

## **MCD5028 Civic Engagement and the Participatory Process in Community Development**

University of Detroit Mercy School of Architecture  
Master of Community Development Program

Summer 2019  
Tuesdays 6-8:30PM  
3 credit hours

Instructor: Ceara O’Leary, olearycm@udmercy.edu  
Office hours by appointment via email

### **SYLLABUS**

#### **Course Description**

This seminar examines the recent history, theory and practice of community engagement in design and development. Coursework will emphasize effective methods for civic engagement and include case studies and guest speakers from Detroit and beyond. Civic engagement enables communities to directly participate in decision-making impacting their neighborhoods, resulting in more responsive and responsible projects. A robust system of civic engagement contributes to community capacity building and long-term change. An examination of the history and theory of civic engagement in community development and design will commence with the era of Urban Renewal and Civil Rights. Strategies and principles for effective engagement will draw from historical precedent as well as local and national projects, including current efforts in Detroit. Readings will include both case studies and process documentation. This course seeks to enable architects and community developers to be more responsible professionals by unpacking *how* and *why* civic engagement strengthens community development and design processes. The objective of the course is to prepare MCD and Architecture students as they embark on research, design and development projects that are rooted in communities by equipping students with meaningful methods for civic engagement.

#### **Course Objectives**

- Gain an understanding of the recent history and evolution of community engagement in community development, design and planning.
- Learn how and why community engagement adds value to community development projects and processes.
- Gain exposure to a range of community engagement practices and processes.
- Begin to build a diverse toolkit of engagement tactics for different communities.
- Develop community engagement strategies for academic and professional practice.

#### **Course Structure**

The course is divided into three sections: Setting the Stage, Responsible and Effective Engagement, and Application & Intersection. These sections align with course content and assignments. While the course will include some lecture, particularly at the outset and from guest speakers, much of the coursework will focus on student learning through readings, research, and workshoping assignments. This course requires that all participants engage in active listening, speak honestly, ask questions, and stay present.

#### **Readings**

Readings will be assigned in class and will be posted to Blackboard. The schedule lists preliminary readings, subject to change. Additional readings will be assigned throughout the course of the semester. Readings draw from both the community engagement “canon” and more contemporary voices, from

both academics and practitioners. Many of the readings are rooted in the fields of design and planning. For every class session, two students will be assigned to lead the reading discussion, which should unpack the readings and apply them to the course content. The instructor may provide guiding questions. Creativity is encouraged, as is focusing on the reading material and relevant lessons.

### **Assignments**

This course includes a total of five assignments. Three are more significant assignments requiring substantive research and interim deliverables. Two are smaller assignments, which require some research and also include brief presentations and write ups. Details will be provided per assignment.

### **Course Policies**

1. Late assignments will be accepted up to one week after they are due. One letter grade may be deducted for every day an assignment is turned in late.
2. Regular attendance and punctuality are expected. You are only allowed one excused absence and must contact the instructor before class. Unexcused absences will impact your grade. Please do not use your phone in class or use your computer for anything other than course notes and materials.
3. The course will use Blackboard to issue assignments and communicate updates. Please make sure your preferred contact information is recorded properly.
4. Students are expected to fully participate in all class activities, including readings discussions and conversations with guest speakers.

### **Assignments and Grading**

Assignments will be graded based on the following criteria:

1. Articulates a thoughtful and thorough response to the project prompt.
2. Exhibits an understanding of class materials, critically integrating readings and class discussions.
3. Exhibits correct spelling and grammar. (Proofread your work before handing it in!)
4. Follows assignment directions.
5. Cites all references correctly using the MLA format.

Attendance, Participation + Reading Discussions – 25%

*You are expected to come to each class fully prepared to discuss the given topic. This includes completing the required readings, contributing to class discussions, and leading reading discussions.*

Assignment 1 – 15%

Assignment 2 – 10%

Assignment 3 – 20%

Assignment 4 – 10%

Assignment 5 – 20%

*Grades for assignments include both process/development and the final product.*

### **Grading Scale**

95.0 – 100 A

90.0 – 94.9 A-

87.0 – 89.9 B+

83.0 – 86.9 B

80.0 – 82.9 B-

77.0 – 79.9 C+

73.0 – 76.9 C

70.0 - 72.9 C-

### **Compliance with Detroit Mercy Student-Related Policies**

Students of the University of Detroit Mercy are expected to comply with all policies and practices established by the College and/or University. Listed below are a few specific Detroit Mercy policies; however the list is not intended to be exhaustive. A complete listing of all Detroit Mercy policies can be found in the Detroit Mercy Graduate Catalog and Detroit Mercy Student Handbook. Students are expected to be familiar with all Detroit Mercy student-related policies.

### **Detroit Mercy Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity**

As members of an academic community engaged in the pursuit of truth and with a special concern for values, students are expected to conform to a high standard of honesty and integrity in their academic work. The fundamental assumption under which the University operates is that work submitted by a student is a product of his/her own efforts.

