

Research, Practice & Social Change

Comm 620

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Office Hours: Because the required fieldwork is time sensitive, faculty guidance should be sought by email or phone in between class sessions. On campus meetings may be set by appointment.

The central questions guiding this course concern the challenges, theoretical models and best practices of academic research and advocacy relationships. The goal of this course is to help students who expect to make careers either as academics or nonprofit policy/research staff to navigate the challenges of bridging the academic-advocacy gap and to become familiar with models for academic/advocacy partnerships, and accrue experience forging these partnerships.

Conduct of Class Sessions

Students are expected to play an active role in shaping class discussion. To that end, students will be asked to take responsibility to lead discussions of the week's readings and may be asked to present a brief summary of the articles covered and discussion questions.

Components of Course Evaluation

Seminar Participation	10
Discussion facilitation	10
Course Project Research Work Plan/Due Wk 4	25
Course Project Presentation	25
Course Project Final Paper	30

Community Research Project:

Students will conduct, either alone or in a small group, a community-based research project using a model of community-based participatory research. Students are expected to engage in a systematic inquiry, making use of whatever methodological approaches seem appropriate to the research and that they have the knowledge to apply. Although it's desirable to develop and complete a research project, given the constraints of the semester, it's understood that with some fieldwork projects the process is the product. Therefore, keeping detailed notes of the process as it unfolds is recommended.

The final fieldwork paper should be prepared in a way so that it is of optimal value to the collaborating community organization, even if this means departing from academic conventions. It is strongly encouraged that reports to community organizations begin with an Executive Summary unless such a summary is inappropriate to the findings or audience.

In the paper submitted to the instructors, please also include a "reflection epilogue" that is not intended for the community organization that details your challenges, encounters with power differentials, cultural differences, and otherwise illustrates your hands-on engagement with the central questions of the course. Please consider, what if anything, you would do differently if you were embarking on a new community-based research project.

A general note on voice: Often the academy encourages an authoritative, anonymous third person voice in papers. That is not the case in this course. You are encouraged to write in a manner that is personal and non-authoritative.

Students are encouraged to use their own contacts and resources to identify an appropriate organization and/or project though instructors will help students identify potential community organizations. Ideally, these partnerships are forged prior to the first class.

Appropriate topics for research that could be conducted within the semester timeframe might be:

- A small population study, e.g., a study of the demographic and spatial characteristics (e.g., physical ecology of roads, parks, schools, etc of a specific geo-ethnic community).
- A demographic or historical analysis of a specific community.
- A community needs/resource assessment or asset mapping
- An evaluation of a community program run by a community group

Alternatively, students may choose to document an existing academic-advocacy partnership, analyzing its strengths and weaknesses. Doctoral candidates may, with instructors' approval, design a related research project that will support the progress of their dissertation.

Each class will begin with a check-in to discuss that week's progress, questions about research design, collaboration and trust-building, and data-collection and analysis.

Seminar Topics & Readings

Class 1/January 15 - Course Overview

Guest Speaker: Carmen Gonzalez

Class 2/January 22 Challenges in advocacy/academic Partnerships, Models for Overcoming Them, part 1

Guest Speaker: Saba Waheed and Miho Kim, The Data Center; Vy Nguyen, Koreatown Immigrant Worker Advocates

Readings:

Nyden, Philip and Wim Wiewel, "Collaborative Research: Harnessing the Tensions Between Researcher and Practitioner," *The American Sociologist*, Winter 1992. 43-55. (reserve)

Cancian, Francesca, M. "Conflicts Between Activist Research and Academic Success: Participatory Research and Alternative Strategies," *The American Sociologist*, Spring 1993. 92-106. (reserve)

Stoecker, Randy, "Creative Tensions in the New Community Based Research," Keynote addressed prepared for the Community-Based Research Network Symposium, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada, May 13, 2004. <http://comm-org.wisc.edu/drafts/cbrtensions.htm>

Also Highly Recommended:

Mills, C. Wright. Appendix to *Sociological Imagination* (1959). Appendix, On Intellectual Craftsmanship, pp. 195-226. In *The Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press. http://ddl.uwinnipeg.ca/res_des/files/readings/cwmills-intel_craft.pdf

Class 3 Jan 29 Challenges in advocacy/academic Partnerships, Models for Overcoming Them, part 2

Dutzik, Tony. "Advocacy Research: A Potent Tool for Social Reform," ed. Jack Rothman, ed. [Title] Forthcoming. (E-copy from instructors)

Strand, Kerry; Sam Marullo; Nick Cutforth; Randy Stoecker; Patrick Donohue. *Community-Based Research and Higher Education: Principles and Practices*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons. 2003. Chapters 1 and 2. (reserve)

Stoecker, Randy. Are academics irrelevant? Roles for scholars in participatory research. *The American Behavioral Scientist*. Thousand Oaks: Feb. 1999. 42:5. (E-copy from instructors)

Class 4 Feb 5 Funders & Thinktanks

Guest Speaker: Anna Soellner, deputy director, vp of communications, Center for American Progress.

