

Leaders in Grassroots Organizations

Community Development and Social Analysis

Taught by Sharon Penderis and organized by Melikaya Ntshingwa at UWC

Course Description

“Structural consciousness enables one to see beyond stories about poor people to the reality of systems that impoverish people.” (Peter Henriot, S.J. and Rodrigo Mejia, S.J.)

In the 21st century, we are challenged as never before to address the root causes – political, social, developmental, environmental, and economic – of upheavals of massive proportions and of poverty of increasing depth that pervades our world. Social analysis, coupled with substantive field experience, will enable you to make a careful, contextual study of economic, social, political, and cultural factors critical to understanding the sources of poverty and conflict in general and in particular nations or among particular groups. In your social analysis, you will ask why conflict and poverty exist, and consider steps necessary to bring about systemic change of conditions that foster conflict and poverty.

This course focuses on the theory and practice in the development of community-based, participatory, grassroots organizations; you will engage in both the academic and practical aspects of social analysis and community development through class readings and discussions. The primary source of learning will be through sustained involvement with a community organization. You will test your theoretical understanding with praxis experience in the field. The substantive field experience is NOT a volunteerism project. Rather it is a highly focused learning engagement with local grassroots organizations wherein your own developing models of grassroots leadership can be tested and refined.

Our classroom discussions will evolve out of the readings, presentations by guest lecturers, AND the ongoing field experience. Dialogue will be a key pedagogical tool utilized to help you integrate the impact of the many levels of this transformative, international, cross-cultural learning opportunity.

Course Objectives

1. Explore theoretical changes regarding community development within the broader framework of development thinking and stimulate critical thought and academic debate on the topic of community development.
2. Learn social analysis as a relevant methodology for deep analysis of significant social issues and problems.
3. Explore your own presuppositions and ideologies as determinants and lenses through which you derive your own analyses of social issues and problems.
4. Develop deeper self-knowledge regarding the boundaries of your own understandings, with a special focus on being able to recognize your own prejudices, biases and projections.
5. Determine who the various stakeholders are; which stakeholders are being considered; which stakeholders are inappropriately not being considered; whose experience is being considered with respect to analysis of problems and creation of structural solutions/ interventions (Henriot, 11)
6. Assess the impact of social and cultural factors on stakeholders' ability to participate in assessments and outcomes of particular structural solutions/interventions
7. Assess the impact of social and cultural factors on stakeholders' ability to benefit from assessments and outcomes of particular structural solutions/interventions
8. Assess methodically the impact of a particular structural solution/intervention on particular groups, especially vulnerable groups, such as children and women.
9. Engage in deep analysis regarding the root causes of particular social issues and problems trace particular, specific problem situations up and down, through, from and to the larger global context and structures from which the problems derive.
10. Explore the necessity of an engaged, involved citizenry as key to the continued development of a democratic society.
11. Extend current leadership theory to the context of sustainable and community-based participatory development in the Western Cape in particular, and consider its applicability to Milwaukee, North America, and other regions of the world.

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Course Requirements

Readings: You will have weekly reading assignments either from your texts or readings proposed by the guest lecturers. It is required that you read the assigned materials before each class meeting.

Journals: You will be expected to make journal entries once a week in relation to your readings and your service experiences. On the left-hand page you will write about what you actually did at your service site and any personal reflections about your work or about what you have experienced in South Africa. On the opposite page, you will relate your community experiences to your readings, thereby integrating your service, your readings and your learning. Most weeks, you will receive specific questions to address on both sides of your journal. These questions will offer you a focus as you integrate your work with the course's theoretical underpinnings. During the last part of the semester, you will be asked to look back to synthesize some of your experiences both as an individual and as a participant in an organisation. Your journals will be collected weekly and graded throughout the semester.

Assignments/examination: Each student will submit an individual assignment on community development theory and practice and experiences in the service learning community/organization. Clear instructions will be handed out at the start of the semester. Additional assignments could take the form of quizzes/tests/theoretical reflections.

