HOD 3470/PSY 347 Community Psychology (Fall, '06): Graduate Seminar Instructor: Douglas D. Perkins, Dept. of Human & Organizational Development, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University

Readings:

- 1. Levine, M., Perkins, D.D., & Perkins, D.V. (2005). *Principles of community psychology*. (3rd edition) NY: Oxford U. Press. This is intended merely as general, introductory background.

 2. The class and instructor will together decide on additional, more in-depth readings most
- weeks, including 1 or 2 readings each student is responsible for identifying for each of their 2 seminar paper topics (see below) to share with the whole class.

Class lectures, outlines and, especially, text chapters are the intellectual property of the instructor and may not be sold, published, or posted on the internet in any form, including notes, without the instructor's permission. Students may share class notes with other students enrolled in the class as a courtesy, but not for pay.

Course Description: 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? How did the kids, teachers and parents of Project Head Start change the nation's mind about what makes people poor and underachieving?

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, 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.

Course Objectives: To introduce students to the basic values, historical influences, theories, and levels and methods of intervention in community psychology.

To allow students to relate these to other approaches in psychology and other social sciences and helping professions and to a brief community project or service experience.

Course Format: Class meetings will be run as a seminar in which the required readings and student papers will be discussed in groups and as a class, along with student presentations and instructor lectures. The exact schedule of topics and reading assignments may change. Be aware of any changes, be prepared for class, and try to obtain a classmate's notes on any class you miss. Please do all of the reading on time, and participate in class. Class attendance is important and may be taken at any time.

Graded Course Requirements (& % of course grade):

1. **TWO Seminar Papers** (50%; each one: 3-6 single-spaced pages on a different week and topic; DRAFT DUE BY SUNDAY BEFORE CLASS; REVISED DRAFT TO BE GRADED

DUE 1 WEEK AFTER PRESENTATION IN CLASS). Identify a topic that interests you and the chapter it is most relevant to (which will determine when it will be presented in class). You must have the instructor's approval on a topic by the 2nd week of class. Do a thorough search, especially of the recent scholarly literature on the topic using PsychInfo, Sociological Abstracts, ERIC, etc. Write a paper, summarizing and critically analyzing the primary reading you chose for the whole class and also relating it to the rest of the literature on that topic and to the text chapter. **Email your draft paper to the entire class and instructor at least 3 days before the topic is scheduled.** Co-lead class discussion of the topic and paper on the day it is scheduled. Every student in the class will be expected to read and comment on each seminar paper (in class and on Blackboard for credit toward Final Exam, see below). Papers may be revised based on comments and class discussion before being turned in for a grade.

- 2. Critical/constructive feedback on other papers in Communication-Discussion on Blackboard (15%).
- 3. Community/Setting Analysis (25%; map + 3-6-page single-spaced paper): Using at least 2 major principles or concepts from community psychology (more than 2 if possible), analyze a community or organizational setting you know from your own experience (current or past; place-based or relational) or one that interests you but that you do not belong to. Try to analyze both strengths and weaknesses of the community. You may consider any aspect of the social, political, economic, or physical environment of the community, but be sure to include both (1) an analysis of the psychological—i.e., behavioral, cognitive, or emotional—aspects of the strength or problem and (2) a drawn cognitive map of the community or setting based on your memory of the physical layout, "anchoring" institutions and meaningful places. Conclude with a section proposing a possible intervention program or policy, organized at the community, organizational, or societal systems (i.e., not individual or family) level, to address the community's problems or develop its strengths. These papers will also be discussed in class.
- 4. Class participation (10%).

OVERVIEW SCHEDULE OF TOPICS & INTRO READINGS [CHECK OUTLINE FREQUENTLY FOR DETAILED TOPICS & ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READINGS]

Date Reading/Topic

ORIGINS OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY

- 1. 8/23 Overview of course, syllabus, requirements LP&P "Introduction: An Overview of Community Psychology" LP&P Chapter 1. Life is a soap opera
- 2. 8/30 Historical limitations of traditional psychology; community mental health; homelessness **Selection of seminar paper topics & scheduling student presentations**Readings: LP&P Ch. 2. Origins of Community Psychology
 Shinn, M., & Tsemberis, S. (1998). Is housing the cure for homelessness? In X. B. Arriaga & S. Oskamp (Eds.), *Addressing community problems: Psychological research and interventions. The Clarement Symposium on applied social psychology* (pp. 52-77). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Wolch, J. R., Dear, M., & Akita, A. (1988). Explaining homelessness. *American Planning Association Journal*, *54*(4), 443-453.

