This course examines methods of community development for a diverse democratic society. It assesses the ways in which people join together, take initiative, and develop community-based programs. It analyzes core concepts of community development, steps in the process, and perspectives on practice in a society which values diversity as an asset.

The course assumes that community members are competent citizens and active participants, rather than problems in society or passive recipients of services. Emphasis is placed on increasing involvement of traditionally underrepresented groups in economically disinvested and racially segregated areas.

The course draws upon best practices and lessons learned from community-based initiatives such as education, environment, health, human services, housing, and neighborhood revitalization, in addition to social work, public health, urban planning, and related fields.

**Course Objectives**

- Understand the changing context and core concepts of community development in a diverse democratic society.

- Recognize alternative concepts of community as pluralist and multicultural units of solution.

- Develop knowledge of steps in the process of community development.

- Critically assess case studies and lessons learned from community-based practice.

- Identify issues of underrepresented groups in economically disinvested and racially segregated areas.

- Examine questions of ethics and values arising in the field.
Course Design

Responsibilities include readings, discussions, written assignments, individual and group exercises, and other learning activities. Community collaborators will address specific topics in areas of expertise.

Relationship of Course to Curricular Themes

Multiculturalism and Diversity: Students will identify ways in which community development can address race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, and other forms of stratification of inequality.

Social Justice and Social Change: Emphasis is placed on how community development can strengthen social change and social justice through community building in economically disinvested and squirted areas.

Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation: The course will focus on how to prevent social problems and promote healthier communities rather than to take the frequent common curative model approach.

Behavioral and Social Science Research: Relevant research and best practices from diverse social science disciplines and professional fields will contribute to understanding of empirically-based practice.

Social Work Ethics and Values

The NASW Code of Ethics establishes responsibility for social workers to engage in socially-just political action addressing the needs of diverse and disadvantaged populations.
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Reading List

Hull House


Grassroots Organizing


Municipal Agencies


Neighborhood Initiatives

- Websites of Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative and Logan Square Neighborhood Association.

Core Concepts


Entering Communities and Building Relationships


• Community Tool Box. Building and sustaining relationships. Chapter 14, Section 7, at

• Community Tool Box. Building Relationships with people from different cultures. Chapter 27, Section 1, at

Assessing Community Conditions

• Henderson & Thomas, Chapter 4.


• McKnight, J. & Kreitzmann, J. Mapping community capacity. In Minkler, Chapter 10.

• Staples, L. Selecting and “cutting” the issue. In Minkler, Chapter 11.

• Community Tool Box. Assessing community needs and resources. Chapter 3, Sections 1-19.

Participatory Planning

• Henderson & Thomas, Chapters 5.8.


• Community Tool Box. Participatory approaches to planning community interventions. Chapter 18, Section 2, at

Building Organizational Capacity: Meetings, Groups, Leaders


Building Community Capacity: Partnerships and Coalitions

• Butterfoss, FD & M.C. Kegler. A coalition model for community action. In Minkler, Chapter 17.


**Engaging Community Members**

- Community Tool Box. *Encouraging Involvement in community work.* Chapter 7, Sections 1-8, at Participation and People.net, at www.peopleandparticipation.net

**Increasing Intergroup Dialogue**


**Social Media for Social Justice**

- Satariano, N.B. & A. Wong. Creating an online strategy to enhance effective community building and organizing. In Minkler, Chapter 15.

**Participatory Evaluation**

- Coombe, C.M. Participatory approaches to evaluating community organizing and coalition building. In Minkler, Chapter 19.
Guiding Questions

Core Concepts

- What is community? What does community provide? What are its strengths and limitations as a unit of solution?
- How do you yourself construct community in your mind? Where do your own ideas come from, and how do they affect your work?
- What is community development? What are its activities?
- What is the purpose of community development? Why should we, or anyone, want to promote community development?
- What are the outcomes of community development, and what criteria should be used for assessing them?
- What matters most? What factors influence successful community development?
- What are some best practices, and what can be learned from them?
- What is a socially just community, and a socially just process for accomplishing it?

