

SW 721 Changing Communities: Tensions and Possibilities for Citizenship and Social Justice

- January 9 to April 2, 2020, Thursday 11:30am-2:30pm.
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Course Overview

Course Description:

This course examines contemporary theories and practices of community and citizenship in Canada. Rather than assuming a consensual and universal model of collectivity, we explore how notions of togetherness, common interests, active citizenship and rights and responsibilities are constituted, enacted, practiced and challenged in the community, and how social work workers could promote social justice through grassroots organizing, advocacy and community based research.

Course Objectives:

At the end of the term, students are expected to be able to:

- 1) Improve their critical understanding of theoretical concepts surrounding community, citizenship and social justice and related issues;

- 2) Appreciate potential contributions and limitations of community intervention strategies and processes in the field of social work & social policy; and
- 3) Recognize implications for the community workers' personal development and professional practice.

The basic assumptions of this course concur with the broader curriculum context set by the School of Social Work's Statement of Philosophy:

As social workers, we operate in a society characterized by power imbalances that affect us all. These power imbalances are based on age, class, ethnicity, gender identity, geographic location, health, ability, race, sexual identity and income. We see personal troubles as inextricably linked to oppressive structures. We believe that social workers must be actively involved in the understanding and transformation of injustices in social institutions and in the struggles of people to maximize control over their own lives.

Course Format

This course is organized as a series of seminars. It is to create a participatory, dialogical and collaborative environment for collective & mutual learning.

As adult learners, students are encouraged to think critically and connect classroom discussion with their own personal, professional and political experiences in the field of social work. Students are also expected to take responsibility as active participants throughout this learning process.

The bulk of each class meeting will be used to clarify, discuss, and critically examine the readings. Participants are expected to take responsibility for summarizing the key themes of the articles, identifying theoretical and practical issues, and reflecting on their own professional practice and research.

As every member of the class will bring in different perspectives and experiences, students and teacher are all understood as co-learners. Discussion should be conducted in a supportive and respectful manner and aim at enhancing one another's intellectual and professional development.

Course Requirements/Assignments

Requirements Overview and Deadlines

Grades for the course will be based on the fulfilment of the following requirements:

1. Critical Reflection Journal/Paper (8-10 pages) (25%), due February 27, 2020
2. Class presentation and discussion (25%)
3. Final paper (15-18 pages) (50%), due April 2, 2020

Requirement/Assignment Details

1. Critical Reflection Journal

- Purpose: to encourage participants to reflect critically on course readings
- In this journal, you present a critical review of the required readings that have been assigned for the class up until the due date. The reflective paper should be approximately 6-8 pages long. It should give a thematic overview of the readings, and examine their strengths, gaps and weaknesses. It is also important to locate the readings in the context of this course and to examine how your previous beliefs and understandings have been challenged or supported by the readings.
- Due Date: February 27, 2020

2. Presentation & Facilitation

- Purpose: to encourage participants to take an active role in this collective learning process. Each student will sign up for a session of her or his choice to be the presenter-facilitator of that session.
- To begin, you will provide a summary of the main themes and arguments presented in the required readings assigned for the session. You will then comment on the authors' theoretical frameworks, the standpoint or location from which s/he is writing, the assumptions shaping her/ his discussion, and the way in which s/he uses empirical material/ practice experience to support her/his arguments.
- After your presentation, you will lead the class to explore if they find the authors' discussion persuasive? Why or why not? What do we agree or disagree with, and why? What theoretical and practice insights could be drawn from the readings? Any questions are left unanswered and could be good for further research?

