

Community Psychology Capstone

UNST 421, section 301

Portland State University, Spring, 2013

Course Description: This two-term capstone course introduces students to the principles of community psychology research and action, and provides guidelines for applying these principles in field settings. Community psychology includes theories and methods that place the needs of individuals, families, and organizations within broader social contexts. Functioning in small teams, students work collaboratively with community agency staff (“community partners”) to address a critical organizational need. This year’s community partners focus on issues related to preventing and intervening to address sexual violence and on youth empowerment.

The second quarter of this capstone will focus on solidifying key consultation skills, addressing core capstone goals, and completing projects with community partners. Students will continue to hone consultation skills related to working in teams, understanding agency/organizational systems, developing technical reports, and collaborating with community partners. Student’s efforts are rooted in four core areas reflective of the University Studies mission: (1) Inquiry & Critical Thinking (Through readings, reading reflection papers, and planning as well as practical problem solving efforts related to their ongoing projects); (2) Communication (Through a focus on the development of technical writing skills, various modes of public speaking and group presentation skills, emphasis on clear and effective consulting team communication, and by learning to actively negotiate roles with their community partner); (3) Diversity (Through continued self-examination via reading reflection assignments, group presentations, and ongoing efforts to address this area in their projects with community partners); and (4) Ethics and Social Responsibility (Through continued self-examination via reading reflection assignments, group presentations, and ongoing efforts to address this area in their projects with community partners).

Time: Tuesday & Thursday 12:00pm – 1:50pm

Location: Neuberger Hall – Room 366

Also available: Community Psychology Office: Cramer Hall room 364

Professor: Eric Mankowski, Ph.D., Psychology Professor

Cramer Hall, Rm 317 N

Department of Psychology, Cramer Hall, Portland State University, P.O. Box 751,
Portland, OR 97207-0751.

Email/Telephone: mankowskie@pdx.edu (503) 725- 3901

Course Website: <https://d2l.pdx.edu>

Office hours: Dr. Mankowski’s office hours are by appointment or as listed on his door in Cramer 317. I check my email daily, so this is a good way to get in touch with me. You can also leave a note in my Psychology Department mail box. Do NOT, however, try to send a message through Desire 2 Learn and avoid leaving a message on my office phone.

Required Text: A number of online articles, available through the course D2L page or the PSU library, will also be used for class assignments. These readings help create a foundation for community psychology research and action, foster an understanding of key concepts, and support the development of a final project report.

Schedule of Classes and Assignments: (Spring, 2011)

T	4/2	Project Group Meetings With Community Partners
TH	4/4	Syllabus Review Reflections on winter term Project Group Meetings
T	4/9	Project Group Meetings With Community Partners
TH	4/11	To be determined in consultation with course students Exercise: Privilege, oppression, and liberation: A community psychology of human diversity Background reading posted on D2L: Peggy McIntosh, Color of Fear, Men's Privilege
T	4/16	Project Group Meetings With Community Partners
TH	4/18	To be determined in consultation with course students
T	4/20	Project Group Meetings With Community Partners
TH	4/25	To be determined in consultation with course students Reading Reflection #1 Due Laray Barna (1994). Six stumbling blocks in intercultural communication.
T	4/30	Project Group Meetings With Community Partners
TH	5/2	To be determined in consultation with course students Reading Reflection #2 Due
T	5/7	Project Group Meetings With Community Partners
TH	5/9	To be determined in consultation with course students Reading Reflection #3 Due
T	5/14	Project Group Meetings With Community Partners
TH	5/16	To be determined in consultation with course students

T	5/21	Project Group Meetings With Community Partners
TH	5/23	To be determined in consultation with course students
T	5/28	Project Group Meetings With Community Partners
TH	5/30	Practice Oral Presentation – PCC & MYC groups Feedback from peers and instructor SARC & peer groups have separate meeting time as groups
T	6/4	Practice Oral Presentation – SARC & peer groups Feedback from peers and instructor PCC and MYC groups have separate meeting time as groups
TH	6/6	Final Oral Presentation – PCC & MYC groups
T	6/11	10:15-12:05 Final Oral Presentation – SARC & peer groups Class Wrap-up Final Reports Due to Dr. Mankowski at beginning of class. Hand in paper copy and send electronic copy to Dr. Mankowski & Community partner

Course Philosophy, Roles, Structure and Guidelines

I. Course Philosophy

A. General Aims

This course provides opportunities for students to work with community organizations focused on community psychology research and action related to social change. Students actively apply community psychology theory to practice, developing skills in participatory research & action. Students also focus on enhancing presentation, technical writing, and team participation skills.