Pluralist and Multicultural

1. What is a community or community group about which you care? What are its distinct characteristics, how do these affect its participation, and which forms of community development have the potential for empowering it?
- What happens to community development when community is constructed as pluralist or multicultural, rather than as monocultural?
- What are the elements of multicultural community development?
- Assuming that diversity will characterize democracy in the future, how will community development look different from a more multicultural perspective?

Neighborhood Development

- What is neighborhood? Why is neighborhood important, and to whom?
- What happens to community development when community is conceived as neighborhood?
- What is neighborhood development? What are its elements, and strengths and weaknesses as a unit of practice?
- What is a socially just neighborhood, and what would it take to develop one?

Steps in the Process

- Are there essential “steps in the process” of community development and, if so, what are they?
- What frameworks are available for assessing community development?

Making Contact and Establishing Relationships

- What issues arise when “entering the community” or starting to work with a community or community group?
• Are there personal issues that arise for you? Is there a philosophy or ideology that comes into play?
• What are some steps in making contact and establishing relationships? How would you assess your own ability to establish relationships with others?

**Assessing Community Conditions**

• What are the steps in assessing community conditions, and how can they be practiced in ways which gather information and activate community members?
• What happens to community assessment when community is constructed as pluralist or multicultural?

**Participatory Planning**

• What is planning? Why is it important, and for whom?
• What are the steps in the planning process? What happens to planning when the community is segregated or diverse?
• What social justice issues arise in planning at the community level?

**Building Capacity**

• What are the elements of building organizational capacity? How can meetings, group formation, and leadership development be constructed as forms of capacity building?
• What are the elements of building community capacity? How can alliances and coalitions be constructed as forms of capacity building?

**Engaging Community Members**

• What are some methods of engaging community members in institutions and decisions that affect them? Are there distinct methods for distinct groups?
• What are some strategies for involving residents in a neighborhood or metropolis that is becoming both more segregated and more diverse?

**Increasing Intergroup Dialogue**

• What are some methods for increasing intergroup dialogue? What are some ways of enabling people to communicate with others who are different, or discuss sensitive issues, or find common ground, or collaborate on a project?
• What are some strategies of community development in areas which are becoming both segregated and diverse?

**Online Organizing**

• What is online organizing for community development? What are its advantages and disadvantages as a unit of practice?
• What happens to community development when community is defined as online?
• How can online organizing can be used as vehicle for bridges differences in segregated areas?
Assignments

All assignments should employ and refer to the course readings, organize your thoughts, and make specific points about the topic.

You are encouraged to discuss the assignments with others in the class, but written papers should be your own work. However, I am open to proposals from students to work together in pairs on assignments 1-3.

1. Community or community group

Write a paper in which you select a community or community group, describe its distinct characteristics and concerns, and discuss at least five steps for involving its members in a community development process (3-5 typewritten pages, due February 4, 20 percent)

For this assignment, “community” is when people take collective action around a common purpose. It might be expressed by place, race, ethnicity, social class, age, gender, sexual orientation, faith, (dis)ability, nation of origin, tribal or indigenous affiliation, or other social identity.

The community or community group should be one in which you want to invest your time during the semester, and for which information is available, e.g., written documents, observations, interviews, or other techniques. Please check the feasibility by searching for information about the group.

As part of the assignment, submit a bibliography in APA format that includes at least five published sources about the group, and at least five published sources about the community development process.

2. Community development analysis

Write a paper in which you analyze a community or community group’s efforts to involve its members in a community development process. (3-5 typewritten pages, due February 27, 20 percent), for example:

Muslim women share concern about discrimination because of family expectations, cultural traditions, and community prejudices, and develop a community development program at the neighborhood level.

Ferguson, Missouri is a place in which community conditions caused violence and sparked protests which can be expected to continue until conditions are addressed and community development is socially-just.

Advocates want to create a youth civil rights academy that will be based upon online courses and face-to-face meetings.
Campus leaders concerned about poverty and education approach school officials to create service-learning courses and participatory research projects in a university-assisted community school.