3. Final Paper

- The purpose of this paper is for you to consolidate what you have learned from the readings, classroom discussion and personal reflections on community work as a professional practice gearing towards social justice and equal citizenship.
- **Topic A:** Identify a community of your interest, define its boundary, argue for the needs of community intervention, locate key stakeholders, and suggest alternative strategies with a tentative time frame for this initiative. Finally, please also try to list out the anticipated barriers and provide contingent solutions.
- **Topic B:** Choose a community initiative/ social action event in Canada and critically examine to what extent this initiative/social action event is able to address the issues it has identified. To illustrate, you are expected to review how the target community is

being defined, what are the presenting issues this initiative/ social action event is trying to tackle, who are the major players directing the course of development, what are the major strategies being adopted, and how appropriate and effective they are. Whose voices are missing in it? If there were any room for improvement, what kinds of alternative intervention plan you would propose.

- Due Date: April 2, 2020

Assignment Submission and Grading

Form and Style

- Written assignments must be typed and double-spaced and submitted with a front page containing the title, student's name, student number, and the date. Number all pages (except title page).
- Assignments should be stapled together. Please do NOT use plastic report covers or binders.
- Paper format must be in accordance with the current edition of American Psychological Association (APA) publication manual with particular attention paid to font size (Times-Roman 12), spacing (double spaced) and margins (minimum of 1 inch at the top, bottom, left and right of each page) as papers not meeting these requirements will not be accepted for grading.
- Students are expected to make use of relevant professional and social science literature and other bodies of knowledge in their term assignments. When submitting, please keep a spare copy of your assignments.

Avenue to Learn (A2L)

In this course, we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss with the course instructor.

Privacy Protection

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests

and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last five digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class;
2. Return of materials to students during office hours;
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

Student Responsibilities

- Students are expected to contribute to the creation of a respectful and constructive learning environment. Students should read material in preparation for class, attend class on time and remain for the full duration of the class. A formal break will be provided in the middle of each class, students are to return from the break on time.
- In the past, student and faculty have found that non-course related use of laptop computers and hand-held electronic devices during class to be distracting and at times disruptive. Consequently, during class, students are expected to only use such devices for taking notes and other activities directly related to the lecture or class activity taking place.
- Please check with the instructor before using any audio or video recording devices in the classroom.

Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes

academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty, please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#)

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Accessibility Statement

The School of Social Work recognizes that people learn and express their knowledge in different ways. We are committed to reducing barriers to accessibility in the classroom, and working towards classrooms that welcome diverse learners. If you have accessibility concerns or want to talk about your learning needs, please be in touch with the course instructor.

Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests. Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, they may not reply.

Course Weekly Topics and Readings

Week 1: January 9

Topic:

- Envisioning a social justice approach to community practice

Week 2: January 16

Topic:

- Conceptualizing Community and Struggle

Readings:

- Davis, Angela, *Freedom is a Constant Struggle*, Chapters 1-3
- Clarks, D. B. (1973). The concept of community: A re-examination. *Sociological Review*, 21(3).
- Burkett, I. (2001). Traversing the Swampy Terrain of Postmodern Communities: *European Journal of Social Work*, 4(3), 233-246.
- Moje, E.B. (2000). Critical Issues: Circles of Kinship, Friendship, Position and Power: Examining the community in community based literacy research. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 32(1), 77-112.
- Shaw, M. (2008). Community Development and the politics of community. *Community Development Journal*, 43 (1), 24-36.

Week 3: January 23

Topic:

- Citizenship, "The Public, (in)Civility

Readings:

- Joseph, A.J. (2017). Making Civility: Historical Racial Exclusion Theories within Canadian Democracy. In Daenzer, P. (eds.), *Civil Society Engagement: Achieving Better in Canada*. (pp. 17-30). New York: Routledge.
- Caragata, L. (1999) The Privileged Public: who is permitted citizenship? *Community Development Journal*, v.34, n.4, pp.270-286.
- George, U., Lee, B., McGrath, S., & Moffat, K. (2003). Exploring citizenship in contemporary community work practice. *Journal of Community Practice*, 11(3), 71-86.

- Lister, R. (1997). Citizenship: toward a feminist synthesis. *Feminist Review*, 57, 28-48.

