RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
Master Syllabus
Course No. 19:910:539 – Community Organization

Instructor: _____
536 George Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Fax: 732-932-8181
Email:

Office hours: _____, and by appointment.
I encourage you to meet with me at least once during the term. You can come individually or in pairs and may talk about anything that is on your mind. Although my office hours are listed above, I have an open door policy; you are welcome to stop by my office anytime I'm there. For those of you who cannot meet during the scheduled office hours, we can arrange alternative times either via e-mail, telephone, or after class. I can best be reached by e-mail.

Overview: This course is designed to provide students with a structured overview of community organization. The course will include readings on defining and characterizing community; power and leadership dynamics in community; economic and class issues; determinants of health that relate to community; community assessments; and approaches and tools to use when actually conducting and evaluating community-organizing initiatives.

A major challenge associated with offering a course addressing community organization is the range of material needing to be covered. Community organization is an interest of social workers, sociologists, organization theorists, political scientists, epidemiologists, and psychologists, to name but a few disciplines contributing to our knowledge of working with communities.

What to expect: This class will enable students to make a careful study of the broad range of issues involved in community organization. The time in class will emphasize discussions and sharing of ideas, insights and questions about community organization. The context and emphasis will be on health but we will draw on case studies, readings, and speakers from a variety of fields and settings.

Students will be assigned readings in advance of each class, and students will have an opportunity to develop leadership skills by taking responsibility for presenting information to the class and leading discussions.

Objectives: Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:
1. Identify basic characteristics of community-organizing approaches to addressing social and health problems;
2. Define the concept(s) of community;
3. Compare and contrast different theories and models relevant to community organization;
4. Analyze organizations that apply community-organizing approaches;

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5. Discuss principles for evaluating and doing research on community-organizing initiatives;

6. Discuss the roles of social workers and other professionals in community organization and their ethical implications; and,

7. Analyze and report a field experience on a class project that is related to community organization.

Approach: This course will generally follow a seminar format. It will include group discussions, instructor and guest presentations, in-class discussions and exercises, students' presentations, and field experience. Students are expected to learn the skills that will help further their thinking and practice. The role of the instructor is to assist students in this process by acting as a facilitator and as a resource.

Requirements: 1. Class participation and attendance are considered in evaluating grades. Students are expected to notify the class instructor if they are unable to attend class for any reason.

2. Midterm and final exams – Students will complete two exams. These exams will provide students the opportunity to synthesize material presented across sessions.

3. Presentation and critique of an empirical article – Students will develop a presentation and facilitate discussion of one article (i.e., an article of interest to you which are not included in the required readings). This assignment will provide you the opportunity to explore a sub-topic within the field of community organization that is of special interest to you. It will also help develop your group facilitation and presentation skills.

4. Conduct and present one case study – Students will gather information from documents and interviews to provide a presentation on a group or organization which applies, in some way, community-organizing strategies. The purpose of the case study is to provide a real-life context for class assignments. This project should serve as a framework within which students do the readings, listen to presenters, and prepare assignments.

5. Conduct and present one class project – Students will review literature and gather data on a question of interest that is related in some way to community organization. This project should serve to strengthen students' research and analytic skills, as well as provide a context for class assignments, discussions, and lectures.

Grading: Students will be evaluated on performance on the following: (a) class participation and attendance (10%); (b) two exams (20% each, for a total of 40% of final grade); (c) class presentation of your critique of an empirical article (10%); (d) a case study of a group or organization which applies community-organizing strategies (20%); and, (e) class project that is related to community organization (20%). Grades will be letter grades, following University procedures.