B. Partnerships within a Community Psychology Context

Your work in this capstone will focus on applied aspects of community psychology with a particular emphasis on group dynamics and participatory research & action. Group theory will form the basis of practical approaches to creating high functioning project work groups. Empowerment evaluation strategies grounded in the research literature will provide a structure for project groups' efforts in the community.

C. A Commitment to Partnership and Collaborative Group Work

Although community service is an important component of community psychology, the work of the community psychologist goes beyond providing volunteer or other service. Students in this class should think of themselves as “consultants” who bring expertise and resources to the community partner

organization in helping them address important questions regarding their organizational and its relationship to the larger community. Student "consultation teams" are supported by a faculty member who serves as a supportive consultant to the teams. Consultation teams are also supported by key partner organization staff members who bring unique community and field knowledge to the table, as well as their professional expertise.

Consulting teams will assist community partners in completing a project that reflects a key partner organization need which falls within the context of community psychology. For example, a community partner might be interested in developing ways to enhance its volunteer component, to recruit more volunteers, train them more thoroughly, and ensure more long-term volunteering. One approach would be to have community psychology students act directly as volunteers with the organization. This provides a group of dedicated volunteers for six months of one year, and thus meets an important partner organization need. However, such an approach does not meet the long-term needs of the organization and it doesn't address the more fundamental concern of how the organization might restructure its recruitment or training activities to ensure a steady stream of long-term volunteers who are able to meet the organization's needs on an ongoing basis.

Instead of simply providing volunteer "person power" the community psychology consultation team could work with the community partner to develop, implement, and fine-tune volunteer recruitment, training, and maintenance activities. As a result, community psychology capstone students' time investment "leverages" many hundreds of future volunteer hours for the organization. This approach also maximizes students' opportunities to practice the application of community psychology principles within a consultation framework. Another approach would be to redefine the problem by identifying approaches to addressing the organization's needs other than through volunteers, or to identify resources and capacities that the organization could further develop to address better its needs.

II. Structure and Roles

This course has been structured to fulfill the basic goals of the PSU capstone program while helping students enhance their community psychology knowledge and develop basic community partnership skills. Course structure and roles include:

A. Two-Term Requirement. Students in community psychology make a commitment to take the course for 2 terms. Winter and Spring terms will fulfill the University's Capstone Requirement. This allows students to fully design, implement and evaluate their work in the community in a realistic time frame.

B. Consulting Teams. Four project teams will be established to work on specific projects with selected community partners. Each team is organized, and in large part, governed by the students comprising that work group. Members of each team are responsible for developing an effectively functioning work team, promoting the principles of community psychology and fulfilling the goals agreed upon in their community partner contract and their logic model/work plan.

C. Community Partner Sites. The community organizations (“community partners”) are co-participating clients in this capstone course and the focus of the consultations. They have graciously opened their organizations to us and our commitment is to fulfill our consultation contracts. Each organization/agency will have a site supervisor who will function as a liaison between the community partner and the project group. Site supervisors will facilitate the acquisition of resources necessary for project completion, and will provide insights regarding organization/agency mission, culture, and tradition. The site supervisor is the ultimate authority regarding what is possible and what is acceptable at each site. Site supervisors will provide weekly evaluations of project groups’ performance and will be in regular contact with Dr. Mankowski.

D. Faculty Consultation. The primary role of the Community Psychology course instructor is as a consultant to the consultation teams. Dr. Mankowski has been conducting research and action consultation projects with community organizations for more than 15 years. His experience includes conducting community needs assessments, program evaluations, program development, and community based research design and implementation. Unlike traditional classes, the primary method for conveying the instructor’s expertise will not (usually) be through classroom lectures, but rather through regular meetings with each consulting team and multiple project group discussions about community psychology and the process of consultation. Although Dr. Mankowski will meet with each project group weekly, **it is the responsibility of the groups to ask for additional assistance when they need it.** As students in Community Psychology, it is not expected that you are “experts” in the art of Community Psychology or consultation (not yet!), and it is the job of the faculty consultant to support you as you learn.

