

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

Course Title: Community Psychology and Community Mental Health – Spring 2023

Course No. 01:830:394:01

Meeting Times: Thursday 2:00–5:00 p.m.

Place: LSH 143, Livingston Campus

Instructor: Maurice J. Elias, Ph.D.

Office: Livingston Campus, Psychology Building: Tillett Hall, Room 431

EMAIL: melias@psych.rutgers.edu

Office Hours: By arrangement via email

TA:

Course Description: Community psychology (CP) 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). American CP (it is an international field) is also concerned with social institutions, including those involved in supporting our democracy. So, there is particular relevance to this course this semester, as we watch the unfolding of potentially new social and political arrangements and perspectives on diversity and democracy.

As you can imagine, CP is highly concerned about the governmental shortcomings and societal inequities illuminated by the COVID-19 pandemic. CP also is concerned with the systemic racism brought forcefully to awareness by George Floyd’s murder. CP also is concerned with why our lack of preparedness for the pandemic and the lack of urgency about racism were “pre-existing conditions” in our society, and with the continuing dynamics that gave rise to the assault on the US Capitol in January 2021 and the polarized political climate that persists. Community psychologists recognize the impact of current events on community mental health and they are committed to improving it through research and social intervention programs such as prevention, citizen participation, environmental change, and influencing public policy.

This course will provide you with the tools to analyze and engage in social action on the issues that surround us. Through the lens of our mental health and wellbeing, from children to senior citizens, we 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 what is happening in our democratic institutions, the role of cross-cultural competence, and the processes by which we prepare young people- including college-aged adults—for roles in civic life.

In addition to our textbook and supplemental readings, we also will read **Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future**. This book, written by individuals who probably have never heard of community psychology, is nevertheless an exemplary application of CP principles to those working with youth at risk at the individual, group, and/or systems levels. Through this book, we will explore a different, more positive perspective on mental health; you will see through youth-related examples how CP embodies conceptualization across the full range of ecological levels and “levels” of prevention: primary, secondary, and tertiary, even though one’s action plans may not explicitly address all of those levels.

This course also includes an optional Service Learning Internship through the Psychology Department. Doing this Internship will give you a unique opportunity to see, in action while we are studying them, 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. Indeed, regardless of whether you take the Internship, this class has 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.. As noted earlier, interested students can register for a two credit Service Learning 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, or other sites in Central New Jersey, or in Trenton. This involves being assigned to a specific preschool classroom for one morning or afternoon per week for about 10 weeks of the semester and attending 4 recitation section meetings spaced throughout the semester. ALL ARRANGEMENTS ARE HANDLED VIA EMAIL, INCLUDING THE SYLLABUS, OPEN SLOTS FOR PLACEMENTS, RECITATION TIMES, AND REGISTRATION AND ORIENTATION DETAILS. Under normal circumstances, there are a large number of openings, but criteria for selection will include a confirmed scheduling match with the openings. Most settings have requirements (e.g., for a background check, fingerprinting, and a recent TB test) and students must attend appropriate orientations, time and location to be determined. *Students who have done this program before may repeat; arrangements will be made with the coordinator, Dr. Slemp.*

## LOGISTICS:

The class web site is on Canvas. To get to course materials, go to [canvas.rutgers.edu](https://canvas.rutgers.edu) and log in with your NetID and password and find our class! Our documents are under Files—Class Sharing and assignments and materials are linked to

**I will be communicating with you via email through the class web site. So please check your university email address, since that is the one that Canvas uses. I will be sending notifications about scheduling, assignments, and materials. Most course materials will be available for download at the site. We will make arrangements for you to submit your assignments to the CANVAS web site and get them returned from me with comments in the same way.**

## **Technology Requirements:**

This is a live class, but I will be providing PowerPoint slides for most classes. We also will be using the Zoom Chat Channel DURING class time, so that we will have a chance to replicate the ability of a chat box on Zoom to allow many people to participate more often than typically occurs in a live class with 100 people. So be prepared to log into the Zoom app during class (but NOT into a Zoom broadcast... I will explain).

Because of Jewish observance days occurring during some of our classes, on those class dates, we will NOT meet but we will have a video-based lesson. Via email I will clarify any assignments due, and of course you can email me with any questions. This is a much better alternative than trying to make up a class, or miss a class and try to sandwich the material into other classes.