Presentation: In pairs or groups of three, you will prepare an *advocacy presentation* which you will present to your guest lecturers and SL site staff. This is the culmination of your SL and this course. Your selection of what to advocate for will come from your experience in your service site or from an issue you have confronted that needs addressing in South Africa. The new South Africa is still in the process of becoming. The role of advocacy is critical in promoting and achieving structural change and promotion of human rights. Be creative and demonstrate your conviction in the manner you advocate for this issue in your presentation. It should reflect community-based involvement and a thorough knowledge of the situation. Meet with the experts and community persons who would be impacted or would know about your topic. Meet with S. Penderis and M.N to develop the project over the course of the second half of the semester. Each pair or group will be limited to a 25 minutes presentation. You will hand in a detailed outline of your presentation. Some may be asked to take the presentation to the relevant board or organisation.

Service Learning: You are expected to be at your SL site for 7-8 hrs twice a week (i.e. 14-16 hours total). Your own endeavours to understand the organisation; to self-motivate and find areas where you might contribute sustainable programs are fundamental to your experience. Place the emphasis on learning, not on service. Practice what you have read and what is discussed in class.

Evaluations of SL: In conjunction with your site supervisor, both at mid-term and semester's end, you will complete an evaluation of your work in the field.

Description of SL site: In order to better connect with students coming after you, you are asked to prepare a brief (1-2 paragraphs) description of your SL site and the kind of projects with which you are or could be involved. Think about adding a telling photo or two (be sure to have permission for the photos to be posted). Imagine that it is a postcard from your site. This should be formatted so that the file can be forwarded to Gail Gilbert and posted to the MU SASLP site.

Grading

Assignments/Tests/Examination	(SP)	35%
Class participation	(SP)	10%
Class presentations	(SP)	15%
Journals Entries	(MN)	10%
Reflection Session	(MN)	10%
Advocacy Paper and Presentation	(MN & SP)	20%

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Class Schedule

Friday, 09 Feb

Welcome and Introduction

Course overview and discussion of the nature and scope of Service Learning. Teaching methodology and expectations. Understanding social theory through a development lens.

Friday, 16 Feb

People Centred Development, Participatory development theory, indigenous knowledge and the role of institutions in fostering participation.

Readings: Jennings, R. (2000). *Participatory Development as New Paradigm: The Transition of Development Professionalism and Rehabilitation in Post-Conflict Settings*. Conference Washington, DC. October, Devkota, P. (2000) People-Centered Development in Nepal: an innovative approach. *An Occasional Paper*: 26-40. Schenk, C & Louw, H. (1995). A people centred perspective on people centred community development. *Journal of Social Development in Africa* (10) 2, pp. 81-91. Osikhena, I & Chikadzi, V. (2014). *Rethinking participation: a case for communicative ethics*. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Science*, (5)14: 521-530.

Friday, 23 Feb

Conceptualising community development and the role of community organisations.

Case Studies:

- Klaver Advice and Development Centre, Klaver, Western Cape
- Civil Society Organisations in Governance Networks in Khayelitsha, Western Cape
- Jansenville Development Forum Jansenville, Eastern Cape
- Kwenzekile Community Development Centre Tsolo, Eastern Cape
- Ixabiso Lomntu Flagstaff, Eastern Cape

Readings:

- Thompson, L., Conradie, I. & Tsolekile De Wet, P. (2014). Participatory Politics: Understanding
- Civil Society Organisations in Governance Networks in Khayelitsha. *Politicon*, (41) 3, 387-402
- Cavaye, J. (2014). Understanding Community Development.
- Eliasov, N & Peters, B. (2013) *Voices in Harmony: stories of community driven development in South Africa*.

Friday, 02 March

Guest Lecturer: Mr. Frank van de Velde

Mr. Frank van de Velde the former Mayor of Cape Town. He was a Mayor during a transition time of the release of Mandela. He shares his experiences as a Mayor and how local government plays a role in the lives of the locals. He also talks about what took place when Mandela was released. The essence of his visit is around the role of local government and service delivery. He starts at 09:00 am.

