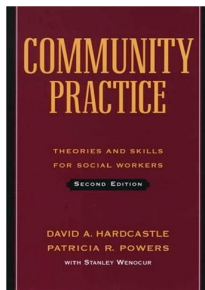


SYLLABUS

Dynamics of Organizations and Communities, SW 381T

Fall, 2009

Instructor:	Stephanie Frogge, MTS	Class:	Tuesday
Phone:	936.577.1072 (it's my cell...be nice)		2:30 – 5:30 p.m.
E-mail:	frogge@mail.utexas.edu		SSW 2.132
Office:	SSW, 331-A (shared w/ Dr. Marilyn Armour)	Office Hours:	Monday / Wednesday 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. and by appt.
Unique No.:	63685	Happy Office Hours:	On occasion...announced weekly



Text: Hardcastle, D. A., Powers, P. A. & Wenocur, S. (2004). *Community Practice: Theories and Skills for Social Workers*, 2nd Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

- **Dreams from the Monster Factory: A Tale of Prison, Redemption, and One Woman's Fight to Restore Justice to All**
Sunny Schwartz and David Boodell
- **Let Them Call Me Rebel**
Sanford D. Horwitt
- **American Heroine: The Life and Legend of Jane Addams**
Allen F. Davis
- **Militant Mediator: Whitney M. Young, Jr.**
Dennis C. Dickerson
- **The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down**
Anne Fadiman
- **Confessions of an Eco-Warrior**
Dave Foreman

Supplemental reading assignments, if any, will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Description: This course familiarizes students with the macro context of social work practice. It examines the reciprocal relationship between human behavior and social environments and explores the consequences of that interaction for populations-at-risk and people from diverse backgrounds. It examines the impact of social structure and other societal factor on one's personal life chances in relation to equity, fairness, opportunity, and other issues of social and economic justice. Drawing on a systems-ecological perspective, this course helps students develop skills at using systems thinking approaches to understanding organizations and communities with special emphasis on their application to a variety of oppressed and disadvantaged populations and multiple levels of intervention. Special emphasis is given to the development of assessment skills and intervention methods that are relevant to empowerment, capacity building and social change within organizations and communities. Understanding the role of age, race, gender, social class, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, and physical and mental ability is an integral part of this course.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course the students will be able to:

- Discuss communities and organizations as a context for professional practice to meet individual needs, build community capacity, and promote social and economic justice;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the value dilemmas and ethical issues confronting social work professionals and their implications for social work practice with organizations and communities;
- Assess the influence of community norms, priorities, and competitive community factions on the social structure of communities and the delivery of human services;
- Assess various evidence-based intervention approaches for working with organizations and communities;
- Analyze the impacts of organizational and community dynamics on populations at risk and relate those impacts to the participation of such populations in organizational and community governance, human service provision, and policy formulation;
- Evaluate alternative strategies for initiating change in organizations and communities, including planning models, coalition building, community development, direct action, and legislative advocacy;
- Understand the relevance of age, race, gender, social class, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, and physical and mental ability in social work practice that is grounded in social and economic justice.

Expectations: This is graduate level course and will be conducted symposium style. That is, content will be covered through reading, listening, thinking, debating, and discussing social work practice in organizations and communities. Most class sessions will be devoted to focused discussions that flow from assigned readings and supplemental materials presented in class. Students are expected to ask questions, share experiences, and actively participate in class discussions. In addition, the class may include small group experiential learning, videotapes to generate discussion, and guest speakers who work in agency and community-based settings.



In order to successfully master this topic students are expected to attend every class, arrive on time, and be prepared to participate in class activities and discussions. I expect to be notified of absences prior to class time. There are no “excused absences” in my classes. **Noise-making devices such as cell phones, pagers and beeping watches are prohibited. Hats are grudgingly tolerated.**

Class Discussion: As indicated above your attendance and active leadership and participation in class is expected and is a significant part of your final grade. That part aside for a moment, *this is interesting material!* Is it possible to take on “city hall” and win? What do you do when you and your boss have completely different viewpoints on how the agency should respond to the unique need of a client? Do social workers have any business promoting their perspective in the media? How would you as a newly minted social worker get your fantastic program idea implemented by the agency for which you work? How and why do policies and laws often favor

the privileged at the expense of the disadvantaged? What can we learn from those who have engaged in social work in other times, places and contexts? This is real life and if you don't get excited at least once or twice this semester I probably haven't done my job. **However**, this is an academic setting designed to promote scholarship and critical thinking. Everyone is welcome to express their opinion and to challenge the opinions of others but those discussions will be respectful, open-minded and tolerant. It's likely that you are working or have worked in social work settings and will be bringing personal experience as well as scholarly perspective to our work together. We will also apply material to relevant current events and community issues that directly impact us as citizens.