Among the most serious academic offenses is plagiarism, submitting the style of another author or source without acknowledgment or formal documentation. Plagiarism occurs when specific phrases or entire passages, whether a sentence, paragraph or longer excerpt, are incorporated into one's own writing without quotation marks or documentation. One also plagiarizes by paraphrasing the work of another, that is, retaining another writer's ideas and structure without documentation.

Students are advised always to set off another writer's exact words by quotation marks, with appropriate references. Students avoid plagiarism by concentrating on their own words and ideas and by fully crediting others' words and ideas when they find their way into the writing. Whenever in doubt, cite the source.

Students that purchase essays from other students or agencies or who copy from one another or from prohibited sources, commit the most serious type of academic dishonesty. The consequences of plagiarism, or any act of academic dishonesty, may range from failure on an assignment or in a course to dismissal from the University.

### **Detroit Mercy Policy on Incomplete Work**

A petition for a grade of "I," Incomplete, is required and may be approved or disapproved at the discretion of the instructor. This grade is only appropriate at the end of the term when the majority of the course requirements have been completed but for serious reason the student is unable to complete the remaining course requirements. Students may not sit in the class in a future semester to complete the work of the original course. Faculty are required to enter a Last Date of Attendance when an "I" grade is issued at the end of the semester. Failure to remain in the course through the end of the semester may impact a student's financial aid eligibility for that course.

Graduate regulations require that the work be completed no later than April 1 for fall term courses and December 1 for courses in winter or summer terms. The instructor, the department, or the college may establish earlier dates for the completion of incomplete work. Students should acquaint themselves with the deadlines established by their programs. Students who fail to complete the course by the established deadlines lose the right to complete the course. The grade of "I" remains the grade of record on the permanent transcript. Some colleges/schools will issue a grade of "F" for failure to complete the "I" grade by the deadline.

Students with an excused absence from a final examination must complete the examination within two weeks of the scheduled date, unless the appropriate college administrator permits a further extension of the deadline in writing.

### **Available Support Services**

The University of Detroit Mercy has a wide array of support services available to all students that include the libraries, media centers, tutoring and writing centers. The Detroit Mercy Student Handbook contains information regarding location and hours of operation of the University's support services. Students are encouraged to utilize the support services provided by the University, as needed. Learning and Writing Centers: The Learning Center provides tutoring on the ground floor of the Student Center. Help with reading comprehension and writing skills is available in the Writing Center in Briggs. 225.

### **Disability Support Services and Accommodations**

It is very important for students to be proactive with regard to requesting their disability accommodations every semester. Students are encouraged to have open communication with their professors. However, it is never a requirement for students to disclose their disabilities to anyone except the Assistant Director of Disability Support Services, and only if they wish to request accommodations. You must be registered with Disability Support Services and your faculty must receive official notification from the DSS office before they can make arrangements for your accommodations.

If you need an accommodation because of a disability, have emergency medical information to share, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please contact Laura M. Bagdady, Assistant Director of Disability and Accessibility Support Services at [bagdadlm@udmercy.edu](mailto:bagdadlm@udmercy.edu) or 313-993-1158. Her office is in the Student Success Center on the 3rd floor of the McNichols Campus Library, Room 328.

### **Title IX**

University of Detroit Mercy is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment for all students. Detroit Mercy's Policy Prohibiting Sex and Gender-based Discrimination applies to sex and gender-based harassment, sexual exploitation, sexual assault, attempted sexual assault, intimate partner violence/dating violence, stalking, cyberstalking, and retaliation.

Students are encouraged to report potential sex and gender-based discrimination policy violations to Marjorie Lang, the University's Title IX coordinator. The Title IX office is located on the 5th floor of the Fisher Administration Center on the McNichols campus. Potential complainants (students making a complaint) and potential respondents (students responding to a complaint) may contact Ms. Lang who is available to assist them in understanding all of their options including resources and referrals on and off campus. Students may contact her at 313.993.1802 or [langma@udmercy.edu](mailto:langma@udmercy.edu). Students may view the University Policy Prohibiting Sex and Gender-based Discrimination as well as University Title IX Investigation and Resolution Procedure at [www.udmercy.edu/titleix](http://www.udmercy.edu/titleix).

### **Student Course Evaluations**

Student course evaluations are an important source of information for curricular and teaching improvement. As such, all students are strongly urged to complete an online course evaluation. Course evaluations are completed during the week preceding final exams each semester. Information is provided to students through email explaining how to complete the evaluation online.

