# DRAFT: HOD2670/Psych 2470: Introduction to Community Psychology

Tu/Th, 9:35 - 10:50 a.m., Payne 007

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**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 people’s and communities’ strengths, not just their deficits, and on prevention, self-help, empowerment, cultural diversity, and changing local conditions through 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 other 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?

CP 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 CP. To allow students to relate these (1) to other approaches in psychology and other social sciences and helping professions, (2) to an actual organization or other community setting, and (3) to their own lives.

**Required text**: Levine, Perkins & Perkins (2005). *Principles of community psychology*. (3rd edition) **Although the text is available from Amazon.com for those who want their own copy, you do NOT have to buy the book: pdf files of each chapter of the text are available on OAK (FOR PUBLISHER COPYRIGHT REASONS, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU NOT SHARE THE ELECTRONIC (PDF) FILES WITH ANYONE OUTSIDE THIS CLASS) and I will put at least 1 hardcopy of the book on Peabody Library reserve. Most weeks, there will also be additional required and recommended readings linked to E-reserves or the Outline on OAK.**

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 without the instructor's permission. Students may share class notes with others enrolled in the class as a courtesy, but not for pay.

**IMPORTANT—Class Format:** This class will be a collaborative endeavor and your active participation is required. Class meetings will be run as a large seminar in which the required readings and student projects will be discussed in groups and as a class, along with lectures and occasional guest speakers. Please do all the reading on time & come to class on time. **Class attendance is important and may be taken at any time**; it will be used to round final grades up or down. Questions and comments during ALL class activities, including lectures are strongly encouraged, but give everyone a chance to participate. **LAPTOPS MAY ONLY BE USED IN CLASS WITH PERMISSION; NEVER CHECK EMAIL OR USE FOR ANY PURPOSE OUTSIDE THIS COURSE.**

**No Prerequisites:** A background in psychology is NOT required.

**Graded Course Requirements (& % of course grade**): The 3 main writing assignments (1-3 below) should be connected—choose a seminar paper topic you are interested in by week 2, then a setting which relates to that topic to analyze by week 3. Then get approval (of both instructor &, if necessary, a site supervisor) for your site visit or service activity by week 5 & visit the site at least once BEFORE completing assignments 1 & 2; if the visit/service cannot be arranged, identify an alternate site; if all relevant sites are unavailable, choose another topic where you can find an appropriate visit or service experience. All completed assignments should be emailed to the instructor.

**1. Seminar Paper (25%; 3-page single-spaced)**: Read the Contents, Preface, Intro, & Chapter 1 of the text to identify a topic that interests you. You must email your topic to the instructor by the 2nd week of class. Do a thorough search, especially of the recent research literature on the topic (e.g, using PsycInfo, Sociological Abstracts, etc.). Write a paper, summarizing and critically reviewing and analyzing the literature on that topic, particularly its community and psychological/behavioral aspects.

**2. Community or Organizational Setting Analysis (25%; map + 3 single-spaced pages):** By week 3, choose a community or other off-campus setting related to your Seminar Paper topic. Using 2 OR MORE major principles or concepts from CP, analyze both strengths and weaknesses of the setting. You may consider any aspect of the socio-cultural, political, economic, or physical environment of the community or setting, 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 setting (can by based on your memory of the physical layout or environs and meaningful places); relate map to setting analysis. Conclude with 1 or 2 detailed paragraphs 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.

**3. Brief Community Site Visit/Intervention Experience (22%; form of report TBA: probably approximately 2 single-spaced pages):** By week 5 or so, you will choose or be assigned 1 or more off-campus site(s) to visit and objectively document and assess (explained further in class). Minimum off-campus time requirement = 2 hours. Optional: 1-30 hours of additional time on the project will be counted as extra credit and can increase your project grade by a maximum of one full letter grade.) Let the instructor know if you are having any difficulty at, or finding, your community site. (1) Keep a log of your hours on this project, including date of each visit, start and ending time, location, activity, supervisor’s name and phone number or email address; (2) immediately after each visit, write down field notes and any reflections on the experience; (3) write a brief (e.g., 2-single-spaced-page) report (format: TBA). Your log, notes, report, and an informal summary/presentation in class are due at the end of the semester.

