



**BHS 404.1 Special Topics in Behavioral Science: International Community Development**

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**Course Description**

This course provides an introduction to international community development, incorporating the disciplines of community psychology and the sociology of development. These two disciplines are concerned with interrelationships between individuals and groups and their immediate environment, and the reciprocal impact they have on one another. The goal of the course is to facilitate the well-being of members of the Seed of Hope community by assisting the staff in providing services to the community in which Seed of Hope is situated, and to situate the Amanzimtoti social setting in the global context of inequality. Thus historical and political perspectives will be of great importance. Participants will work with social service agencies and directly with community members. The course thus emphasizes experiential learning and community service couched in historical, geo-political, social, and economic understanding.

**Course Objectives**

It will be important to analyze the Amanzimtoti experience from one of the major sociological paradigms: structural-functionalism, conflict theory, or symbolic interactionism and to approach the topic from the perspective of women in development, poverty, family, social problems, inequality and ethnic and class stratification, education, social institutions, or economic and environmental conditions in an effort to enhance understanding of those conditions with a view to effecting positive social change. One of the main aims of the course is to help empower students to contribute to positive social change in both local and international communities. Another aim is to provide students with the opportunity to contribute to the literature of development by participating in a research project that will be presented at one or more major sociological conference(s) and be published in one or more referred academic journal(s).

Specifically, this travel-study course aims to help students

- Develop an understanding of the effects of societal, cultural, political, and environmental influences on community well-being
- Acquire an understanding of the methods and values of the sociology of development and community psychology
- Explore the relationship between people and their immediate environment, and consider ways in which this relationship can be improved
- Become familiar with innovative programs and practices geared towards prevention of social problems and empowerment of disenfranchised groups

- Apply their learning to a specific social problem that they identify in their own community
- Apply the major sociological paradigms and concepts to a real-life setting

### **Required Textbooks**

Dolby, N.E. (2001). *Constructing Race: Youth, identity, and popular culture in South Africa*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Seedat, M., N. Duncan, and S. Lazarus (eds.). (2003). *Community psychology: Theory method, and practice. South African and other perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Umeh, O.J. and G. Andranovich. (2005). *Culture, development, and public administration in Africa*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press.

### **Course Requirements**

**Reflection Papers.** Two 3-4 page reflection papers, one for each of the Umeh and Dolby textbooks, are required. These reflection papers, which will be presented orally over the course of several evening sessions in Amanzimtoti before being submitted, should address no more than two ideas stimulated by the material from these books. You should assume that your audience has read the books. Thus, there is no need to provide detailed summaries of these sources. Exemplary reflection papers will integrate or synthesize ideas from the new readings with previous readings, lectures, discussions, and the South Africa experience, and will demonstrate high-level critical thinking skills. Well-conceived and cogent arguments will earn top marks. These papers will be provocative to both writer and audience. They may be used, together with the next assignment, as the basis for the Problem-definition Paper, which in turn, will constitute material for the conference presentation(s) and journal article(s).

**Value: 30% (12% for each paper, and 6% for the oral presentation).**

### **South Africa Analysis Paper (Bekulwandle Case Study)**

This 7-8 page assignment will be a critical analysis paper describing your South Africa experience, what you have learned about community development, and what you have yet to understand (this could be the basis/topic for your Problem-definition Paper). Your paper should also explain how your experience relates to the Sociology of Development, and to other BHS, SO, and PS courses taken in your degree program. You should keep a journal during your time in South Africa to inform your reflections and analysis. This paper will be due **May 30, 2008**. This paper, too, will constitute material for the conference presentations(s) and journal article(s) and will inform your Problem-definition Paper. **Value: 30%**

**Problem-Definition Paper.** This is the major assignment for this class. It is intended to allow students to select an issue significant to them individually and to the Bekulwandle community and to analyze that issue from a participant-observer's perspective. Students are expected to discuss the issue utilizing the concepts, issues, and philosophies derived from the required reading—particularly the Seedat et al volume—and to provide a conceptual and methodological critique of the various efforts and/or interventions that they witnessed in Bekulwandle and that were designed to address the issue.

