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office of teaching resources in PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology 370 - Summer, 2010
Introduction to Community Psychology
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:30am – 12:15pm
Parmer, 209

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Office hours: Tu & Th, 12:30-1:30

Welcome to Psych 370, Introduction to Community Psychology!

Prerequisites: PSCH 290. If you have not taken Psych 290, or its equivalent, you may not enroll in this course.

Required Textbook:

Dalton, J.H., Elias M. J., & Wandersman, A. (2007). *Community psychology: Linking individuals and communities (2nd edition)*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson.

This textbook is available at the DU bookstore, but you can feel free to order it from an online bookstore, such as amazon.com. However, if you choose to buy your text from an online site, I ask that you pay attention to shipping timeframes to be sure that your textbook will arrive in a timely manner. The “I ordered my textbook two weeks ago, but it hasn’t arrived yet” excuse for not meeting the course requirements will not be accepted. ☺

Course Description and Objectives:

This course will introduce you to the field of Community Psychology through an examination of relevant theory, research, and practice. Community psychology deals with the ways in which individuals and communities are interconnected. Throughout the semester, we will be using Dalton, Elias, and Wandersman’s (2007) introductory Community Psychology textbook. The major content areas we will review are:

- What is Community Psychology and how did it develop, both here in the United States and abroad? What factors led to the development of this field of Psychology in the 1960’s? How is Community Psychology different from the other areas of Psychology?
- A distinct aspect of Community Psychology is its goal to create social change. You will learn what research methods Community Psychologists use to learn about communities and the ways in which they can change. Can you think of a community that you are a part of, in which you would like to see a change?
- Communities are made up of individuals, and we will study how individuals are connected to their environments. Think about the different communities you are a part

of, such as your family, your school, your workplace, your city, or even your country and ask yourself how you know you are a part of that community. We will also focus on understanding different ways to define “community.”

- Because communities are so diverse, we will have explicit conversations about human diversity, and the ways in which Community Psychologists value human diversity in their work.
- All humans have to deal with different stressors in their lives, and many have various ways of coping with these stressors. We will see the ways in which Community Psychologists understand stressors in people’s lives, and how they believe they can better understand and impact people’s coping in life.
- It is often said that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Community Psychologists often prefer to prevent something from happening, than to have to treat it later. Therefore, you will learn how Community Psychologists implement prevention programs in communities and how they try to promote competence in the communities they work with.
- Since social change is highly valued in the field, we will look at citizen participation and empowerment to see how these can affect the ways in which communities work.
- Many of the areas discussed above mention community and social change. When reviewing the last few chapters of your text, we will discuss how these changes come about, and what we have to do to try and effect long-lasting changes in communities.
- To see if our community and social changes work, we need to be able to evaluate them. We will briefly discuss program evaluation and development, as they pertain to our discussions on community change.
- Community Psychology is still a young field, and there are many things we still do not fully understand. The last chapter in the book allows us to discuss future directions for the field and we will also discuss future directions for you now that you have taken this class!

Readings/Films:

Even if some material from the textbook is not covered in class, you are still responsible for it. I highly recommend that you read the corresponding textbook chapter before the class meeting in which that chapter will be covered.

In addition to the textbook readings, we will watch various videos throughout the semester. These videos are meant to highlight some of the major content areas and to provide supplemental information. You are responsible for the information presented in the videos and you will be tested on this information.

Exams:

There will be three sectional exams this semester. All exams will consist of 50 multiple choice questions, and be worth 100 points. You will use scantrons for all exams, so please be sure to bring a #2 pencil to each exam!

Assignments:

You will have two major writing assignments due this semester. For these assignments, the paper should have 1 inch margins, 12 point, Times New Roman font and be written in APA style. These assignments are meant to help you further understand some key concepts of community psychology. All assignments need to be submitted at the beginning of class, stapled, on their due date. Papers submitted after class will be considered late, and receive a 2 point deduction. Any papers submitted after the due date will have a 5 point deduction per day late. If you are turning in a late paper, you need to e-mail me, so that we can set up a time for you to submit it. If you do not do this, you may lose additional points for lateness because I have no proof of when you turned it in. Please note that the page limits for these assignments DO NOT include the title or reference pages.

Assignment #1: This assignment is due on Tuesday, June 1st, and is worth 50 points. You will need to watch one of the approved movies (list will be distributed on the first day of class) and write a 3- to 5- page paper critiquing how this movie exemplifies the definition of the field cited in your textbook on page 15. There will be an in-depth handout detailing the requirements of the paper which will be distributed on the first day and will also be available on blackboard.

Assignment #2: This assignment is due on Tuesday, June 15th, and is worth 100 points. For this assignment, you are required to read one of the following: *All Our Kin* (social networks), *There Are No Children Here* (inner city pathology), *Nickel and Dimed* (working poor), *Reaching Higher: The Power of Expectations in Learning* (schooling) or *Rachel and Her Children* (homelessness), and write a 5- to 7- page paper on it. Because this is a substantive assignment, I would highly recommend that, at the latest, you finish reading your book by week three.

This paper is meant to provide you with a way of integrating a lot of the concepts you will have learned about throughout the course. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask! I am more than happy to discuss outlines with you, and I will read rough drafts if you set up an appointment with me before Tuesday, June 8th. Remember that this is a lengthy assignment, and requires you to both read the book you select and integrate the information you have learned throughout the course, so you will not do well on it if you neglect the assignment until a few days before it is due. Please plan your time accordingly and pace yourself!

For this paper, you will also be provided with an in-depth handout that will provide more details regarding how I want you to format your paper and what information I expect you to include in your paper. As with all other handouts for this class, this handout will also be available on blackboard for you to download.