Grades: Your final grade will be based on the following 1,000 point formula—

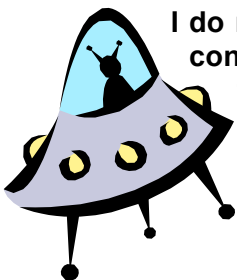
1000 - 940 = A
930 - 900 = A-
890 - 870 = B+
860 - 840 = B
830 - 800 = B-
790 - 770 = C+
760 - 740 = C
730 - 700 = C-
690 - 670 = D+
660 - 640 = D
630 - 600 = D-
590 and below = F

A note about extra credit...it's likely I'll be offering occasional extra credit opportunities throughout the semester. Those points, although added to your total score, do not adjust the grading formula. If you earn 940 points, you get an "A" regardless of whether there were 1,000 points possible, 1,100 or a million.

You will earn points as follows

- 15% - 150 points, discussion question, paper, and discussion leadership
- 15% - 150 points, case study and case study presentation
- 20% - 200 points, participation including attendance. Eight points will be deducted for each absence, regardless of reason.
- 50% - 500 points, community project. Those 500 points will be earned as follows:
 - o 100 points, mid-semester report
 - o 100 points, small group evaluation
 - o 100 points, agency evaluation
 - o 100 points, final report
 - o 100 points, personal analysis

There are no exams in this class.



I do not accept late assignments or give makeup opportunities. Preparation and contingency planning are hallmarks of professional social workers so transportation problems, computer malfunctions, roommate crises, work schedule changes, social events, and alien abduction are not considered viable excuses for late work.

Other Important Stuff:

Policy on Absence for Religious Holidays

By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the assignment. If accepted, late assignments date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>).

APA

The School of Social Work uniformly requires APA (5th Ed) editorial style as the standard format for all written assignments. Details of the APA style are included in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th Ed). Information on APA style and format can also be found at the Learning Resource Center (LRC) in the School of Social Work.

Documented Disability Statement

Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

Safety


As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify instructors regarding any safety concerns.



Email: Emails sent through Blackboard and other university systems accessible to me are sent to your student account. It is YOUR responsibility to check your account regularly and to make sure it's accepting messages. Unfortunately I have too many students to track you down if an email bounces back because your account is full or there's some kind of problem. It's my practice to acknowledge all emails so that you know I received your message. If you send me an email and don't hear back for some reason, feel free to resend it, call me, or talk with me in class. Please don't forget to sign your emails with your first and last name. I don't know who abc00 is and I'm way too lazy to figure it out.

Blackboard: I like Blackboard and use it to post assignments and other communications (just as soon as I'm granted access to it, which sometimes takes a few weeks). If you are not proficient, please get with someone who can teach you to use it.

Class Schedule: (guest speakers may require some juggling of topics):

Class	Topics	Text	Assignment
September 1	Syllabus, introductions, class expectations, work groups		Show Up!
September 8	Social work theory Construct of social problems Case studies Work group preferences	Hardcastle & Powers, Chapters 1, 2 & 3	Case studies: Taylor Tiffin West Williams
September 15	Book discussion Work group assignments	Dennis C. Dickerson, Militant Mediator: Whitney M. Young, Jr.	Discussion questions: Arguello Drell Moton Oriente-Padilla
September 22	Macro social work Concept of community Community programs and interventions Case studies	Hardcastle & Powers, Chapters 4 & 5	Case studies: Rose Schmelzer Sigman Kubkova Smith
September 29	Book discussion	Allen F. Davis American Heroine: The Life and Legend of Jane Addams	Discussion questions: Delanoy Taylor Cordero McCoy Tiffin
October 6	Community analysis	Hardcastle & Powers, Chapters 6 & 7	Case studies: Perez Purcell Read Rolle

