

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

SW 650 Community Development
Mondays, 1 – 5, 2816 SSWB
Phone: 734-260-0331
Office Hours: By appointment

Spring/Summer 2012
Instructor: Michael Appel
E-mail: mjappel@umich.edu

Course Description:

This course examines methods of community development as a process in which people join together and develop community-based programs and services at the local level to create community change, with or without assistance by outside agencies. It emphasizes ways in which residents can take initiative, contribute to collective action, and help themselves through community-based business and economic development, health and human services, popular education, and housing and neighborhood revitalization projects. It includes innovative examples of community development in urban and rural areas, as well as examples that involve diverse communities of interest taking into account ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation. Special emphasis is placed on initiatives which involve individuals and families in positive pluralist and multicultural efforts to integrate human, social, economic, and community development to build upon their strengths and assets rather than focus solely on their problems and needs.

Course Content:

Students will learn that the community development sector is immense, and that its initiatives are increasing in areas such as education, employment, housing, health care, and human services. Its practitioners are applying skills from interpersonal practice and organizational development to community planning and public policy, and its constituencies include increasing concentrations of low-income people, African-Americans, Latinos and Latinas, people with disabilities, and other traditionally underserved groups. Community development efforts are widespread and often the centerpiece of work in communities outside the United States in areas dealing with economic and social issues.

One specific theme of this course will be the ways in which methods of popular education can be used to "animate" local communities and initiate changes in local thinking and social

conditions through methods of consciousness raising. These methods, which have been developed in an international arena, are now receiving increasing attention throughout the world. They can be particularly useful when building a sense of community, when identifying local issues, or when developing communities of interest.

This course will examine the roles and responsibilities of social workers in community development practice at individual, family, neighborhood and other levels of intervention. These include efforts to develop and build upon the factors that truly motivate communities to take initiative and help themselves (e.g., religious beliefs, ethnic identity, shared residential space, and family ties). Also, efforts to assist people to develop programs that realize their own dreams (e.g., affordable housing, accessible health care, economic security, public safety) will be reviewed.

This course will draw on innovative practices in urban neighborhoods, rural settings and other areas worldwide. This will include efforts by faith-based organizations, block clubs, fraternal groups, self help and mutual aid groups and other formal and informal organizations that work with racial and ethnic groups in ways which recognize cultural diversity while building bridges across cultural boundaries.

This course will compare and contrast community development with other community organization approaches as follows:

1. Community planning is the development and implementation of plans for human services.
2. Social action consists of the use of tactics which build powerful organizations for social and political action.
3. Citizen participation involves people and the decisions that affect their lives through committees, meetings, and other techniques of community agencies.
4. Public advocacy represents group interests in legislative or other institutional arenas, such as when legislators are lobbied to show support for programs.
5. Community development provides services at the geographical community, or community of interest level, in the tradition of the social and neighborhood settlements and organizations that serve specific population groups (e.g., the Urban League).

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the changing context of community development, including the social, political, and economic forces affecting communities at their diverse constituencies relevant to ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation, as well community of residence"..
2. Recognize alternative concepts of community as pluralist and multicultural units of solution.
3. Assess the needs and assets of low income communities as defined by the communities themselves.
4. Analyze the roles and responsibilities of community development workers as facilitators of efforts by communities to empower themselves.
5. Analyze organized efforts by community residents to increase interaction, take initiative, plan programs, and help themselves through community-based business and economic development, health and human services, housing and neighborhood revitalization, with or without assistance from outside agencies and practitioners.
6. Develop practical skills for understanding and working with racial and ethnic groups in economically disinvested, racially segregated, and/or culturally diverse communities e.g., assessing community needs and assets, power structure analysis, finding and developing leaders that represent diverse constituencies, building organizational capacity and institutional structures, researching local history, and popular education).
7. Recognize and address ethical and value issues which arise in community development practice situations.

Course Design:

The format of the course will include instructor presentation and facilitation of class discussion, class exercises and simulations, and individual and/or group activities and reports. Students will share in responsibility for managing weekly discussion of course readings, developing and presenting case study material, and bringing their own learning, insights, values, and questions

to weekly dialogue. Outside speakers and audio-visual materials will be used to illustrate and augment other course materials, and to provoke class learning and exploratory dialogue.

All students will be expected to contribute actively to cultivating a climate in the classroom in which everyone can (a) articulate their own biases and experiment with new ideas; (b) engage in collaborative learning; (c) explore their own multicultural competencies and the implications of their own background for developing and implementing social and political action strategies; (d) consult with each other on action projects and assignments; and (e) generate plans and strategies for future learning and development.