Readings: Callahan, David. "\$1 Billion for Conservative Ideas," *The Nation*, April 26, 1999. <http://www.thenation.com/doc/19990426/callahan>

Krehely, Jeff; Meaghan House and Emily Kernan, Axis of Ideology: Conservative Foundations and Public Policy," National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, March 2004. Executive Summary only. (E-copy from instructors)

Rich, Andrew. "War of Ideas: Why mainstream and liberal foundations and the think tanks they support are losing in the war of ideas in America politics," *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Spring 2005. http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/war_of_ideas

Weaver, R. Kent. "The Changing World of Think Tanks," *P.S. Political Science and Politics*, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 568-578. (reserve)

Class 5 Feb 12 The Role of Research - The PIRG Model

Guest speaker: Susan Rakov, Frontier Group

Class 6 Feb 19 Framing for Public Consumption

Guest Speakers: David Hamlin, Sydney Weissman, WHPR. These speakers will discuss their own experiences as well as present as in-class training.

Readings:

Lakoff, George, *Don't Think of an Elephant: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate*, Chelsea Green Publishing. 2004. (Please purchase online.)

Wallack, Lawrence and Lori Dorfman. "Media Advocacy: A Strategy for Advancing Policy and Promoting Health," *Health Education Quarterly*. Vol 23 (3) 293-317. August 1996. (reserve)

Class 7 Feb 26 Edutainment

Guest speaker: Arvind Singhal, who will also present to CMGT583 (Paula Woodley).

Readings: Papa, Michael J.; Arvind Singhal, Sweety Law, Saumya Pant, Suruchi Sood, Evertt M. Rogers and Corinne L. Shefner-Rogers, "Entertainment-Education and Social Change, An Analysis of Parasocial Interaction, Social Learning, Collective Efficacy and Paradoxical Communication." Presented at the 2000 International Communication Association. (reserve)

Sood, Suruchi, "Audience Involvement and Entertainment-Education," *Communication Theory*, 12: 2, May 2002, 153-172. (reserve)

Class 8 March 4 The Metamorphosis Project

Readings:

Matei, Sorin Adam, and Ball-Rokeach, Sandra. "Watts, the 1965 Los Angeles Riots, and the Communicative Construction of the Fear Epicenter of Los Angeles." *Communication Monographs*, vol 72, no 3, September 2005, pp. 301-323. (reserve)

Kim, Young-Chan, and Ball-Rokeach, Sandra J. "Civic Engagement from a Communication Infrastructure Perspective," *Communication Theory* 16 (2006) pp. 173-197. (reserve)

Class 9 March 11 Changing The Media

Readings:

Feld, Harold. "Necessary Knowledge for a Democratic Public Sphere: Creation of a Shared Culture of Skills and Vocabulary between Advocates and Academics," Media Access Project. <http://www.ssrc.org/programs/media/background/>

Dutton, William H. "Hired Gun or Partner in Media Reform: High Noon for the Social Scientist." <http://www.ssrc.org/programs/media/background/>

Ball-Rokeach, Sandra J. Matthew Hale, Adam Schaffer, Lorena Porras, Philip Harris and Miguel Drayton. "Changing a Media Production Process: From Aggressive To Injury Sensitive Traffic Crash Stories." (E-copy from instructors)

SPRING BREAK

Class 10 March 25 Evaluation

Guest Speaker: Marilyn Gittell

Readings:

Rossi, Peter H., Howard E. Freeman and Mark W. Lipsey. *Evaluation: A systematic approach*. SAGE Publications, 2004. 7th ed. (reserve)

Stoecker, Randy. *Research Methods for Community Change*. Chapter 7. Thousand Oaks, SAGE Publications, 2007. (reserve)

Gittell, Marilyn. "Assessing Community Change: An Evaluation of the Ford Foundation's Community Organizing Initiative, 2000-2004, April 2006. Chapters 2, 5, 7, and 8. (E-copy from instructors)

Class 11 April 1 Continued Discussion of Evaluation

Class 12 April 8 Outside The U.S. Context

Guest Speaker: Doe Mayer, Chair of Film and Television Production at USC's School of Cinematic Arts.

Class 13 April 15: Communication Across Privilege: Environmental Justice.

Guest Speakers: Manuel Pastor USC Professor of Geography and American Studies and Ethnicity, and CBO rep TBD.

"Building A Regional Voice for Environmental Justice," a report by the Building A Regional Voice for Environmental Justice Collaborative, September 2004. <http://www.libertyhill.org/reports>

Prakash, Swati. "Power, Privilege and Participation." <http://urbanhabitat.org/node/155>

Tesh, Sylvia Noble. Overview, *Uncertain Hazard: Environmental Activists and Scientific Proof*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001. (reserve)

Class 14-15 April 23 and 30: Class Presentations