

Community Psychology Doctoral Emphasis within the EAPS specialization

Mission Statement

The Community Psychology Concentration (CPC) is an emphasis area within the Experimental and Applied Psychological Science program in the Ph.D. degree in Psychology at Utah State University. The goal of the concentration is to train doctoral students to apply psychological principles and methods to the study of human behavior within the context of community settings and to effect social change at the community level.

Community Psychology Principles

In line with this commitment to promoting human welfare in community contexts, there are five principles that guide the concentration's faculty members in their work with students and in their own projects:

- (1) **System Perspective:** Social change, whether in organizations or communities, is inherently system change and needs to be approached as such;
- (2) **Cultural Context:** Understanding social systems requires understanding the multiple cultures in each context;
- (3) **Prevention:** Interventions that attempt to remedy problems in social systems generally benefit from strategic efforts to prevent the initial development of problems;
- (4) **Social Justice:** Effecting change in communities is never value-neutral; a principle value for community psychology is promoting social justice by recognizing the needs of those most disadvantaged as having special standing, and
- (5) **Participatory Science:** A participatory paradigm is one in which collective knowledge is created to affect change. Collective knowledge leads to collective action which, in turn, leads to research and evaluation products that are meaningful to the consumer as well as the scientist. Thus, it is important for community psychology researchers to develop skills in partnership and power sharing consistent with the constituents who may be affected by the research findings.

Graduate Education Philosophy

The Community Psychology Concentration is designed for students wanting to develop the skills necessary for studying and ameliorating social and environmental problems. Examples of problem areas addressed by the faculty of the concentration include poverty, disability policy, youth development, education reform, environmental stressors, community systems development, indicators for measuring progress in federal, national, state, and local initiatives. Graduates from this concentration can expect to be employed in academia, government agencies, consulting firms, policy research centers, and private/public advocacy centers.

The required skills taught have both methodological and theoretical components that include training in rigorous experimental and qualitative research and evaluation methods and in the social interventions developed by applied psychologists. These skills are brought together in the real world projects that students are involved in during their graduate study, many of which

requiring evaluation of government programs and policies. Central to this work in applied settings is the scholar-apprentice model of education. Each student is assigned a temporary advisor but soon after chooses a permanent advisor for joint work on ongoing projects.

Faculty Affiliated With the Community Psychology Emphasis

Richard Roberts, Emphasis Leader

Professor of Psychology and Director of the Early Intervention Research Institute (EIRI)

Research Interests: Community change and participatory action research approaches to change

Email: Richard.Roberts@usu.edu

Scott Bates, Assistant Professor of Psychology

Research Interests: Environmental psychology

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Melanie M. Domenech Rodriguez, Associate Professor of Psychology

Research Interests: Latino/a mental health, parenting interventions, prevention; multicultural psychology; research ethics

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Jamison Fargo, Assistant Professor of Psychology

Research Interests: Behavioral epidemiology and prevention of victimization, particularly sexual violence; prevention methodology.

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Renee V. Galliher, Assistant Professor of Psychology

Research Interests: Rural psychology; multicultural psychology; Adolescent psychosocial development

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George Julnes, Associate Professor of Psychology

Research Interests: Program evaluation theory and evaluation of human service programs

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Research and Training Opportunities

One of the important components of the Community track is the availability of paid assistantships in University programs focused on communities around the country. Community students have the opportunity to serve as a junior researcher in several capacities, from participating in the proposal writing process to evaluating components of a given program in the field. Graduate students who participate in this process become very familiar with community participation and proposal writing in ways that cannot be duplicated in the classroom. They join a team and have the opportunity to work closely with the professional and community staffs on a variety of projects. One of the main sources of these training opportunities is the Early

Intervention Research Institute (EIRI), directed by Prof. Richards Roberts. EIRI generates over a million dollars in external funding each year, and examples of projects can be found on the EIRI web page (<http://eiri.usu.edu/projects/>). Other research opportunities include federally funded projects led by emphasis faculty.

Concentration Curriculum for Doctoral Degree (following completion of Master's Degree)

Required Methodology Courses (all 4 courses are required; 9 credits)

Psy 7080, Multivariate Methods
Psy 7090, EAPS Program Seminar (2 credits)
Psy 7670, Proposal Development (1 credit)
Psy 7700, Grant Writing

Required Community Emphasis Courses (all 3 courses are required; 9 credits)

Psy 6810, Seminar: Introduction to Community Psychology
Psy 7020, Advanced Evaluation, Theory and Practice
Psy 7020, Practicum in Evaluation Planning and Contracting

Elective Courses (12 credits, suggested from the following)

Psy 6330, Psychometrics
Psy 6470, Health Psychology
Psy 6770, Qualitative Methods I
Psy 7070, Advanced Measurement: Theories and Practice
Psy 7810, Seminar: Rural Psychology
Psy 7810, Seminar: Longitudinal Data Analysis

Dissertation and other required Experiences and Competencies: 31 credits, for a total of 61 credits required for the doctoral degree