**Contemporary Issues in Community**

Fall 2024

Meeting Times: Mondays from 10:00am -12:30pm

Location: 5405 Posvar Hall

Instructor: Colleen Eddy, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist

Office Hours: by appointment <https://calendly.com/ceddy-5>

Contact: email – [ceddy@pitt.edu](mailto:ceddy@pitt.edu)

Phone – (412)648-7348

**Course Description**

This course is an introduction to participating in community partnerships as part of the Applied Developmental Psychology (ADP) program. Through the semester, students will identify a local organization and engage in a partnered volunteer experience (minimum of 25 documented hours required). Students will increase their understanding of building effective partnerships and contemporary concerns impacting the youth and families in the local area. Students will practice self-reflection and discuss topics including privilege and marginalization, systemic inequities, and intersectionality. The course will also present various levels of the ecological system that influences youth development including schools, out-of-school-time spaces, the justice system, and behavioral health.

**Course Objectives**  
1. To understand and apply ecological systems theory and how various contexts shape child development.

2. To develop skills for self-reflection, critical consciousness, and advocacy for working with youth and families, especially considering marginalized individuals and communities.

3. To engage in a community partnered experience for a minimum of 25 hours per semester.

4. To increase awareness of current concerns facing youth in the local area.

**Course Readings**

A textbook is not required for this course. All readings will be posted on canvas.

**Assignments**

*Please note that more detailed assignment descriptions and rubrics will be posted in canvas.*

**Attendance and Participation (20 points).** The course will involve discussion in large group, small group, and dyads. Please arrive on time and prepared to engage in conversation about the course material and readings provided by peers. Participation also includes the respectful use of computers and smart phones. You may have one unexcused absence with no impact on your attendance and participation grade. Each additional unexcused absence will result in 2 points deducted from your attendance and participation grade. Please see attendance policy for descriptions of excused and unexcused absences. If you have an unexcused absence during a schedule presentation, you will not have an opportunity to make-up the presentation.

**Each One Teach One: Small Group Presentation Paper (50 points).**

Understanding current issues and problems facing children and families is important to becoming a professional in the field of youth development. For this assignment you will work in a small group. Your group will be responsible for selecting a contemporary issue and facilitating a 15-20 minute activity/discussion about the topic. Each group member should have an equitable role in preparing the presentation. You will also write an individual paper about the topic.

**Community-Engagement Experience (130 points).**

During this semester, you will identify a local organization that supports youth development in the local community. You will volunteer with the organization for a minimum of 25 hours during the course of the semester (this includes participating in any required trainings). You will complete a variety of assignments related to this project:

**Hours log (10 points).** You will record your weekly hours and submit a signed hours log at the end of the semester that is approved by a representative from your site. Failing to complete the required 25 hours will result in a 10% deduction of points from your final community-engaged experience grade.

**Organization Overview (10 points).** After identifying your community engagement site, you will write a brief (2-3 page double-spaced) paper about your organization. You should include a history of the organization, mission statement, overview of the work and how the organization supports youth development, and a description of your role. You will then share a brief overview of your paper in class.

**Interview (30 points).** To develop a deeper understanding about your organization from multiple perspectives, you will interview a few individuals about their experience with and views of the site. You should develop a list of questions prior to completing the interview and record the responses (with permission). If you are at a site with another student, you should coordinate so you do not overburden anyone with multiple interviews. Afterwards, you will write a summary of the response and what you learned from the experience.

**Annotated Bibliography (30 points).**  You will identify relevant research about your organization and/or the type of work that they do to support child development. You should identify at least 3 peer-reviewed and/or scholarly papers relevant to this topic. You will submit a reference list using correct APA formatting and a summary of each article.

**Final Share (20 points).** You will work in pairs or small groups with others who worked at your site. If you were at a site with more that 5 students, you will be split up into multiple groups. You will prepare a presentation about your experiences. More details will be provided in class.

**Final Paper (20 points).** In addition to the presentation, you will also write a reflection paper about your community-engaged experience during the semester. This is meant to be completed individually reflecting on your work.

