

CYP 6936 Current Issues in Community Psychology (3 credits)

PROFESSOR INFORMATION



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| Instructor: | Maureen C. Kenny, Ph.D. |
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| Office: | DM 201B (MMC) |
| Office Hours: | By appointment: Please let me know if you want to meet and we will make arrangements for a mutually beneficial time. |
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Class meeting time: Thursdays, GC 250, 9:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

FIU Catalog Course Description: An intensive analysis of contemporary theoretical, practical, and professional aspects of the field of Community Psychology.

This course provides an overview of theory, research, and action in community psychology (CP). CP is the study and application of psychological solutions to community-based social, mental health, and environmental problems. It also explores the relationships between stressful environments, supportive social systems, and individual and family well-being. It emphasizes values, applied research, and action, all focused on promoting the welfare of the whole community, especially under-served populations. It focuses on prevention, self-help, empowerment, cultural diversity, and organizational, community, and societal-level action. How do friends and family help you cope with life's major traumas and daily hassles? Why have so many mentally ill and criminally convicted people been "deinstitutionalized," what does that mean, and why have so many become homeless? How can people organize and work collectively to improve their neighborhoods, workplaces, services, and other community settings, and develop a greater sense of community? Community psychology answers these and many other questions.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: The instructor for this course will strive to insure inclusion of curriculum material consistent with the department's mission of diversity, equity and inclusion. The aim of such inclusion is to help foster social and political awareness of, interest in, respect for, and competence in understanding all groups, and skills in providing services to people of diverse backgrounds. The instructor for this course will also include curriculum material that addresses the importance of empirically supported evidence, multiple critical viewpoints, and the current literature concerning relevant interventions, assessments, diagnoses, theoretical constructs, and other related issues and/or techniques relevant to the topic area. An empirically supported approach is consistent with the ASCP's mission statement of providing training where scientific knowledge is integrated with clinical practice (practitioner/scholar model), as well as the American Psychological Association (APA) Ethics Code concerning ethical teaching approaches and service delivery.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION

The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and sustainable. The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the necessary support to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students. If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, please contact the Center at 305-348-3532 or visit them at the Graham Center GC 190.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT STATEMENT

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Academic Misconduct includes: **Cheating** – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. **Plagiarism** – The use and appropriation of another’s work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student’s own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism.

Further, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is not permitted for any assignment. I want to see your intelligence. Use of Chat GPT or any other AI may result in failure on that assignment.

Learn more about the [academic integrity policies and procedures](#) as well as [student resources](#) that can help you prepare for a successful semester.

| Letter | Range (%) | Letter | Range (%) | Letter | Range (%) |
|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|------------|
| A | 94 - 100 | B | 83 - 86 | C | 70 - 76 |
| A- | 90 - 93 | B- | 80 - 82 | D | 60 - 69 |
| B+ | 87 - 89 | C+ | 77 - 79 | F | 59 or less |

ASSIGNMENTS

| Assignment | Point Value |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Class Participation | 10 points |
| 30 days Episode Paper | 20 |
| Midterm Essay Quiz | 25 |
| Journal Paper | 10 |
| Final Project | 25 |
| Discussion Posts | 10 |
| Total Points | 100 |

Class participation: It is expected that students will have consistent and timely (on time) attendance in class, will prepare for class by completing the assigned readings prior to the date listed on this syllabus, and will be active participants in class discussions. Class participation counts 10 points toward the final grade. Class participation grades will not be granted if you have excessive, unexcused absences (e.g. 2 or more). There is a sign in sheet each week and you are responsible for signing in. Full points will be given to those who attend all classes and participate in discussions. (i.e., I like to hear you talk.) Must be

present on the day to participate in the consultation role play and the final day to participate in class exercise to receive the full points. (10 points toward final grade).

