Tufts University Department of Urban & Environmental Policy and Planning

UEP 287: Community Practice Theory and Methods
Fall 2023 Syllabus (v1)

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Thursdays noon-2:30pm @ Tisch Library, Room 310

Office Hours: Wed's 1:30-3:30pm and by appointment

Description

Community is a concept frequently invoked in policy and planning. But what is community, and what does it mean to work *in* or *with* communities? Communities are not homogeneous, but complex entities where power is exercised and built.

This course introduces students to theoretical frameworks and methods for community-driven policy and planning practice. Students will be introduced to literature covering citizen participation, democratic practice, community organizing, social movements, and community action research. Case studies will be interwoven throughout to provide practical examples of methods at work. Special attention will be paid to the intercultural aspects of community practice, particularly looking at race, class, and gender.

Course Objectives

1) Introduce students to frameworks for understanding what community is, how it is (re)produced, and its role in driving policy and planning.
2) Introduce students to methods for community practice, including community organizing and social movements, community building, action research, and civic engagement/democratic practice.
3) Support students to examine the ways that power operates at community scale (among individuals and families, formal and informal groups, nonprofits, government, and the private sector) and the intercultural aspects of community practice, particularly in terms of race, class, and gender.
4) Create space for students to reflect deeply on their own identity and possible roles that they may play in community practice.

Schedule at a Glance

Sep 7	Course Overview
Sep 14	Conceptualizing Community
Sep 21	Citizenship, Civic Participation, Democratic Practice
Sep 28	Community Organizing and Social Movements 1
Oct 5	Community Organizing and Social Movements 2

Oct 12	Case Study: Upham's Corner Arts and Innovation District (Guests: Harry Smith, Lori Lobenstine, John Smith)
Oct 19	Nonprofits and Nonprofit Industrial Complex
Oct 26	Community Knowledge, Popular Education, and Action Research
Nov 2	Policy and Planning Professionals in Community Practice (Guests: Maria Belen Power, Ben Baldwin, Monique Nguyen*)
Nov 9	Regions, Coalitions, and Communications Technology
Nov 16	Community Participation
Nov 30	Case Study: Mutual Aid and Community Care in COVID (Guest: Neenah Estrella-Luna*)
Dec 7	Case Study Presentations

(*Guest to be confirmed)

Course Requirements and Assessment

1. Class Preparation and Participation (10%)
All students are expected to complete required readings before class and to be fully present to participate in class discussions. Assessment of participation will include presence/absence (5%) and contributing to in-class discussions (5%). All readings will be available through Tufts Canvas, Tisch Library, and web links.

2. Reflective Journals (30%)
This Journal will consist of two postings of 500-1000 words (2-4 pages double spaced):

- Beginning of Course (due Sep 14, class 2): What does community mean to you? What are your learning goals for this course? How do you envision your role(s) in community practice?
- End of Course (due Dec 7): What have you learned in this course about community practice? How have your conceptions of community and your role in community practice changed since the beginning of the course (or not)?

3. Weekly Discussion Forum (10%)
For most weeks, there will be short postings on the course Canvas site reflecting on course readings, discussions, and guest visits by selected students. Over the semester, each student will be expected to do 2-3 postings (2-3 paragraphs). All students are expected to read postings prior to each class.

In addition, each student will post at least one link by Oct 19 to a piece of art or creative work that conveys the meanings and feelings of community and/or that helps us to understand community and community practice. These could be poems, songs, visual art, play/movie/television show, etc.

4. Case Study (50%)
Students working in small groups will explore and analyze community practice in one current (or recently completed) initiative. Possible cases: Participatory Budgeting process in Boston, Boston Ujima Project, Union Square Neighborhood Council, GreenRoots (Chelsea), Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Boston Neighborhood Community Land Trust, Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network, or another case that students already have some familiarity with (and approved by the instructor). The case study should result in a website or digital story map (or other online format) with

each student contributing ~2500 words (or equivalent of 10-pages double-spaced), due December 14. Each case will also be presented at the final class on December 7. The case study should have the following components:

- Profile of initiative – summary of who, what, where, and why.
- Community context – basic background on the demographics, history, and issues relevant to the community.
- Stakeholder analysis and power map – descriptions of the relevant stakeholders and analysis of their relative capacities and resources.
- Interview(s) with stakeholder(s) or community practitioner(s) and/or direct observation of the initiative in action (~2-4 hours).
- Analysis and Findings - use the frameworks and concepts introduced in the course to analyze the dynamics of community practice. What are the ways that community is defined and used? What are the power dynamics among the stakeholders? How is community mobilized and organized? What are the roles of residents, nonprofits, and professionals? What ways does this case exemplify best community practices? How might this initiative strengthen its community practices?
- References – properly cite all sources (including images).

