



McMaster University School of Social Work
Critical Approaches to Community Based Research

Monday January 6 to April 6, 2020, 1:30pm – 4:20pm

Classroom: L.R. Wilson Hall, Room 1013

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Course Overview

Course Description:

This course introduces students to critical approaches in community based research in the social sciences. It is intended for graduate students at the MA and PhD level in the social sciences or related field who are interested or engaged in scholarship from a community-based perspective.

Course Objectives:

- To provide students with a working knowledge of the theoretical foundation and history of community based research;
- To provide students with a practical understanding of the methods and methodologies taken up within community based research;
- To provide students with an entry into the practice of community based research with an attention to:
 - i) Developing a critical analysis of collaboration;
 - ii) Analyzing and evaluating strategies aimed at community-based participation and leadership;
 - iii) Develop a critical analysis of community-based research ethics;
 - iv) Develop a critical understanding of engaging in research for social change.

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 as researchers. 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 experiences of 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.

Required Texts:

Catherine Etmanski, Budd L. Hall & Teresa Dawson Eds. (2014). Learning and Teaching Community Based Research: Linking Pedagogy to Practice. University of Toronto Press.

Course Requirements/Assignments

Requirements Overview and Deadlines

1. Critical Question Presentation (25%): **Due TBD**
2. Community Leadership and Engagement Proposal (30%): **Due Feb. 24**
3. Final Paper (35%): **Due April 6**
4. Participation (10%): **Throughout**

Requirement/Assignment Details

1. Critical Question Presentation: In pairs, students will be required to choose a week where they share their thoughts, experiences and analysis related to the readings. Students will also bring a question for critical inquiry and debate that corresponds with the readings from that week. Students will draw on an issue, case example, or other interesting aspect of the readings OR from their own CBR experiences to develop a question that they will present to the class. After presenting the question, the student will facilitate a class discussion and/or debate. Students will also be assessed (see student participation grade) on their participation in the group facilitated discussion. Everyone is expected to contribute.
 - DUE DATES: TBD
2. Community Leadership and Engagement Proposal: The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate your understanding and critical analysis of the community leadership and engagement process including the challenges and possibilities. In this paper you can either identify a community that you are currently working with or that you wish to work with, and the leadership and engagement processes that you will subsequently need to consider. Drawing on readings, lectures, and in class discussions, you will then discuss your process of developing partnerships that ensure community leadership and engagement at various stages of the research process. The final part of the paper should focus on some of the methodological or ethical tensions that you anticipate bumping up against throughout this process and the steps you will take to minimize these tensions.
 - DUE DATE: Monday, February 24th
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 based research and research as a part of the larger social change project. Students can choose between Topic A and Topic B or consult with me on another approach to fulfilling the aims of this paper.

- DUE DATE: Monday, April 6th

Topic A: Analytic Paper

- Identify, describe and analyze some aspect of CBR (for example a CBR principle that you wish to include in your current or future research projects) with which you wish to achieve greater familiarity. The paper must include a comprehensive review of background literature of the CBR concept and/or principle and why this concept is important for your research and the community/community organization that you are working with, the methodological and ethical tensions that you may experience, and how you plan on working with the community to address these tensions.

Topic B: Theorizing Practice Experience

- Students involved in a CBR project (either now or previously) may submit a critical analysis of their experience in which they draw on CBR concepts, principles, guest lectures, class discussions and readings, to critically evaluate the project and study day to day issues in the course of implementation. The paper must include background on the community and your relationship with the community, literature which addresses the core CBR issues related to the project, a reflection on the methodological and ethical tensions you are experiencing (or previously experienced), and lessons learned.
- Participation: Students will also be assessed on their participation in weekly seminars and during the group facilitated discussion. Everyone is expected to contribute.

- DUE DATE: Throughout

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.

Submitting Assignments & Grading

Assignments should be handed to the professor on the due date unless other arrangements have been negotiated and agreed on.

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 5 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.
- 5.

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 and University Policies

- 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.

Attendance

Participation, attendance, and questions are essential in order to fully engage in the analysis of the readings. Furthermore, the expectation is that students will attend all lectures. If a student is unable to attend class (due to illness etc.), please ensure that you communicate with the instructor that you will be absent.

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](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity), located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity

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. Please review the RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences about how to request accommodation. 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, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Weekly Topics and Readings

Week 1: January 6

Topics:

- Learning and Teaching CBR

Readings:

- <http://www.academicmatters.ca/2014/06/beyond-all-in-the-family-community-based-research-in-canada/>

Week 2: January 13

Topics:

- Building and Maintaining Trust

Readings:

- Introduction and Chapter 1 in C. Etmanski et al.
- <https://communityengagement.ubc.ca/partnership-perspectives/building-trust-in-communities/>
- Van der Meulen, E. (2011). Action Research with Sex Workers: Dismantling Barriers and Building Bridges. *Action Research*, 9(4), 370-384.

Week 3: January 20

Topics:

- Partnering vs. Participating in CBR

Guest: C.A. Klassen

Readings:

- Chapter 2 in C. Etmanski et al.
- Arieli, D., Friedman, V.J. (2009). The Paradox of Participation in Action Research. *Action Research*, 7(3), 263-290.
- McNeill LH, Reitzel LR, Escoto KH, Roberson CL, Nguyen N, Vidrine JI, Strong LL and Wetter DW (2018). Engaging Black Churches to Address Cancer Health Disparities: Project CHURCH. *Front. Public Health* 6:191.doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2018.00191.

