

New Topics in Sociology: Community Development

SOC493H1F

Department of Sociology

Fall 2022

Meeting Time: Wednesdays, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Location: Room FE41 – Basement of 725 Spadina Avenue

Instructor

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Land Acknowledgement

Drawing on the words of Christina Sharpe's own land acknowledgement, in this class, we recognize the violent histories of where we are, making note of and reminding us of the ongoing conflicts and contradictions of this land, this water, this air. We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto (UofT) operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land. As decades of violent encroachment and open warfare on Indigenous peoples illustrate, this land was built on violence and erasure, and we bring these histories with us: those native to this land, Indigenous peoples from other territories, as well as White settlers by conquest and those of us who have come here by force, or otherwise, as a result of slavery, colonialism, imperialism, and ongoing wars. When we enter any room, we must bring these histories into view and actively work toward making a radically different world.

Introduction

Despite a multitude of historical and contemporary challenges, numerous community-based efforts are underway to revitalize urban neighborhoods by building upon community assets and opportunities, rather than merely focusing on problems and needs. These diverse strategies fall under the rubric “community development” (CD) and range from strengthening the political power of formerly silenced voices to improving a neighborhood’s physical and economic infrastructure. Activities can focus on specific areas—housing, business development, wealth-building, health, education, safety—or coordinate long-term, comprehensive action through neighborhood planning and comprehensive community initiatives. CD is messy, engaging multiple, diverse publics with widely varying, and often conflicting, interests. Anyone working in or with cities and urban residents should be knowledgeable about the past and potential of

local neighborhoods; the organizational, human, financial, and political capital necessary for revitalization; and the strategies available to implement real, democratic change

Course Description

This course undertakes a critical examination of civil society-generated community development strategies that straddle state and market to address inequality. It pays special attention to the importance of power, politics, and voice in advancing social justice goals by analyzing market-conforming “pragmatic” approaches versus efforts aimed at a boarder political transformation in democratic values.

Course Objectives

1. Understand and explain how systems form the foundation of community and economic development policy and practice. Students should be able to describe and apply community development theory in a local context;
2. Understand and explain the role of non-governmental organizations in creating CD and its evolution at the local level;
3. Execute a case study of a CD project centered on analyzing the context in which local organizations design, implement and evaluate actions focused on policy and practice;
4. Work to improve your critical and analytical thinking and writing skills as well as your oral presentation.

Prerequisites

Completion of 1.0 SOC at the 300-level is required to take to take this course. Students without this prerequisite will be removed from the course.

Required Text

Greg Suttor. 2016. *Still Renovating. A History of Canadian Social Housing Policy*. McGill-Queen’s University Press.

Students are required to buy, rent or borrow the required book. All other readings will be posted on Quercus for their viewing. It is the student’s responsibility to download and review all assigned material PRIOR TO CLASS. Additional readings and course materials may be assigned, but at no cost to the student. All additional material can be downloaded from Quercus as well.

Course Grading

The University of Toronto Grading Scheme will be used to evaluate individual assignments as well as the overall grade for each student in this class. For more information, please review the university’s grading practices policy:

<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-1-2020>.

Course Evaluations

Each student's grade will be based on four areas. The purpose of designing the course in this manner is to allow students the opportunity to engage in different areas of evaluation including traditional examinations and diverse writing and presentation assignments. The following lists depicts the course breakdown:

I. Discussion Questions (10%)

A discussion question that is truly great is challenging and inspires people to think critically and respond with well thought out answers. These questions are a framework for creating prompts that encourage inquiry, challenge us to think bigger and connect the classroom to real world ideas and events. For this course, you are to provide one discussion question each week (unless otherwise instructed). Discussion questions are due Tuesday by 5 PM. You are also expected to respond to one other discussion question posed by one of your peers. Responses to your peers' questions are due by Wednesday at 12 PM (unless otherwise instructed). Discussion questions are only due on days where new content is required and noted within the course schedule. Discussion questions should not exceed 125 words. Please review the course schedule and Quercus for further clarification.

II. Student-led Discussion on Current Events (20%)

Students are required to make a brief presentation to the class about a current event that relates to a topic within community development. In groups of three, students will be assigned to a specific class over the course of the term whereby they will serve as presenters on a current event. Students must find a news story from a reputable source that coincides with the theme for that week. Students are required to submit both a complete citation for the news story and approximately 250 words explaining how the news story relates to the issue, how the issue impacts the respective community, and thoughts of social change. Lead facilitators must also come up with 3 discussions to pose to the class. Students should upload the citation and response to Quercus by 11 AM the day of their presentation.