References:

- Ehrenrich, B. (2002). *Nickel and dimed: On (not) getting by in America*. New York: Henry Holt and Co.
- Kotlowitz, A. (1991). *There are no children here: The story of two boys growing up in the other America*. New York: First Anchor Books.
- Kozol, J. (2006). *Rachel and her children: Homeless families in America*. New York: Three

Rivers Press.

Stack, C. (1997). *All our kin*. New York: Basic Books.

Weinstein, R. (2004). *Reaching higher: The power of expectations in schooling*. Massachusetts:
Harvard University Press.

Grading:

Sectional Exams - 300 possible points (100 pts each)

Writing Assignments - 50 possible points (paper #1)

- 100 possible points (paper #2)

Total - 450 possible points

Your final grade will be calculated based on the number of points you have earned. To calculate your grade, all you need to do is add the number of points you have earned on each of the assignments listed above, and compare them to the cutoffs listed below.

Letter grade	Percentage	Points Earned
A	93-100%	417+
A-	90-92%	403-416
B+	87-89%	390-402
B	84-86%	376-389
B-	80-83%	358-375
C+	77-79%	345-357
C	74-76%	331-344
C-	70-73%	313-330
D	60-69%	268-312
F	Less than 60%	267 or less

Extras:

Special Needs Students:

At Dominican University, no qualified individual with a disability will be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university. The dean of students' office is a university resource promoting barrier-free environments (physical, program, information, attitude) and assisting the university in meeting its obligation under federal statutes and school tradition in regard to the rights of students with disabilities.

The Office of the Dean of Students coordinates the provision of services necessary and appropriate for students with special needs. Upon receipt of appropriate documentation of disability, this office assists by providing or arranging appropriate auxiliary aids and services, reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments and consultation. In some instances, the dean of students' office acts as a liaison with other appropriate state and federal agencies. Students are expected to meet individually with the dean of students to determine what specific services and reasonable accommodations are needed. It is the responsibility of the student to make requests for auxiliary aids or special services at least three weeks prior to the start of a program or class.

Policy on Academic Honesty:

In fairness to the vast majority of students who take their college career seriously, no form of plagiarism, cheating, or academic dishonesty will be tolerated. If you have any questions about what academic honesty includes, please refer to the Dominican University student handbook.

You can access the handbook online via the following link:

http://www.thezonelive.com/zone/02_SchoolStructure/IL_DominicanUniversity-RiverForest/handbook.pdf

Academic Enrichment Center:

Learning Resources is located in the lower level of Parmer Hall within the Academic Enrichment Center, Parmer 010. Learning Resources consists of faculty and student tutors, serving both undergraduate and graduate students.

Through Learning Resources, a student can receive assistance in writing, English, math, business, chemistry, physics, biology, psychology, Italian, Spanish, or computers.

While tutoring is done on a walk-in basis for most subjects, appointments are strongly encouraged for math, writing, and English tutoring. To make an appointment, come to Parmer 010 or call 708-524-6682.

Communication with your instructor:

The easiest way to get in touch with me is through e-mail. I would like to offer a word of advice here... e-mails are a form of written communication and as such, you are presenting yourself to me, your instructor, via your “typing.” Please write in complete sentences, check your grammar, and use appropriate language. Here are some things you may want to avoid in your e-mails:

- Writing in all CAPS – this is usually perceived as “yelling” and is not polite
- Not including a subject in the subject line – these messages sometimes get marked as SPAM and I never even receive them
- Not including your name or the class you are e-mailing me about

If I have not replied to you within two working days, you may feel free to e-mail me again. However, please note that e-mails received late on Friday (after 3pm) or during the weekends may not be answered until the following Monday (or working day).

Counseling Services:

Counseling Services, a component of the Wellness Center, offers Dominican University students confidential counseling to help cope with day-to-day stresses and difficult periods in life. Topics such as relationship issues, stress management and self-care, depression, self-esteem, anxiety, and transitions are some of the areas that may be of concern.

Our mental health professionals are available for supportive, individualized counseling in a safe, comfortable environment. There is no fee for Dominican University students for these services.

Contact Person:
Minerva, 708-524-6229

Week	Dates	Topics	Readings/ Assignments
1	Tuesday, 5/18	Introduction to the course and the syllabus	
		What is Community Psychology?	Chapter 1
		How has CP developed?	Chapter 2
	Thursday, 5/20	CP outside of the USA	
		The Aims of Community Research	Chapter 3
		Methods of CP Research	Chapter 4
2	Tuesday, 5/25	VIDEO: The deadly deception	
		<i>Exam #1, chapters 1-4</i>	
	Thursday, 5/27	Understanding Individuals Within Environments	Chapter 5
		Understanding Community	Chapter 6
3	Tuesday, 6/1	Understanding Human Diversity	Chapter 7 Short paper due
		Understanding Coping in Context	TBA
	Thursday, 6/3	Prevention and Promotion: Key concepts	Chapter 9
		P & P: Highlights of chapters 10 and 11	TBA
4	Tuesday, 6/8	<i>Exam #2, chapters 5-9</i>	
		Citizen Participation and Empowerment	Chapter 12
	Thursday, 6/10	VIDEO: The Democratic Promise	
		Community and Social Change	Chapter 13
5	Tuesday, 6/15	VIDEO: Tough Guise	Final paper due
		Program Evaluation and Program Development	Chapter 14
	Thursday, 6/17	Looking Ahead	Chapter 15
		<i>Exam #3, Chapters 10-15</i>	