So, for our CP class, you will need to access CANVAS and Zoom—Zoom during class time. And you also will need a **subscription to the New York Times**, which you can get for free as a Rutgers student:

<https://login.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/login?url=https://ezmyaccount.nytimes.com/grouppass/redirect>

You may have to renew this even if you have had it in prior semesters.

**If you do not have the appropriate technology for financial reasons, please email Dean of Students [deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu) for assistance. If you are facing other financial hardships, please visit the Office of Financial Aid at <https://financialaid.rutgers.edu/>.**

## Topical Outline

<u>Dates Due</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings/Work Due</u>
1/19	<u>I. Orientation to the Course</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Background of CP</li><li>2. Orientation To RU/The Collaborative and Service Learning Internship Option</li><li>3. What is equity? What is social justice?</li></ol>	NY Times articles to be distributed and read prior to class
1/26	<u>II. Principles and Development of CP</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What is CP? What are the Core Values? What is "Blaming the victim"?</li><li>2. How did CP develop?</li><li>3. What are CP's concerns? Equity, social justice, service, the "American Dream"</li></ol>	<b>REQ Write-up of Kloos Ch. 1 &amp; 2</b> Watch MLK's Dream Speech Read Kakutani <b>Bring William Winter article- Opening Doors...</b>
2/2	<u>III. The Sense of Community</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The Nature of Community Life in America</li><li>2. The Meaning and Purpose of Purpose, Possibility, and Legacy</li><li>3. Lab in the Sense of Community: <i>The Neglect of S. Carolina's Rural Schools</i></li></ol> <u>IV. Impact of the Environment and Context on Individuals: Civic Engagement, Empowerment, and Participation</u>	Kloos Ch.6 <b>Submit Ch. 1 &amp; 2 REQ's- last call</b> Arthur Brooks NYT article Read added article, TBD
2/9- VIDEO CLASS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Social Ecology Perspective: Application of a Core CP Theoretical Concept to HIB; Consultation Scenario</li></ol>	Kloos Ch. 5 Preview Consultation Scenario NJ HIB Law and Fact Sheets at <a href="http://www.njbullying.org/">www.njbullying.org/</a>
2/16	<u>V. Stress, Coping, Support, Resilience</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Review of the Consultation Scenario</li><li>2. At-Risk Youth- Challenges, Resilience</li><li>3. Ecology and Mechanisms of Stress &amp; Coping</li></ol>	Kloos Ch. 9 Read Brendtro Pts 1 & 2 and <b>Bring in Brendtro Book</b>

2/23	<p>4. Watch: <i>The One That Got Away</i> (PBS)</p>	<p>Watch PBS Video Read PBS Video Handout and Review Questions for Class discussion Read Kloos Ch. 7 on Diversity with a focus on Equity</p>
3/2	<p>5. Implementing the Circle of Courage Class discussion of <i>The One That Got Away</i></p>	<p><b>Bring in notes from discussion questions Bring Brendtro book to class, with Special Brendtro REQ for Part 3</b></p>
3/9	<p>6. The Ecology of Migration and Immigration</p>	<p>The Great Migration; Keeping the Blues Alive; Freedom's Main Line; A Strike for 3 Loaves; one article from the NY Times of your choosing from my list. <b>There is a special REQ for this.</b></p>
<p>VI. <u>The Role of Inspiring Leadership</u></p>		
3/23	<p>1. The Life and Teachings of Sargent Shriver: Leadership, Idealism, and Activism</p>	<p>Kloos Ch. 8 &amp; 13 <b>Bring in Social Action Project Assignment Download</b></p>
<p><u>VII. Introduction to Prevention &amp; Social Competence Promotion</u></p>		
3/30	<p>1. Prevention &amp; Promotion: Key Concepts; 2. Programs: "Ounce of Prevention" video; Introduction to SEL/SECD 3. <b>Exam Review</b> 4. Social Action Project Team Meetings</p>	<p>Kloos Ch. 10, 378-83, 387-91 <a href="http://www.CASEL.org">www.CASEL.org</a>, <a href="http://www.character.org">www.character.org</a> <b>Special REQ on Shriver Speech</b> selected from <a href="http://www.sargentshriver.org">www.sargentshriver.org</a></p>

