut and paste, copied and relabeled media. Please look at <http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/hc/plagiarism.html> for excellent information about plagiarism. If you are not sure whether or not something is plagiarism, please feel free to check with me. It's better to be unoriginal and honest, than to plagiarize. Remember, the University and individual faculty use many anti-plagiarism filters on students' work, so the risks are higher than you may think.

Topical Outline

| <u>Dates Due</u> | <u>Topic</u> | <u>Readings/Work Due</u> |
|------------------|---|--|
| 9/6 | <u>I. Orientation to the Course</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Background of CP2. Orientation To RU/CESEP3. What is equity? What is social justice?4. William Winter and the American Dream | |
| 9/13 | <u>II. Principles and Development of Community Psych.</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is CP? What are the Core Values? What is "Blaming the victim"?2. How did CP develop? | Kloos Ch. 1 & 2 Hand in REQ Write-up, Bring to Class Head Start final sign up in class |
| 9/20 | <u>III. The Sense of Community</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Nature of Community Life2. The Meaning and Purpose of Purpose, Possibility, and Legacy3. Lab in the Sense of Community: <i>The Neglect of S. Carolina's Rural Schools</i> | Kloos Ch.6 Shaiman p. 90-95 |
| 9/27 | <u>IV. Stress, Coping, Support, Resilience</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ecology and Mechanisms of Stress & Coping Children, Education, & Urban Poverty Assignment | Kloos Ch. 8 Download Haberman & bring to class |
| 9/27 | Urban Poverty Policy Brief Team Meetings | |
| 10/4 | <u>V. Impact of the Environment on Individuals: Civic Engagement, Empowerment, and Participation</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Social Ecology Perspective2. The Life and Teachings of Sargent Shriver: Idealism and Activism- 1 | Kloos Ch. 5 |
| 10/11 | <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. The Life and Teachings of Sargent Shriver: Idealism and Activism-24. Spotlight on David Brooks' Work | REQ on Speech from sargentshriver.org Kloos Ch. 11 |
| 10/18 | <u>VI. Introduction to Prevention & Social Competence Promotion</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Prevention & Promotion: Key Concepts;2. Programs: "Ounce of Prevention" DVD; Introduction to SEL/SECD & CBAR | Kloos p.284-316, 322-5, 327-31 www.CASEL.org Hand in Policy Briefs |

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| | <u>VII. Understanding Diversity</u> | |
| 10/25 | 1. Diversity, Oppression, Difference | Kloos Ch.7 (Bring in REQ write-ups) |
| | Introduction to Force Field Project Submit Force Field Preferences | Download Force Field Project Info and bring in |
| | Exam Review | |
| 11/1 | EXAM- First half of class | |
| | <u>VIII. Force Field Analysis:</u> | |
| 11/1 | 1. Force Field Groups and initial Force Field questions | Bring in Force Field Outlines; |
| 11/8 | 2. Force Field Lab - 2; Gather Background Information | Info. Search for Force Field |
| 11/15 | 3. Force Field Lab - 3; Continue Outline, Review of Approach | |
| 11/22- THURSDAY CLASSES | Continue Force Field project work | |
| 11/29 | 4. Force Field Analysis-Final In-Class Meeting | |
| | SUBMIT FORCE FIELD PROJECTS BY 12/2 | |
| | <u>IX. Organizing for Change</u> | |
| 12/6 | 1. Social Power and Community Change: Applying what you have learned to create change at Rutgers | Kloos Ch. 13 |
| | Action Letters Due 12/9 | |
| 12/13 | Action Letter Feedback Lab | Kloos Ch. 14 |

Academic Expectation: Evaluations will be based on: % of Grade

1. Class Participation: Class sessions will be devoted primarily to clarifying and supplementing basic points in the readings and also to skill-building labs. Participation is assumed to reflect effort and interest, as well as knowledge. 15%
2. Exams: One exam will be given. It will be focused on mastery and application of key concepts and issues, as well as important points in the readings not covered in lectures. R-E-Q summaries will be collected as part of the exam grade. 25%

Exams for this course require Scantron answer sheets, so bring #2 pencil(s) with erasers to all exams.

3. Group Projects: Students will work in groups to plan and carry out two in-and-out-of-class projects. The first is a Web Quest/ Policy Brief about coping with the impact of poverty on education and mental health. The second is a Force Field Analysis of a community problem or issue. Further details will be provided in separate handouts at the eCollege web site. 45%
4. Action Letter: Based on the Force Field results, each student will be expected to submit an Action Letter-- such as to one's Congressperson or NJ Legislator--by December 13. 15%
5. Bonus:
Do extra REQ writeups of two Shriver speeches (with approval in advance of the speeches selected) 10%

Attendance: Poor attendance will minimize the likelihood of one's obtaining a good grade, let alone a useful understanding of course material. Up to two unquestioned absences are permitted, but it's a good idea to let me know in advance if you cannot attend class.

Make-Up Exams: Midterm makeup exams will only be allowed under extenuating circumstances. If missed and not made up, the exam will be considered as a zero.

THOSE ARRIVING LATE FOR EXAMS ALSO ARE SUBJECT TO A GRADE-LOWERING PENALTY.

Plagiarism & Cheating: I dislike even mentioning this, but all of the Psychology Department has decided to cooperate with regard to plagiarism and cheating. Either event will result in a reduction of two levels on one's course grade, and a note will be sent to the student's academic dean. Remember, Internet searches can detect almost any phrase you borrow without citation. Better to be unoriginal than dishonest. If you're having trouble with the material or an assignment, come me. I am here to help learn the course material in any that I we can.

Texts (Available at the Livingston Bookstore):

1. Kloos, B., & Associates. (2011). *Community Psychology: Linking individuals and communities* (3rd Edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
2. Materials to be handed out and materials on the class web site. Log in at <https://ecollege.rutgers.edu/students.jsp>