

University of Florida
Department of Psychology
PSY 4930: Special Topics in Psychology -Community Psychology
Spring 2026

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Office: PSY 238
Office Hours: Tuesday, 11:30AM - 1:30PM & Thursday, 12:35PM – 1:35PM

Class Location: PSY 130
Class Days/Times: Tuesday, 10:40AM - 11:30AM & Thursday, 10:40PM – 12:35PM

Required Text and Readings

- Moritsugu, J., Vera, E., & Wong, F. Y. (2025). Community Psychology (7th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge. **(If you cannot get the 7th edition, then 6th edition is acceptable.)**
- Additional readings will be made available on Canvas.

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the field of community psychology. Community psychology focuses on person-environment interactions and the various ways individuals navigate between different social contexts, such as schools, neighborhoods, communities, and society. Community psychologists employ a variety of methodological approaches to understand many of the social issues facing communities today such as juvenile violence, homelessness, and access to healthcare, etc..

Course Objectives

- 1- Students will be able to identify and articulate the basic tenets and principles of Community Psychology.
- 2- In an informed and effective manner, students will be able to differentiate and discuss such key aspects of person-environment interactions and the ways individuals navigate various social context.
- 3- Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of different methods used in the community psychology research.
- 4- Students will be able to articulate knowledge on the topic of social justice and the importance of cultural sensitivity.

Grading System

Assignment	Percentage
1. Exams 1, 2, and 3 (worth 15% per exam)	15% x3
2. Final Exam	25%
3. Group Research Presentation	20%
5. Attendance	10%
TOTAL Points	100%

Grading Scale

A	$\geq 92\%$
A-	90% to $< 92\%$
B+	88% to $< 90\%$
B	82% to $< 88\%$
B-	80% to $< 82\%$
C+	78% to $< 80\%$

C	72% to $< 78\%$
C-	70% to $< 72\%$
D+	68% to $< 70\%$
D	62% to $< 68\%$
D-	60% to $< 62\%$
E	$< 60\%$

Assignment Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

All assignments will be submitted via [Canvas](#) on the date indicated by each assignment, **not through email or hard copies**. Course assignments are as follows:

1. Exams (Exams 1, 2, and 3, and Final Exam)

There will be four, online exams throughout the semester, three during the semester, and one during the scheduled final exam. Exams will consist of multiple-choice questions and will cover material from the assigned readings and lecture class activities. The first three exams will include only new material covered since the previous exam. However, the final exam will cover materials from previous chapters.

2. Group Research Presentation

During the semester, you will develop a group research proposal utilizing concepts of community psychology. The project will require you to develop a research plan and share your hypotheses and research questions (NOTE: you do not need to collect data). At the end of the semester, you are required to give an oral presentation of your group's research proposal to the class as part of the course requirements (approx. 30 minutes). This presentation will require you to utilize visuals (e.g., PowerPoint slides, Prezi) or other presentation resources as a way to communicate your proposed project. The specific details of the requirements of the presentation and the grading rubric are provided later in the syllabus. You are required to attend all proposal presentations at the end of the semester even on the day you are not presenting your own project.

Additional Information

Civility: I expect students to act civilly at all times. This means respecting yourself, other students, and me. Uncivil behavior will not be tolerated. Examples of uncivil behavior include, but are not limited to, disrupting the class in any manner, using verbally aggressive languages when posting a comment, breaking student code of conduct rules, etc.

Copyright Statement: Some of the materials in this course are possibly copyrighted. They are intended for use only by students registered and enrolled in this course and only for instructional activities associated with and for the duration of the course. They may not be retained in another medium or disseminated further. They are provided in compliance with the provisions of the Teach Act.

Syllabus Change Policy:

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice. Any changes will be announced in class and on Canvas.

Class attendance, make-up exams, and other work

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in the course are consistent with university policies. See UF Academic Regulations and Policies for more information regarding the University Attendance Policies.

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Late Assignments

It is my intent that all assignments will be turned in on time (see dates on course schedule below). Assignments cannot be made-up except in the case of extreme circumstances that meet the criteria of the University of Florida policy for an excused absence. Make-ups are only given for illnesses that require medical treatment, valid emergencies, and valid scheduling conflicts.

University Honesty Policy

"We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity." This applies, but is not limited, to cheating and plagiarism.

If you do a paper for this class, write it in your own words. It is possible to plagiarize a source even if no full sentences are copied word-for-word. In writing papers, please consult with APA style (7th edition). Reference your sources and write in your own words. According to the Academic Dishonesty guide and the University's Student code of Conduct, "Plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty" may lead to grade penalty, "formal disciplinary probation, suspension, or dismissal."

Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565; <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

I strive to make this course accessible to students with diverse needs, strengths, and abilities. Please talk with me about any concerns you may have regarding accessibility and this course. If you think you may need accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as early as possible in the semester so that I can make any necessary adjustments to the course. You can call the DRC at **(352) 392-8565** or visit www.dso.ufl.edu/drc for more information. They are dedicated to making sure students with various abilities have success at the university. Usually you'll talk with someone and may do additional assessments in order to develop the best plan possible. After you register with them, you'll get a letter that you show to me so that I can make the appropriate accommodations. It's okay to call them with any questions you might have. I am also more than happy to talk with you as well. If anything happens during the semester that may necessitate accommodations, please reach out to me

and the DRC as soon as possible to make sure you have what you need to learn and be successful in the course.

Evaluation of this course

I appreciate and value your feedback so that I can continue to improve upon this course and my teaching skills. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see:
<http://registrar.ufl.edu/catalog0910/policies/regulationferpa.html>

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

- U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.
- University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.
- GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and

counseling services.

- Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Call 866-281-6309 or email ask@ufl.libanswers.com for more information.
- Teaching Center: 1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- Writing Studio: Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- Academic Complaints: Office of the Ombuds; Visit the Complaint Portal webpage for more information.
- Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): View the Student Complaint Procedure webpage for more information.

COVID-19 Considerations

In response to COVID-19, the following practices are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available at no cost and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit this link for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment: <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/vaccinations/vaccine-availability/>. Students who receive the first dose of the vaccine somewhere off-campus and/or outside of Gainesville can still receive their second dose on campus.
- You are expected to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings even if you are vaccinated. Please continue to follow healthy habits, including best practices like frequent hand washing. Following these practices is our responsibility as Gators.
 - Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
 - Hand sanitizing stations will be located in every classroom.
- If you are sick, stay home and self-quarantine. Please visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website about next steps, retake the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 (or email covid@shcc.ufl.edu) to be evaluated for testing and to receive further instructions about returning to campus. UF Health Screen, Test & Protect offers guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website for more information.
 - Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.
 - If you are withheld from campus by the Department of Health through Screen, Test & Protect you are not permitted to use any on campus facilities. Students attempting

to attend campus activities when withheld from campus will be referred to the Dean of Students Office.

- Continue to regularly visit coronavirus.UFHealth.org and coronavirus.ufl.edu for up-to- date information about COVID-19 and vaccination.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is not tolerated in this class, in the Department of Psychology, or at the University of Florida. Sexual harassment includes: the inappropriate introduction of sexual activities or comments in a situation where sex would otherwise be irrelevant. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and a violation of state and federal laws as well as of the policies and regulations of the university. All UF employees and students must adhere to UF's sexual harassment policy which can be found here: [https://hr.ufl.edu/forms- policies/policies-managers/sexual-harassment/](https://hr.ufl.edu/forms-policies/policies-managers/sexual-harassment/). Please review this policy and contact a university official if you have any questions about the policy. As mandatory reporters, university employees (e.g., administrators, managers, supervisors, faculty, teaching assistants, staff) are required to report knowledge of sexual harassment to UF's Title IX coordinator. For more information about UF's Title IX office see: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/>. You can also complete a Sexual Harassment Report online (Title IX) at: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/title-ix-reporting-form/>.

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal education use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by an instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentation such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless, of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Course Schedule

Unless otherwise stated, all Chapters/Pages refer to *Sixth Edition* of our assigned text

Date/Time		Topic
Tues 10:40-11:30		
Thurs 10:40-12:35		
1/13/25	Tues	Course Introduction
1/15/25	Thurs	Introduction to Community Psychology 1 (Chap 1)
1/20/25	Tues	Introduction to Community Psychology 2 (Chap 2)
1/22/25	Thurs	Scientific Research Methods (Chap 3)
1/27/25	Tues	Scientific Research Methods (Chap 3)
1/29/25	Thurs	Stress and Resilience (Chap 4)
2/3/25	Tues	Stress and Resilience (Chap 4)
2/5/25	Thurs	Exam 1 Q&A/Review
2/10/25	Tues	Working on Group Research Presentation
2/12/25	Thurs	Exam 1 (No class meeting; Exam administered in CANVAS)
2/17/25	Tues	The Importance of Social Change (Chap 5)
2/19/25	Thurs	The Importance of Social Change (Chap 5)
2/24/25	Tues	Community Interventions (Chap 6)
2/26/25	Thurs	Community Interventions (Chap 6)
3/3/25	Tues	CP Application: Schools, Children, and the Community (Chap 9)
3/5/25	Thurs	CP Application: Schools, Children, and the Community (Chap 9)
3/10/25	Tues	Checking in on Group Presentation/ Exam 2 Q&A/Review
3/12/25	Thurs	Exam 2 (No class meeting; Exam administered in CANVAS)
3/17/25	Tues	SPRING BREAK
3/19/25	Thurs	SPRING BREAK
3/24/25	Tues	CP Application: Mental Health System (Chap 7)
3/26/25	Thurs	CP Application: Mental Health System (Chap 7)
3/31/25	Tues	CP Application: Healthcare System (Chap 11)
4/2/25	Thurs	CP Application: Disaster Resilience (readings posted on Canvas)
4/7/25	Tues	Checking in on Group Presentation/ Exam 3 Q&A/Review
4/9/25	Thurs	EXAM 3 (No class meeting; Exam administered in CANVAS)
4/14/25	Tues	Presentation
4/16/25	Thurs	Presentation
4/21/25	Tues	Presentation