Required Textbook:

Minkler, M. (Ed.) (2012). Community Organizing and Community Building for Health and Welfare, 3rd edition. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. ISBN-13: 978-0813553009

Schedule: Weeks 1 and 2
Introduction to basic concepts and foundations of community organization

Readings for Weeks 1 and 2:
Christens, B. D., & Speer, P. W. (2015). Community organizing: Practice, research, and policy implications. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, *9*(1), 193-222.
Minkler, M. (2012). Introduction to community organizing and community building. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 5-26). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
Minikler, M., Pies, C. & Hyde, C.A. (2012). Ethical issues in community organizing and community building. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 110-129). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
Minkler, M. & Wallerstein, N. (2012). Improving health through community organization and community building: Perspectives from health education and social work. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 37-58). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
Martinson, M. & Su, C. (2012). Contrasting organizing approaches: The "Alinsky Tradition" and Freirian organizing approaches. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 59-76). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
Obama, B. (2012). Why organize? Problems and promise in the inner city. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 27-36). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
Walter, C.L. & Hyde, C. (2012). Community building practice: An expanded conceptual framework. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 78-94). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Weeks 3 and 4
Environmental determinants of social and health problems

Readings for Weeks 3 and 4

Mitchell, F. M. (2012). Reframing diabetes in American Indian communities: A social determinants of health perspective. *Health & Social Work*, *37*(2), 71-79.
Moniz, C. (2010). Social work and the social determinants of health perspective: A good fit. *Health and Social Work*, *35*(4), 310
Peterson, N.A., Yu, D., Morton, C.M., Reid, R.J., Sheffer, M.A. & Schneider, J.E. (2011). Tobacco outlet density and demographics at the tract

level of analysis in New Jersey. *Drugs: Education, Prevention & Policy, 18*, 47-52.

Rine, C. M. (2010). Unnatural causes: is inequality making us sick?. *Health and Social Work, 35*(3), 229.

Subica, A. M., Grills, C. T., Villanueva, S., & Douglas, J. A. (2016). Community organizing for healthier communities: Environmental and policy outcomes of a National Initiative. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine.*

Wiggins, L., Nower, L., Sanchez Mayers, R. & Peterson, N.A. (2010). A geospatial statistical analysis of the density of lottery outlets within ethnically concentrated neighborhoods. *Journal of Community Psychology, 38,* 486-496.

Yu, D., Morton, C.M. & Peterson, N.A. (2014). Community pharmacies and addictive products: Sociodemographic predictors of accessibility from a mixed GWR perspective. *GIScience & Remote Sensing, 51*, 99-113.

Week 5
Community assessment and issue selection.

Readings for Week 5:

Hancock, T. & Minkler, M. (2012). Community health assessment or healthy community assessment: Whose community? Whose health? Whose assessment. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 153-170). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

McKnight, J.L. & Kretzmann, J.P. (2012). Mapping community capacity. . In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 171-186). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Staples, L. (2012). Selecting and "cutting" the issue. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 187-210). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Weeks 6 and 7
Building authentic partnerships and organizing within and across diverse groups

Readings for Weeks 6 and 7:

Butterfoss, F.D. & Kegler, M.C. (2012). A coalition model for community action. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 309-328). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Chang, C., Salvatore, A.L., Lee, P.T., Liu, S.L. & Minkler, M. (2012). Population education, participatory research, and community organizing with immigrant restaurant workers in San Francisco's Chinatown: A case study. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 246-264). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Gutierrez, L.M. & Lewis, E.A. (2012). Education, participation, and capacity building in community organizing with women of color. In M.

Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 215-228). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Labonte, R. (2012). Community, community development, and the forming of authentic partnerships: Some critical reflections. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 95-109). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Linnan, L., Thomas, S., D'Angelo, H. & Freguson, Y.O. (2012). African American barbershops and beauty salons: An innovative approach to reducing health disparities through community building and health education. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 229-245). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Powell, K.G. & Peterson, N.A. (2014). Pathways to effectiveness in substance abuse prevention: Empowering organizational characteristics of community-based coalitions. *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership, & Governance, 38,* 471-486.

Week 8 – Exam I

* No readings for Week 8 *

Week 9 – Spring Break

* No additional readings for Week 9 *

Week 10 – Case Studies Due

* All groups will present case studies *
* No additional readings for Week 10 *

Weeks 11 and 12
Using the arts, internet and digital technology as tools for community organizing and community building

Readings for Weeks 11 and 12

Brady, S. R., Young, J. A., & McLeod, D. A. (2015). Utilizing digital advocacy in community organizing: Lessons learned from organizing in virtual spaces to promote worker rights and economic justice. *Journal of Community Practice*, *23*(2), 255-273.

