Extra Credit Assignments

These extra assignments help the student see how the theories, concepts, and readings are translated into practice. The assignments are (A) to observe a community practice meeting, (B) interview a community practitioner, (C) interview an administrator, and (D) observe an administrative meeting. Each part is worth a maximum of 15 extra points.

A: Observe a community practice meeting

Attend a community meeting of your choice. Turn in your answer to the following questions. Your answers need not be typed, but they must be organized and readable (maximum 1 page single spaced, typed, two pages handwritten). Organize your answer by question and give the question number. Where possible, tie the answers to concepts we covered in class readings, discussion, and videos, etc.

1. Identify meeting type, purpose, participants, & how meeting type and purpose influenced what occurred.
2. How the meeting room/participants were physically arranged and why, for example, did the setting match the purpose?
3. List several forms of power displayed in the meeting? What was the basis of this power, for example, expertise? How was power demonstrated or used?
4. What methods were used to arrive at a decision?
5. Given your experience with chairing a meeting in this class, cite some things that you think the chair did well and some things that the chair could improve.
6. Using the Benne & Sheats reading (see end of assignment), identify what roles were played and when. What roles were not played, why, and should they have been?
7. Was the meeting successful, why or why not? What criteria determine success?
8. Add a question/observation of your own.

B: Interview a community practitioner

Interview someone who, as one of their primary job responsibilities, views the community as client. Focus only on the community practice part of their job, not the administrative or direct practice parts. They need not work in the human services. Turn in answers to the following questions. Your answers need not be typed, but they must be organized and readable (maximum 1 page single spaced, typed, 1” margins, or two pages handwritten). Organize your answer by question and indicate the question number. Where possible, tie the answers to concepts we have covered in class readings, discussion, and videos, etc.

1. The person's organization, title, and location in the organizational structure.
2. What community tasks the person does during a typical week?
3. What community approaches does s/he use, e.g., action, development, planning, other?
4. What makes someone is a “good” community practitioner. For example, what physical, social and emotional characteristics make a good practitioner? What training is necessary? What is the most important lesson they have learned?
5. Since assessment is key to successful intervention, can they describe a recent assessment s/he conducted? How was their assessment process different from that followed in class?
6. What theories/theorists influence their practice? Can they give examples where theory guided practice?
7. Does a male community practitioner do things differently than a female practitioner, a minority differently than a non-minority? If yes, what is different and why? Is there an age at which one's age becomes a negative factor in their work, i.e., an age when one is “over the hill.”?
8. Describe the career path of a typical community practitioner, for example, in what position and type of organization does one start and finish one's career?
9. What is the salary range of people in similar positions? What rewards other than salary exist in his/her job?

C. Interview an administrator

Interview someone who, as his or her primary job responsibility, views the organization as client. Focus only on the administration part of their job. They need not work in the human services. Turn in answers to the following questions (maximum 1 page single spaced typed, 1” margins and 10-point size). Organize your answer by question.

1. The person's organization, title, major duties, and location in the organizational structure.
2. What the person does during a typical week?
3. What makes someone is a “good” administrative practitioner. For example, what physical, social and emotional characteristics make a good practitioner? What training is necessary?
4. How responsible is s/he for the agency's success or failure? How do client outcomes impact manager performance evaluations, e.g., describe the process that relates client outcome to evaluations?
5. What theories or theorists have influences their practice and can they give an example where theory guided practice?
6. Does a male practitioner do things differently than a female practitioner, a minority differently than a non-minority? If yes, what and why? Is there an age when one's age becomes a negative factor in your position?
7. Describe the career path of an administrator, i.e., in what position and type of organization does one start and finish one's career?
8. What is the salary range of people working in similar positions, what rewards (other than salary) exist in their job, and what is the most important lesson they have learned?

D. Observe an administrative meeting.

Attend an administrative meeting of your choice. Turn in your answers to the following questions (maximum 1 page single spaced, 1” margins and 10-point size).

1. Identify the meeting type, purpose, participants, and how the meeting type and purpose influenced what occurred.
2. How the meeting room/participants were physically arranged and why, e.g., did the setting match the purpose?
3. List several forms of power displayed in the meeting? What was the basis of this power, e.g., expertise? How was power demonstrated or used?
4. What methods were used to arrive at a decision?
5. Given your experience with chairing a meeting in this class, cite some things that you think the chair did well and some things that the chair could improve.
6. Using the Benne & Sheats reading (see end assignments), identify what roles were played and when. What roles were not played, why, and should they have been?
7. Was the meeting successful, why or why not? What criteria determine success?
8. Add a question/observation of your own.

The assignments will be graded on how well your analysis answers the questions and how well you related the meeting to concepts covered in class. To reference any reading on the syllabus, use the last name of the first author and the page number in parentheses, e.g., (Saleebey, p. 69).

According to Kenneth Benne & Paul Sheets, Journal of Social Issues, Vol IV, No 2, Spring 1948, the task roles that people play in a meeting are: initiator-contributor, information seeker, opinion seeker, information giver, opinion giver, elaborator, coordinator, orienter-summarizer, evaluator-critic, energizer, and procedural technician. The maintenance roles are encourager, harmonizer, compromiser, gate-keeper, commentator, and follower. The individual roles are aggressor, blocker, recognition-seeker, self-confessor, dominator, and special interest pleader.