**The difference between papers 2 and 3** is simply that the Setting Analysis requires you to analyze and critique the functioning, strengths and weaknesses of a setting through the application of CP concepts and map rather than just relying on your personal observations, whereas the Intervention Experience requires you to rely especially on your personal observations of that same or a related setting in terms of how it illustrates or contradicts theory or research in CP/the text.  In sum, one paper concentrates on applying theory to a community or org setting, the other on applying your experience to theory or research.

**4. OAK Discussion (28%).** Instead of regular exams or quizes, students are required to respond on the OAK Discussion Board to **questions that will be posed regularly IN CLASS**. Be sure to use your posts to demonstrate as deeply and comprehensively as possible your understanding of the readings for that week. In addition to writing about the topics discussed in class (required), you will also get credit for informed and insightful postings on anything related to the readings, community intervention experience or other assignments, or current events as related to a course topic. For example, you might take something from the text or any other part of this course and explore how it could be applied and helpful in your life currently or in the future or helpful to some person, group, or community you know. Students can also use OAK discussions [note anonymous Board] to critique any aspect of the course or text. If you prefer to write something privately, you can email your “posting” privately to the instructor. You should post **at least** once-- either a new thread or a response to an existing thread—**every week**. These will be graded approx. every 3 weeks.

**Grading Policy:** The following are my definitions of grades: A = Extraordinary work. Only a small percentage of students consistently turn in the caliber of work that merits an A. B = Very good work. B is commendable. It is likely that about a third to half of the students in this course will receive a B consistently. C = Average work. C work is acceptable, complete, but displays little or no effort or insight going above and beyond what is necessary. A third of the students in this class may receive a C consistently. D = passing, but sub-par work. D work is incomplete, poor quality, or fails to achieve the basic objectives of the assignment or class. F = failure. F work is severely incomplete and/or unacceptable quality.

Late work will lose 3 points (out of 100) per 24 hours, starting immediately after the assignment is due. Exceptions will only be granted for documented illness. Any missing work will be graded 0 unless you submit a written explanation, a plan for completing the work, and receive my approval for your plan. Please talk to the instructor if you're having problems.

The Vanderbilt Honor Code governs all course requirements. **Violations include, but are not limited to, failure to properly credit sources in a paper, copying other students’ answers to quiz questions, turning in all or part of a paper written for another course without prior permission from both instructors, inflating time logged in a project**. Student study groups and, with instructor’s prior approval, collaboration on projects are permissible. If you have any doubts how the Honor Code applies, please ask the instructor for clarification. Uncertainty about the application of the Honor Code does not excuse a violation.

Students who may need disability-related accommodations should contact the instructor and the Opportunity Development Center (322-4705) as soon as possible.

**SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS**

The following schedule is flexible with respect to timing of topics. Assignment due dates in bold are not expected to change. The exact schedule of topics and reading assignments may change. Look on OAK Syllabus for any changes & try to obtain a classmate's notes on any class you miss.

