

**The University of British Columbia**  
**Sociology 354B 002: Community – Course Syllabus**

<b>Term 2:</b> Winter 2016	<b>Credits:</b> 3
<b>Time:</b> Tuesday/Thursday 3:30-5:00 pm <b>Room:</b> TBA	<b>Prerequisites:</b> Sociology 100
<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Donna Lester-Smith <b>Contact:</b> E: through <a href="http://connect.ubc.ca">http://connect.ubc.ca</a> <b>TA:</b> Krystal Lillico-Ouachour <a href="mailto:klillico-ouachour@hotmail.com">klillico-ouachour@hotmail.com</a> <b>TA:</b> Tiffany Eng <a href="mailto:tiffany.eng.14@gmail.com">tiffany.eng.14@gmail.com</a>	<b>Texts:</b> 1) McKnight, J. and Block, P. (2012). <i>The Abundant Community: Awakening the Powers of Families and Neighbourhoods</i> 2) Lebaron, M. and Venashri, P. (2006). <i>Conflict across Cultures: A Unique Experience of Bridging Differences</i>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Our consumer society constantly tells us that we are insufficient and that we must purchase what we need from specialists and systems outside the community. We are trained to become consumers and clients, not citizens and neighbors. Like most things in the social sciences, community does not fit into a nice neat package. A "community" in some senses may not even have a physical location, but be demarcated by being a group of people with a common interest. However, the "community" which is the object of a mobilizer's attention, is usually one with a physical geographic location, and those inhabiting it. We need our neighbors and sense of community to be healthy, produce jobs, protect the land, and care for the elderly and those on the margin. But our consumer society constantly tells us that we must purchase what we need from specialists and systems outside the community. We are trained to become consumers and clients, not citizens and neighbors. This course takes a thoughtful, sociological look at how this situation came about, what maintains it, and the crippling effect it has had on our families, our communities, and our environment. Each neighborhood has people with the gifts and talents needed to provide for our prosperity and peace of mind - we can each assume roles that can reweave the social fabric that has been unraveled by consumerism and its belief that however much we own, it is not enough.

**LEARNING GOALS:** Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify important sociological factors in processes affecting communities and environments from their ideological, institutional, and interpersonal stances of what makes a community
- Apply critical thinking and self-reflective skills to the analysis of historical, present-day, and future communities of practice (eg. urban, rural, sub-communities within communities, local, and distant)
- Recognize and appraise the various ways that perceptions, experiences, and meanings impact one's understandings and expectations of the communities in which we live and may seek to transform
- Strengthen their ability to communicate their sociologically-based analysis in writing.

**COURSE FORMAT:**

Students learn in a variety of ways such as through the exchange of ideas and critical thinking. It is said that students retain 10% of what they read; 20% of what they hear; 30% of what they see; 50% of what they see and hear; 70% of what they say; and, 90% of that they say as they do something. Therefore, interaction between students, along with the instructor, is directed at promoting strong learning and critical thinking skills. Critical thinking is the process of independent thinking, not just memorizing or reiterating what someone else has written or said about a topic. It involves more than just "reporting." Critical thinking means evaluating and critiquing information and pondering how different ideas fit together. Students are expected to share ideas and opinions in class and via assignments posted on Blackboard. The format of this course is based on the premise that students learn from each other. Lectures do not promote active learning, and will be used sparingly, and as guidance. Thus, the success of class depends on students as much as the instructor. Students are encouraged to make the most of their learning experience!

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## **COURSE EVALUATIONS and ASSIGNMENT DETAILS:**

Final marks in this class are based on 100 percentage points and are divided as follows:

1. Class Engagement (10%)
2. Group Chapter Facilitations (10%)
2. Critical Reflections (50%)
3. Research Paper (30%)

**1. Class Engagement (10%):** Class sessions provide students the opportunity to actively participate through asking questions and making thoughtful contributions. Attentiveness is critical to student learning; effective preparation for class includes completing a thorough reading of the assigned texts, taking note of questions you have about the readings, and offering examples that could illustrate the concepts being articulated. You are encouraged to engage in classroom learning activities (e.g., discussion questions, thoughtful discourse, critiquing research, sharing resources, and responding to readings in different ways). Engagement can also include sharing your ideas about the course material with the instructor, which you can do by forwarding different news and popular culture texts that exemplify and illustrate the themes of the course. While attendance at all classes is the basis for participation, marks will not be assigned for simply being present in class. Those who do not prepare, attend, and participate will receive a lower engagement mark for the course.

**2. Group Chapter Facilitations to Class (10%):** To be explained later.

**3. Critical Reflections (50%):** Each student will submit a total of 5 online critical reflections (worth 10% each) on Connect (<http://connect.ubc.ca>). All submissions must be uploaded as a Microsoft Office Word Document file with your last name, first name, and student number at the top of the document, and your name and assignment name in the upload subject/heading box (for example: Last-name, First-name, Critical Reflection #1). They must also be typed in 12-point Times font; double-spaced; page-numbered; and with American Psychological Association (APA) style reference citations. These assignments (each 300-500 words and one or more paragraphs in length) will be your individual, critically reflective responses at various points throughout the course. This is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your ability to examine course content in both critical and personal ways. The reflective question for each of the 5 entries is: "What information from the previous few classes (discussions, readings, visiting guests, and/or film clips) has influenced you the most; in what ways; and, for what reasons?" In other words: "What course content from the last few weeks stands out the most for you, why, and how?" Critical entries will be evaluated on your ability to use critical thinking and reflective skills as you review our class discussions so far, and examine a topic relevant to course content. This assessment includes your ability to recognize and appraise the various ways that perceptions, experiences, and meanings impact your understanding of parent-child family relations and culture. Critical Reflections may be submitted before the due date; however, late submissions will be penalized. **Due Dates: Fridays January 15<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, February 12<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup>.**

**4. Research Paper (30%):** This assignment has 2 parts to it, and you will submit them both via Connect. **Part A (10%)** is intended to help you plan for your final paper assignment by organizing your thoughts, topical themes, and helpful resources. Part A, your Research Plan, will include: (1) A description of your chosen thesis—a centrally clear and concise topic, argument, or purpose of the paper; (2) An annotated bibliography of 4-5 scholarly resources that will inform and support your paper's thesis; and, (3) An outline or overview of your paper's anticipated content/layout. This assignment will consist of: a cover page with your name, student number, course title, and suggested paper title; 2-3 pages of annotated bibliographical content; and a final page of your essay's anticipated outline. This assignment will be in 12-point Times font; double-spaced; page-numbered; and with American Psychological Association (APA) style reference citations. **Part A - Due Date: Friday, Feb 26<sup>th</sup>.**

**Part B (20%)** will be your academic paper complete with: a cover page with your name, student number, course title, and decided paper title; 6 pages of essay content (3 double-sided); and a closing page of listed references. This assignment will be in 12-point Times font; double-spaced; page-numbered; and with American Psychological Association (APA) style reference citations. Part A and B assignments may be submitted before the due date; however, late submissions will be penalized. **Part B - Due Date: Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup>.**

**All written assignments will be graded on:** (1) Content; (2) Organization; (3) Style; and, (4) Creativity.