SC255 Community Research Seminar II  
Spring 2013, Higgins 280  
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 social policy training for students interested in working with Latino, Asian immigrant and Asian-American, African and African Diaspora and/or Native American 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 an independent study with a faculty advisor, conduct their research project, and attend the 1-credit community research seminar once a week. Students also will have the opportunity to present their research findings in a public forum at a date to be determined.

The Spring semester seminar is designed to complement students’ independent work on their research projects. It will serve in large part as a forum for students to discuss their research with each other, and work through challenges together. The seminar will include the opportunity for sharing research data and process in order to receive feedback from classmates, graduate assistants, and the faculty coordinator. It will also feature a few speakers that will share their expertise and experiences with the process, challenges, and rewards of research. Finally, students will continue to develop their formal oral presentation skills in preparation for potential opportunities to present in a public setting.
Course Objectives for Spring Semester

• By completing and submitting your research plan to the Institutional Review Board, gain a deeper understanding of the various ethical and methodological issues related to your project that must be addressed before conducting research
• Deepen your understanding of the process of conducting community-based research, including the obstacles that researchers encounter and ways in which they can be overcome
• Apply appropriate methodological tools, including data collection and analysis skills, for your research project
• Acquire analytic reading and writing skills, as well as skills for working with various populations within a specific community
• Develop oral presentation skills suitable for both academic and general audiences

Seminar Requirements and Grading for Spring Semester

This is a one (1) credit seminar. In addition to a grade for this seminar, you will also receive a grade for your independent research study from your faculty advisor that will constitute three (3) credits.

Class Attendance and Participation (60% of your grade)

This seminar is designed to assist you in completing your independent research study by providing an environment that facilitates peer support and methodological instruction. Therefore, class attendance is of utmost importance. It is expected that you will come to class prepared to discuss progress on your research project and lead one discussion specifically on your research data to date. Additionally, it is expected that you will provide constructive feedback to your classmates on their respective projects. In addition there are several tasks that need to be completed to keep your project on track:

Registration: You will ensure that you are enrolled in a three (3) credit course (e.g., Research and Readings or Independent Study) with your faculty advisor (or a course they designate) before drop/add period ends: Wednesday, January 23rd. You have already been enrolled in the one (1) credit seminar (SC255). If you are experiencing problems with registration, please inform Prof. Piatelli as soon as possible so she can assist you.

Faculty/Student Agreement: You will meet with your faculty advisor and obtain a signed faculty/student agreement if you have not done so. Please provide a copy of this agreement to Jeanette by Thursday, January 24th. If for some reason you are not able to obtain this signed agreement by this date, please inform Prof. Piatelli as soon as possible so she can address any questions your advisor may have.

IRB forms: You will complete and submit your IRB application forms with your faculty advisor approval by Thursday, January 31st. Please provide a copy of your submission to Jeanette for our records. If for some reason you are not able to submit your application by
this date, you will submit a status report to Prof. Piatelli as to your progress with submitting your application.

Project timeline. You will draft a schedule outlining tasks to be completed for your research project to serve as checkpoints throughout the semester. It is recommended that this timeline be presented to your faculty supervisors for review. You will submit a copy of your timeline via email to Prof. Piatelli by Thursday, February 7th.

Progress Reports (30% of your grade)

1st Written Progress Report: This report will outline your progress to date with your research project. You should discuss your progress in developing a sample and collecting data, along with any challenges you may have encountered conducting research or working with faculty. This report of approximately 2-3 double spaced pages is due via email to Prof. Piatelli by Thursday, Feb. 21st and will be used as the basis for discussion in the next class. A handout with guiding questions can be found on Blackboard.

2nd Written Progress Report: This report should focus on discussing preliminary interpretations of data collected thus far, any challenges in finalizing data collection and analysis, and an action plan for crafting the final research paper. This report of 4-5 double spaced pages is due via email to Prof. Piatelli by Thursday, April 4th and will be used a basis for discussion in the next class. A handout with guiding questions can be found on Blackboard.

Presentation (10% of your grade)

You will be asked to present your research project in the form of a 15-minute powerpoint presentation. Powerpoint presentations will be sent via email to Jeanette by 5pm on the day prior to your presentation. You will also provide Jeanette with an abstract of your paper by that time as well. Points will be deducted for lateness and not adhering to time limit for presentation. Guidelines (similar to your Fall presentation) for this presentation can be found on Blackboard.

Grading scale and late work: 95-100 (A); 90-94 (A-); 87-89 (B+); 84-86 (B); 80-83 (B-); 77-79 (C+); 74-76 (C); 70-73 (C-), etc. In order to best support your progress with your research project, 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 and appropriate point deductions; 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

Thursday, January 17
Review research proposal and IRB status

Thursday, January 24
Designing data collection instruments
Setting project timelines and managing your time
Registration Completed
Agreement to Jeanette in class

Thursday, January 31
CRP Student Panel
IRB Application Due via email to Jeanette

Thursday, February 7
Problems gaining access, generating a sample
and other research dilemmas
Timeline Due to Piatelli via email

Thursday, February 14
Analyzing quantitative data

Thursday, February 21
Analyzing qualitative data
Progress Report Due to Piatelli via email

Thursday, February 28
(Continued)

SPRING BREAK NO CLASS

Thursday, March 14
Student-Led Discussions on Data to Date (4)

Thursday, March 21
Student-Led Discussions on Data to Date (4)

EASTER NO CLASS

Thursday, April 4
Student-Led Discussions on Data to Date (5)
Progress Report Due to Piatelli via email

Thursday, April 11
Moving from Analysis to Paper Writing
Presentation Overview

Thursday, April 18
Presentations (5)
Thursday, April 25
Presentations (4)

Thursday, May 2
Presentations (4)