October 13	Mid-semester work group reports Book discussion	Anne Fadiman The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down	Mid-semester reports Discussion questions: Lee Sigman Smith
October 20	Mid-semester work group reports Assertiveness Using your agency	Hardcastle & Powers, Chapters 8 & 9	Mid-semester reports Case studies: Mishal Moton Oriente-Padilla
October 27	Book discussion	Dave Foreman Confessions of an Eco-Warrior	Discussion questions: Barnard Brown Rose Schmelzer Williams
November 3	Teams, networks & social marketing	Hardcastle & Powers, Chapters 10, 11 & 12	Case studies: Deciero Delanoy Dress Lee McCoy
November 10	Book discussion	Sunny Schwartz and David Boodell Dreams from the Monster Factory: A Tale of Prison, Redemption, and One Woman's Fight to Restore Justice to All	Discussion questions: Kubkova Read Perez Rolle
November 17	Influencing change Creating change	Hardcastle & Powers, Chapters 13 & 14	Case studies: Barnard Arguello Brown Cordero
November 24	Book discussion	Sanford D. Horwitt Let Them Call Me Rebel	Discussion questions: Purcell Deciero Mishal West
December 1			Final reports

Case Studies: On your assigned date (trading is permitted) bring in a media account of a relevant social issue in which the perspective and / or services of a social worker might be appropriate. Be prepared to make a very brief, informal presentation about the nature of the issue framed within the context of macro social work. What are the community / organizational ramifications of this issue? If you were directly affiliated with this issue as a social worker, what might your response look like? In what ways does this issue illustrate or tie into this week's reading assignment? (Don't forget to do this part.) Be prepared to take an especially active, even directive, role in this week's discussion.

Discussion Question: On your assigned date (trading is permitted) prepare a discussion question based on your reading and analysis of the week's book. I expect that the question will be substantial enough to generate debate and discussion, which you will assist in leading. I would suggest that you be further prepared with some "nudges" in the event that the discussion falters a bit.

At the beginning of class on the day that you have one of the discussion questions, please hand in a one page paper with your discussion question at the top and an overview of the reading's significant points related to the discussion question. It does not need to be a formal paper but it does need to be thoughtful. For example, if your discussion question was crafted around the issue of class distinction, you might want to point out some places in the book where that was addressed, or should have been addressed. How did the author cope with class distinction? How did class distinction influence the community work described in the book? What were your thoughts as you read about it?

Option: If it is agreeable with all those assigned to bring in the discussion questions on any given day, you may work together as a team to generate the questions and to craft and submit a single paper – obviously it will be more than one page – authored by all of you. Teams are permitted to generate one less question than there are team members. For example, if there are five of you that day you only need to come up with four questions. If you are working as a team you may also choose to lead the discussion in some innovative way. I'll leave that up to you but note that I am usually impressed with creativity and innovation.



Community Project: Based on student preference to the best of my ability, the class will be divided into groups of five or six and assigned a community partner. Throughout the course of the semester your team will work with your community partner to analyze a challenge or issue faced by the community partner and to craft possible solutions and strategies. Your group isn't necessarily expected to solve the problem but to leave the community partner with a viable action plan for addressing the issue.

In order to complete this assignment it is expected that you will meet at least once with representatives of your community partner agency to formulate the issue you'll be working on and to create a plan of action for completing the assignment. It is anticipated that part of your plan of action will involve staying in regular contact with them throughout the semester for feedback and guidance.

Some of our class times will end early for various reasons and your team is encouraged to use the remaining time to work on this project. However, it is anticipated that your team will need to get together on occasion outside of class.

Your team will report on the issue as well as its progress mid-semester and will give a final report on the last day of class. Both reports will be 10-15 minutes in length with another 10-15 minutes for questions and discussion. All team members will be expected to take part in the presentations in some fashion.

On the last day of class your team will also hand in a final report. Community Action Network <http://www.caction.org/faqs/english.htm> provides some excellent examples of the format to be used. This document can be thought of as a briefing paper that provides the reader with a definition of the problem being addressed, important data on the nature and scope of the problem, answers to common questions about this problem, and identification of innovative solutions one might use to respond to this problem. It should be well organized, concisely written, neatly presented, and in a form useful to your community partner. In other words, the final report should look like a professional document that takes into consideration the needs of the community partner.

At the end of the semester you will have an opportunity to evaluate the team process as well as individual team members. Your agency partner will also evaluate the work of your team. Finally, you will provide a self-evaluation and written statement outlining your contributions to the group and the group project. It may be helpful for you to keep a log throughout the semester. More direction on this assignment will be provided later in the semester.

Community Project Deliverables:

- Mid-semester presentation - team
- End of semester presentation - team
- Final report – team
- Group evaluation – individual
- Agency evaluation – instructor will coordinate
- Self-evaluation, contributions report - individual