III. Critical Response Papers (45% (each worth 15%))

Students will be expected to write 3 critical response papers over the course of the term. The response papers give students the opportunity to read new material, synthesize the author(s) main points, and to critically respond. The response papers should be no more than 750 words (excluding references), Times New Roman, 12 pt. font with 1-inch margins, double-spaced using ASA citation formatting. Late submissions will not be accepted. Additional information regarding expectations and the grading rubric will be uploaded to Quercus.

V. Critical Book Review (25%)

A book review in itself does not only tell you what a book is about, but also whether it achieves what it is trying to do. Therefore, a book review is more than a summary of the content (even

though this is an important component), but a critical analysis of the book and your reactions to it. It presents several areas for inquiry.

Here are a series of questions to focus your thinking:

1. What is the thesis—or main argument—of each book? If the author wanted you to get one idea from the book, what would it be? How does it compare or contrast to the world you know? What has the book accomplished?
2. What exactly is the subject or topic of each book? Does the author cover the subject adequately? Does the author cover all aspects of the subject in a balanced fashion? Can you detect any biases? What is the approach to the subject [topical, analytical, chronological, descriptive]?
3. How does the author of each book support his or her argument? What evidence [i.e., sources cited and data collection] does each author use to prove his or her point? Do you find that evidence convincing? Why or why not? Does any of the author's information [or conclusions] conflict with other books you've read, courses you've taken, or just previous assumptions you had about the research problem under study?
4. How does the author structure his or her argument? What are the parts that make up the whole? Does the argument make sense to you? Does it persuade you? Why or why not? Were there any questions left unanswered? Were limitations to the study effectively addressed?
5. How has each book helped you understand the subject? Would you recommend the books to others? Why or why not?

The format should be Times New Roman, 12 pt. font with 1-inch margins, double – spaced using ASA citation formatting. Papers should not exceed 1,000 words excluding references. Papers should be typed and saved as a word document and then uploaded to Quercus. Late submissions will not be accepted. Additional information and examples regarding the book review will be given by November 2nd. All papers are due Wednesday, December 7th, by 12:00 PM.

Grading Rationale

For the written assignments, I consider an “A” to denote work of excellence, rising above the merely sufficient and competent to incorporate new insights as well as creative and critical thinking. It will, of course, be well written and demonstrate depth of thought and clarity of conception. A “B” denotes a mastery of the concepts and issues, competent and well-written work. A “C” is given for work with logical inconsistencies, which fails to adequately explore all the arguments related to the topic, which has errors of fact, or which is badly written and poorly organized or conceptualized. A “D” is for work that fails to meet even these minimal standards. An “F” is for work of exceedingly poor quality, including work that is plagiarized, unintelligible, and/or handed in extremely late. There is no extra credit offered in this course and no replacement assignments will be entertained.

Plagiarism

Be careful to avoid plagiarism. It is a serious academic offense with serious penalties (see the “Code of Behavior on Academic Matters”). If you are using someone else’s ideas, do not present them as your own. Give proper references if you are using somebody else’s ideas, and use quotation marks if you are quoting. When in doubt, it is always safer to over-reference --you are not going to be punished for that. Please also be aware that turning in an old paper, or large parts thereof, for credit in a second (or third etc.) course, is considered an academic offense that results in students being referred off to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Sometimes, students will be required to submit their assignments to the University’s plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool’s reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

For some of your assignments, we will be using the software Ouriginal. It uses text matching technology as a method to uphold the University’s high academic integrity standards to detect any potential plagiarism. Ouriginal is integrated into Quercus. For the assignments set up to use Ouriginal, the software will review your paper when you upload it to Quercus. To learn more about Ouriginal’s privacy policy please review its [Privacy Policy](#).

Students not wishing their assignment to be submitted through Ouriginal will not be assessed unless a student instead provides, along with their work, sufficient secondary material (e.g., reading notes, outlines of the paper, rough drafts of the final draft, etc.) to establish that the paper they submit is truly their own.

Accessibility Needs

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: disability.services@utoronto.ca or <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>.

Policies for Lateness and Absences

Late submissions are typically not accepted. However, the instructor will consider making concessions based on the individual needs of the students. Students who miss the test, or are late in submitting an assignment for medical reasons, need to email the instructor (not the TA), and also declare their absence on the system (ACORN). (NOTE: Because of Covid-19, students do NOT need to submit the usual documentation, i.e., medical notes or the Verification of Illness forms).

Students who miss the test, or are late in submitting an assignment for other reasons, such as family or other personal reasons, should request their College Registrar to email the instructor.

Please be advised that absences related to extracurricular activities are not considered emergency situations. Students involved in such activities should communicate their absences to the professor by the first day of the course.

Policy Regarding Changes to the Syllabus

As the instructor, I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus in order to provide a better learning environment to the students. All changes will be made with advanced notice at no additional costs to the students. Concerns or issues with changes to the syllabus should be addressed to me as soon as possible so a suitable alternative can be determined.