Week 4: January 27

Topics:

- Collaboration and Control in CBR
- Guests: Doris Peltier and Tracey Prentice

Readings:

- Casteldon, H., Garvin, T. and Huu-ay-aht First Nation (2008). Modifying Photovoice for Community-Based Participatory Indigenous Research. *Social Science and Medicine*, 66: 1393-1405.
- Travers, R., Pyne, J., Bauer, G., Munro, L., Giambrone, B., Hammond, R., & Scanlon, K. (2013). 'Community Control' in CBPR: Challenges experienced and questions raised from the Trans PULSE Project. *Action Research*, 11(4), 403-422.
- Snarch, B. (2004). Ownership, Control, Access and Possession: (OCAP) or Self-Determination Applied to Research: A critical analysis of contemporary First Nations Research and Some Options for First Nations Communities. *International Journal of Aboriginal Health*, 1(1).

Week 5: February 3

Topics:

- Teaching, Learning and Doing CBR
- Guest Lecturer: Apondi Odhiambo

Readings:

- Chapters 4 and 5 in C. Etmanski et al.
- Greene, S., Muchenje, M., Cotnam, J., Dunn, K., Frank, P., Nicholson, V., Odhiambo, A.J., Shore, K., Kaida, A. Learning, Doing and Teaching Together: Reflecting on our arts-based approach to research, education and activism with women living with HIV. *Engaged Scholar Journal*, 9.

Week 6: February 10

Topics:

- Peer Researcher Involvement in CBR
- Guests: Jasmine Cotnam and Kristin Dunn

Readings:

- Greene, S., Ahluwalia, A., Watson, J., Tucker, R., Rourke, S.B., Koornstra, J., Sobota, M., Monette, L., Byers, S. (2009). Between Skepticism and Empowerment: The Experiences of Peer Research Assistants in HIV/AIDS, Housing and Homelessness Community-Based Research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 12(4): 361-373.
- Greene, S. (2013). Peer Research Assistantships and the Ethics of Reciprocity in Community-based Participatory Research. *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics*. 8 (2), 141-152.
- Damon, W., Callon, C., Wiebe, L., Small, W., Kerr, T., McNeil, R. (2017). Community-based participatory research in a heavily researched inner city neighbourhood: Perspectives of people who use drugs on their experiences as peer researchers. *Social Science and Medicine*, 176: 85-92.

Week 7: February 17

- **READING WEEK**

Week 8: February 24

Topics:

- CBR Ethics

Readings:

- https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/sites/default/files/publication/cbpr_ethics_guide_web_november_2012.pdf
- Guta, A., Wilson, M., Flicker, S. Travers, R. Mason, C., Wenyewe, G., & O'Campo, P. (2010). Are we Asking the Right Questions? A review of Canadian REB Practices in Relation to Community-Based Participatory Research, *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics*, 5(2), 35-46.
- Coons, K.D. and Watson, S.L. (2013). Conducting research with individuals who intellectual disabilities: Ethical and Practical Implications for Qualitative Research. *Journal on Developmental Disabilities*, 19(2), 14-24.

Week 9: March 2

Topic:

- Feminist Participatory Arts Based Research
- Guest Lecturer: Mary Vaccaro

Readings:

- Clover, D. (2011). Successes and challenges of feminist arts-based participatory methodologies with homeless/street-involved women in Victoria. *Action Research*, 9(1), 12–26.
- Gastaldo, D., Magalhães, L., Carrasco, C., and Davy, C. (2012). Body-Map Storytelling as Research: Methodological considerations for telling the stories of undocumented workers through body mapping. Retrieved from <http://www.migrationhealth.ca/undocumented-workers-ontario/body-mapping>

Week 10: March 9

Topics:

- Participatory Approaches to Data Collection and Analysis

Readings:

- Chapter 6 and 13 in C. Etmanski et al.
- Jackson, S. (2008). A Participatory Group Process to Analyze Qualitative Data. *Project Muse*, 2(2): 160-170.

Week 11: March 16

Topics:

- Participatory approaches to dissemination and knowledge mobilization

Readings:

- Kukkonen, T., & Cooper, A. (2019). An arts-based knowledge translation (ABKT) planning framework for researchers. *Evidence & Policy*. 15(2): 293-311

Week 12: March 23

Topics:

- CBR Ethics Beyond the REB

Readings:

- Maiter, S., Simich, L., Jacobson, N, and Wise, N. (2008). Reciprocity: an ethic for community-based participatory *Action Research*, 6(3), 305-325.
- Banks, S., Armstrong, A., Carter, K., Graham, H., Hayward, P., Henry, A., Holland, T., Holmes, C., Lee, A., McNulty, A., Moore, N., Nayling, N., Stokoe, A. and Strachan, A. (2013). Everyday ethics in community-based participatory research. *Contemporary Social Science*, 8(3), 263-277.

Week 13: March 30

Topics:

- Representations of ourselves and Our 'Communit(ies)' in CBR
- Guests: Lori Chambers
- Reading: <https://www.becauseshecares.com/>
- Performance: Because She Cares

Readings:

- Chapter 7 in C. Etmanski et al.
- Sinding, C., Barnoff, L., Grassau, P., Odette, F., & McGillicuddy, P. (2009). The stories we tell: Processes and politics of research representation. In J. Gould, J. Nelson & S. Keller-Olaman (Eds.), *Cancer on the Margins: Method and Meaning in Participatory Research*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Week 14: April 6

Topics:

- CBR and Social Change: Tensions and Possibilities

Readings:

- Chapter 15 in C. Etmanski et al.
- Fine, M. & Torre, M.E. (2006). Intimate Details: participatory action research in prison. *Action Research*, 4(3), 253-269.