4/6	<b>EXAM: 4:00 p.m.- 5:00 p.m.</b> <b>(Accommodations will be made for Passover)</b>	<b>Hand in Social Action Projects</b>
	<u>VIII. Understanding Diversity</u>	
4/13	1. Revisiting Diversity, Oppression, Difference  2. Introduction to Action Letter Project	Kloos Ch.7-Review  Have available <b>Action Letter Project Virtual Assignment</b> download
	<u>IX. The Challenge of Creating Change</u>	
4/20	1. Social Power and Community Change  2. Action Letter Feedback Lab	Review Kloos Ch. 13  <b>Bring in sharable draft copy of Action Letter</b>
4/27	<b>Action Letter Final Review</b> CP: Current and Future Directions	Kloos Ch. 14 <b>Bring in CP questions and updated draft of Action Letter</b>

Academic Expectation: Evaluations will be based on:

	<u>% of Grade</u>
1. <u>Class Participation:</u> Every class will involve participation. You will be asked to respond to questions both "live" and in the chat box. Chats will be saved, and Most class sessions will be recorded. Thus, it will be quite possible to determine your degree of class participation. Participation is assumed to reflect effort and interest, as well as knowledge.	10%
2. <u>Exams:</u> 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 lectures not covered in readings. A detailed exam review will be given prior.	20%
2. <u>R-E-Q summaries</u> will be submitted on 3-4 readings There is a document under Files at the CANVAS class web site that describes exactly how to do an R-E-Q (Revelations-Emotional Reactions-Questions/Disagreements) writeup. You will submit these as assignments via CANVAS and feedback will be sent to you via that same mechanism.	30%

3. **Group Projects:** Students will work in groups to plan and carry out two in-and-out-of-class/Zoom/Google projects. 20% each  
The first is a Social Action Policy Brief Project, addressing a topic about which you are concerned as a citizen, such as the impact of poverty or racism on education and mental health, immigration, pandemic preparedness or response, housing, or mental health or transportation services at Rutgers.  
The second is an Action Letter written to a community leader, media outlet or other appropriate source, providing insight and/or solutions to a community problem or issue, possible the one from your Social Action Project.  
**SOCIAL ACTION PROJECTS ARE DUE 11/15; ACTION LETTER DRAFTS ARE DUE 12/6.**  
Further details will be provided in separate documents at the CANVAS web site.
4. **Bonus:**  
Do extra REQ writeups of readings TBD. 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. When you miss a class, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Contact the Dean of Students for notification to your professors for extended absence: <http://deanofstudents.rutgers.edu/> You will be able to watch a video of classes that are held remotely and synchronously.

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

**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 and filters can detect almost any phrase you borrow without citation. Better to be unoriginal than dishonest.** If you are having trouble with the material or an assignment, see me. I am here to help you learn the course material in any way that I can. For further information: <http://nbacademicintegrity.rutgers.edu/home-2/for-students/>

Other options for learning assistance:

**Learning Centers:** <https://rlc.rutgers.edu/>

**Academic Advising for SAS students:**

<https://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/advising/advising>

### **Student Supports:**

**Success Weeks:** The first few weeks of a semester can often determine how the entire semester will go. RU has arrayed a series of resources to help

you. Check them out at <https://success.rutgers.edu/SuccessWeeks> and participate!!!!

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/getting-registered>.

### **Student-Wellness Services:**

#### **Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)**

**(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/**

**<http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/>**

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professionals within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community, and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

**Crisis Intervention** : <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/crisis-intervention/>

### **Required Texts**

1. Kloos, B., & Associates. (2021). *Community Psychology: Linking individuals and communities (4th Edition)*. American Psychological Association (APA).  
**NOTE: You are responsible for using the 4<sup>th</sup> edition. It should not cost you more than \$50.** <https://www.vitalsource.com/products/community-psychology-bret-kloos-jean-hill-v9781433832659>
2. Brendtro, L., Brokenleg, M., & Van Bockern, S. (2002). *Reclaiming youth at risk: Our hope for the future (Rev. Ed.)*. National Education Service. (Available through the Bookstore; if you order online, be sure to order in advance and get the Revised Edition)
3. A FREE subscription to the New York Times because you are an RU student. You will be using this often:  
  
<https://login.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/login?url=https://ezmyaccount.nytimes.com/grouppass/redirect>
4. Materials on the class web site on CANVAS.