Week 4: January 30

Topic:

- Organizing for Change, Justice

Readings:

- Freire, Paulo. 1970. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Chapter 1
- Thompson, N. (2002). Social Movements, Social Justice and Social Work. *British Journal of Social Work*. 32(6): 711-722.
- Palumbo, E. and Friedman, M. (2014). Occupying Social Work: Unpacking Connections and Contradictions in the Social Work/Activist Divide. *CAOS: The Journal of Critical Anti-Oppressive Social Inquiry*. 1:82-100.
- Shragge, E. (2013). Theoretical Perspectives and Models of Community Work. *Activism and social change: Lessons for community organizing*. University of Toronto Press: Toronto .1-28

Week 5: February 6th

Topic:

- Community Solidarity and Participation (1)

Readings:

- Dobbie, D. & Richards-Schuster, K. (2008). Building Solidarity through Difference: A Practice Model for Critical Multicultural Organizing. *Journal of Community Practice*, 16(3), 317-337.
- Fraser, H. (2005) "Four different approaches to community participation." *Community Development Journal*. Vol. 40, No. 3. Pp286-300.
- Madonna Thunder Hawk. 2007. "Native Organizing Before the Non-Profit Industrial Complex In *Incite! Women of Color Against Violence 07. The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*. South End Press: MA, pp101-106.
- Koyama, E. (2003) "A Transfeminist Manifesto" <http://eminism.org/readings/pdf-rdg/tfmanifesto.pdf>

Week 6: February 13

Topic:

- Community Solidarity and Participation (2)

Readings:

- Janes, J. E. (2016). Democratic encounters? Epistemic privilege, power, and community-based participatory action research. *Action Research*, 14(1), 72-87.
- Cook, B. and Kothari, U. (2001). The Case for Participation as Tyranny in Cook, B. and Kothari, U (Eds.) *Participation: the New Tyranny?* Zed Books, pp 1-15.
- Drolet, J., Dominelli, L., Alston, M., Ersing, R., Mathbor, G., & Wu, H. (2015) Women rebuilding lives post-disaster: innovative community practices for building resilience and promoting sustainable development, *Gender & Development*, 23:3, 433-448.
- Jewkes, R. and Murcott, A., (1998). Community Representatives: Representing the Community? *Social Science and Medicine*, 46(7), 843-858.

Week 7: February 20

Midterm Recess: No Class

Week 8: February 27—Critical Reflection Paper Due

Topic:

- Capacity Building, “Empowerment”, Freedom

Readings:

- Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Random House, 2000), chapters 1-3
- Toomey, A.H. 2011. “Empowerment and disempowerment in community development practice: eight roles practitioners play.” *Community Development Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 2, pp181-195. [L] [SEP]
- McGrath, S., Moffat, K., George, U., & Lee, B. (1999). Community capacity: The emperor's new clothes. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 44, 9-23.
- Craig, G. (2007). Community capacity-building: Something old, something new...? *Critical Social Policy*, 27(3), 335-359.
- Chaskin R. J. (2001). Building Community Capacity: A definitional framework and case studies from a comprehensive community initiative. *Urban Affairs Review*, 36(3), 291-

323.

Week 9: March 5

Topic:

- Movements and Activism (1)

Readings:

- Smith, A. L. (2006). Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of Settler Colonialism. In *The Color of Violence: The INCITE! Anthology*, edited by Smith, A.L., Richie, B.E., Sudbury, J., and Janelle White, J., 68–73. South End Press
- Policy.M4BL.org. *A vision for Black Lives: Policy Demands for Black Power, Freedom, & Justice: The movement for Black Lives*. <https://policy.m4bl.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/20160726-m4bl-Vision-Booklet-V3.pdf>
- Beresford, P. (2012). The Theory and Philosophy Behind Service User Involvement in *Social Care, Service Users and Service User Involvement*. Beresford, P. and Carr, S. (Eds). pp.21-37. Research Highlights no.55, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Staples, L. (2012). Community organizing for social justice: Grassroots groups for power. *Social Work with Groups*, 35(3), 287-296
- Stientstra, D., & Ashcroft, T. (2010). Voyaging on the Seas of Spirit: an ongoing journey towards understanding disability and humanity. *Disability and Society*, 25(2), 191- 203.

