

**San José State University**  
**Department of Environmental Studies**  
**ENVS 127/227, SOCI-127**

**(Advanced) Community Based Participatory Research, Spring 2024**

**Course and Contact Information**

Instructor: Jesse Williamson, Ph.D., M.C.P.  
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Office Location: Washington Square Hall (WSQ) 115D  
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12:30-2:30  
Class Days/Time: Tuesdays 3pm-5:45pm  
Classroom: Clark Building 243

**Course Description**

This course integrates interdisciplinary theory and practice in developing a situated understanding of community-based participatory research (CBPR) toward redressing environmental inequities. Students will apply these theories and practices in their own environmental research and advocacy projects regarding local environmental issues. This course explores the epistemological, environmental and movement building imperatives for creating effective and responsible community-researcher partnerships for social, health and environmental justice. Through training in theory and community practice, students will increase their competency in understanding the complexity of environmental conditions in underserved communities. Students will learn a broad range of methodological approaches to doing the work of community, in community, and with community.

227 builds on the information and skills provided in 127 by incorporating an advanced focus on the theory behind the practice of community-based research. Students will be able to analyze the interdisciplinary theoretical foundations for this research methodology as well as place their own projects within this lineage. This advanced course will provide students the tools to engage theory in their writing through case studies in the policy and health implications of CBPR projects. Completion of this course will help graduate students in this field design feasible projects and thesis studies.

**Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will develop and demonstrate an ability to:

1. Engage with and provide critical analysis of the principles of community based participatory research,
2. Interpret and analyze advanced community-based research theoretical texts,
3. Evaluate the applicability of key community organizing and participatory research concepts,
4. Formulate the theoretical bases of their own community-based research projects using the advanced readings in the field,
5. Apply their knowledge and skills to new settings or in addressing complex problems in collaboration with community partners, and
6. Work productively in student groups and with community partners.

## Course Requirements and Assignments

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

## Theory and Discussion

1. **Written responses (10%).** There will be a total of ten, starting with a one-page positionality reflection in the beginning of the course, and ending with a one-page course reflection at the end of the semester. The other eight will be short responses to the readings, no more than 250 words total. Details will be provided on Canvas.
2. **Class Participation (10%).** A course where we create community, mutual respect, and didactic dialogue is the goal. Showing up, being mentally present, contributing to discussions, and elevating the overall level of the exchange is what it means to participate. This does not always mean talking - it might mean bringing materials or announcements to share, coming to office hours to continue discussion or express concerns, etc.
3. **Class discussion Facilitation (10%).** Each student will choose a week to briefly present and then facilitate class discussion on that week's topic and readings, for 30-45min. It can include activities, creative expression, and audio visual aids, and must provide original discussion questions on the reading. The projector can be used for infographics or visuals (multimedia), but a standard powerpoint presentation is discouraged.

## CBPR Project

All students will work in self-organized small groups to investigate an issue affecting a Bay Area community. Some of the issues that may be considered include but are not limited to: access to parks and green space, transportation inequities, food justice, pollution exposure, or others. In this process, students will apply the CBPR skills gained in this course to develop a relationship with a community-based organization (CBO) and collaboratively work with key partners at the CBO to identify and prioritize issues of concern and develop an approach to study and redress the identified issue.

- A. **Group CBP Research proposal (15%).** A 750-word (about 3-page) proposal which describes the issue that you discussed with community members, briefly reviews the importance of the issue based on peer-reviewed literature, poses a research question to be investigated, and presents a methodology including the roles of each group member and community partner.
- B. **Individual Progress Report (15%).** Each individual student will be expected to report on their contributions, achievements, and challenges during the team research in the form of individual progress reports. The individual project report will entail a 1000–1500-word response (4-6 pages).
- C. **Group class presentation (15%).** All groups will be expected to present their community-based studies in class. The purpose of this assignment is to provide a space for each group to demonstrate their knowledge and experiences of their investigation, and to expose class members to the diversity of issues that are experienced throughout communities in the Bay Area. Each presentation should be no more than 20 minutes with 5 minutes reserved for questions.
- D. **Individual CBP Research Report (25%).** This is the final culmination of the course. Upon completing group CBPR projects, each student will produce a 2500–4000-word APA style research paper. Additional details will be provided on Canvas and discussed in class.

## Grading Information (Standard grading scale)

<b>Theory and Discussion</b>	
1. Ten written responses	10%
2. Class Participation	10%
3. Discussion facilitation day	10%
<b>CBPR Project</b>	
A. Group CBP Research proposal	15%
B. Individual Progress Report	15%
C. Group class presentation	15%
D. Individual CBP Research Report	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Classroom Protocol

Harassment of any kind (sexual, racial, class, sexual preference, gender, etc.) between students or towards/from the instructor will not be tolerated. As a community member of this classroom, I expect everyone to act in a respectful and mature manner. Should any problems arise we as a class will promptly take action.

## University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](#), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](#) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.