McDonald, M., Catalani, C. & Minkler, M. (2012). Using the arts and new media in community organizing and community building: An overview and case study from post-Katrina New Orleans. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 288-305). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Satariano, N.B. & Wong, A. (2012). Creating an online strategy to enhance effective community building and organizing. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 269-287). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Week 13
Influencing policy through community organizing and media advocacy

Readings for Week 13
Blackwell, A.G., Thompson, M., Freudenberg, N., Ayers, J., Schrantz, D. &
   Minkler, M. (2012). Using community organizing and community
   building to influence public policy. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community
   organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 371-385). New
   Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
Dorfman, L. & Gonzalez, P. (2012). Media policy: A strategy for helping
   communities change policy. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community organizing
   and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 407-423). New
   Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Week 14
Measuring outcomes and evaluating community organizing and community building

Readings for Week 14
Coombe, C.M. (2012). Participatory approaches for evaluating community
   organizing and community building. In M. Minkler (Ed.), *Community
   organizing and community building for health and welfare* (pp. 346-369). New
   Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
Peterson, N.A., Peterson, C.H., Agre, L.A., Christens, B.D. & Morton, C.M.
   (2011). Measuring youth empowerment: Validation of a sociopolitical
   control scale for youth in an urban community context. *Journal of
   Community Psychology, 39*, 592-605.
Speer, P.W., Peterson, N.A., Zippay, A. & Christens, B. (2010). Participation
   in congregation-based organizing: A mixed-method study of civic
   engagement. In M.R. DeGennaro and S. Fogel (Eds.), *Using Evidence
   to Inform Practice for Community and Organizational Change* (pp. 200-217).
   Chicago: Lyceum Books.

Week 15 – Class Projects Due

* All groups will present class projects *

Week 16 – Exam II

* No additional readings for Week 16 *

Course
Evaluation: Rutgers University issues a survey that evaluates both the course and instructor. This
survey is completed by students toward the end of the semester, and all answers are
confidential and anonymous. The instructor may also choose to conduct a mid-
point evaluation.

Academic
Integrity
Policy: All work submitted in a graduate course must be your own. It is unethical and a
               violation of the University's Academic Integrity Policy to present the ideas or words
               of another without clearly and fully identifying the source. Inadequate citations will
               be construed as an attempt to misrepresent the cited material as your own. Use the
               citation style preferred by the discipline. Plagiarism is the representation of the words
               or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism,
               every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate
               indentation and must be properly cited in the text or in a footnote.
               Acknowledgement is required when material from another source is stored in print,
               electronic, or other medium and is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in
               one's own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: "to
               paraphrase Plato's comment…" and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact
               reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not
               suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material.
               Information which is common knowledge, such as names of leaders of prominent
               nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be footnoted; however, all facts or
               information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among
               students in the course must be acknowledged. In addition to materials specifically
               cited in the text, only materials that contribute to one's general understanding of the
               subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a
               subtle issue. Any question about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed
               with the faculty member. Plagiarism along with any and all other violations of
               academic integrity by graduate and professional students will normally be penalized
               more severely than violations by first-year undergraduate students. Since all
               violations of academic integrity by a graduate or professional student are potentially
               separable under the Academic Integrity Policy, faculty members should not
               adjudicate alleged academic integrity violations by graduate and professional
               students, but should refer such allegations to the appropriate Academic Integrity
               Facilitator (AIF) or to the Office of Student Conduct. The AIF that you should
               contact is Antoinette Y. Farmer, 732.932.2621. The student shall be notified in
               writing, by email or hand delivery, of the alleged violation and of the fact that the
               matter has been referred to the AIF for adjudication. This notification shall be done
               within 10 days of identifying the alleged violation. Once the student has been
               notified of the allegation, the student may not drop the course or withdraw from the
               school until the adjudication process is complete. A TZ or incomplete grade shall
               be assigned until the case is resolved. For more information regarding the Rutgers
               Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures, see:
               http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml.

Disability
Accommodation: Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's
               educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable
               accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability
               services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake
               interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/
               documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for
               reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you

with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form.