Discussion Posts: There will be 2 discussion posts throughout the semester (see calendar for due dates). These will be on CANVAS. The discussion will typically involve reading an article or watching a short video. The discussion board will be used for replies to discussion prompts. Everyone can read Discussion Forum postings; therefore, do not post confidential information and only information you feel comfortable sharing with others in the class. Your answers should be thorough and demonstrate that you read and understand related assigned textbook chapters. The approximate length of the answer is 200 words. You must also respond to at least two of your classmates' posts in a way that demonstrates your understanding and application of the assigned material. Reading and replying to the posts of other students will help prepare you to integrate and better understand the course material as well as reflect on your personal values and beliefs related to the readings and assignments. **Initial discussion posts are due each week on Thursday at 11:59 pm. Discussion responses to peers are due Sunday of the same week by 11:59 pm. Discussion posts and responses will be scored based on the rubric in CANVAS.** (5 points max per discussion; 10 points toward final grade)

Midterm Essays: There will be one quiz approximately halfway through the semester. The quiz will ask for brief answers to approximately 5 questions (your choice from a larger pool of questions) related to readings and discussions included up to that point in the course. Responses are to be typed and in complete sentences. References should be provided to support your statements. Each question should be an approximately 1000 words reply. Include the question (in bold) and your typed answer below. The questions will become available in CANVAS on October 1, 2023. (25 points toward final grade)

Thirty Days Episode: Find and watch one episode of Thirty Days, an award winning reality tv show. There are several available for free on You Tube. 30 Days is an American reality television show created and hosted by Morgan Spurlock for FX. In each episode, Spurlock, or some other person or group of people, spend 30 days immersing themselves in a particular lifestyle with which they are unfamiliar (e.g. working for minimum wage, being in prison, a Christian living as a Muslim etc.), while discussing related social issues. There are a number of rules unique to each situation which must be followed during each such experiment. Your paper will be approximately 4 pages. Begin with naming and summarizing the episode you chose. Then describe a bit about what transpired in the episode (e.g. what happened among the characters). Finally, share your thoughts and reactions to the episode and what you learned. Make suggestions for how you think this issue could be overcome or solutions to the problem. This is a type of intergroup contact "experiment" so draw on what you know about that theory and how it may apply in this situation. A full list of episodes is available here: [30 Days \(TV series\) - Wikipedia](#) (20 points toward final grade)

Journal Paper: As students, you can gain a greater appreciation for scientific approaches to the study of community psychology by perusing current issues of some of the more rigorous journals in the field. These include: *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *Journal of Community Psychology*, *Journal of Community Psychology in Global Perspective*, *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, and *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice*. Please search for a research article in recent issues (last 5 years preferred) one of these journals. Using the article, please write a 2-3 page paper that includes the following:

- Why did you choose this paper? What was appealing about the topic or author?
- Offer a summary of the main findings and purpose of the article. This can include some general commentary on the type of research design used for the study (i.e., is the selected study correlational or experimental? Retrospective or prospective?)

- Consider the issue under consideration? Does the article address etiology, treatment or solutions?
- What knowledge have you gained from this paper and how do you anticipate it may guide some of your work in the future?

Formatting Reminder: You are expected to format your paper according to APA 7th edition formatting guidelines. Be sure to cite the article accordingly. Also please attach a copy (PDF) of the article you have chosen. You do not need a title page, but rather put your name and the proper APA citation of the paper on the first page. (10 points toward final grade)

Final Project. Community psychology emphasizes collaborative work, so the final project will provide an opportunity for you to work with other students. Collaboration is also key in working in academic or organizational settings and this assignment will engage you in this process. The groups will be randomly assigned in CANVAS. Look in the People Tab to see your group. In the process of working with other students, you will face challenges similar to those that community psychologists face in the field: finding time to meet, creating common cause, and resolving differences in opinions. I hope that you will come to see that we human beings are all interdependent; your relationships with other students will be important for your learning in this course.