Relationship of the Course to Curricular Themes

- ***Multiculturalism and Diversity:*** Students will learn that community development is a process which involves individual cultural groups and attempts to build bridges across cultural boundaries. They will identify ways in which community development can address race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, and other forms of stratification and inequality.
- ***Social Justice and Social Change:*** Emphasis will be placed on how the practice of community development can influence social change and strengthen social justice through community-building activities.
- ***Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation:*** This course will focus on how to promote well-being and prevent problems through early intervention at the neighborhood or community level.
- ***Behavioral and Social Science Research:*** This course will draw upon an extensive social science and research literature which contribute to critical analysis and understanding of community development theories and empirically-based practice.

Relationship of the Course to Social Work Values and Ethics

Ethical and value issues in all phases of community development will receive recognition and discussion in conjunction with course objectives. Examples of ethical concerns will include issues related to the social worker's responsibility to clients and to promote the general welfare of society in ways which promote participation, strengthen social change, and promote pluralism and multiculturalism.

Faculty Approval: 12/6/2006

Students with Special Needs

Any student who feels that s/he may need an accommodation for any sort of disability, should make an appointment to discuss this directly with the instructor to discuss desired accommodations. This information will be kept strictly confidential. More information in this regard is available through the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities in Room G-664, Haven Hall, or by phone (734-763-3000).

Religious Observances

Please notify the instructor if your personal religious observances in any way conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments. We can then negotiate appropriate arrangements that maintain respect for your commitments and any conflicts that may result.

Class Attendance and Participation:

Much of the core learning to be gained from this class will be cultivated through class-based dialogue and experience. As such, students are expected to attend and participate actively in all scheduled class sessions. Students should come prepared for class and be ready to engage actively and critically with the course readings and the materials presented in class. Students will earn 1 point for each class they attend (for a maximum of 10 points). If students must miss class for any reason, it is expected that they will contact the instructor either directly or via e-mail, *in advance* of that class session. Three or more unexcused absences will result in the automatic loss of a letter from the student's final grade, and excessive absences beyond this threshold may warrant more significant consequences in grade reduction.

In addition, each student will be expected to team with at least one other peer in taking responsibility for facilitating class discussion of assigned readings for one week during the semester.

Electronic Devices and Laptops

In consideration of your classmates, your own learning, and the integrity of classroom processes, please turn off cell phones during class. And while use of laptops is certainly okay



UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

for the purpose of taking notes or presentations, please refrain from texting, e-mailing, or browsing during class time.

Academic Integrity

All students should be familiar with and take seriously the School of Social Work's standards regarding intellectual honesty and plagiarism. These standards are published in the MSW Student Handbook (<http://www.ssw.umich.edu/studentGuide/2007/>).

Course Schedule

Session	Date	Topic	Items Due
1	May 7	Orientation to Community Work	
2	May 14	History of Community Development	
3	May 21	Community, Organizing & Development	C-tools Discussion #1 & Sample Press Release from field placement
4	May 28	Memorial Day	No Class
5	June 4	Researching and Describing Communities; Effective Press Releases	Reflection Paper
6	June 11	Community Development Corporations	
7	June 18	Financial and other community institutions	Press Release
8	June 25	Philanthropy, Government & the private market	C-tools Discussion #2
9	July 2	Independence Day (week)	No Class
10	July 9	Globalization	
11	July 16	TBD	Analytic Paper
12	July 23	Final class & presentations	

Reading List

Required Text:

The Community Development Reader, Edited by James DeFilippis and Susan Saegert, Routledge, 2012, Second Edition.

On-Line Resources

There are various on-line resources relevant for your work in the course, including:

www.comm-org.wisc.edu Comm-Org: The On-Line Conference on Community Organizing

www.crb.ku.edu Community Toolbox: Bringing Solutions to Light

www.prattcenter.net Pratt Center for Community Development

www.nhi.org National Housing Institute

- **Additional Readings may be posted to C-tools with at least one weeks notice at the prior class and via email.**

May 14th Readings History

The Community Development Reader, Chs. 1 – 4, 35 – 41

May 21st Community, Organizing & Development

CDR, Chs. 20 – 27, 44

May 28th Memorial Day

No Class

June 4th Learning About the Community

Review Press Releases uploaded to C-tools “Press Release Forum”

Uses of census data, GIS, and other tools as uploaded to site

June 11th Community Development Corporations

CDR, Chs. 5 - , 42

June 18th Financial and other community institutions

CDR, Chs. 10 – 15

June 25th Philanthropy, Government & the Market

CDR, Chs. 16 – 19, 43

July 2nd No Class

July 9th Globalization

CDR, Chs. 18 – 34

July 16th TBD

July 23rd Project Presentations

Course Assignments and Grading

(More specific details and directions will be posted on C-tools in a timely manner and discussed in class, as appropriate.)