Week 10: March 12

Topic:

- Movements and Activism (2)

Readings:

- Césaire, A. (1955). Discourse on colonialism. *Postcolonialisms: An anthology of cultural theory and criticism*, 60-64.
- Naples, N.A. (1998). Introduction: Women’s Community Activism and Feminist Activist Research, in Nancy A. Naples (Ed). pp. 1-30. *Community Activism and Feminist Politics: organizing across race, class and gender*. Routledge: New York and London.
- Tagore, S. 2011. “A Slam on Feminism in Academia” in Yee, J. (Ed). 2011. *Feminism For Real: Deconstructing the Academic Industrial Complex of Feminism*. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives: Canada. Pp37-42.
- Christens, B.D. (2015). Community Organizing: Practice, Research and Policy Implications. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 9(1), 193-222.

Week 11: March 19

Topic:

- History, voice and representation

Readings: TBA

- Chapman, C., & Withers, A. J. (2019). Troubling the Standard Account of Social Work, in (pp.25-75) *A Violent History of Benevolence: Interlocking Oppression in the Moral Economies of Social Working*. University of Toronto Press.
- Joseph, A. J. (2019). Constituting “Lived Experience” Discourses in Mental Health: The Ethics of Racialized Identification/Representation and the Erasure of Intergeneration Colonial Violence.
- Dunbar, T., & Scrimgeour, M. (2006). Ethics in Indigenous research—connecting with community. *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry*, 3(3), 179-185.
- George, P., Coleman, B., & Barnoff, L. (2007). Beyond "providing services" - Voices of service users on structural social work practice in community-based social service agencies. *Canadian Social Work Review*, 24(1), 5-22.

Week 12: March 26

Topic:

- Research and Community Action

Readings:

- Razack, S. H. (2007). Stealing the pain of others: Reflections on Canadian humanitarian responses. *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 29(4), 375-394.
- Branom, C. (2012). Community-Based Participatory Research as a Social Work Research and Intervention Approach. *Journal of Community Practice*, 12(3), 260-273.
- Maiter, S., & Joseph, A. J. (2016). Researching racism: The colour of face value, challenges and opportunities. *British Journal of Social Work*, 47(3), 755-772.
- Smylie, J., Olding, M., & Ziegler, C. (2014). Sharing what we know about living a good life: Indigenous approaches to knowledge translation. *Canadian of the Canadian Health Libraries Association*, 35(1), 16-23. doi:10.5596/c14-009
- Enhancing the Research and Knowledge Mobilization Capacity of Disability Community Organizations Executive Summary. Centre for Research and Education in Human Services.
www.communitybasedresearch.ca/resources/RKM/RKM%20exec%20summ.pdf

Week 13: April 2 —Final Paper Due

Topic:

- Ethical Tensions in Community Practices

Readings:

- Butler, J. (1997). Merely cultural. *Social Text*, 52/53, 33-44.
- Nancy Leong, "Racial Capitalism" (2013) 126:8 Harvard Law Review 2151
- Hardina, D. (2004). Guidelines for ethical practice in community organization. *Social Work*, 49(4): 595-604.
- Kenny, Sue (2001) Tensions and Dilemmas in Community Development: New Discourses, New Trojans? Keynote at the International Development Conference, Rotorua, New Zealand, April, 2001. www.iacdglobal.org/files/kenny.pdf
- Orr, C. 2002. "Challenging the "Academic/Real World" Divide." In Naples, N. A. and K. Bojar (Eds.). *Teaching Feminist Activism: Strategies from the Field*. Routledge: New York. Pp36-53.