

**CARLETON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY**

**ANTH 2180A / SOCI 2180A
FALL 2025
FOUNDATIONS IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Thursdays 2:35pm to 5:25pm

Instructor: Dr. Sarah Gelbard (she/her)

Pre-requisites & Precluded Courses: Second year standing or permission of instructor.

Method of Delivery: In person

In this course, you are expected to learn from your texts, your teacher and from one another. This requires striving towards understanding each other but it does not imply striving towards finding agreement. Our class will be racially, religiously, politically, culturally, generationally, and economically diverse. We will be of different gender identifications and sexual orientations and our lived experiences and reactions to the course material will reflect this diversity. Sharing our perspectives and interpretations on the course material will enhance everyone's learning experience and you are encouraged to openly express any disagreements with the authors you will read, with your fellow classmates, or with the Professor in the different participation fora that are available for this course. However, you are expected to conduct yourself in such a way that shows the utmost respect to others who may – or may not – share your views. Derogatory comments and hateful behavior towards others (and their views) will not be tolerated.

Carleton University acknowledges the location of its campus on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin nation. In doing so, Carleton acknowledges it has a responsibility to the Algonquin people and a responsibility to adhere to Algonquin cultural protocols.

1. Course Description and Objectives

Calendar Description: Study of theoretical debates and practical applications relating to community engagement with a focus on Canadian examples. Exploration of the contested and complex meanings of community engagement in and between diverse communities, public institutions, non-profit sector and private enterprise with an emphasis on social justice. Includes: Experiential Learning Activity.

Course overview: This course explores how we can engage people in making the world a better place. In this course, we will explore notions of “community,” “engagement,” and “community engagement” – terms which are popularly thought of as positive, but which are also replete with contradictions and contestations as they are applied in diverse settings. We will learn to work theoretically and contextually with these terms through readings and discussions.

This is an interactive course where our learning about community engagement will involve hands-on experiences of engagement with each other and community organizations. Our time together in-class will be divided between lecture sessions with group discussions and activities, and group working sessions for the Community Engagement Project. The Community Engagement Project is an experiential learning

activity integrating community service that addresses a community need with student learning outcomes. This is an opportunity for students to apply the lessons from the course readings, lectures, and discussions to a community-based group project and to meaningfully reflect on and evaluate the experience.

This course is the foundational, requisite course in the [Minor in Community Engagement](#). The Minor in Community Engagement offers students a course of study that includes the theoretical tools and practical skills to recognize, respectfully engage, and build community, while working for change and respecting differences both on- and off-campus.

2. Learning Outcomes

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- Articulate theoretical understandings of the complex and contested natures of the terms “community”, “engagement” and “community engagement,” based on your experiences and learning in the course.
- Recognize the functioning of hierarchical social and power relations in and between diverse communities, public institutions, the non-profit sector, and the private sector.
- Participate in a community engagement effort while drawing on the course concepts to inform your participation.
- Assess the effectiveness of a small community engagement process in creating engagement and social change.

3. Reading(s)/Textbook(s)

Course readings have been selected to support student learning on the key concepts, principles, practices, and skills to be covered in class. Students are expected to read the weekly required readings prior to class in order to fully participate in class discussions and group work sessions.

Textbook (required):

Tinglin, Win, and Donna Joyette. 2020. *Community Engagement in a Changing Social Landscape*. First edition. FriesenPress.

[eBook available for purchase online from FriesenPress](#) (\$9.99)

Textbook (recommended):

Pyles, Loretta. 2021. *Progressive Community Organizing: Transformative Practice in a Globalizing World*. 3rd edition. Routledge Press.

Available for purchase at the Campus Bookstore (softcover \$99.50, eBook TBD). A hardcopy of the 2nd edition (2014) is available through library course reserves. ***Note that chapter titles, pages, and content may vary from those listed in the course syllabus.*

Other required readings: All other required course readings will be available through Ares Course Reserves and accessible through the course Brightspace page.

Citation Style

The Chicago author-date citation style (17th edition) is to be used in the assignments and papers of this course. For more information, please see:

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html

4. Class Schedule

Most weeks, we will begin class with a lecture session from 2:35 to 4:00pm, followed by the group working sessions from 4:15 to 5:25pm.

Week 1 September 4	Welcome to Foundations in Community Engagement —course intro
Week 2 September 11	Neighbourhood Tours
Week 3 September 18	Introduction to Community Engagement
Week 4 September 25	Fletcher Wildlife Gardens Visit (TBC)
Week 5 October 2	Engagement strategies
Week 6 October 9	Communications, and (digital) media
Week 7 October 16	Working with community
October 23	FALL BREAK – NO CLASS
Week 8 October 30	Reflecting on our role and place in community
Week 9 November 6	Social theory and social movements
Week 10 November 13	Evaluating process and outcome
Week 11 November 20	IN-CLASS EXAM

Week 12 November 27	PROJECT PRESENTATIONS.
Week 13 December 4	Topic 8: Future directions
CAFES Members Engagement Event Community Engagement Project presentations (optional) Monday December 8, 6pm. Dominion Chalmers	

5. Course Activities & Methods of Evaluation

Lectures and In-class Discussions: Weekly lectures will explore key concepts, principles, practices, and skills in community engagement. This includes topics in engagement strategies, communication and media, and working in groups and with community. Lectures will also engage with contemporary critical issues and discourse, reflexivity and ethics, and positioning community engagement practices in social theory and movements.

Community Engagement Project on invasive plant species: We are fortunate to continue an ongoing partnership with Community Action for Environmental Sustainability (CAFES) and Fletcher Wildlife Gardens for this collaborative advocacy project. Throughout the term, students will work in small groups with one of the participating community associations/organizations from the CAFES network across Ottawa to learn about an issue and to create a series of products and deliverables on the chosen topic to engage Ottawa residents through social media and other methods. The topic for this year's engagement is to increase education and capacity for managing invasive plant species in Ottawa.

Participation: The in-class and assigned elements of this course are designed to build on each other. Many of the key concepts, principles, practices, and skills covered in the required readings and in-class lectures will inform and support you throughout the development of your Community Engagement Project. Similarly, work sessions with your groups will raise important issues and questions that will contribute to our discussions during the lecture sessions where we can reflect on your experiences, progress, and challenges. Regular attendance and ongoing active participation in both the lecture and group working sessions are therefore crucial to meeting the learning outcomes of this course.

Assignments: In addition to the deliverables for the Community Engagement Project, there will be three reflection assignments. *Detailed Assignment Briefs will be posted separately on the course Brightspace page.* Unless otherwise noted in the detailed assignment brief, all assignments are due before 11:59 pm on the deadline date and must be submitted via the course Brightspace page.

Exam: An in-class exam will evaluate student comprehension and critical thinking based on the course content including lectures, readings, and other assigned materials.