Course Schedule

September 14th – Introduction and Course Requirements

- Introductions
- Review of Course Syllabus
- Illich, Ivan. 1968. "To hell with good intentions." *Combining service and learning: A resource book for community and public service, Vol. 1*: 314-320.
- City of Toronto Master Plan Report. 2022. *Chapter 1 – Making Choices*.

September 21st – What is Community Development?

- Bhattacharyya, Jnanabrata. 2004. "Theorizing community development." *Community Development 34*, 2: 5-34.
- Matarrita-Cascante, David, and Mark A. Brennan. 2012. "Conceptualizing community development in the twenty-first century." *Community Development 43*, 3: 293-305.
- DeFilippis, James and Susan Saegert. 2008. "Community develop: The question is how?" In James DeFilippis and Susan Saegert, eds., *The Community Development Reader*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- **Discussion Questions Due**

September 28th – History of Community Development

- DeFilippis, James. 2008. "Community control and development: The long view?" In James DeFilippis and Susan Saegert, eds., *The Community Development Reader*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Sites, William, Robert J. Chaskin, and Virginia Parks. 2007. "Reframing community practice for the 21st century: Multiple traditions, multiple challenges." *Journal of Urban Affairs 29*, 5: 519-541.
- City of Toronto Master Plan Report. 2022. *Chapter 2 – Shaping the City*.
- **Discussion Questions Due**

October 5th – Building Community

- City of Toronto Master Plan Report. 2022. *Chapter 3 – Building a Successful City*.
- **1st Critical Response Papers Due**
- **In-Class Screening**

October 12th – Community Development Organizations

- Ferman, Barbara, and Patrick Kaylor. 2001. "Building the spatial community: A case study of neighborhood institutions." *Review of Policy Research* 18,4: 53-70.
- Frisch, Michael, and Lisa J. Servon. 2006. "CDCs and the changing context for urban community development: A review of the field and the environment." *Community Development* 37, 4: 88-108.
- LeRoux, Kelly. 2007. "Nonprofits as civic intermediaries: The role of community-based organizations in promoting political participation." *Urban Affairs Review* 42, 3: 410-422.
- **Current Event Presentation**
- **Discussion Questions Due**

October 19th –Social Capital and Capacity Building

- Sampson, Robert J. 1999. "What "community" supplies." In Ronald F. Ferguson and William T. Dickens, eds., *Urban Problems and Community Development*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- DeFilippis, James. 2001. "The myth of social capital in community development." *Housing Policy Debate* 12, 4: 781-806.
- Neufeld, Susan. 2016. "Community building despite trauma." *Shelterforce*. <https://shelterforce.org/2016/05/04/community-building-despite-trauma/>.
- **Current Event Presentation**
- **Discussion Questions Due**

October 26th – The Politics of Community Change

- Newman, Kathe, and Robert W. Lake. 2006. "Democracy, bureaucracy and difference in US community development politics since 1968." *Progress in Human Geography* 30, 1: 44-61.
- Shaw, Mae. 2008. "Community development and the politics of community." *Community Development Journal* 43, 1: 24-36.
- Russell, Alastair. 2015. "Radical community development: We do talk politics here." *The Pacific Journal of Community Development* 1, 2: 58-64.
- **Current Event Presentation**
- **Discussion Questions Due**

November 2nd – Lessons from the Field

- **Guest Speakers**
- **2nd Critical Response Paper Due**

November 9th – Fall Reading Week – No Classes

November 16th – Community Development Around the World

- Craig, Gary. 1998. "Community development in a global context." *Community Development Journal* 33, 1: 2-17.
- Reimer, Bill. 2006. "The rural context of community development in Canada." *Journal of Rural and Community Development* 1, 2: 155-175.

- Theodore, Nik, and Nina Martin. 2007. "Migrant civil society: New voices in the struggle over community development." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 29, 3: 269-287.
- **Current Event Presentation**
- **Discussion Questions Due**

November 23rd – Just Futures

- Young, Iris Marion. 2008. "Fives faces of oppression." In James DeFilippis and Susan Saegert, eds., *The Community Development Reader*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Checkoway, Barry. 2013. "Social justice approach to community development." *Journal of Community Practice* 21, 4: 472-486.
- Howard, Jo, Erika López Franco, and Jackie Shaw. 2020. "Intersecting inequalities and prospects for community development." *Community Development Journal* 55, 1: 1-6.
- **Current Event Presentation**
- **Discussion Questions Due**

November 30th – We Do We Go From Here?

- **In-Class Screening**
- **3rd Critical Response Paper Due**

December 7th – Critical Book Reviews Due

- **In-Class Discussion**