

Community Psychology Semester Long Project

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This project is broken up into five parts: proposal, problem assessment, key stake holder interviews, logical model, and presentation. Students begin the semester by thinking about issues that are important to them. Students learn about a problem on campus and eventually generate solutions for the problem. I recommend pre-selecting some common community psychology topics that easily lend themselves to community psychology for students to work on. For example, you may want students to work on academic performance, sense of school belongingness, psychological well-being, social support, and/or community resources. Instructors may use pieces of the project to demonstrate course concepts without doing an extended project. It may also be done as a group project or honors project.

The Project Proposal can occur as early as you would like. Using a group format will allow students to discuss and hopefully generate more ideas.

Community Psychology Project Proposal

Each student has been assigned to a Community Research Group. In this group, you each represent a community member as well as a community psychologist in training. Together, you will develop a proposal around your group's target issue. The topic itself is fairly broad and vague to allow each of you space to explore the concepts that are most important or relevant to you and your experience at [institution name]. This proposal will be a collaborative effort between you and your peers. You will submit one proposal per group.

As the semester progresses, each student's project will begin to shape itself so that every project will be different from the others. However, it is not necessary to create these distinctions at this time. Your task for this assignment is to define the issue or outcome that you have been assigned.

Write-Up

Make sure the write-up clearly and correctly names each group member.

1. Why does that topic interest you as a group?
2. What types of constructs comprise the issue?
3. Who are possible key stake holders?
4. What groups have possibly been unheard in regards to this issue?
5. What are some of the assumptions that your group currently hold regarding your issue?

Example

For example, a group with the issue violence could define violence as mental, physical, and emotional abuse that occurs on campus as well as those incidences that occur off campus yet continues to affect students on campus. Possible key stake holders include people who have experienced frequent violence, people who have not experienced frequent violence, and people who previously experienced violence and have moved away from it. One possible unheard voice is that of men who have been abused in dating relationships. Our group holds several assumptions. We assume that people will not want to talk about such negative events with strangers. We also think that

Problem Assessment Assignment

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This assignment gives students an opportunity to learn about their community issue. It is best to have students work on this assignment after learning about the Ecological Model.

Community Psychology Problem Assessment

In this assignment, you will gather information on the current state of your topic. This information should provide you with an insight into the history of the problem and what has led up to the current state of your topic. For example, has the university dealt with this problem in the past? If yes, who addressed the problem, what was done at that time, and what was the outcome?

Resources

For this assignment, you need to support each claim that you make. You may use the university website, newspaper or magazine articles, books, journal article, and other published information. You may also use personal observations sparingly. You are required to use a minimum of 3 different sources for information. Each webpage, book, or article is considered one source.

Write-Up

This is an individual assignment. Each student will write his/her own problem assessment. The assignment must be typed, 12 inch font, Times New Roman font, double spaced, with 1 inch margins. Write-ups should be free of grammatical and spelling errors. The complete write up should be approximately 3-6 pages.

In your write up, you will address the following principles of James Kelley's Ecological Theory. You will start each principle by briefly explaining what the principle means. Then you will address the principle as it relates to your issue. The questions listed are meant as suggestions. They may not apply to every issue. Use them to help you discuss your issue.

1. **Succession:** What is the history of the issue? Research past programs that [institution name] or other local organizations have implemented to address the issue. If past programs have been implemented, who was involved, what did they do, where did it take place, when did the program occur, and what changes resulted from the program? Are their past incidents related to your issue? Crimes, lawsuits, or other incidences? Additionally, it is important for you to also find information on whether or not there are future plans to address your issue.
2. **Cycling of Resources:** What resources are currently available to address the issue at hand? Describe some of the formal resources that are available on campus to address the issue. Describe some of the informal resources that are available to address the issue.
3. **Interdependence:** How are people or campus organizations dependent on each other with regards to this issue? If changes are made with organizations or people on campus, what other entities would be affected?

- 4. Adaptation:** How have students adapted to the current issue? How are people involved in the situation coping with the situation? What changes have occurred since the problem began? How are people trying to survive the situation as it is now?

Key Stake Holder Interview Assignment

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This assignment gives students an opportunity to apply interviewing techniques learned in class. I typically use this assignment as part of a larger semester long project where students learn about a problem on campus and eventually generate solutions for the problem. This assignment is intended to keep students grounded in the experiences of key stake holders and learn more about how their target issue impacts different groups of people.