Working with this small group, you will identify and research and investigate a **relevant social problem affecting people in the local community (or FIU or global community if you prefer)**. Hypothetically, the project you will propose would be conducted in cooperation with a community (or government) organization, public interest group or other not-for-profit entity that will benefit directly from the project. Provide a background on the issue in that particular community, including literature reviewed on the topic. Review any existing programs that address this issue and their strengths and weaknesses. Thoroughly review how you will gain access to the population and implement your program. You can include sample recruitment flyers and speak about locations of the programming. Specifics of the programming will need to be addressed. You must also address issues of evaluation—what form will it take, how will you conduct it, how many staff you will need etc. You should also include at least one interview with someone who is an expert in this field (either in the topic or program implementation) and include what you learned from them. Remember to have clear recommendations for addressing the problem (in a way that is likely to work and that fit with community psychology/social justice values).

Your project will include a budget of up to \$25,000 a year. If your planned proposal includes an intervention, the proposal should carefully describe the theoretical rationale for the intervention, specifically how the effectiveness of the program will be assessed and the plan to disseminate the findings to relevant parties and policy makers. Also describe what successes and challenges your group faced, how those successes and challenges might be predicted by community psychology concepts. For the class you will present your project. Each member of the team should be involved. You should prepare an infographic on the problem and your solution. Your presentation should be no more than 20 minutes. The accompanying paper will be 5 pages: introduction to the problem, proposed solution/intervention, notes from interview with expert, budget, planning and timeline, and evaluation. The goal of this is to keep your writing to a minimum. *(This assignment is largely based off the SPSSI community grants process for students. Thus, you may be able to in the future use your assignment as part of that submission process.)*

Calendar of Meetings

| Date | Topic | Readings * | Assignments |
|-----------------------------|--|---|---|
| Week 1 August 21-27 | Introduction to the class and assignments | Ch. 1 Moritsugu | |
| Week 2 August 29-Sept. 3 | Scientific Methods | Read Ch. 2 Moritsugu on Scientific Methods Guest Speaker: Marquay Smith, VetSuccess On-Campus Counselor, FIU | Discussion Post: HCZ |
| Week 3 Sept. 4- 10 | Schools, Children and the Community | Ch. 8 Moritsugu | |
| Week 4 Sept. 11- 17 | Stress and Resilience | Ch. 3 Moritsugu Guest Speaker: Dr. Jonathan Spikes Affirming Youth | Complete Life Events Scale Complete ACES |
| Week 5 Sept. 18- 24 | The Importance of Social Change | Ch. 4 Moritsugu | |
| Week 6 Sept 25- Oct. 1 | Community Intervention Strategies | Ch. 5 Moritsugu Consulting Role Play Exercise (in class) | Journal Paper Due |
| Week 7 Oct 2- 8 | The Mental Health System | Ch. 6 Moritsugu Guest Speaker: Fellowship House-Rosemary Smith-Hoel | |
| Week 8 Oct 9- 15 | Social and Human Services in the Community | Ch. 7 Moritsugu | Midterm essays due |
| Week 9 Oct. 16-22 | Schools, Children and the Community | Ch. 8 Moritsugu (again) Guest Speaker: Deborah Billings-Kristi House Child Safety Matters | Discussion Post: School Violence |
| Week 10 Oct 23- 29 | Law, Crime and the Community | Ch. 9 Moritsugu Guest Speaker: Dr. Zgoba-Restorative Justice | |
| Week 11 Oct. 30- Nov 5 | The Healthcare System | Ch. 10 Moritsugu | |
| Week 12 Nov 6- 12 | Community Health and Preventive Medicine | Ch. 11 Moritsugu Guest Speaker: Francesco Dubleri, Survivors Pathway | |
| Week 13 Nov 13- 19 | Interpersonal Violence, Child Abuse Human Trafficking | Ch. 12 Moritsugu Polaris Report Child Maltreatment Report | Thirty Days Assignment Due |
| Week 14 Nov 20- 26 | | No class. FIU Closed | |
| Week 15 Nov 27- Dec 3 | Interpersonal Violence, Child Abuse Human Trafficking continued | | |
| Week 16 Dec 4- 9 | Final week | Presentation by groups | |

**See additional readings in CANVAS for each week/module.*