THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

SW/UP 651-001 Barry Checkoway
Planning for Organizational and Community Change

Fall 2001

Course Description

This course examines planning as a process for organizational and community change in a diverse democratic society. It analyzes the sociopolitical context in which change operates, major models and methods of practice, and practical tools to promote public participation and strengthen social justice, including tools for assessing community conditions, setting goals and priorities, formulating action plans, and building constituency support for program implementation. Special emphasis is placed on planning with socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

Course Objectives

1. Distinguish among major approaches to planning for organizational and community change;

2. Demonstrate knowledge of analytical and interactional skills to assess community conditions, set goals and priorities, formulate action plans, and build constituency support for program implementation;

3. Describe factors which facilitate and limit planning in community-based organizations, civic agencies, and other occupational settings;

4. Conduct an assessment and formulate a plan at the organizational or community level; and

5. Identify issues of ethics and values arising in the field.

Course Responsibilities

Responsibilities include readings, participation in discussions, written assignments, oral presentations, and individual and group problem-solving and planning activities related to objectives. Resource persons will be invited as appropriate to supplement other course materials.
# Course Schedule

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Course Assignments

First Assignment

Identify a problem or issue that affects a disadvantaged or disenfranchised group and that needs changing at the organizational or community level. Describe the problem and group, review any relevant literature about the problem and efforts to address it, and present a vision for change that includes individual, organizational, and community components. 5-7 double-spaced pages, due October 5. (10 percent)

Second Assignment

Assess an organization or community in terms of a problem or issue that affects a disadvantaged or disenfranchised group and that needs changing. Describe the organization or community, analyze the problem and how it affects the group, summarize your methodology, and present some specific steps to create change. 5-7 double-spaced pages, due November 1. (20 percent)

Third Assignment

Formulate a plan for organizational or community change that addresses a problem or issue affecting a disadvantaged or disenfranchised group. Describe the organization or community, present and analyze the problem or issue, formulate the plan, summarize your methodology, and assess some of the issues which might arise in implementation. Assume that few new financial resources are available, but that other non-monetary support may be mobilized. 7-10 pages due November 29. (40 percent)

Class Presentation

You will have at least 20 minutes to present the plan to the entire group on November 29 or December 7. (10 percent)
Class Participation

Class participation is instrumental for individual and collective learning. You are expected to come prepared for class, and engage actively and critically in discussions. You will be assessed on the quality, not the quantity, of your participation. (10 percent)

Final Exercise

This take-home exercise will involve one or more questions which allow you to synthesize the readings. The exercise will be due 24 hours after its availability on December 7 (10 percent).

Assignment Notes

Assignments offer opportunities to apply what you are learning. Part of each assignment is concerned with your ability to use and refer to course readings, organize your knowledge, and present this in a concise manner.

The assignments may be undertaken by individuals or groups. Group papers will receive a single grade and should include information on the nature of your collaboration.

Papers are due on assigned dates unless prearranged with the instructor, and will be penalized if they are late.

You may revise and resubmit any paper for reevaluation until the last session.
Course Readings

Concepts and Issues


Davidoff, P. Advocacy and pluralism in planning. In Faludi, 277-296.


Defining Community


Chaskin, R. J. Perspectives on neighborhood and community: A review of the literature. In Tropman, Chapter 3.


Starting with People

Homan, Chapters 4, 9.

Bryson, Chapters 3, 11.


Assessing Communities

Homan, Chapters 6, 14


Hope and Timmel, Chapter 4.

Making Action Plans

Bryson, Chapters 4, 8.
Hope and Timmel, Chapter 7

Getting Organized

Staples, L. Selecting and ‘cutting’ the issue. In Minkler, Chapter 11.
Homan, Chapter 12
Hardcastle, Chapter 9.
Bryson, Chapter 11.
Hope and Timmel, Chapters 5, 6.

Building Support

Bryson, Chapter 9
Homan Chapter 10, 11
**Participatory Evaluation**


Minkler, M. Using empowerment evaluation in community organizing and community-based health initiatives. In Minkler, Chapter 18


Hope and Timmel, Chapter 8

**Multicultural Planning for Diverse Democracy**


Minkler, M. Community organizing among the elderly poor in San Francisco’s Tenderloin District. In Minkler, Chapter 15.


**Youth Participation in Community Planning**


**Professional Roles and Professional Ethical Dilemmas**


Minkler, M. Ethical issues in community organization and community participation In Minkler, Chapter 8.