PS 382: Research in Community Psychology
Syllabus, Schedule, and Assignments
Fall 2007

Class hours: Tuesday, Thursday 1:00 - 2:20 p.m.
Class location: N2015 (Science Building)

Instructor: Dr. C. Loomis,
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Office hours: Tuesday 3:30 – 4:30, Thursday 11:30 – 12:30, or by appointment

Required Readings:
Readings are available via WebCT. Additional sources will be given to you in class.

Course Description:
This course is designed to introduce you to a systematic research process from developing research questions through report writing, with a goal of feeding back and communicating the findings to stimulate community action and social change. Several types of various research designs are presented as well as multiple methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting both quantitative (numerical) and qualitative (e.g., text, photos, drawings, video, etc.) data. (This course does not provide detailed instruction on analyzing qualitative data (for more information on that topic take the PS 398 course).

Students will be exposed to a variety of research designs including quasi-experiments, correlational studies, and naturalistic (field) observational studies. As part of the content on research designs sampling strategies also will be covered. Within the various types of studies more attention will be paid to descriptive studies using observational methods (observation, interview, and survey) and working with qualitative data rather than quantitative, because students have had little exposure to qualitative data in other psychology courses. These methods will be applied to different types of community research, including needs assessment (indicator approaches, key informant interviews, and community forums), program evaluation (evaluability assessment, process, outcome, and cost-effectiveness evaluation), participatory action research, and basic research in community psychology. Ethical issues in community research also will be addressed.

Course Objectives:
The objectives for this course in research in community psychology are as follows:

- contribute to students' learning about how to systematically move from an idea to a research question and from a research question to the appropriate research design
- clearly explain various types of research designs and methods
- stimulate students' interest in doing participatory action research and using qualitative and quantitative data, as well as different types of program evaluation
- develop students' skills in constructing a program logic model/evaluability assessment of a human service program
- develop students' skills in critically reading research articles in community psychology
- assist students in their developing a proposal for a community psychology study, including literature review, research questions, method, and proposed analyses
- connect students to community psychology research through concern for their own research ideas

Course Process:
I want to engage you in an active learning process. To this end, I use an adult education model, emphasizing student participation in the course. Class sessions will be a combination of mini-lectures on many of the different topics, discussion, and problem-solving in community research.

Additional Resources: Community Psychology Research and Evaluation Journals
Applied and Preventive Psychology
American Journal of Community Psychology
Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health
Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation
Community Mental Health Journal
Evaluation and the Health Professions
Evaluation and Program Planning
Evaluation Review
International Journal of Qualitative Methods
Journal of Community Psychology
Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology
Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community (formerly Prevention in Human Services)
Journal of Primary Prevention
Prevention and Treatment (on-line journal)
Qualitative Health Research
Qualitative Inquiry

Overview of Evaluation and Marks:
There are no exams in the course, and there is not a great deal of assigned reading that is required. Rather your mark is based on assignments and a research proposal that will provide you with

experience in reviewing, formulating, and conducting community research. Also, part of your mark will be based on your attendance and participation. **Please note that you will be penalized for handing in assignments late at the rate of 2 percentage points per day; however, no assignments will be accepted 5 days beyond the due date.** Of course allowances will be made for illness or personal issues that are beyond your control. The assignments are included below the schedule.

Requirement	Grade %	Date Due
Class Attendance and Participation	15%	Throughout
Assignment #1 (Group*) - Program Logic Model Assignment	10%	Oct. 4
Assignment #2 (Individual) - Review of Qualitative Research Article Assignment	15%	Oct. 20
Assignment #3 (Individual) - Research Proposal: Title, Research Questions, and Proposal Outline (Returned to you by Nov. 8)	5%	Nov. 3
Assignment #4 (Group*) - Qualitative interview project with report	15%	Nov. 8
Assignment #5 (Individual) - Research Proposal – FIRST DRAFT w/ Logic Model (Returned to you by Nov. 22, so you have two weeks to revise and resubmit)	10%	Nov. 15
Assignment #6 (Individual) – Research Proposal - FINAL	30%	Dec. 6

Class Attendance and Participation (15%):
I will take attendance for each class. I will also note your contributions to class discussions and your preparation for class assignments, and I will have you do an evaluation of the peers that you work with for your group assignments.

***Group Assignments:**
There are two group assignments. Students will work in groups of roughly 4 people for the group assignments. Different groups will be formed for each assignment. Each of the assignments should be about 5-7 pages in length.