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| Class | | | Date | | Day | | ***Reading/Topic*** |
| 1 | | 8.25 | | | Th | | Overview of course, syllabus, requirements  Small Group Discussion: What is my community and what are its strengths and weaknesses? |
| 2 | | 8.30 | | | T | | LP&P: Foreword + Intro: An Overview of Community Psychology & LP&P: Chapter 1. Life is a soap opera |
| **ORIGINS OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY** | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | **9.1** | | Th | | **Email Seminar Paper Topic to Instructor;** LP&P: Ch. 2. Origins of Community Psychology in Community Mental Health; Limitations of traditional psychology: behavioral, social, & testing psychology  RECOMMENDED: [Perkins, D.D. (2009). The death of community psychology (& the development of community research & action) in the United States: Issues of theoretical, methodological, & practical diversity*.*](http://www.people.vanderbilt.edu/~douglas.d.perkins/Perkins.2009.Death_of_CP_&_dev_of_CRA_in_US.doc) In *International Community Psychology: Shared Agendas in Diversity*. (pp. 285-314) | |
| 4 | | 9.6 | | T | | Deinstitutionalization, Housing and Homelessness:  **Required Supplemental Reading** [see E-reserves]:  Growing up homeless. *Tennessean*. + Explore http://thecontributor.org/ & other homelessness websites on OAK outline  Recommended (if you are interested in this topic, for sem paper or otherwise):  Shinn, M. (1992). Homelessness: What is a psychologist to do? *American Journal of Community Psychology, 20*(1), 1-24.  Shinn, M., & Tsemberis, S. (1998). Is housing the cure for homelessness?  Martinez & Burt (2006) article [+ letter & reply] on the "Impact of permanent supportive housing on the use of acute care health services by homeless adults."  Wolch, J. R., Dear, M., & Akita, A. (1988). Explaining homelessness. *American Planning Association Journal, 54*(4), 443-453. | |
| **PERSPECTIVES IN COMMUNTY PSYCHOLOGY** | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | 9.8 | | Th | | LP&P: Ch. 3. Conceptual Road Map of CP: Dohrenwend stress model; crisis intervention; enhancing psychological, situational, and neighborhood mediators | |
| 6 | | 9.13 | | T | | LP&P: Ch. 4. The Ecological Analogy | |
| 7 | | 9.15 | | Th | | Marris, E. (2011). Darwin's city. *Nature, 474*, 146-149.  Community/Ecological Research Methods | |
| **8** | | **9.20** | | **T** | | **Guest Speakers/Presentation of Shaping Healthy Cities Project**  Read: Stokols, D. (1992). Establishing and maintaining healthy environments: Toward a social ecology of health promotion. *American Psychologist, 47*(1), 6-22. | |
| 9 | | 9.22 | | Th | | LP&P: Ch. 5. Psychological Conceptions of the Environment | |
| 10 | | 9.27 | | T | | SUPPLEMENTAL READING (see Outline or E-reserves for links):  [Perkins, D.D. (2010). Empowerment. In R.A. Couto (Ed.), *Political and Civic Leadership* (pp. 207-218). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage](http://www.people.vanderbilt.edu/%7Edouglas.d.perkins/25.Empowerment_chapter.penultimate_draft.doc).  Recommended:  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. | |
| 11 | | 9.29 | | Th | | LP&P: Ch. 6. Labeling Theory: An Alternative to the Illness Model | |
| 12 | | 10.4 | | T | | Select one form of “deviance” (eg, drug use, juvenile delinquency, mental illness, sexual orientation, etc.) and prepare to discuss in class how society responds to that form  Recommended:  Logan, E. (1999). The wrong race, committing crime, doing drugs, and maladjusted for motherhood: The nation's fury over "crack babies". *Social Justice Research, 26(*1), 115-138.  Taylor, I. (1982). Moral enterprise, moral panic, and law-and-order campaigns. In M. M. Rosenberg, R.A. Stebbins & A. Turowitz (Eds.), *Sociology of deviance* (pp. 123-149). | |
|  | | **10.6** | | Th | | ***OCTOBER BREAK – NO CLASS*** | |
| **APPLICATIONS OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY** | | | | | | | |
| 13 | 10.11 | | | T | | LP&P: Ch. 7. Adaptation, Crisis (Stress), Coping, and Support | |