The general outline of the paper will include a statement of the problem being addressed in the paper, and will include discussion of the social/community and individual effects of the issue (i.e., who is being affected and how those individuals are affected) as well as why the issue is a social problem. This will be followed by a discussion of the possible causes of the problem. The focus should be on both individual responsibility and social/community responsibility (i.e., this discussion addresses the ecology of the problem—those individual, community, and social factors which drive the problem as well as those which inhibit potential solutions. The last section of the paper will focus on innovative solutions which take into account the ecological nature of the problem, with an emphasis on prevention and empowerment-oriented efforts. Sources for this section will come through review of the professional literature dealing with this social problem as well as knowledge gained from community agencies (e.g., schools, clinics, hospitals, government agencies) and Seed of Hope Volunteers working to address the problem. Your References section will be an annotated Bibliography with at least ten (10) sources besides the three required textbooks. Your paper will end with suggestions for intervention and research that arise from your critical analysis of the current situation.

### **Recommended Sources**

It is strongly recommended that you consult the following journals in preparing your literature review for the Problem-definition Paper. Most of these journals are available in the Ambrose library via electronic databases.

- American Journal of Community Psychology
- International Sociology
- Current Sociology
- Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health
- Community Development Journal
- Community Mental Health Journal
- Journal of Community Psychology
- Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community (formerly Prevention in Human Services)
- Journal of Primary Prevention

Work on this paper should begin immediately. The following components are required:

1. Students should immediately begin exploring the knowledge base (this will become the literature review and annotated bibliography) of social/community issues that are of potential interest, and become knowledgeable about their own community's issues. A one-page proposal is to be submitted for approval by **Friday, June 12, 2009**. This proposal will include the topic and a brief description of the information sources that will be reviewed for the assignment. It will include also a description of the issue(s) to be addressed in the paper as well as the scope of the paper and a description of how the paper will be organized, as would be found in the paper's introduction. A preliminary References page should include a minimum of 5 sources and will be cited in either APA or ASA format.
2. An annotated bibliography (minimum 10 sources exclusive of the course textbooks) is due by **June 26, 2009**. The annotated bibliography contains a full citation of each source and a one- to two-paragraph description of the source. The annotation should pay particular attention to information that is relevant to the

thesis statement of the paper. Students should schedule a time with the instructor for individual feedback and guidance at the time of submission of the annotated bibliography. The Problem-definition paper is due by **Friday, July 10, 2009**. Students are encouraged to submit drafts for feedback before submitting the final draft. These discussions will also be useful in determining the direction of potential journal articles and conference presentations.

The Problem-definition Paper will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Formal paper conventions (typed, double-spaced, one-inch margins, APA/ASA style, introduction, conclusion, coherence, etc.)
2. Sources are appropriately cited internally and in References
3. Grammar, spelling, syntax (evidence of proof-reading and editing)
4. Evidence of utilization and application of sociological and community psychology theories with higher-order thinking skills employed
5. Insightful and thorough definition and discussion of ecological causes and consequences of the issue(s) being addressed
6. Extensiveness of the literature review integrating the ideas and research findings from the various sources
7. Quality of the conceptual and methodological critique of the literature, with underlying assumptions identified and elaborated
8. Summary of potential future directions of research and interventions in the problem area and articulation of how the issue affects home community
9. The paper is provocative in nature and creative in approach
10. The focus is on important points and selective in choice of facts, ideas, and examples that elucidate the thesis statement
11. Limitations of the methodology of interventions are clearly delineated

### Course Grade

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
A+	96-100
A	91-95 Excellent
A-	86-90
B+	82-85
B	75-81 Good
B-	72-74
C+	68-71
C	63-67 Satisfactory
C-	60-62
D+	56-59
D	50-55 Minimal Pass
F	Failure