Schedule

Week 1: Sep 7 Course Overview

Course overview. What are our experiences, ideas, and ideals of community? Why focus on community in policy and planning practice? Introduce range of ways that community is framed: public participation, civic engagement, community organizing, community building, social capital, etc.

Week 2: Sep 14 Conceptualizing Community

What is community? How is it conceptualized in the social sciences, particularly in the community development field? What is social capital and how is it related to community?

Readings & Resources

DeFilippis, James, Robert Fisher, and Eric Shragge. 2010. "Chapter 1: Community and Its Discontents." In *Contesting Community: The Limits and Potential of Local Organizing*, 7-34. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Jennings, James. 2007. "Social Capital, Race, and the Future of Inner City Neighborhoods." In *Race, Neighborhoods, and the Misuse of Social Capital*, edited by James Jennings, 87-108. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Ostrander, Susan and Kent Portney. 2007. "Introduction: Key Issues in Civic Engagement Research Today." In *Acting Civically: From Urban Neighborhoods to Higher Education*, edited by Ostrander and Portney, 1-17. Medford, MA: Tufts University Press. Read pages 1-8.

Week 3: Sep 21 Citizenship, Civic Participation, Democratic Practice

What is relationship between democracy and community? What are ways of "deepening democracy"? How do marginalization and precarity (uneven power relations and race/class/citizenship) affect civic participation?

Introduce potential case studies.

Readings & Resources

Fung, Archon and Erik Olin Wright. 2003. "Chapter 1: Thinking about Empowered Participatory Governance." Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance, 3-42. London: Verso. Available at: https://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/DeepDem.pdf

Ostrander, Susan. 2013. Citizenship and Governance in a Changing City: Somerville, MA. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. Chapter 5: Immigrant Civic and Political Engagement, 81-105.

Levine, Jeremy R. 2017. The Paradox of Community Power: Cultural Processes and Elite Authority in Participatory Governance. Social Forces, 95(3): 1-25. doi: 10.1093/sf/sow098

Week 4: Sep 28 Community Organizing and Social Movements 1

History of modern community organizing. The Alinsky school of organizing and its critics.

Assign case studies.

Readings & Resources

DeFilippis, James, Robert Fisher, and Eric Shragge. 2010. "Chapter 2: History Matters: Canons, Anti-canons, and Critical Lessons from the Past." In *Contesting Community: The Limits and Potential of Local Organizing*, 35-66. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Smock, Kristina. 2004. Democracy in Action: Community Organizing and Urban Change. New York: Columbia University Press. Chapter 2: Models of Community Organizing: An Overview, 10-36.

Calpotura, Francis. "Letters to Alinsky," *ColorLines*, Winter 2000-2001, 8-11.

Ganz, Marshall. 2002. "What is Organizing?" *Social Policy* Fall 2002, 16-17.

Week 5: Oct 5 Community Organizing and Social Movements 2

Popular education, community building, and network models of organizing and social movements.

Readings & Resources

Horton, Myles and Paulo Freire. 1990. We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Organizing. Edited by Brenda Bell, John Gaventa, and John Peters. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. Charismatic leaders (109-114), Education and Organizing (115-127), Expert (128-130).

Traynor, Bill. 2008. "Community Building." In *The Community Development Reader*, edited by James DeFilippis and Susan Saegert, 214-224. New York: Routledge.

brown, adrienne maree. 2017. Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds. AK Press. 41-60

Kaba, Mariame. 2021.We Do This 'Til We Free Us. Haymarket Books. "Free Us All: Participatory Defense Campaigns as Abolitionist Organizing" pp 110-118.

[optional] Taiwo, Olufemi O. 2022. Elite Capture. Haymarket Books. Pp. 85-113 "4. Building a New House".

Week 6: Oct 12 Case Study: Upham's Corner Arts and Innovation District

Case study of the Upham's Corner Arts and Innovation District Implementation Process. Politics of community and city partnering to co-facilitate a district-wide planning process. The use of arts and creative engagements in planning.