| 14 | 10.13 | | | Th | | TBA | |
| 15 | 10.18 | | | T | | LP&P: Ch. 8. Prevention | |
| 16 | 10.20 | | | Th | | Rolling Stone article on substance abuse policy and research  Recommended:  Nation et al. (2003). What works in prevention: Principles of effective prevention programs. *American Psychologist*.  Reynolds, A.J., Temple, J.A., Ou, S.-R., Arteaga, I.A., & White, B.A.B. (2011). School-Based Early Childhood Education and Age-28 Well-Being: Effects by Timing, Dosage, and Subgroups. *Science Express (online)*(June 9, 2011), 1-9. | |
| **17** | **10.25** | | | **T** | | **Seminar Paper DUE, discussed in class** | |
| 18 | 10.27 | | | Th | | LP&P: Ch. 9. Self Help & Advocacy Groups | |
| 19 | 11.1 | | | T | | LP&P: Ch. 10. The Problem of Change | |
| 20 | 11.3 | | | Th | | Reforming/transforming organizations & institutions; analyzing & creating new community & organizational settings: relate to, & discuss progress on, writing assignments 2 & 3  Supplemental readings: Fournier, R., & Quinton, S. (2012). In Nothing We Trust. *National Journal*. <http://www.nationaljournal.com/features/restoration-calls/in-nothing-we-trust-20120419>  [Perkins, D.D., Bess, K., Cooper, D.G., Jones, D. Armstead, T., & Speer, P.W. (2007). Community organizational learning: Case studies illustrating a three-dimensional model of levels and orders of change. *Journal of Community Psychology, 35*, 307-332.](http://www.people.vanderbilt.edu/%7Edouglas.d.perkins/Perkins_et_al.2007.comm.org.learning-levels.orders.change.JCP.pdf)  Recommended: [Bess, K.D., Prilleltensky, I., Perkins, D.D., & Collins (2009). Participatory organizational change in community-based health and human services: From tokenism to political engagement. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 43*, 134-148.](http://www.people.vanderbilt.edu/%7Edouglas.d.perkins/Bess_et_al.2009.Particip_org_change.AJCP.pdf) | |
| 21 | 11.8 | | | T | | LP&P: Ch. 11. School Desegregation: A Societal-level Intervention | |
| 22 | 11.10 | | | Th | | Diversity issues in CP, psychology, the helping services, society  Homework/Small gp. discussion: How would you write your own personal narrative about one or more diversity issues (ancestry, gender, religion, sexual orientation, SES, etc.) that has affected your life? Have you or anyone in your family ever been or felt "oppressed" for any reason? On what basis? How did that make you feel? Did it give you empathy for groups or individuals who may have suffered even greater oppression? Can you think of an instance when you were, or might have been perceived as, an oppressor? | |
| 23 | 11.15 | | | T | | LP&P: Ch. 12. Community Development & Social Action in CP | |
| 24 | 11.17 | | | Th | | TBA | |
|  | 11.22-24 | | | T-Th | | ***THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS*** | |
| **25** | **11.29** | | | **T** | | **Community or Organizational Setting Analyses DUE, summarized in class** | |
| 26 | 12.1 | | | Th | | LP&P: Ch. 13. Science, Politics, and Ethics of Community Intervention  Recommended: Rappaport, J. (2005). Community Psychology Is (Thank God) More Than Science. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 35*(3/4), 231-238. | |
| **27** | **12.6** | | | **T** | | **Guest Speaker: Nikolay Mihaylov; Examples of international CP research**  Supplemental readings:  1. Perkins, D. D. (2009). International Community Psychology: Development and Challenges. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 44*, 76–79.  2. Perkins et al (ms.) Conditions for the Growth of Community Psychology: The People’s Republic of China as a Case Study  Recommended: Any other article from *AJCP* vol. 44#1, or from *Psychosocial Intervention* Fall ’11issue on migration OR any chapter from: Reich, Riemer, Prilleltensky & Montero (Eds.)(2007). *International community psychology.* | |
| **28** | **12.8** | | | **Th** | | **Last class: Community site visits/intervention experiences presented** | |
|  | **12.12** | | | M | | **Community Site Visit/ Intervention Experience reflection paper, field notes & log DUE** | |