**Grading:**

Attendance/Class Participation 20 points

EOTO Presentation/Paper 50 points

Site Plan Individual Paper/Share 10 points   
Interview Paper 30 points

Annotated Bibliography 30 points

Final Share and Paper 40 points

Hours Log 20 points

Total 200 points

**Grading**

98-100% = A + 77-79% = C+

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 94-97% | = A | 74-76% | = C |
| 90-93% | = A- | 70-73% | = C- |
| 87-89% | = B+ | 67-69% | = D+ |
| 84-86% | = B | 64-66% | = D |
| 80-83% | = B- | 60-63% | = D-  Below 60% = F |

Grading guidelines are listed above. Please note that I round up for .5 or above. For example 89.5 would be an A- and 89.4 would be a B+. All assignments should be submitted electronically through the canvas site by the deadlines listed. All assignments should follow APA 7th edition formatting including with 1 inch margins, double-spaced, and Times New Roman font and submitted as Word documents. Grades for late assignments will be deducted 10% per day that the assignment is late unless otherwise discussed prior to the assignment deadline.

I am happy to discuss any questions or concerns related to grading; however due to privacy concerns, I will not discuss specific grading questions through email. We can set up a time to meet to talk about grading.

**Course Expectations**

**Attendance**. Attendance is a required component of this course as much of the course will involve applying content through course discussion, class activities, and presentations. This includes arriving on time and staying for the duration of the class. Absences due to illness, mental health, personal emergencies, religious holidays, travel for university athletics, and other extenuating circumstances will be excused at the discretion of the instructor. Students requesting an excused absences should contact the instructor by email for approval prior to the class meeting time if at all possible with as much notice as possible. All students are permitted one unexcused absence and do not need to receive approval for this; however, each additional unexcused absence will result in a deduction in their participation grade.

**Respectful Participation.** This looks like engaging thoughtfully with peers. In order to facilitate an environment where open discussion can occur, at times I may need to pause the discussion or ask follow up questions to clarify meaning of statements.If you would like to check in following a course discussion or in response to the material, I would be glad to follow up directly after class or at another scheduled time.

**Communication.** It is expected that you check the canvas site and regularly check your email for course updates.

**Respect of Community Partner.** It is critical for your to be respectful in your interactions with the community partnered site. This includes being responsive to their communication, showing up on-time at your scheduled time, and displaying professionalism as a representative from Pitt School of Education. If there are any concerns expressed from the site about this behavior, this may result in conversations with the instructor and deduction of points from the community-engaged experience assignments, potentially resulting in a failing grade for the course at the discretion of the instructor.

**Expectations of the Instructor.** I will also do my best to attend class on time and prepared for discussion. I will communicate with as much advanced notice as possible if there are any changes to the course format. During the weekdays, I will check my email daily and respond within 24 hours and within 48 hours on the weekends. Should you need more immediate assistance, you are welcome to call or text, though sometimes it does take me some time to reply after hours. I understand it can be difficult to give feedback, but I appreciate your suggestions.

**Academic Integrity**

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the [University of Pittsburgh’s Policy on Academic Integrity](https://www.provost.pitt.edu/info/ai1.html). Please refer to university resources on the definitions of plagiarism (e.g., <https://pitt.libguides.com/academicintegrity>, and Academic Integrity module in canvas). A student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. Consequences may be applied at the instructor’s discretion and may include, but is not limited to, redoing an assignment, or receiving a failing grade for an assignment, exam, or for the course of any individual suspected of violating University Policy.

To learn more about Academic Integrity, visit the [Academic Integrity Guide](http://pitt.libguides.com/academicintegrity/) for an overview of the topic. For hands- on practice, complete the [Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism tutorial](http://pitt.libguides.com/academicintegrity/plagiarism).

Through this course, you will complete written assignments and reflections that are designed to have you think critically and deeply. It expected that you complete these assignments individually (with the exception of group projects in the assigned groups). You may not use generative AI such ChatGPT to complete assignments. This will be considered a violation of academic integrity and may result in consequences at the instructor’s discretion including redoing an assignment, failing an assignment or the course.

All hours logs submitted must reflect actual hours spent volunteering. These forms need to be approved by the site supervisor. Any form of falsifying hours will be considered an academic integrity violation and may result in consequences at the instructor’s discretion.

**Disability Services**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and [Disability Resources and Services](https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drs/) (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, [drsrecep@pitt.edu,](mailto:drsrecep@pitt.edu) (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

### Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, familial status, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity or other factors as stated in the University’s Title IX policy. The University is committed to taking prompt action to end a hostile environment that interferes with the University’s mission. For more information about policies, procedures, and practices, visit the[Civil Rights & Title IX Compliance web page](https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix-compliance).

I ask that everyone in the class strive to help ensure that other members of this class can learn in a supportive and respectful environment. If there are instances of the aforementioned issues, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, by calling 412-648-7860, or e-mailing [titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu). Reports can also be [filed online](https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix-compliance/make-report/report-form). You may also choose to report this to a faculty/staff member; they are required to communicate this to the University’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion. If you wish to maintain complete confidentiality, you may also contact the University Counseling Center (412-648-7930).

