Description of Seminar
The Community Research Program is a two-semester seminar that offers leadership, research, and public social policy training for students interested in working with AHANA communities in Massachusetts. In the Fall 3-credit seminar, 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 a 3-credit independent study with a faculty advisor, conduct their research project, and attend the 1-credit community research seminar once a week (same time on Thursdays). Students also will have the opportunity to present their research findings in a public forum at a date to be determined.

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 readings, assignments and/or develop questions for the speakers. Hence, absences and lateness will be noted as this has an effect on group participation and learning. Additionally, you are to meet individually with your graduate assistant (GA) on a regular basis to discuss your progress with your work and reflections on the seminar. You will also schedule a meeting with Prof. Piatelli mid-semester to discuss your research project and progress in securing a faculty advisor for Spring semester. Lastly, you will be asked to present your final paper at the end of the semester, attend all presentations, and provide constructive feedback for your classmates on their work.

Reflection Papers (20% of your grade)  
DUE: One week after date of 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 a maximum of three double spaced pages that use the questions below as a guide in discussing your reactions to the ideas presented by the speakers, readings, and the subsequent class discussion. It is recommended that you discuss your reflections on the speaker with your GA prior to writing your paper.

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 or if spelling and grammar problems persist over the course of writing the reflection papers. 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 GA and your grade will be based on the paper’s thoughtfulness, insight, and engagement with the discussion/material.

*How have the speakers/readings influenced your point of view on a particular issue/topic? Were there any assumptions you may have about the root causes of the issue affirmed/challenged? Was there something specific in the reading or in the class session that was a key point for you?*

*How did the speakers/readings influence your thinking about your own research project? If not directly related to your topic, discuss how the session informed your thinking more generally about your project (e.g., root causes of your proposed research problem; methodology; similarities with your proposed sample’s experiences, etc.).*

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

*These papers will be graded by your GA. Please email your paper to your GA one week after the speaker visits class.*
**Field Experience (15% of your grade)**

DUE: Thursday, October 25

You will conduct an interview with a member of an off-campus community organization or research institution that works with some aspect of the AHANA community in the local area. You will be asked to initiate contact early on in the semester. (Information on resources will be provided by your GA 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. 6

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 6th. 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. 27

*Complete initial literature search*  
DUE: Tues., Oct. 9

*Expanded Literature Search (at least 3 sources)*  
DUE: Thurs., Nov. 1

*Submit a draft of your literature review and methodological plan*  
DUE: Thurs., Nov. 15

*The draft methodological plan will be transferred into the IRB application for submission with the final paper.*

**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. This applies to reflection papers as well.

**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 4
Orientation to the seminar

Thursday, September 6
Community-based research paradigm and public policy

**Required Reading:**

Tuesday, September 11
Policy Overview Panel

**Required Readings:**

Thursday, September 13
Social inequality and the intersection of race and class

**Required Readings:**

Tuesday, September 18
(continued)
Thursday, September 20

This will be a guest speaker class session. See end of syllabus for topics and readings that are being scheduled.

Tuesday, September 25

This will be a guest speaker class session. See end of syllabus for topics and readings that are being scheduled.

Thursday, September 27

The research process and the literature review

Tentative Topic Due

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

LIBRARY RESERVE

Tuesday, October 2

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

Thursday, October 4

The methods of fieldwork and interviewing

Required Readings:

Tuesday, October 9

Initial Lit. Search Due

This will be a guest speaker class session. See end of syllabus for topics and readings that are being scheduled.

Thursday, October 11

This will be a guest speaker class session. See end of syllabus for topics and readings that are being scheduled.

Tuesday, October 16

Building the Literature Review
Thursday, October 18

This will be a guest speaker class session. See end of syllabus for topics and readings that are being scheduled.

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

Tuesday, October 23

This will be a guest speaker class session. See end of syllabus for topics and readings that are being scheduled.

Thursday, October 25

Field Experience Report Due
Ethics and the Institutional Review Board

*Required Reading:
*Complete NIH Training Program online by October 27th 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, October 30

This will be a guest speaker class session. See end of syllabus for topics and readings that are being scheduled.

Thursday, November 1

Expanded Lit. Review Due
Writing the literature review and developing a methodological design

*Reading:
*Research Proposal: BLACKBOARD

Tuesday, November 6

Building your sample

Thursday, November 8

Choosing appropriate methods

Tuesday, November 13

Community-based research to policy discussion

Thursday, November 15

Draft Lit. Review Due
Presenting your proposed project

Tuesday, November 20

(continued)
HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Tuesday, November 27
Research proposal presentation and peer review

Thursday, November 29
Research proposal presentation and peer review

Tuesday, December 4
Research proposal presentation and peer review

Thursday, December 6
Research proposal presentation and peer review

Final Lit. Review and IRB Due
SPEAKERS IN PROGRESS OF BEING SCHEDULED

Immigration, Deportation, Human and Civil Rights

Readings: Choose one reading from below


Cultural Competency and Mental Health

Readings: Choose one reading from below


Urban Health and Healthcare

Readings:

AND Choose one reading from below


Select Issues Facing Youth

Readings: Choose one reading from below


* McIntyre, Alice. (2000). Constructing meaning about violence, school and community: Participatory action research with urban youth. The Urban Review. V32, 2, 123-154. LIBRARY RESERVE


Inequality: College Access and Success

Readings:

AND Choose one reading from below

*Griffin, Kimberly, et.al. (2012). “Oh, of course I’m going to college: Understanding how habitus shapes the college choice process of black immigrant students.” Journal of Diversity in Higher Education. V5, 2:96-111. [LIBRARY RESERVE]


Educational Inequality: K-12, Bilingual Education

Readings:

Choose one reading from below


interpretative policy analysis of Native American Languages Act of 1990/1992.”
LIBRARY RESERVE