SYLLABUS

CONF 651: COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY PLANNING

Semester: Fall Semester 2014
Location: Arlington Campus. Founders Hall 468
Class Meetings: 10AM-5PM, October 25; November 1, 15, 16, 22; and December 6

Instructor: Bill Potapchuk
Telephone: (703)425-6296
E-mail: bill@communitytools.net

COURSE BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Communities across the globe are faced with an increasing array of challenges -- deep racial and ethnic divisions, complex community problems, environmental degradation and embedded inequities – and these are among the many issues that effective collaborative community planning processes can help address.

The important words above are "effective" and "collaborative." Community planning processes happen every day. Some rely upon experts, others marginalize the opponents, and some try to be collaborative but do not succeed. Students in this course will learn how to construct effective collaborative planning processes that employ a wide range of design options ranging from small group dialogue to facilitated consensus building and online engagement to thousand person town meetings.

Equity issues thread through almost every community issue and are woven, implicitly or explicitly, through every community planning process. We will explore how collaborative community planning processes address equity issues, or not.

COURSE FORMAT

The class will meet in a compressed schedule on five Saturdays and a Sunday between October 25th and December 7th. These sessions will include presentations, discussion, role plays, and exercises. Between sessions, students will actively engage in reading and completing assignments as described.

CLASS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

GRADING

Students are responsible for completing individual and group assignments on time. You will be penalized the equivalent of a full letter grade for each day the assignment is late.

Some class assignments and readings will be sent via e-mail and students are responsible for keeping up-to-date with these. Your grade will be based on the following criteria:

CLASS DISCUSSIONS AND PARTICIPATION (35%)

This class is interactive and elicitive. Attendance and participation in class activities is important and will account for thirty-five percent of your grade. All students are expected to actively participate in class discussions. In order to successfully participate in the class, you must read the assigned materials prior to class.

Oral communication and presentation skills are an essential competency in conflict resolution and collaboration. Your grade for participation will include an assessment of your preparation for and delivery of presentations.

Absences will be excused only in exceptional circumstances.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS (65%)

All written assignments are expected to reflect graduate level research and analysis.

There are three written assignments. The first assignment is due on ==November 2==. It is worth 10% of your final grade. The second assignment is due on ==November 16==. It is worth 25% of your grade. The final assignment is due by ==8:00 am on December 15th==. It is worth 30% of your grade.

Papers are graded based upon on how well you integrate the readings, presentations, and discussions with your analysis and strategy. Papers are also graded on presentation, grammar, and style as well as your creativity and analysis.

HONOR CODE AND PLAGIARISM

All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code. You can find a copy of the Honor Code at academicintegrity.gmu.edu. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review. With specific regards to plagiarism, three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor.

S-CAR requires that all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit a student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. S-CAR's policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace or substitute for it.

STUDENT SUPPORTS

English Language Institute. The English Language Institute offers free English language tutoring to non-native English speaking students who are referred by a member of the GMU faculty or staff. For more information, call 703-993-3642 or email malle2@gmu.edu.

The Writing Center. The Writing Center is a free writing resource that offers individual, group, and online tutoring. For general questions and comments please contact us at wcenter@gmu.edu or call: 703-993-4491.

Disability Resource Center: The Disability Resource Center within the Office of Disability Services assists students with learning or physical conditions affecting learning. Students with learning differences that require special conditions for exams or other writing assignments should provide documentation provided by the Disability Resource Center. You must let me know before class begins if you have a learning or physical disability so that I can accommodate you. You will find more information at http://ods.gmu.edu/ or may call 703-993-2474.

TEXTBOOKS AND READINGS

The main textbook for this course is:

The Collaborative Leadership Fieldbook, David D. Chrislip. Jossey Bass, 2002.

Optional:

How to Make Collaboration Work: Powerful Ways to Build Consensus, Solve Problems, and Make Decisions, David Straus and Thomas Layton.   Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2002. This book complements the chapter that will be shared in class.

Collaboration Handbook: Creating, Sustaining, and Enjoying the Journey, Michael Winer and Karen Ray. Amherst Wilder Foundation, 2000. This book is recommended for those students who would like more background on the specific mechanics and tactics of collaborative processes.

Process Design, A Practical Guide to What to do When and How for Facilitators, Consultants, Managers and Coaches: Making it Work, Dorothy Strachan and Paul Tomlinson. Jossey Bass, 2008. This book, while focused on organizational settings, provides an excellent step-by-step guide to process design.

You are strongly encouraged read materials beyond the assigned readings. These two websites also contain a wealth of information.

- http://www.community-problem-solving.net/
- http://ncdd.org/

OPTIONAL SESSIONS

Students are encouraged to attend the National Coalition on Dialogue and Deliberation national meeting on October 17-18, 2014 in Reston, VA. More information can be found here: http://ncdd.org/events/ncdd2014.

S-CAR and the Community Relations Service of the US Department of Justice are co-hosting a conference on November 19th, tentatively titled, Looking Back, Looking Forward: Celebrating the Contributions of James Laue, Wallace Warfield, & Roger Wilkins to the Community Relations Service and Work toward Justice. The conference will be followed by the annual Lynch Lecture. This year's speaker is John Paul Lederach.

Students are encouraged to attend both events.

CLASS DESCRIPTIONS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

See attached graphic.

ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENT #1: DUE IN CLASS ON NOVEMBER 2ND

Find a community planning process/case from course readings or any other source. There are two options:

- If the case you selected primarily used a "typical" planning process, write a 3-4 page essay that (a) describes the "typical," community planning process employed, (b) offers an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the typical community planning processes that was employed, (c) offers a brief description of how a collaborative process might have been used, and (d) contrasts typical community planning processes with a collaborative processes, using the case as a reference.