Project groups will meet with Dr. Mankowski each Thursday for approximately 20 minutes during class time. Discussions will be based on “Project Worksheets” completed during the previous week’s group meeting and turned in each Thursday afternoon. The faculty consultation will focus on a review of tasks and a discussion of “key issues” identified on the worksheets. During the time on Thursdays, when groups are not meeting with faculty, they will be working on Project Group Planning Worksheets which assist them in preparing for their Tuesday meetings with partner organization staff. Dr. Mankowski will also be available for consultation meetings with project groups by appointment, when additional consultation time is needed. Groups that are struggling with an issue, whether it relates to internal functioning of the consulting teams, questions

regarding consultation or how to communicate with community partners, should contact Dr. Mankowski immediately. A mark of professionalism is knowing when to ask for assistance and to do so before a problem reaches a point of crisis.

E. Capstone Agreement. A signed agreement is required by Portland State University for all Capstone projects, and provides a basic outline of shared responsibility for both Community Partners and Student Work Groups. In addition to this general form, a set of project goals, objectives, and tasks (i.e., in the form of a Logic Model) will be agreed upon between the organization, Dr. Mankowski, and the consulting team. The role of the contract and the Logic Model are not to restrict the activities of the working groups, but rather to provide a template for the group's efforts and to clarify early in the process what is expected from each of the participating parties (i.e., community partner and student consulting team). It is likely, even expected, that the Logic Models will be revised each term as the group's work evolves. While the overall project goals should be maintained across this two quarter course, revisions to project objectives and tasks can be negotiated with community partners on an "as needed" basis. Work plans provide a basis for thoughtful changes to the group's activities that may be needed in order to address changes that develop as a natural part of the project development. Each consulting team will be responsible for completing the Capstone contract by the fourth week of class. Due dates for the Logic Model are specified above. Any changes should be approved with Dr. Mankowski, as well as the community partner.

F. Weekly Schedule. The first two weeks of fall term will provide orientation and background, as well as opportunities for students to select a community partner. A regular schedule of activities will begin during the third week of the quarter. **Thursdays** will begin with topical lectures and the discussions that follow. Dr. Mankowski will meet with each of the consulting groups to discuss progress, answer questions, and facilitate planning for the Tuesday meeting with the community partner. Consulting groups will complete and turn-in a copy of a Project Group Planning Worksheet each Thursday. On **Tuesdays**, project groups will meet both with community partners and as a project group. At least an hour should be spent in each type of meeting. Students will arrange additional hours during the week to complete the work of their project group. This will involve a combination of time in project group meetings as well as additional meetings with community partners. Each week, individual group members will more than likely be assigned tasks to complete individually or in collaboration with organization staff and/or other project group members.

III. Course Requirements

A. Individual Responsibility. Students participating in this course have a variety of responsibilities. These include:

1. Attendance – Given the experiential nature of this class, attendance is critical to meet individual learning objectives as well as to ensure effective functioning of the project groups.

2. Required Readings – Readings should be completed prior to the Thursday class meeting in which they are due. These readings will be incorporated into both process discussions and project consultations.

3. Reading Reflection Papers – Reading reflection papers are due by 11:30am on Thursdays. They should be turned in electronically to Dr. Mankowski via D2L. These papers involve responding to the reading reflection questions provided for each of the readings. A **minimum of 2 double spaced pages** should be written in response to the questions assigned for each reading. For each paper, include the following at the top of each paper: "Reading Reflection (Due _____)(fill blank in with due date); Your Name; and The Current Date. **LATE PAPERS** - Papers sent after 11:30am on the due date will be considered late and lose 20% of the possible points. Papers turned in after midnight on the due date will lose an additional 10% of the points. Papers will **NOT BE ACCEPTED** after 5pm on the day after the assignment is due (and will receive zero points).

B. Group Responsibilities

2. Weekly Group Minutes and Planning: At the weekly meetings with community partners and the weekly internal meeting of the project group, the group should assign one member to be responsible for taking and submitting the notes electronically by 5pm Friday (please send minutes to Dr. Mankowski and your community partner supervisor).

