UNAS2254/SOCY2254/AADS2248 Community Research Seminar
Fall 2015, Gasson 201
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 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 of 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 may also have the opportunity to present their research findings in a public forum.

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. 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 choose methods appropriate for particular research questions
Reference Books on Reserve (particularly as you construct your proposal)


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 three unexcused 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 (recommend you meet every other week) 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.

Lastly, signed faculty advisor agreement forms (on Canvas) will be due the last day of class, **Tuesday, December 8th**. 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 (approximately seven). 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 as well as how the class session informed your thinking about your research topic. A guideline for these papers can be found on Canvas.

*Your GA will remind you of the due dates for these papers through “Announcements” in Canvas. Please submit your paper through Canvas on the due date. Comments/grades on these papers will be done within Canvas; however we will not utilize the “Grade Sheet” in Canvas for this course. If you miss class during a speaker session, you will receive a zero for the reflection paper grade.*
Field Experience (15% of your grade) DUE: Thursday, October 22
You will conduct an interview with a member of an off-campus community provider or research institution that works with communities of color 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 contacting the field site and developing your interview guide. A guideline for this assignment can 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 10th. Below are several, checkpoint, ungraded assignments to assist you in completing a quality piece of work. Only the final paper will be graded. Guidelines for these assignments can be found on Canvas.

*Choose a topic of interest DUE: Thurs., Sep. 24
*Complete initial literature search DUE: Thurs., Oct. 8
*Complete IRB ethics certificate DUE: Thurs., Oct. 22
*Complete expanded literature search (at least 3 sources) DUE: Thurs., Oct. 29
*Submit a draft of your literature review and methodological plan DUE: Thurs., Nov. 19
*Submit the final paper and draft IRB application DUE: Thurs., Dec. 10

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.). Note, you have the opportunity to obtain 5 points extra credit if you submit ALL optional IRB materials. We will discuss these optional materials in class.

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 (you will be provided a weblink for this purpose during the class sessions). A guideline and samples of presentations are 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 Prof. Piatelli’s 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.
Students Requiring Accommodations

If you have a learning disability and are requesting accommodations for this course, please register with Dr. Kathy Duggan (dugganka@bc.edu), Associate Director, Connors Family Learning Center. For other types of disabilities, register with Ms. Paulette Durrett (paulette.durrett@bc.edu), Assistant Dean for Students with Disabilities. Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for all accommodations.

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to understand the university’s policy about academic integrity. It can be found at www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/integrity.html. Any violations of this policy will result in penalties prescribed by the university. A list of writing resources to assist you in citing sources is available from the library and can be found at http://www.bc.edu/libraries/help/citation/formatting.html.
Seminar Schedule

Tuesday, September 1
Orientation to the seminar

Thursday, September 3
Community-based research paradigm

Required Readings:


Tuesday, September 8
Community-based research and public policy

Required Readings:
*Dodson, Lisa and Randy Albeda. (2012). How youth are put at risk by parents’ low-wage jobs. *Center for Social Policy, University of Massachusetts Boston*. [Example of research aimed at large policy change.] CANVAS

*Goldman, Paula. (undated). Lessons learned from troubled teens: Reflections on the value of community-based research in reaching out to at-risk youth. [An undergraduate reflection on how research can inform local community policy.] CANVAS

Optional Readings: ALL ON CANVAS


Thursday, September 10
Social inequality and the intersection of race and class

Required Readings:


Tuesday, September 15
(continued)

**NOTE: Speakers are in the process of being scheduled. Therefore, topics and associated readings may shift, but you will be given advanced notice.**

Thursday, September 17
Speaker Session 1: Immigration, Deportation, Human and Civil Rights

Required Readings:

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


Tuesday, September 22
Speaker Session #2: Select Issues Facing Youth

Required Readings:

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


Thursday, September 24
The research process and the literature review

Tentative Topic Due

Reflection Paper #1 Due

Required Readings:


Tuesday, September 29
Reflection Paper #2 Due
Overview of the library system with Research Librarian Brendan Rapple
Meet in O’Neill 307

Thursday, October 1
In the field

Required Reading:

Tuesday, October 5
Speaker Session #3: Educational Inequality: Primary and Secondary Schooling

Required Readings:

Please 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. COURSE RESERVES

Thursday, October 8

Initial Lit. Search Due

Speaker Session #4: Educational Inequality: College Access and Persistence

Required Readings:

Please 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. COURSE RESERVES


*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. COURSE RESERVES


Tuesday, October 13

Reflection Paper #3 Due

Building the Literature Review
Thursday, October 15

Speaker Session #5: Urban Health and Healthcare

Reflection Paper #4 Due

Required Readings:


Please 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. COURSE RESERVES


*******Set up time to meet with Prof. Piatelli to discuss progress with final paper*******
Tuesday, October 20  
Speaker Session #6: Cultural Competency and Mental Health

Required Readings:

Please 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 Research, 22(6), 825-834. COURSE RESERVED

Thursday, October 22  
Field Experience Report Due

Ethics and the Institutional Review Board  
IRB Staff Visit to Classroom

Required Assignment:

*Complete IRB Ethics Training Program online (approx. 1.5 hours).  
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. See GA for assistance to be sure you are completing the correct program.

Tuesday, October 27  
Reflection Paper #6 Due

Speaker Session #7: TBD

Thursday, October 29  
Expanded Lit. Review Due

Writing the literature review and developing a methodological design

Tuesday, November 3  
Reflection Paper #7 Due

Choosing appropriate methods

Thursday, November 5  
Choosing your sample

Tuesday, November 10  
Presenting your proposed project
Thursday, November 12  
Review of final paper/IRB requirements

Tuesday, November 17  
In class time to work on presentation/IRB materials

Thursday, November 19  
In class time to work on presentation/IRB materials

Draft Lit. Review Due

Tuesday, November 24  
We will hold class ONLY if we need an extra presentation date

**HAPPY THANKSGIVING-NO CLASS ON THURSDAY**

Tuesday, December 1  
Research proposal presentation and peer review

Thursday, December 3  
Research proposal presentation and peer review

Tuesday, December 8  
Research proposal presentation and peer review

**PLEASE EMAIL PROF. PIATELLI ALL FINAL MATERIALS BY 5 P.M. ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10TH.**