Guests: Lori Lobenstine (Design Studio for Social Intervention), John Smith (Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative), Harry Smith (former DSNI staff)

Readings & Resources

Browse Tufts research team website: https://sites.tufts.edu/uit/

Loh, Penn and Molly Kaviar. 2020. Arts for Community Control: Planning an Arts and Innovation District Without Displacement. Shelterforce magazine. https://shelterforce.org/2020/09/28/planning-an-arts-district-with-art-and-fighting-displacement-with-community/

Bedoya, Roberto. 2013. Placemaking and the Politics of Belonging and Dis-belonging. Grantmakers in the Arts. https://www.giarts.org/article/placemaking-and-politics-belonging-and-dis-belonging

Design Studio for Social Intervention. 2020. Ideas Arrangements Effects. Minor Compositions. Pp 18-59.

Week 7: Oct 19 Nonprofits and Nonprofit Industrial Complex

Role of nonprofits in community practice. Implications of nonprofit structure and funding for communities and social change.

Readings & Resources

Rodriguez, Dylan. 2007. "The political logic of the non-profit industrial complex," in The *Revolution Will Not be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex* edited by Incite! Women of Color Against Violence, 21-40. Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

Roelofs, Joan. 2006. "The Third Sector as a Protective Layer for Capitalism." Nonprofit Quarterly [online], September 21, 2006. Accessible at: https://nonprofitquarterly.org/philanthropy/618-the-third-sector-as-a-protective-layer-for-capitalism.html

Villanueva, Edgar. 2018. Money as Medicine. Stanford Social Innovation Review, 5/21/2018. https://ssir.org/articles/entry/money_as_medicine#

Kania, John and Mark Kramer. 2011. Collective Impact. Stanford Social Innovation Review, Winter 2011, 36-41. Accessible at: http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/collective_impact

Week 8: Oct 26 Community Knowledge, Popular Education, and Action Research

What is the role of local knowledge in community practice? Introduce Participatory Action Research and some models of community-university partnerships based on this model.

Readings & Resources

Gaventa, John and Andrea Cornwall. 2000. "Power and Knowledge," in *Handbook of Action Research* edited by Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury, 71-82.

McNiff, Jean and Jack Whitehead. 2006. All You Need to Know About Action Research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Chapters 1-3, 7-35.

Bengle, T., & Sorensen, J. (2017). Integrating popular education into a model of empowerment planning. Community Development, 48(3), 320–338.

Week 9: Nov 2 Policy and Planning Professionals in Community Practice

What roles are played by policy and planning professionals in community practice? What are the challenges and opportunities for professionals in government and intermediary organizations working at the community level? What cultural competencies are important for effective community practice?

Guests: Maria Belen Power (Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs), Ben Baldwin (Somerville Community Land Trust), Monique Tu Nguyen* (Boston Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement)

Readings & Resources

Bratt, Rachel G. and Kenneth M. Reardon. 2013. "Beyond the Ladder: New Ideas About Resident Roles in Contemporary Community Development in the United States." In *Policy, Planning, and People: Promoting Justice in Urban Development* edited by Naomi Carmon and Susan S. Fainstein, 356-381. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Vasquez, Leonardo. 2009. "Principles of culturally competent planning and placemaking." The Placemaker's Advisor [blog]. Published November 11, 2009. Available at: http://placemakerhub.blogspot.com/2009/11/principles-of-culturally-competent.html

Suarez, Cyndi. 2018. The Power Manual: How to Master Complex Power Dynamics. New Society Publishers. Pp. 11-21, 55-62.

Week 10: Nov 9 Regions, Coalitions, and Communications Technology

How are communities situated within regions? What is the role of coalitions in community practice? How are the internet and social media affecting community practice and social movements? How are these new technologies being used for public participation and civic engagement?

Readings & Resources

Pastor, Manuel, Chris Benner, and Martha Matsuoka. 2011. For what it's worth: regional equity, community organizing, and metropolitan America. Community Development, 42(4): 437-457.

Chavis, David. 2001. The Paradoxes and Promises of Community Coalitions. *American Journal of Community Psychology 29*(2), 309-320.

Castells, Manuel. 2012. *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press. Opening, 1-19.

Gordon, Eric. February 1, 2013. "Beyond Participation: Designing for the Civic Web." Journal of Digital and Media Literacy.