All lecture and exam dates are approximately planned and subject to change.

Group Research Presentation Guidelines

Presentation in brief: The presentation is a group project. The presentation should include: Introduction (Literature Review, Significance & Purpose of the Study, and Research Questions & Hypotheses) and Methods (Population and Sampling, Research Design, and Data Analysis). Feel free to include any tables and/or graphs as needed.

The presentations should be approximately 30 minutes long, excluding Q&A. Plan on needing about 1 to 2 minutes per slide. The trick to giving good presentations is distilling your information down into a few bulleted lists, diagrams, tables and graphs. You don't want to be rushed while presenting.

Title slide (1 slide). Title of the talk, the names of all group members, the class and university names, and the date the talk is given.

Introduction (7-10 slides). Explain why your work is interesting. Place the study in context – how does it relate to / follow from the community psychology literature on this subject. If it relates to any applied issues (e.g., environmental problems), mention this here. Use some pretty visuals (photographs, drawings, etc.) to get the audience excited about the issue and questions you are addressing. Clearly state the significance and purpose, and your hypotheses.

Methods (approx 5 slides). Describe who your population and sample are, and how you are going to recruit your sample. Clearly summarize all the variables you are going to examine and the research design you are going to use. State the planned analytical methods you are going to use.

Q&A (1 slide). Verbally thank your audience for their attention and tell them you would be happy to answer any questions.

Group Research Presentation Grading Rubric

Assessment/Points	2 points	1 point	0 point
Introduction: Literature Review & Context/Background Information (approx 5-6 slides)	Narrative integrates critical and logical details from the peer-reviewed theoretical and research literature. Each key construct and variable are grounded to the literature <u>in community psychology</u> .	A key construct or variables were provided but were not connected to the current project/research question.	Background information or the review of the literature were missing or consisted of primary non-research-based articles.
Introduction: Significance & Purpose of the Study (approx 1-2 slides)	Presents a significant research problem <u>related to community psychology</u> . Articulates clear, reasonable research questions given the purpose, design, and methods of the proposed study. All constructs and variables have been appropriately defined.	Research issues are identified, but the statement is too broad, or the description fails to establish the importance of the problem area.	Significance and purpose of the study were omitted or inappropriate
Introduction: Research Questions & Hypotheses (approx 1-2 slides)	Specific research questions or hypotheses are clearly articulated, and variables or possible outcomes are defined	Research questions or hypotheses are present, but vague	No research questions or hypotheses were given
Methods: Population and Sampling (approx 1 slide)	The description of the population was meaningful. The sampling process was reasonable to recruit a representative sample of the population.	The description of the population or sampling strategy was confusing, lacked relevance to the purpose, was incomplete.	The population or sample was not identified or described. The sampling strategy was inappropriate for the research questions
Methods: Research Design (approx 2 slides)	The purpose, questions, and design are mutually supportive and coherent. Attention has been given to eliminating alternative explanations and controlling extraneous variables. Appropriate and important limitations and assumptions have been clearly stated.	The research design is confusing or incomplete given the research questions and sampling strategy	The research design is inappropriate or has not been identified.
Methods: Data Analysis (approx 2 slides)	Analytical methods were sufficiently specific, clear, and appropriate given the research questions, research design, and scale of measurement, and type of distribution.	Descriptive or inferential methods were confusing, incomplete, or lacked relevance to the research questions, data, or research design.	Analytical methods (descriptive, inferential test, and significance level) were missing or inappropriately aligned with data and research design.
Presentation Skills	Clear and concise presentation; answered questions with great ease; logical flow	Satisfactory presentation skills; responses to questions were adequate	Unable to discuss findings in a scientific fashion; lacked a logical order; presentation lacks polish
Personal Conduct	Very well prepared; well-mannered and respectful towards others; arrived on time; polished presentation	Reasonably prepared; behavior appropriate for context	Arrived late; behavior not appropriate for context; not prepared