Professor Deborah Piatelli  
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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 communities of color in Massachusetts. In the Fall 3-credit seminar, students will spend time observing work with a community provider, 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 four research-interest communities.

Note: This course counts towards the university’s cultural diversity requirement.
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

Reference Books on Reserve


Seminar Requirements for Fall Semester

Participation: In Class (10% of your grade); One-on-Ones with Graduate Assistant (5% 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 ask questions of the speakers. Hence, absences and lateness will be noted as this has an effect on group participation and learning. More than two absences will result in points deducted from your class participation grade. Additionally, you are to meet individually with your graduate assistant (GA) on a regular basis to discuss your progress with your research project design as well as 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. If you have not secured a faculty advisor by the end of Fall semester, five points will be deducted from your final grade.

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 speakers and readings will be required. For these papers, you should compose a narrative of a maximum of three double spaced pages 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. A guideline for these papers can be found on Canvas.
Please email your paper to your GA one week after the speaker visits class for review and comments. Prof. Piatelli will also review your papers and assign your grade.

**Field Experience (15% of your grade)**  
**DUE: Thursday, October 23**
You will conduct an interview with a member of an off-campus community provider 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 and are available on Canvas.) 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. Your GA will assist you in developing your interview guide and we will discuss how to conduct an interview during the semester. A handout for this assignment will be provided with further information, and can also be found on Canvas.

Please email this paper to Prof. Piatelli before class time on the date due.

**Literature Review and Methodological Plan/Draft IRB application (45% of your grade)**
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 by 5 p.m. on Thursday, December 11th. Below are several checkpoint ungraded assignments to assist you in completing a quality piece of work. Only the final paper will be graded. A handout will be provided for each of these assignments well in advance and can also be found on Canvas.

*Choose a topic of interest*  
**DUE: Thurs., Sep. 25**

*Complete initial literature search*  
**DUE: Tues., Oct. 7**

*Complete expanded literature search (at least 3 sources)*  
**DUE: Thurs., Oct. 30**

*Submit a draft of your literature review and methodological plan*  
**DUE: Thurs., Nov. 20**

*Submit the final paper and draft IRB application*  
**DUE: Thurs., Dec. 11**

Please email all papers to Prof. Piatelli before class time on the date due (except the last paper which is due at 5 p.m.).

**Powerpoint Presentation of your Final Research Proposal (5% of your grade)**
You will be asked to present your final paper at the end of the semester in the form of a powerpoint presentation. You should also attend all presentations, and provide constructive feedback for your classmates on their work through the presentation evaluation form (on Canvas and to be distributed in class). We will discuss requirements for the presentation in class and a handout will be distributed (also on Canvas).

**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 and evaluate my effectiveness in the classroom, 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
For information on Boston College’s academic integrity policy, please visit: www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity.
Seminar Schedule

Tuesday, September 2
Orientation to the seminar

Thursday, September 4
Community-based research paradigm and public policy

Required Readings:


Tuesday, September 9
Policy Overview Panel
Prof. Martin Summers (BC History/African Diaspora Studies)
Prof. Peter Kiang (UMass Boston; Asian American Studies)

Required Readings:


*National Hispanic Leadership Agenda. (2012). Hispanic public policy agenda. CANVAS


*Also see Canvas for other interesting demographic information on Boston under “Policy Papers.”
Thursday, September 11
Social inequality and the intersection of race and class

*Required Readings:


Tuesday, September 16
(continued)

Thursday, September 18
Immigration, Deportation, Human and Civil Rights
Prof. Westie Egmont, BC School of Social Work
Representative from the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition

*Film on your own:

*Required Readings:

Plus choose one reading from below and discuss in your reflection paper.


Tuesday, September 23
Select Issues Facing Youth

Required Readings: Choose one reading from below and discuss in your reflection paper


Thursday, September 25
Tentative Topic Due

The research process and the literature review

Required Readings:


Tuesday, September 30
Overview of the library system with Research Librarian Brendan Rapple
Meet in O’Neill 307
**Thursday, October 2**
The methods of fieldwork and interviewing

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**Tuesday, October 7**  
**Initial Lit. Search Due**
Educational Inequality: K-12, Bilingual Education.  
Prof. Anne Homza, BC Lynch School of Education

*Required Readings: Choose one reading from below and discuss in your reflection paper.*


*Rubin, Beth C. (2003). ’I’m not getting any F’s’: What ‘at risk’ students say about the support they need. In Beth C. Rubin and Elena M. Silva (Eds.), *Critical voices in school reform: Students living through change* (pp. 189-207). Routledge. LIBRARY RESERVE


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**Thursday, October 9**
Educational Inequality: College Access and Success.

*Required Readings:*

Or

*Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education. (2013). *Succeeding in the city: A report from the NYC Black and Latino male high school achievement study.*

**Plus choose one reading from below and discuss in your reflection paper.**

*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*, 5(2), 96-111. LIBRARY RESERVE

strategies. *Journal of Developmental Education, 33*(2), 12-38. LIBRARY RESERVE

*Museus, Samuel D. & Kiang, Peter N. (2009). Deconstructing the model minority myth and how it contributes to the invisible minority reality in higher education research. *New Directions for Institutional Research, 142*(Summer), 5-15. LIBRARY RESERVE


**Tuesday, October 14**
Building the Literature Review

**Thursday, October 16**
Urban Health and Healthcare.

*Required Readings:*

*Plus choose one reading from below and discuss in your reflection paper*


*Goh, Ying Ying, et.al. (2009). Using community-based participatory research to identify potential interventions to overcome barriers to adolescents’ healthy eating and physical activity. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 32*, 491-502. LIBRARY RESERVE


**Set up time to meet with Prof. Piatelli to discuss progress with final paper**
Tuesday, October 21
Poverty in America

Required Readings:
Dodson, Lisa, et.al. (2012). How youth are put at risk by parents’ low-wage jobs. *Center for Social Policy Publications*, University of Massachusetts Boston, Paper 68. CANVAS

Recommended Readings:

Thursday, October 23
Ethics and the Institutional Review Board
IRB Staff Visit to Classroom

Required Readings/Assignment:
*Complete IRB Ethics Training Program online and print out certificate for files. (Approx. 1.5 hours). See [http://www.bc.edu/research/oric/human.html](http://www.bc.edu/research/oric/human.html)
The IRB requires all research personnel to complete an online ethics training program either through CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative) or NIH (National Institutes of Health) and attach copies of the training certificates to all IRB applications.

Tuesday, October 28
Cultural Competency and Mental Health

Required Readings: Choose one reading from below and discuss in your reflection paper


*Pistulka, Gina M., et.al. (2012). Maintaining an outward image: Korean immigrant’s life with Type 2 diabetes mellitus and hypertension. *Qualitative Health*
Thursday, October 30
Writing the literature review and developing a methodological design

Tuesday, November 4
Choosing appropriate methods

Thursday, November 6
Choosing your sample

Tuesday, November 11
Presenting your proposed project

Thursday, November 13
Review of final paper/IRB requirements

Tuesday, November 18
In class time to work on presentation

Thursday, November 20
Research proposal presentation and peer review

HAPPY THANKSGIVING-NO CLASS

Tuesday, December 2
Research proposal presentation and peer review

Thursday, December 4
Research proposal presentation and peer review

Tuesday, December 9
Research proposal presentation and peer review

PLEASE EMAIL PROF. PIATELLI ALL FINAL MATERIALS BY 5 P.M. ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11TH. BRING A HARD COPY OF ALL MATERIALS TO PROF. PIATELLI’S OFFICE AS WELL.