Also explore: http://www.nhtf.org/

PERSPECTIVES IN COMMUNTY PSYCHOLOGY

3. 9/6 LP&P: 3. Conceptual Road Map of Community Psychology; poverty, unemployment & social problems

4. 9/13 LP&P: 4. The Ecological Analogy

Supplemental readings:

Shinn, M., & Toohey, S. M. (2003). Community contexts of human welfare. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *54*, 427-259.

Luke, D. A. (2005). Getting the Big Picture in Community Science: Methods That Capture Context. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *35*(3-4), 185-200.

Recommended readings:

Altman, I., & Rogoff, B. (1987). World views in psychology: Trait, interactional, organismic, and transactional perspectives. In D. Stokols & I. Altman (Eds.), *Handbook of Environmental Psychology* (Vol. 1, pp. 7-40). New York, NY: Wiley-Interscience.

Werner, C. M., Brown, B. B., & Altman, I. (2002). Transactionally oriented research: Examples and strategies. In R. B. Bechtel & A. Churchman (Eds.), *Handbook of environmental psychology* (pp. 203-221). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

5. 9/20 LP&P: 5: Five Psychological Conceptions of the Environment Possible supplemental reading:

Manzo, L.C., & Perkins, D.D. (2006). Neighborhoods as common ground: The importance of place attachment to community participation and development. *Journal of Planning Literature*, 20, 335-350.

6. 9/27 LP&P: 6. Labeling Theory: An Alternative to the Illness Model Possible supplemental readings:

Taylor, Ian (1982). Moral enterprise, moral panic, and law-and-order campaigns. In Rosenberg, et al. (Eds.), *The sociology of deviance* (chapter 5; pp. 123-149). St. Martin's Press. McKnight, J. (1995). *The careless society: Community and its counterfeits* (pp. 95-172). New York: Basic Books.

7. 10/4 LP&P: 7. Adaptation, Crisis (Stress), Coping, and Support

APPLICATIONS OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY

8. 10/11 LP&P: 8. Prevention

Possible supplemental readings:

Durlak, J. A., & Wells, A. M. (1997). Primary prevention mental health programs for children and adolescents: A meta-analytic review. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 25(2), 115-152.

Rolling Stone article on substance abuse policy and research

9. 10/18 LP&P: 9. Self Help & Advocacy Groups

10. 10/25 LP&P Chapter 10: The Problem of Change

Topics: Organizational change

Possible supplemental reading: Perkins, D.D., Bess, K., Cooper, D.G., Jones, D. Armstead, T., & Speer, P.W. (in press). Community organizational learning: Case studies illustrating a three-dimensional model of levels and orders of change. *Journal of Community Psychology*.

- 11. 11/1 LP&P: 11. School Desegregation: A Societal-level Intervention + diversity issues in communities and psychology
- 12. 11/8 LP&P: 12. Community Development and Social Action in Community Psychology Supplemental readings:
- Perkins, D.D., Crim, B., Silberman, P. & Brown, B.B. (2004). Community development as a response to community-level adversity: Ecological theory and research and strengths-based policy. In K.I. Maton et al (Eds.), *Investing in children, youth, families and communities: Strengths-based research and policy* (pp. 321-340). Washington, DC: APA. [Links to Community Development Resources on the Internet]
- Speer, P. W., & Hughey, J. (1995). Community organizing: An ecological route to empowerment and power. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 23(5), 729-748.
- 13. 11/15 Ethical & political issues in CP, future directions; CP around the globe LP&P Chapter 13: Science, Ethics & Future of Community Psychology Supplemental readings:

Prilleltensky, I. (in press). The role of power in wellness, oppression, and liberation: the promise of psychopolitical validity. Journal of Community Psychology http://people.vanderbilt.edu/~isaac.prilleltensky/power.htm

11/18-11/26 ***Thanksgiving Break***

14. 11/29 Interdisciplinary Community Psychology: Each student discuss a study and how it relates to Christens & Perkins Comprehensive Framework for Ecologically and Psychopolitically Valid Community Action-Research

Readings:

Maton, K., Perkins, D.D., Saegert, S., Altman, D., Guttierez, L., Kelly, J.G., & Rappaport, J. (in press). Community psychology at the crossroads: Prospects for interdisciplinary theory, research and action. *American Journal of Community Psychology*.

Christens, B., & Perkins, D.D. (in press). Transdisciplinary, multilevel action research to enhance ecological and psycho-political validity. *Journal of Community Psychology*.

Proposal for international research network proposal

+ choose 1 study to apply to Christens & Perkins framework (e.g., see in press special issue of *AJCP* on interdisciplinary CP)

15. 12/6 Present Draft Community Analysis Papers

12/11 Community Analysis Papers due