**Gender Inclusive Language**

Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender.  Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of all genders (for example, first year student versus freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind, everyone versus ladies and gentlemen, etc.).  It also affirms non-binary gender identifications, and recognizes both gender identity and expression.  Identities including trans, intersex, and genderqueer reflect personal descriptions, expressions, and experiences.  Just as sexist language excludes women’s experiences, gendered language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identifies may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth.  Students, faculty, and staff have the right to control their own identity and to be referred to by the name and pronouns with which they identify.  People also have the right to maintain their privacy regarding information they do not wish to share about their identities, including gender identity and pronouns. Source: [School of Social Work](https://www.socialwork.pitt.edu/)

**Religious Observations**

The observance of religious holidays (activities observed by a religious group of which a student is a member) and cultural practices are an important reflection of diversity. As your instructor, I am committed to providing equivalent educational opportunities to students of all belief systems. At the beginning of the semester, you should review the course requirements to identify foreseeable conflicts with assignments, exams, or other required attendance. If at all possible, please contact me within the first two weeks of the first class meeting to allow time for us to discuss and make fair and reasonable adjustments to the schedule and/or tasks.

### ****Sexual Misconduct, Required Reporting, and Title IX****

The University is committed to combating sexual misconduct. As a result, you should know that University faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct, including harassment and sexual violence, to the University’s Title IX office.  What this means is that as your professor, I am required to report any incidents of sexual misconduct that are directly reported to me, or of which I am somehow made aware.  After a report is made, you will be contacted by the Title IX Office for opportunities for support and options for proceeding.

For additional information, please visit the [full syllabus statement](https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix/make-report/responsible-employee-program-and-reporting#syllabus) on the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion webpage.

### Statement on Classroom Recording

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student’s own private use. The instructor may record the course and post the recording to canvas for student use.

### Your Well-being Matters

College/Graduate school can be an exciting and challenging time for students. Taking time to maintain your well-being and seek appropriate support can help you achieve your goals and lead a fulfilling life. It can be helpful to remember that we all benefit from assistance and guidance at times, and there are many resources available to support your well-being while you are at Pitt. You are encouraged to visit [Thrive@Pitt](https://www.thrive.pitt.edu/" \o "thrive.pitt.edu" \t "_blank) to learn more about well-being and the many campus resources available to help you thrive.

If you or anyone you know experiences overwhelming academic stress, persistent difficult feelings and/or challenging life events, you are strongly encouraged to seek support. In addition to reaching out to friends and loved ones, consider connecting with a faculty member you trust for assistance connecting to helpful resources.

The [University Counseling Center](http://www.counseling.pitt.edu/) is also here for you. You can call 412-648-7930 at any time to connect with a clinician. If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal, please call the University Counseling Center at any time at 412-648-7930. You can also contact Resolve Crisis Network at 888-796-8226. If the situation is life threatening, call Pitt Police at 412-624-2121 or dial 911.

**Course Schedule**

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| **Meeting/Date** | **Topic** | **Assignment Due** |
| 8/26/24 | What is Applied Developmental Psychology? Introduction to the community-based experience |  |
| 9/2/24  *No Class* | Labor Day |  |
| 9/9/24 | Vulnerability and authenticity |  |
| 9/16/24 | Privilege, power, marginalization, and intersectionality |  |
| 9/23/24 | Systemic inequities and Pittsburgh communities |  |
| 9/30/24 | Engaging in community-partnered work | **Community Partnership Overview** |
| 10/7/24 | Good intentions don’t always mean good impact | Group 1 Presentation |
| 10/14/24  *No Class* | Fall Break |  |
| 10/21/24 | Positive youth development and critical youth development | Group 2 Presentation |
| 10/28/24 | School-based supports | Group 3 Presentation  **Interview Paper Due** |
| 11/4/24 | Media impacting development | Group 4 Presentation |
| 11/11/24 | Trauma-informed interventions | Group 5 Presentation |
| 11/18/24 | Centering love and empathy | Group 6 Presentation  **Annotated Bibliography Due** |
| 11/25/24  *No Class* | Thanksgiving Break |  |
| 12/2/24 | Positive news in the community | **Final Share** |
| 12/9/24\*  Please note that we will NOT meet during the university scheduled final time. | Final Course Wrap-Up | **Final Paper Due and Hours Log** |