These minutes should be in **outline form** and should include the following headings:

- I. THIS WEEK'S FOCUS** (Specify Objectives & Tasks);
 - II. PROGRESS MADE** (Including who worked on what this week);
 - III. ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED NEXT WEEK,**
 - IV. A LIST OF THE ACTIVITIES THAT NEED TO BE DONE IN THE COMING WEEK, WHICH GROUP MEMBERS ARE ASSIGNED TO EACH ISSUE OR TASK FOR NEXT WEEK, WHAT RESOURCES MAY BE NEEDED TO COMPLETE THE ACTIVITY, AND THE DATE BY WHEN IT SHOULD BE COMPLETED.**
 - V. ISSUES TO DISCUSS WITH DR. Mankowski.**
- Please note discussion of any other important issues.

SEPARATE MINUTES SHOULD BE TURNED IN FOR: (1) THE PROJECT GROUP'S MEETING WITH THE COMMUNITY PARTNER ON TUESDAYS; AND THE PROJECT GROUP'S MEETING AMONG THEMSELVES ON THURSDAYS. Project groups should use an outline

format for these notes as well. Please be sure that outline points are clear and understandable.

3. PowerPoint Oral Report on Research & Action Project Progress – Each consulting team will present a summary of their project during the quarter to the class. Each group member is required to do a 5 minute presentation as their contribution to the report. The Oral Report should be of professional quality, utilizing PowerPoint slides and handouts. (See Required Oral Report Guidelines)

4. Written Report on Project Progress – Project groups are responsible for submitting a 20-25 page written report describing their work over the course of both winter and spring quarters. The reports should describe the rationale for the project, include a review of the critical research literature pertinent to the work being done, describe project goals & objectives, provide a summary of the progress and accomplishments of the project team over both quarters. (See Required Written Report Guidelines) Each consultation team member **REQUIRED** to contribute to this written report (contributions should be identified in the table of contents).

For all individual and group assignments, due dates are provided above.

III. Evaluation/Grading

Your grade will be based upon a maximum of 100 points that can be earned as follows:

(1) 20 points: Attendance, participation with partner organization, & group minutes

(2) 10 points: Reading reflection papers

(3) 20 points: Community partner's evaluation of consultation

(4) 25 points: Final oral presentation

(5) 25 points: Final project written report

Point Conversion to Letter Grade. Total points obtained will be converted to a percentage that will result in assignment of a letter grade based on the following:

A = 93-100

A- = 90-92

B+ = 87-89

B = 83-86

B- = 80-82

C+ = 77-79

C = 73-76

C- = 70-72

D+ = 67-69

D = 63-66

D- = 60-62

F = below 60

A Note On Missed Work

Please note that since the focus of this capstone is research & action in collaboration with community partners and much of the work is experiential it is generally not possible to make up missed group work or to be excused from attending Tuesday or Thursday meetings. As a courtesy to your colleagues, please be sure to inform a team member if you become ill or have an emergency that interferes with your attendance and/or your responsibilities. It is each individual's personal responsibility to arrange coverage with other team members and let Dr. Mankowski know about any absence. If it is on a Tuesday or interferes with work at

the community organization, please also get in touch (or leave a message for) the community partner.

Since individual assignments are submitted electronically there should be little reason for missing deadlines. In consideration of the unexpected, however, students will be allowed to turn in ONE Reading Reflection Paper ONE DAY LATE without consequences. Dr. Mankowski reserves the right to make other assignment/grading exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

Students With Disabilities

I am happy to accommodate any student with a documented disability. To receive accommodation you will need to be officially registered with the University's Disability Office and you will need to provide this documentation to Dr. Mankowski. This documentation cannot be applied retroactively. For more information, please contact the Portland State University Disability Office at 503/725-4240.

Student Behavior

Capstone classes in general and this course in particular represent a unique learning situation that places students in the position of consultant and budding community professional. You will be interacting with the community partner's staff and participants/clients and involved in assisting them in developing programmatic materials. You will be representing Portland State University, the Psychology Department, and in some cases, the community partner's organization. With these opportunities, comes greater responsibility and an expectation for a higher standard of behavior. As a result, unethical or inappropriate behavior, as determined by Dr. Mankowski and the partner community organization supervisor, cannot be tolerated. Depending upon the situation, behavior of this nature may result in being asked to drop the course, being failed for the course or some other appropriate consequence.

* Dr. Mankowski reserves the right to adjust this syllabus as necessary to provide students with the optimal learning experience.