

Community Psychology 4215: Winter, 2017
Department of Psychology, Lakehead University

Time and Place: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00 to 2:30pm in AT 2005

Instructor:

Dr. Mirella Stroink
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Teaching Assistant:

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Course Description:

Prerequisite: Psychology 2801 or permission of the instructor

An in-depth review of how the interactions between person and society impact upon individual and community functioning. Research will be explored on the ways in which individuals interact with other individuals, social groups, institutions, communities, the larger culture, and environment. A specific focus will be the effects of various social issues on individual and community well-being. Topics may include unemployment, discrimination, environmental degradation, intergroup conflict, immigration, and diversity. Students are expected to read assigned chapters in advance of each meeting and be prepared to contribute significantly to discussion with their own comments and questions.

Required Readings:

Kagan, C., Burton, M., Duckett, P., Lawthom, R., & Siddiquee, A. (2011). *Critical Community Psychology*. West Sussex, UK: BPS Blackwell.

Additional materials and lecture slides will be available on WebCT.

Evaluation:

10% Paper #1: Social Issue Analysis
20% Paper #2: Action Proposal
10% Paper #3: Reflection
30% Midterm exam
30% Final exam

Learning Outcomes for 4215:

With successful completion of this course (a mark of 70% or higher) you will be able to:

- Apply the knowledge, skills, and values of community psychology to your thinking about and approaches to social and community issues.
- Conduct scientific, evidence-based research and critical thinking to explain social and community issues.
- Design and justify a plan that integrates psychological literature, includes the planning, action, and evaluation steps of community psychology, and is appropriate to addressing a social or community issue.
- Communicate effectively both orally and in writing while adhering to APA style and with the appropriate audience, purpose and context in mind.
- Integrate your knowledge of community psychology to meaningful professional development, wellness, and life-long learning.

Accommodations:

Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and register as early as possible. For more information, please visit: <http://studentaccessibility.lakeheadu.ca>

Regulations

As per university policy, **make-up exams and assignment extensions are not permitted** without a valid medical certificate. The student must contact the professor or TA within 48 hours of a missed exam or due-date. Students are expected to be familiar with the university's regulations. Disruptive behaviour will not be tolerated.

Critical Participation:

This is a unique course with a community action component and a critical perspective. Active engagement, participation, genuine reflection and discussion are critical to your success. Come to each class prepared to participate. Complete each assigned reading *before* the associated lecture and engage in the reflections suggested in the text. This will help prepare you to critically participate in class discussions and small group exercises.

Midterm and Final Exam

Both exams will consist of short and long answer questions and will cover material from lectures, text, discussions and activities, as well as any supplementary materials. The final exam will be partially cumulative; including key material covered in the first half of the course.

Paper #1: Social Issue Analysis

One of the outcomes from successful completion of this course is that you will be able to engage in critical thinking and conduct scientific, evidence-based research to explain social and community issues. Another is that you be able to apply the knowledge and skills of community psychology to your thinking about and approaches to community issues. Addressing such systemic and community-level issues is critical to enhancing psychological well-being. Through this assignment you will be able to strengthen and demonstrate your capacity to examine the community level and the systemic issues that affect people on that level with a scientific and evidence-based approach.

Choose a social or community issue. A good place to begin is with your own lived experience or your observations of the community around you. Options include discrimination, marginalization, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, poverty, homelessness or precarious housing, mental health stigma, social inclusion for people with disabilities or mental health issues, food security, environmental issues including urban, employment, violence, availability of community services, etc. We will engage in some in-class group work to assist your choice and exploration of the topic.

Critically examine the issue from various angles. Review relevant literatures and draw upon scientific studies to explain the main causes of the issue. What are some systems' factors giving shape to the emergence of this issue? Consider a historical lens. How does this issue impact psychological (emotional, behavioural, cognitive) functioning? You may supplement your discussion of the issue with a map or other visual depiction. Demonstrate scientific, evidence-based thinking in your discussion of the issue.

Write a brief paper discussing and explaining the issue and exploring how it affects psychological functioning, providing citations and critical evidence. The paper should be 4 to MAX 6 pages long (plus a title page and references and any supplemental images or maps, no abstract required), double spaced, 12pt font, 2.5cm margins in APA style. This paper is worth 10% of your final mark.

Paper #2: Action Proposal

Another outcome from successful completion of this course is that you will be able to design and justify a plan that integrates psychological literature and includes the planning, action, and evaluation steps of community psychology, while addressing a community issue, all from a scientific, evidence-based approach. Community psychology is action oriented, and this assignment will enable you to strengthen and demonstrate your knowledge of community level social change.

Write a paper in which you plan and justify (propose) a set of next steps seeking to address at least one aspect of your social issue. Discuss possible next steps in terms of *planning*, *action*, and *evaluation*, as discussed in the course. Incorporate a research component and explain *how* you propose to bring about change to address the issue. This paper should be 7 to MAX 10 pages long (plus a title page and references, no abstract required), double spaced, 12pt font, 2.5cm margins in APA style. This paper is worth 20% of your final mark.

Paper #3: Reflection

Another outcome from successful completion of this course is that you be able to integrate your knowledge of community psychology (including its values) to professional development, wellness, and life-long learning.

In a 3 to MAX 5 page paper (double spaced, 12pt font, 2.5cm margins, plus a title page), reflect on your learning in the course relative to all 5 of its learning outcomes. In particular, how has what you have learned in this course impacted your own life journey? How do you see yourself as a community member? How might you apply what you have learned? This paper is worth 10% of your final mark.

** All papers must include a title page with the name of the assignment, your name and student number. An abstract is not required. Plagiarism will be dealt with according to university regulations. Late papers will be penalized at a rate of 10% per day and will NOT be accepted after the remainder of the class has received their marked papers (approximately 2 weeks after the due date). Students are responsible for ensuring that the TA has received the paper. Papers we do not receive will be given a grade of zero.

Course Outline:

Date	Topic	Chapter
Jan. 10 Jan. 12	Introduction What is Community Psychology?	1 2
Jan. 17 Jan. 19	Core Elements of Community Psychology Complex Systems Perspective	3
Jan. 24 Jan. 26	Social Issues Discussion (Dr. Stroink will be away) Core Elements Part 2: Innovation and Action	3
Jan. 31 Feb. 2	What is Community: Contested nature of Community What is Community: Community as Social Ties	4 5
Feb. 7 Feb. 9	Problem Definition: Complex Human Systems Social Issue Analysis and Mapping	6
Feb. 14 Feb. 16	Exam review – Paper #1 (Social Issue Analysis) Due Midterm Exam	
Feb. 21 Feb. 23	Reading Week	
Feb. 28 March 2	Action Planning Action Proposal: Planning and Innovation <small>Note: You may find material from chapter 11 helpful here</small>	7
March 7 March 9	Action 1: Critical Consciousness and Social Settings Action Proposal: Raising Awareness and Tilting the Floor	8
March 14 March 16	Action 2: Connection and Alliances Action Proposal: Networks, Crowd-Sourcing, Policy Change	9
March 21 March 23	Evaluation: Action Research, Program Evaluation	10
March 28 March 30	Change, Influence, and Power Action Proposal: Reflection on Social Change	11
April 4 April 6	Roles, Skills, and Reflections; Paper #2 (Action Proposal) Due Exam Review; Paper #3 (Reflection) Due	12

* The Final Exam will be held in the Examination Period