Monday, 12 March

Guest Speaker: Ayanda Nxusani is a University of Cape Town student who is currently pursuing an Honours in Justice and Transformation. In 2014 she graduated with a Bachelor of Social Science in Politics, International Relations and Economic History. After graduating, she went on to study Interfaith Dialogue at Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut. She has an interest in theology particularly black theology and feminist and queer theology. An intersectional approach to decolonization and an interest in intergenerational trauma, memory and memorialization. Ayanda is currently doing her Honours thesis on the impact on intergenerational trauma on black youth political formation in post-apartheid South Africa.

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Friday, 09 March

The nature of social analysis, community assessment and Participatory Action Research.

Readings:

- World Bank. (2007). Tools for Institutional, Political and Social Analysis of Policy Reform: A Sourcebook for Development Practitioners.
- MacDonald, C. (2012). Understanding Participatory Action Research: A qualitative approach. *Canadian Journal of Action Research*, (13) 2, 34-50.
- Sharp, P. (2000). Assets-oriented community assessment. *Public Health Reports*, 115: 205-211.
- Wallerstein, N. & Duran, B. (2006). Using Community-Based Participatory Research to Address Health Disparities. *Health Promotion Practice*, 7:312-323.

Friday, 16 March

Guest Lecture Series and selected readings: Ms. Carol Bower

Extensive skills in the area of policy analysis and development and have particularly applied these skills in relation to abuse and neglect prevention, criminal justice (including children in trouble with the law), children's rights and gender issues. Specializes in children's rights, law and policy development, child abuse and neglect prevention.

Tuesday, 3 April

Guest Speaker: Mr. Fraser Siteti

Fraser Siteti is a former Secondary School teacher in Port Elizabeth and Cape Town. Fraser has also participated in various enrichment program that seek to improve Mathematics and Physical Science skills to Secondary school learners over weekends and holidays. Currently Fraser is Community Participation Work Stream Leader at Violent Prevention through Urban Upgrading NPC, a program, which deals with community development in informal settlements and impoverished neighborhoods. He shares his experiences as a Community facilitator and Leadership trainer. The essence of his visit is around the role of community participate in development plans for local neighborhoods.

Friday, 06 April

Community visioning, action planning and project development.

Readings:

- Elkins, L., Bivins, D. & Holbrook, L. (2009). Community visioning process: A tool for successful planning. *Journal of Higher Education, Outreach and Engagement*, (13), 75-83.
- Okuba, D. (2000). *The Community Visioning and Strategic Planning Handbook*. Denver: National Civil League Press.

Friday, 13 April

Action Planning

- Student Presentations and Reflections

Friday, 20 April

Transformational grassroots leadership

- Bolden, R. (2011). Distributed leadership in organisations: a review of theory and research. *Journal of Management Reviews*, (13), 251-269.
- Kirk, P., & Schutte, A. (2004). Community leadership development. *Community Development Journal*, (39), 3:234-251.
- Ozor, N. & Nwankwo, N. (2008). The Role of Local Leaders in Community Development Programmes in Idea to Local Government Area of Imo State: Implication for Extension Policy. *Journal of Agricultural Extension*, (12), 2:63-75.
- Lipman-Blumen, J. (1996). *Connective Leadership: Managing in a Changing World*.

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Stages of service learning realities, reflections and assessment

Friday, 27 April – No class - **Public Holiday**

Friday, 4 May Guest Lecture Series, selected readings

Friday, 11 May Guest Lecture Series, selected readings

Friday, 18 May Guest Lecture Series, selected readings:

Friday, 25 May Advocacy Mock Presentation

Friday, 01 June Guest Lecture Series, selected readings:

Friday, June 8 – Visual Diaries/Advocacy Presentations – Depending on final exam schedule.
No work accepted after this date.

Contact information

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