[optional] Noveck, Beth Simone. 2016. Re-Imagining Government through Civic Media: Three Pathways to Institutional Innovation. In Eric Gordon and Paul Mihailidis (eds), Civic Media: Technology, Design, Practice. MIT Press. 149-164.

Week 11: Nov 16 Community Participation

Community participation is often thought of as a positive goal in and of itself. What are the various modes of participation? Who participates and who doesn't? How? Case example of participatory budgeting.

Readings & Resources

Fung, Archon. 2006. Varieties of Participation in Complex Governance. *Public Administration Review*, *66*, 66–75.

Einstein, K. L., Glick, D. M., & Palmer, M. (2020). Neighborhood Defenders: Participatory Politics and America's Housing Crisis. *Political Science Quarterly (Wiley-Blackwell)*, *135*(2), 281–312.

Baiocchi, G., & Ganuza, E. (2014). Participatory Budgeting as if Emancipation Mattered. *Politics & Society*, *42*(1), 29–50.

No Class Nov 23 Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 12: Nov 30 Case Study: Mutual Aid and Community Care in COVID

What has been learned from COVID pandemic around community practice? What new practices are emerging? What are the opportunities and constraints for community engagement and organizing in virtual space?

Guest: Neenah Estrella-Luna*

Readings & Resources

Spade, Dean. Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the next). Verso. Pp 9-29.

Loh, Penn, Neenah Estrella-Luna, and Katherine Shor. 2023. Pandemic Response and Mutual Aid as Climate Resilience: Learning from Community Responses in the Boston Area. *Journal of Climate Resilience and Climate Justice*, in press.

Week 13: Dec 7 Case Study Presentations

Student presentations of Community Practice Case Studies.

Other Policies

In-Person Classroom Health and Safety Policy: Tufts is not currently mandating mask-wearing in the classroom. You should feel free to wear a mask if you wish. We cannot know everyone's personal or familial health situations, so please take the steps you need to feel comfortable in an in-person setting. Should the university's masking requirements change, we will update our practices as well. Here is the link to the current Tufts COVID policy: Healthy@Tufts | Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Tufts is committed to providing equal access and support to all qualified students through the provision of reasonable accommodations. If you have a disability that requires reasonable accommodations, contact the StAAR Center at StaarCenter@tufts.edu or 617-627-4539. Please be aware that accommodations cannot be enacted retroactively, making timeliness a critical aspect for their provision.

Academic Support at the StAAR Center: The StAAR Center offers a variety of FREE resources to all students. Students may make an appointment to work on any writing-related project or assignment, attend subject tutoring in a variety of disciplines, or meet with an academic coach to hone skills like time management and navigating procrastination. Students can make an appointment for any of these services by visiting https://students.tufts.edu/staar-center.

Student Support, including Mental Health: As a student, there may be times when personal stressors or difficulties interfere with your academic performance or well-being. The Dean of Student Affairs Office offers support and care to undergraduates and graduate students who are experiencing difficulties, and can also aid faculty in their work with students. In addition, through Tufts' Counseling and Mental Health Service (CMHS) students can access mental health support 24/7, and they can provide information on additional resources. CMHS also provides confidential consultation, brief counseling, and urgent care at no cost for all Tufts undergraduates as well as for graduate students who have paid the student health fee. To make an appointment, call 617-627-3360. Please visit the CMHS website: http://go.tufts.edu/Counseling to learn more about their services and resources.

Academic Integrity Policy: Tufts holds its students strictly accountable for adherence to academic integrity. The consequences for violations can be severe. It is critical that you understand the requirements of ethical behavior and academic work as described in Tufts' Academic Integrity handbook. If you ever have a question about the expectations concerning a particular assignment or project in this course, be sure to ask me for clarification. The Faculty of the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering are required to report suspected cases of academic integrity violations to the Dean of Student Affairs Office. If I suspect that you have cheated or plagiarized in this class, I must report the situation to the dean.

Religious Accommodations: Tufts University faculty, staff, and administration highly value and acknowledge the religious diversity of its student body. Students seeking religious accommodations related to their holy days are encouraged to collaborate with faculty to make arrangements during the first week of each semester. The religious holy days calendar, including the holy days policy from the Faculty Handbook, is available here for your reference. Students seeking additional support may refer to the University Religious Accommodations Policy, available here. The University Chaplaincy is also available to respond to questions on religious observances; their contact information is available here.