Key Stake Holder Interview Assignment

- (1) **Key Stake Holders:** Identify 3 key stake holders, 1 of your stake holders must represent an unheard voice. These stake holders do not need to be the same as the ones you identified in the project proposal. In fact, the categories you choose should be more specific to your topic. Consider the groups that you read about in your Problem Assessment. Explain why you chose each stake holder and how their perspective is relevant to fully understanding the scope of your issue/topic.
- (2) **Interview:**
 - a. **Semi-structured interview guide.** You must have 5 open-ended questions that allow the participant to have some control over the direction of the conversation. You must also have 3 structured questions related to understanding the individual's relationship to your target issue /organization.
 - b. **Interview:** Using the interview guides you created, you will interview 3 people. Each person should represent one of your stake holder groups. Bring your interview guide with you to the interview. You will take notes as the interview occurs. Save these notes, you will attach them to your final write-up. They will also help you write up your summaries as described in the next step. You may conduct one interview over the internet. If you choose internet communication for one interview, you must include the entire typed transaction with your final write up.
 - c. **Summary:** Identify which key stake holder group the interviewee represents. Do **not** include the person's name. Explain why this key stake holder is relevant to your topic? Describe the context in which you conducted the interview. How do you know the person? Based on the information gathered during your interview, describe the information you learned about the participant. For each interviewee, make sure to note any information that was contrary to what you originally thought. Each interview summary should be approximately 1 page. You must paraphrase what participants say. You may only use 1 quote per interview summary that is no more than 1 sentence long.
- (3) **Self-Reflection:** Write a brief reflection on your experience with this assignment. If you had any difficulties, describe them here. Additionally, address at least 2 of the questions listed here. The self-reflection should be approximately 1 page.
 - a. How did your interviewee react to your interview questions?
 - b. Did you learn anything about your interviewing style from this assignment?
 - c. What types of question, if any did your interviewees ask you?

- d. What would you recommend keeping the same and what would you recommend changing in your interview guide/style/interview/stake holders for the future?

Write-up Structure

*These are the sections of your paper. Write it exactly in this way.

Introduction: Describe your topic and the student outcome you are working on improving.

Interview Summary 1

Interview Summary 2

Interview Summary 3

Self-Reflection

*Attach all your interview notes after your write-up.

Logic Model Assignment

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This assignment gives students an opportunity apply the information they have gathered throughout the semester. It is also the first time that students begin generating “solutions” to their problems. I teach logic models and show students several versions of simple logic models. Students generate ideas for activities that would help to affect the conditions they proposed to work on through group discussion. Encourage students to think outside the box. At this point in the semester, students typically fall back on general and “been done” type activities that blame the victim for their problem.

Logic Model Assignment

(1) For this assignment you will draw a logic model for your project. Use the information you gathered throughout the semester to determine your conditions. Be creative with activity(s) that you are proposing will create change for the conditions. The outcomes and impact should be directly related to your activities and conditions. Make sure you include ARROWS connecting each box to another box.

2.

Conditions	Activities	Outcomes	Impact

- (2) **Explanation:** Write a 1 paragraph description of your logic model. The description should be concise, clear, and easy to understand. Make sure the “logic” is clear and that each box directly links with the boxes they are connected to. You will be graded on the clarity of your writing and the logic you provide for the connections between the boxes.
- (3) What type of change are you proposing? First-order change or second-order change? Explain why it is the type of change you suggested.
- (4) Describe the types of resources that are needed to implement the activities you proposed.
- (5) List and describe at least 2 places where you can get such resources.
- (6) Name at least one way that your proposed social change activity addresses a factor outside of the individual (i.e., systems level factor). In other words, how are you attempting to prevent victim blaming?

Final Project Presentation
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At the end of the semester, students should have a better understanding of their issues and problems, who it affects, and possible ideas for improving, changing, or solving the issue/problem. The final presentation can occur in many different formats. One possibility is to have students produce a tri-fold presentation and hold a poster faire. You may choose to invite other colleagues to come see student projects. Below is an example of a suggested student presentation board.

Final Project Presentation

<p>ABSTRACT</p> <p>The abstract should be written in paragraph form.</p> <p>PROBLEM</p> <p>ASSESSMENT</p> <p>(1) <u>Succession:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullet points representing relevant information • Use ~3 bullets per principle <p>(2) <u>Cycling of Resources</u></p>	<p>TITLE: Written Large & Easy to Read</p> <p>LOGIC MODEL</p> <pre> graph LR subgraph Conditions C1["(1) Low Applications"] C2["(2) Need for Graduation Speaker"] C3["(3) Need for Student Bonding"] end subgraph Activities A1["Letter Writing Campaign"] end subgraph Outcomes O1["More publicity"] O2["Obtain Graduation Speaker"] O3["Build Student Relationships"] end subgraph Impact I1["More Applications"] I2["More welcoming campus climate"] end C1 --> A1 C2 --> A1 C3 --> A1 A1 --> O1 A1 --> O2 A1 --> O3 O1 --> I1 O1 --> I2 O2 --> I1 O2 --> I2 O3 --> I1 O3 --> I2 </pre> <p>Social Change Suggestion: Name your suggestion below logic model</p> <p>(3) <u>Cycling of Resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullet points representing relevant information • Use ~3 bullets per principle 	<p>INTERVIEWS</p> <p>(1) <u>UMass Lowell Alum:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullet points representing relevant information • Use ~3 bullets per interview <p>(2) <u>Commuter Student:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullet points representing relevant information • No names • Ok to use interesting quotes <p>(3) <u>Full time Students with</u></p>
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