WORKING SYLLABUS (August 18)
UN254/SC240/BK248 Community Research Seminar
Fall 2011, Higgins 280
Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30-11:45 a.m.

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Description of Seminar
The Community Research Program is a two-semester seminar that offers leadership, research, and public policy training for students interested in working with Latino, Asian and/or African Diaspora communities in Massachusetts. In the Fall, students will spend time observing work within a community organization, and begin to design a research proposal for the Spring semester research project. In the Spring, students will register for an independent study with a faculty advisor, conduct their research project, and attend the community service research seminar once a week on Thursdays. Students also will have the opportunity to present their research findings in a public forum at a date to be determined. Information on the Spring semester schedule is detailed in a separate syllabus provided by Dr. Sendoya.

During the Fall semester, we will discuss the paradigm of ‘community-based’ research, the role of the literature review in defining a research question, different research methods and methodologies, as well as the considerations a researcher must make when ‘inviting themselves’ into the lives of the research participants. We will discuss issues such as informed consent, confidentiality, and the importance of establishing trust and rapport in producing ethical, valid research. Also, we will delve into the faculty-student relationship and explore the practical issues of time management.

In order to foster greater focus about one’s research question, the seminar will also include a Lecture Series where academic researchers and community professionals will come and discuss their current work and experiences on issues related to the three research-interest communities.
Course Objectives for Fall Semester
* Gain an understanding of the uniqueness of community-based research in comparison to other forms of research
* Build upon your knowledge of the issues affecting communities of color and those organizations working for social change
* Acquire field observation, interviewing, analytic reading and writing skills
* Learn the important components in designing a research proposal and conducting a study to include how to conduct a thorough literature review
* Develop an understanding of the various methodological tools available to researchers and be able to decide what methods are appropriate for particular research questions
* Become critical consumers and producers of knowledge

Seminar Requirements for Fall Semester
Class Attendance and Participation (15% of your grade)
Much of the learning will take place in the classroom through participation in class discussions. It is expected that you will come to class prepared to discuss the assigned reading and/or assignment. Hence, absences and lateness will be noted as this has an effect on group participation and learning. Additionally, you are to meet individually with a graduate assistant on a regular basis (schedule to be determined with your graduate assistant) to discuss your progress in the seminar. You are also required to meet with Prof. Piatelli mid-semester to discuss your research project and progress in securing a possible faculty advisor for Spring semester.

Reflection Papers (20% of your grade) DUE: One week after speaker
Over the course of the semester, short informal written assignments on the readings and speakers will be required. For these papers, you should compose a narrative of approximately 2-3 double spaced pages that use the questions below as a guide in discussing your reactions to the ideas presented by the speaker(s), reading(s), and the subsequent class discussion.

*How has the speaker(s)/reading(s) influenced your point of view on a particular issue/topic? Was there something specific in the reading or in the class session that was a key point for you?

*How did the reading(s)/speaker(s) influence your thinking about your own research project?

*Do any of these issues resonate with your own personal experiences and if so why/why not?

While this paper can be informal writing, please pay attention to spelling and grammar. The writing should be clear in that the reader can comprehend what you are communicating. Points will be deducted if it is evident that the paper has not been proofread. These papers should NOT be a summary of a discussion or reading, but rather a critical reflection on the issues discussed. Each paper will be evaluated by your graduate assistant and your grade will be based on the paper’s thoughtfulness, insight, and engagement with the discussion/material. Please email your paper to your respective graduate assistant one week after the speaker visits class.
Field Experience (15% of your grade)  DUE: Thursday, October 27
You will conduct an interview with a member of a community organization that works with either the Latino, Asian and/or African Diaspora community in the local area. You will be asked to initiate contact with a local agency early on in the semester. (Information on campus and community resources will be provided by your graduate assistant during your one-on-one meetings.) During this visit, you will be asked to gain insights into the organization’s purposes, activities, and goals, and reflect upon these in a detailed field report. You will also assess the feasibility of conducting your second semester research project at this field site. We will discuss how to conduct an interview during the semester and a handout will be provided with further information. This paper will be graded by Prof. Piatelli. Please email this paper to Prof. Piatelli before class time on the date due.

Literature Review and Methodological Plan (Draft IRB application) (50% of your grade)  FINAL DUE: Thurs., Dec. 8
Your primary focus this semester is to identify a researchable question for your Spring semester research project. An important piece of this process is producing a comprehensive literature review that frames your research question and lays the foundation for developing your methodology for your research study. The final paper is due in the last class, Thursday, December 8th. Below are several checkpoint ungraded assignments to assist you in completing a quality piece of work. A handout will be provided for each of these assignments well in advance with guidelines.