- If the case you selected primarily used a "collaborative" planning process, write a 3-4 page essay that (a) describes the collaborative process employed, (b) offers an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of collaborative planning processes, (c) offers a brief description of how a "typical" planning process might have been used, and (d) contrasts typical community planning processes with a collaborative processes, using the case as a reference.

In addition to your essay, please prepare two, two-column charts. The first chart should summarize the advantages and disadvantages of a collaborative planning process, the second, a "typical" planning process. Be prepared to present your paper in class.

SELECTING A CASE: DUE IN CLASS ON NOVEMBER 2ND

Nominate the conflict or situation you wish to use for the November 16th assignment. The nomination should include a 2-3 sentence description and several bullet points on why you think this is a good situation for the November 16th assignment.

ASSIGNMENT #2: DUE IN CLASS ON NOVEMBER 16TH

Select a case in consultation with the instructor. The case may be contemporary or historical. The briefing memo must be written for a point in time in the situation where choosing a collaborative process is feasible (e.g., not at the end of the case nor when the parties are fully invested in a particular approach).

The primary objective of this assignment is to prepare a packet of materials to educate a decision maker on how a collaborative process might work with their situation and persuade them that using a collaborative process is a good idea. The packet should include a 4-6 page briefing memo, an accompanying PowerPoint-style presentation document, and a 1-2 page visual depiction of the proposed process for leaders in a case/situation who are in a position to make decisions about the process. The briefing memo must (a) analyze the advantages and disadvantages of proceeding along the current path (b) make a case for why a collaborative approach would be more effective, (c) describe a proposed collaborative process and how it would proceed and (d) propose next steps.

Guidance for the memo:

- The recipient(s) of the memo should be those persons who are in a position to determine whether or not a collaborative process will be used
- You may invent appropriate standing for yourself and/or your team (e.g., you are from SCAR, a community mediation service, a planning firm, NGO, or ???)
- You may invent some appropriate context that establishes a relationship between you/your team and the process. For example, "In response to your invitation to interview key stakeholders . . . . "
- Feel free to be creative while being reasonably pragmatic
- Organize the memo as an executive briefing. Ensure the key points are presented concisely and clearly at the beginning of the memo. Consider the appropriate level of detail for a decision maker.

The presentation deck should be no longer than six slides. For your deck, you may use any software (e.g., MS PowerPoint or Apple Keynote) or any of the many (free) online services (e.g., Prezi, Open Office, Zoho, Sliderocket, Google Slides or others).

The visual depiction can be prepared with software (e.g., Visio, drawing tools in PowerPoint or MS Word, or others), online tools (e.g., such as Gliffy, DrawAnywhere, LucidChart, or others) or simply drawn by hand.

Be prepared to present your assignment in class.

ASSIGNMENT #3: DUE BY 8:00 AM ON DECEMBER 15TH

You may pursue one of the following assignments or negotiate a project/paper that requires similar effort with the instructor. Further guidance on these assignment options will be provided in class.

A. **Proposal to funder**. Develop a 5-8 page proposal to a prospective funder asking for support for a conflict resolution/collaborative process or the development of a collaborative. Pursuing this option will require identifying a situation, developing a process design, making a case for the proposed approach, researching possible funders, developing a budget, and other steps.
B. **Detailed process design with facilitator guidance**. Develop a detailed process design for a complex challenge and detailed guidance for the facilitator and meeting planners for each meeting in the early stages of the process. This product can include a combination of a memo for facilitators and various visuals.
C. **Detailed Critique of Case where a Collaborative Process was employed**. Provide a 6-8 page detailed critique of a case where a there was an intentional use of a structured collaboration process. Discuss choice points in the process and alternatives that might have been employed.
D. **Power and Equity Analysis**. Analyze a case using power and equity lenses and discuss how process choices can balance (or not) the playing field.

Class Descriptions and Reading Assignments

	OCTOBER 19	NOVEMBER 1	NOVEMBER 15-16	NOVEMBER 22	DECEMBER 6
LEARNING THEMES	• Discuss organization of course, assignments, and readings. • Explore topics of interest to students • Explore conceptions of "good" and "bad" community planning • Introduction to situation assessment • Explore process and other types of advocacy • Explore key concepts of collaboration and community planning including advantages of collaborative processes	• Sharpen analysis of "good" and "bad" community planning • Develop understanding of basic phasing and staging in collaborative processes • Explore process design frameworks • Explore different kinds of processes through examining the Neighborhood Action case in DC	• Explore case studies of collaboration and community planning • Deeper exploration of complex process design •	• Explore how collaborative processes fail • Further develop process design frameworks and skills for extended layered and phased processes • Explore case studies of collaboration and community planning	• Explore collaborative governance frameworks for ongoing community planning efforts • Exploring the role of collaboration and conflict resolution in strengthening democracy and reshaping political culture.
READINGS		• Chrislip, Parts 1, 2 and Chapter 13 • "Designing a Consensus Building Process using a Graphic Road Map" by David Straus. Consensus Building Handbook. Sage, 1999. • Read about conflicts/situations so you are able to nominate a case for your November 16 assignment	• Chrislip, Part 3 • *Creating Spaces for Change* (found at http://www.wkkf.org/knowledge-center/resources/2010/creating-spaces-for-change.aspx)	*What's Next Alexandria: Handbook for Civic Engagement*. (found at http://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/special/CivicEngagement/web_boxes/WNA%20HANDBOOK%20FINAL%20reduced_3_2014.pdf)	• Chrislip, Chapter 12 • Others TBD