Unless otherwise noted, all written assignments should be submitted electronically, via C-tools, no later than the established deadline. Final grades will be based on the aggregate of all components identified below. Students are encouraged to converse directly with the instructor for clarification of any assignments or expectations that may be unclear.

1. Class Attendance and Participation (15%)

As mentioned above, students are expected to attend and participate actively in all scheduled class sessions. Students will earn 1 point for each class they attend (for a maximum of 10 points). An additional 5 points can be earned based on active participation.

2. Co-Facilitation of Class Session (10%)

Students will work in teams of 2 or more to facilitate a presentation / discussion on the required readings and focal content for the week (as assigned in the course syllabus). Roughly one hour each week will be devoted to this. Students are encouraged to be creative in how they engage fellow class members and make use of active learning techniques, media clips, and class exercises. Solely didactic presentations (i.e., lectures) are discouraged, although active use of Powerpoint tools and integration of lecturettes will be fine. Discussion leaders may also identify an additional 1-2 articles that they believe to be particularly relevant for others to share. In those circumstances, it will be the responsibility of discussion leaders to distribute and/or post any such additional readings on C-tools at least 1 week ahead of the intended presentation.

3. Cultural Motivations for Community Work (10%)

In order to explore the ways that cultural productions motivate and reflect our sense of community and social justice, students will share cultural expressions that provide meaning to

their work, goals and/or values. These can be from communal and/or cultural traditions in the communities in which students work; they can also be from students' own traditions. Each week 2-3 students will share with the class a sample of the kind of cultural items that motivate their community work (poems, songs, visual art, food etc.) for 5 – 10 minutes maximum.

4. Contributions to C-tools Class Discussion (5% for each contribution: 10%)

On two dates (**May 21 and June 25**) students will contribute to an “on-line” discussion using the Forum Tool on C-tools. On the first date, students with last names beginning with A – K should upload a reaction or observation to one or more of the articles assigned for that week. The comment to be to the general theme of an article or to a specific issue in the article. Students with last names starting with L – Z should then choose one or more of their peers comments and offer a reaction. Initial comments by the first group should be uploaded no later than the Friday preceeding the class. The second round of responses should be uploaded no later than 9am on the Monday of class. On June 25 and the Friday/weekend preceeding it, the same protocol should be followed, except students with last names beginning with L – Z should make the initial comments, and students with last names beginning with A – K will respond.

5. Reflection Paper on Community Development (15%) – Due June 4

This paper offers an opportunity for students to reflect on a community development effort in which they are involved or have the chance to observe closely in the context of the readings assigned in the first two weeks. These readings highlight the history of community development, theoretical perspectives on community development and current issues in the field. In a 4-5 page essay, use the readings to frame a discussion of the community development effort you are describing, as well as your position, strengths and challenges in relation to the issues that you identify.

References to every article read are not necessary, but the essay should demonstrate an understanding of the kinds of concerns raised in the textbook articles as well as a thoughtful description of real world activities in which you are participating.

6. Press Release (15%) – Part 1 Due May 28; Part 2 Due June 18

Part 1: Students should obtain a press release from their field placement, ideally concerning a community development initiative, but not any press release is acceptable. Please upload a copy of the press release to the Press Release Forum on the course C-tools site.

Part 2: Students should write and submit a press release for a Community Development initiative or an event that is part of a Community Development effort. If appropriate for your placement, please write up a press release for an event or initiative happening at your agency or which you are planning. Alternatively, please write a press release for an initiative or event described in course readings or materials presented in class. The press release should be both an effective press release (to be discussed on June 4) and a statement that frames the event in terms that are consistent with the issues discussed in this course.

7. Analytic Paper or Grant Submission (25%) – Due July 16

- A. This analytic paper will integrate the perspectives studied throughout the course. Students may choose a community development initiative from their placement, current events or history and discuss it using the knowledge, ideas and perspectives shared throughout the semester. This should be a 5 – 7 page paper that uses articles read during the semester or other appropriate citations. At a minimum, the paper should place the initiative in the historic context of community development, should identify the key theoretical perspectives that help evaluate and understand the initiative and provides lessons that can be learned for community development practice.
- B. A description of a community development initiative may be submitted in the form of a grant application. A grant application format will be provided and uploaded to C-tools. This format will be selected to both represent a real community development skill and it may be supplemented to call out some of the knowledge, ideas and perspectives shared through the semester.