*Choose a topic of interest  DUE: Thurs., Sep. 29
*Complete initial literature search  DUE: Tues., Oct. 11
*Expanded Literature Search (at least 3 sources)  DUE: Thurs., Nov. 3
*Submit a draft of your literature review and methodological plan  DUE: Thurs., Nov. 17

Late work. In order to prepare you for Spring semester, it is imperative that you submit your work on time. If you have extenuating circumstances that will prevent you from doing so, you must come see Prof. Piatelli BEFORE the due date to discuss a possible extension; otherwise you will lose 5 points each day the assignment is late.

A note on academic integrity
Sharing of information and ideas are encouraged. However, when working on individual assignments, it is expected that you do your own work. In cases where you are required to use published work, you must cite the work. If you plagiarize or cheat in some other form, you will fail the assignment; repeated episodes will result in failure of the course. If there are any questions on proper method of citing, please see me. For more information on Boston College’s academic integrity policy, please visit: www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity.
Seminar Schedule

Tuesday, September 6
Orientation to the seminar

Thursday, September 8
Community-based research paradigm and public policy

Reading:

Tuesday, September 13
CRP Student Panel: Gabriella Karina, Ivana Perez, Khloe Scurry.

Thursday, September 15
Policy Overview Panel: Carlos Maynard (UMass Boston Public Policy Program), Prof. Karen Miller (BC History Dept. and African and African American Diaspora Studies), Prof. Arissa Oh (BC History Dept. and Asian and Asian American Studies)

Readings:

Tuesday, September 20
Social inequality and the intersection of race and class

Readings:
Thursday, September 22
SPEAKER TO BE SCHEDULED (SEE PG. 8)

Reading:

Tuesday, September 27
SPEAKER TO BE SCHEDULED (SEE PG. 8)

Reading:

Thursday, September 29
The research process and the literature review

Reading:
*O’Neill Library “Literature Review”. See weblink: [http://libguides.bc.edu/content.php?pid=1194]

LIBRARY RESERVE

Tuesday, October 4
Overview of the library system with Research Librarian Brendan Rapple
Meet in O’Neill 307

Thursday, October 6
The methods of fieldwork and interviewing

Readings:

Tuesday, October 11
Initial Lit. Search Due
SPEAKER TO BE SCHEDULED (SEE PG. 8)

Reading:

Thursday, October 13
SPEAKER TO BE SCHEDULED (SEE PG. 8)

Reading:
Tuesday, October 18
Building the literature review

Thursday, October 20
SPEAKER TO BE SCHEDULED (SEE PG. 8)

Reading:

**Set up time to meet with Prof. Piatelli to discuss progress with final paper**

Tuesday, October 25
SPEAKER TO BE SCHEDULED (SEE PG. 8)

Reading:

Thursday, October 27
Field Experience Report Due
Ethics and the Institutional Review Board

Reading:
*Complete NIH Training Program online and print out certificate for files. (Approx. 1.5 hours) [http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php](http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php)

Tuesday, November 1
SPEAKER TO BE SCHEDULED (SEE PG. 8)

Reading:

Thursday, November 3
Expanded Lit. Review Due
Writing the literature review and developing a methodological design

Reading:
*Research Proposal: “Nutrition in the Low-Income Latino Community” [BLACKBOARD](#)

Tuesday, November 8
Building your sample

Thursday, November 10
Choosing appropriate methods

Tuesday, November 15
Community Based Research to Policy: Melisa Colon (UMass Boston)
Thursday, November 17	Draft Lit. Review Due
Presenting your proposed project

Tuesday, November 23 (continued)

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Tuesday, November 29
Literature review presentation and peer review

Thursday, December 2
Literature review presentation and peer review

Tuesday, December 6
Literature review presentation and peer review

Thursday, December 8	Final Lit. Review Due
Literature review presentation and peer review
Speaker sessions in progress of being scheduled

**Educational inequality (urban school reform; immigrant concerns; bilingual education; college access)**

This reading will be required and added to syllabus once we have a date determined. I already put the link on Blackboard. We may also add any readings the speakers offer.


**Healthcare and Inequality**

These readings will be required and added to syllabus once we have a date determined. I already put them on Blackboard/Library Reserve. We may also add any readings the speakers offer.


**Youth (possibly criminal justice system; mentoring; leadership, identity)**

These readings will be required and added to syllabus once we have a date determined. I already put them on library reserve. We may also add any readings the speakers offer.


**Immigration (possibly human rights, racial profiling, economic inequality)**

This reading will be required and added to syllabus once we have a date determined. I already put it on library reserve. We may also add any readings the speakers offer.