Neighborhood residents protest redlining and disinvestment by banks, then create a nonprofit and build housing of their own.

Students and teachers create a diversity dialogue program enabling them to communicate across boundaries with others who are different from themselves.

Young people use community development to create a safe space for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning youth and their allies.

First-generation students and students of color use community development to create a new initiative in the university.

In a densely populated immigrant area, white women have established a social settlement with a lengthy list if programs and services.

Parents are concerned about racial inequalities in suspensions and expulsions, and develop a restorative justice program which requires community support.

College students who experience depression develop a mentoring and social support network on the campus.

3. **Community development strategy**

Write a paper in which you identify a community or community group, describe its distinct characteristics and concerns, and propose a community development process for increasing involvement of its members in the institutions and decisions that affect their lives. Your paper should be empirically-based and the process should be framed in terms of their cultural sensitivity. (8-10 typewritten pages, draft due March 25, final due April 1, 40 percent).

4. **Final exercise**

I will provide five questions which enable you to synthesize readings and reflect upon experiences in the course, and ask you to choose three of them about which to write “at home”. You will receive the questions in the morning and send your paper to me by the end of the day. (Probably April 8, 10 percent).

When students synthesize readings and reflect upon learning experiences in a course, they report higher satisfaction and greater learning than in other courses which lack this opportunity.
Class Participation

Class participation is good for everyone. It might include active involvement in discussions, group leadership, volunteering, arranging a day at the ropes course, or other activities. (10 percent).

Participation requires regular attendance, coming to class on time, preparing for class, engaging in class discussions, and submission of assignments on scheduled dates unless arranged in advance. “Showing up” is itself not participation in the course. Absence from class might result in lowering your grade.

Course Readings

Course readings and class preparation are integral to our learning. You may be asked to open a session, or called upon to share your thoughts on a reading.

Most course readings are available on CTools. Please check CTools to confirm their availability and contact the instructor if anything is awry.

Three books – (1) Minkler (2) Henderson and Thomas (3) DeFilipis and Saegert - are available for purchase at Common Language Bookstore 317 Braun Court, Kerrytown, Ann Arbor.

On-Line Resources

There are various on-line resources which are relevant for your work in the course, including Comm-Org and Community Tool Box.

Paper Revision Policy

You may revise and resubmit any paper for reevaluation until the last session. Papers are due on assigned dates without extension, unless prearranged with the instructor. All papers in the course should be submitted in hard copy.

General Guidelines for Papers

1. Make a specific point. Express what you think.
2. Quality and depth of analysis of information and ideas, and relevance to topic.
3. Appropriate use of and reference to empirical evidence, as well as their variety and range.
4. Quality of presentation, e.g., introduction, logical sequencing, conclusion.
5. Use of proper grammar and professional presentation of material.
6. Level of effort expressed in written work.

Class Climate

We want to create a classroom climate in which everyone can experiment with new ideas or skills; explore their own cultural competencies and their implications for social and political action; consult with others on assignments and projects; and identify areas for future learning.
Using Laptops

Using laptops for taking notes is acceptable, but using them for other purposes is distractting to others.

Academic Integrity

We will follow the Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct in the School of Social Work Student Handbook. Web resources on academic integrity developed by the University’s Center for Research on Learning and Teaching can be found at their website.

Disabilities Statement

If you have a disability or condition that may interfere with your participation in this course, please schedule a private appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your needs. This information will be kept strictly confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, (734) 763-3000.

Contacting the Instructor

My e-mail is barrych@umich.edu, my office is 3840 SSWB, and my home telephone is 734.668.0117. I am available through e-mail, telephone, and by appointment. I want to get to know you, and hope that you will arrange a time when we can talk early in the semester.
Student Information Form

Name:

Address:

E-Mail: Telephone:

UM program:

Professional goal:

Primary social identity group(s) at present, e.g., place, race, ethnicity, social class, age, gender, sexual orientation, faith, (dis)ability, nation of origin, tribal or indigenous affiliation, other:

Community experience:

Interest in course topic:

Experience or skill which might be useful to the class:

Something that will help me get to know you better: