Part 1 – Introduction to Civil Society

Week One

Topic: Introduction to the Scope of the Course and the History of Civil Society in America

Recommended Readings:


Tape:
Moderated discussion about social capital/civil society. Featuring Charles W. Bray ’55, President of Princeton Project 55, Stanley Katz, Professor of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, Angela Goode, Senior Planner, NJ Council on Affordable Housing, and Elizabeth Johnson, Chief Operating Officer of Isles, Inc. (Trenton, NJ)

Key Questions:
What is meant by “civil society” and “social capital”? What are the strengths and limitations of these concepts? Is social capital eroding in the United States?

Additional Resources:

Civil Society and Community Building  
An online course developed by Princeton Project 55

WEEK TWO

Topic: Today’s Changing Communities and Introduction to the Case Studies

Recommended Readings:


Case Studies (Neighborhood Backgrounds and Introduction):

Dudley Street Neighborhood - Boston

- Medoff, Peter and Holly Sklar, Streets of Hope: The Fall and Rise of an Urban Neighborhood, Boston, South End Press, 1994, Introduction & Chapter 1 (pp. 1-17, 30-35).

North Lawndale – Chicago


Key Questions:

How have demographic changes challenged our assumptions about what is American? What is our community ideal today? How do changing demographics, immigration and affluence affect the concepts of social capital and civil society? How have the communities of Dudley Street and North Lawndale changed over time? What are the major challenges facing these communities today?

Additional Resources:


PART 2 – APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY BUILDING

WEEK THREE

Topic: Local Communities as Resources

Recommended Readings:

Case Studies:

Tape:
*Jody Kretzmann ’66*, Professor of Urban Affairs and Policy Research, Northwestern University, introducing the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) framework and interviewing two Chicago practitioners: *Mary Nelson, President and CEO, Bethel New Life* and *Richard Townsell, Executive Director, Lawndale Christian Community Development Corporation*.

Key Questions:
How do we identify the building blocks for strengthening communities? How does the ABCD approach relate to the concepts of social capital and civil society? What are the obstacles to finding and using assets in community development?

Additional Resources:
- ABCD Institute, <http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/research/rescommunity.html>
- Knight Foundation, <http://www.knightfdn.org>
WEEK FOUR

Topic: Service-based Approaches to Community Building: The Settlement Movement and Beyond

Recommended Readings:

Case Studies:

Key Questions:
What are the strengths and limitations of the service-based approach to community building? Can this strategy coexist effectively with an asset-based approach? Do service-based approaches build social capital?
WEEK FIVE

Topic: Community Organizing

Recommended Readings:

Case Studies:

Key Questions:
From deTocqueville to Alinsky to Cortes, how has community organizing evolved? What are the strengths and limitations of community organizing?

Additional Resources:
- Eyes on the Prize, PBS Documentary on the Civil Rights Movement.
**WEEK SIX**

**Topic:** Community Economic Development: CDC’s and Beyond

**Recommended Readings:**


**Case Studies:**


**Key Questions:**

How do placed-based community building strategies differ from person-focused ones? What has the rapid development of CDCs contributed to social capital and civil society?

**Additional Resources:**

- Grogan, Paul S. and Tony Proscio. *Comeback Cities*, Westview Press, 2000, especially Chapter 4 “We Can Sure as Hell Do Better Than This.”
WEEK SEVEN

Topic: Market/Private Sector Approaches

Recommended Readings:


Case Studies:


Key Questions:

What are the commonalities and differences among these approaches? How are market-based approaches similar to/different than other community building strategies? Do market/private sector approaches to community change contribute to or detract from civil society? How?

Additional Resources:

WEEK EIGHT

Topic: Faith-Based Initiatives

Recommended Readings:


Case Studies:


Key Questions:
How are faith-based initiatives similar/different from other community building approaches? What are their strengths and weaknesses? What are some of the challenges of integrating faith-based solutions into American civil society?

Additional Resources:

• Roundtable on Religion & Social Welfare Policy at Harvard University, [http://www.religionandsocialpolicy.org/]

• White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, [http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/]

• “Asset-Based Strategies for Faith Communities,” 2002, workbook, [http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/research/rescommunity.html] (see link at bottom of page)

• Public/Private Ventures faith-based initiatives reports, [http://www.ppv.org/indexfiles/faith-index.html]

• Veterans of Hope Project, [http://www.iliff.edu/about_iliff/special_veterans.htm]
PART 3 – COMMUNITY BUILDING IN CONTEXT

WEEK NINE

Topic: Community Building and Public Policy

Recommended Readings:


Case Studies:


Key Questions: What role should the local, state and federal government play in building communities at the grassroots level? What do historic examples teach us? How does public policy influence community building efforts and vice-versa? What is the relationship between public policy and civil society?

Additional Resources:

Civil Society and Community Building
An online course developed by Princeton Project 55

WEEK TEN

Topic: Community Building in the Regional Context

Recommended Readings:


Case Studies:


Key Questions: What does a regional context mean for Putnam’s thesis of social capital? How does regionalism impact traditional community building? Can a regional context address issues of economic and social disparity?

Additional Resources:

- The CitiStates Group http://www.citistates.com, Neal Peirce ’54 website on regionalism.
PART 4 – CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTATION

WEEK ELEVEN

Topic: From Theory to Practice: The Challenge of Public Housing

Recommended Readings:


Key Questions:
What lessons about community building can be learned from the ongoing evolution of public housing policies and programs in the United States? How has the existence or absence of social capital affected public housing programs? Can the Hope VI program respond to past failures and future needs for public housing? Why or why not?

Additional Resources:

- See syllabus and annotated bibliography developed by Susanne Seitinger ’01 and Laura Lazarus ’88 at <http://www.project55.org/asc_overview.html>.
WEEK TWELVE

Topic: Race/Diversity

Recommended Readings:


Case Studies:


Key Questions:
How does racism affect the creation of social capital and the building of community? What are some of the challenges of multi-racial collaboration and action?

Additional Resources:

Week Thirteen

**Topic:** Accountability, Effectiveness and Evaluation

**Recommended Readings:**


**Case Studies:**


**Key Questions/Ideas:**

What are the strengths and limitations of outcome measurement? How do funders’ expectations about evaluation influence program strategies? How do communities define success? Can the development of social capital and the creation of communities be measured?

**Additional Resources:**

WEEK FOURTEEN

Topic: Conclusion: Leadership for a Civil Society

Recommended Readings:


Case Studies:


Key Questions/Ideas:
What are some of the challenges of leadership today? What are effective leadership strategies? What can we do to promote civil society individually and collectively?

Additional Resources:

SUPPLEMENTAL READING FOR CHICAGO “PLUNGE” WEEKEND

**A valuable portion of this online course involved an optional 2 day “hands-on” experience in Chicago. Participants made site visits to innovative nonprofit organizations in North Lawndale, a neighborhood located on the west side of Chicago which is featured throughout this course. Attendees also explored course themes further with Chicago practitioners and fellow course participants. In future courses this feature could be adapted to any locale.**

The following readings were recommended to course participants who planned to attend the Chicago “Plunge” Weekend.

**Topic:** Comprehensive Community Initiatives – North Lawndale

**Case Studies:**

**Key Questions:**
How is social capital evident or lacking in North Lawndale? What approaches have been used to build community in North Lawndale? Who have been the key players? What have been the major challenges? What lessons can we learn from North Lawndale?

**Guest Preceptors:** At the weekend.

**Additional Resources:**