## CLASS SCHEDULE (subject to change)

### Section 1: Setting the Stage

- Week 1: May 7** Introductions, Course Foundations + Personal Reflection  
**Assignment 1 Issued:** Public Participation + Community Planning Meetings  
**Reading:**  
Dick & Rick: A visual Primer for Social Impact Design  
[http://welcometocup.org/file\\_columns/0000/0789/dick\\_rick.pdf](http://welcometocup.org/file_columns/0000/0789/dick_rick.pdf)
- Week 2: May 14** Modern History of Public Participation  
**[Mini] Assignment 2 Issued:** Engagement Process Case Study  
**Readings Due:**  
Alexis de Tocqueville, *Associations in American Life, Democracy in America* (1935-40).  
Paul Davidoff, "Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* (1965).  
Sherry Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* (1969).  
Henry Sanoff, "Participation Purposes," *Community Participation Methods in Design and Planning* (2000), p1-13.
- Week 3: May 21** Engagement Today: Panel discussion with Detroit engagement professionals  
Informal Peer Presentations  
[Mini] Assignment 2 Check In  
**Readings Due:**  
Carol Zou, "Engaged Participation," *Ethical Redevelopment Salon Sessions: Written Reflections* (2016).  
Kofi Boone, "Designing Equity: What's Next in Community Engagement?" *ASLA Professional Practice Networks' Blog* (2016).  
Eastside Community Network, *Neighborhoods First Engagement Model*  
<http://ecn-detroit.org/neighborhoods-first-engagement-model/>

### Part 2: Responsible and Effective Engagement

- Week 4: May 28** Listening, Privilege + Partnerships  
**[Mini] Assignment 2 Due:** Presentations  
**Readings Due:**  
Chapter Intro & Shalini Agrawal and Shreya Shah, "Positioning Yourself on the Spectrum of Power and Privilege," *Design as Democracy: Techniques for Collective Creativity* (2017).  
Peggy McIntoch, *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* (1990).
- Week 5: June 4** **No meeting.**  
**INSTEAD: Saturday June 8, Community Organizing Workshop 9am-12pm**
- Week 6: June 11** Engagement Tactics  
Guest Speaker: Charles Cross  
**Assignment 1 Due:** Discussion

**Assignment 3 Issued:** Engagement Theme Research Project

**Readings Due:**

Pitera + Heximer, "Mosaics & Tapestries," *Syncopating the Urban Landscape*

Theresa Hwang, Participatory Design Toolkit

Optional: Detroit Future City Civic Engagement Chapter

**Week 7: June 18**

Unpacking Engagement Tactics

*In-Class Activity: Workshop engagement scenario*

**Assignment 3:** Research topic + list of sources due

**[Mini] Assignment 4 Issued:** Tactic Case Studies

**Week 8: June 25**

**OR Week 9: July 2**

Workshop Assignments 3 & 4

**Assignment 3:** Outline due

**Readings Due:**

Karen Umemoto, "Walking in Another's Shoes: Epistemological Challenges in Participatory Planning," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* (2001).

Randolph Hester, TBD.

*Part 3: Application & Intersection (topic schedule subject to change due to speaker availability)*

**Week 10: July 9**

Facilitation + Conflict

Guest Speaker: Francis Grunow

**[Mini] Assignment 4 Due:** Presentations

**Readings Due:**

John Forester, *Journal of the American Planning Association*.

Ronald Heifetz, Excerpt, *Leadership without Easy Answers* (1998).

**Week 11: July 16**

Storytelling

Guest speaker: Cornetta Lane

**Assignment 3 Due**

**Assignment 5 Issued:** Engagement & Evaluation Plan

**Readings Due:**

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, The Danger of a Single Story

Detroit Narrative Agency, Begin by Listening

**Week 12: July 23**

Evaluation

Guest speaker: Madhavi Reddy

Workshop Assignment 5 in class

**Assignment 5:** teams, Q&A, initial framing

**Readings Due:**

Madhavi Reddy, Gabe Neustein, Heather Newman, Melissa Arkuski, *Am I Doing this Right?: A guide to assess your community engagement work* (2017).

Equitable Evaluation Framing Paper

**Week 13: July 30**

Topic TBD, by class interest

**Assignment 5:** Preliminary Draft Due

**Week 14: August 6**

Final Presentations + Evaluations

**Assignment 5 Due**

DUE DATES:

**June 18 - Research topic and list of 4-5 sources due**

Your research topic may be informed by the available materials you are able to find on any given theme. So far this semester we have already read from a variety of resources that will be helpful. Once you are narrowing in on your topic, feel free to contact me for further guidance. Sources should address both specific case studies as well as more general practices/processes. Include real books!

**June 25 or July 2 (when we have class) - Outline due**

This should be a detailed outline of your final report that makes clear the report structure, flow and content areas. This should be clearly informed by your research with specific references and content, to be further developed as you write. Outline elements may include (in much further detail):

- Introduction
- Overview of the issue/theme
- Historical milestones on the topic
- Different approaches to the topic
- Case studies/best practices
  - o Who, what, where, when, why
  - o How was the topic addressed in the example?
  - o What worked?
  - o What did not work?
- Strategies, tools and other methods extracted from examples
- *Detailed analysis* of strategies and challenges associated with the topic
- Lessons for practitioners in the field
- Conclusion

2 pages single spaced

**July 16 - Final report due**

The final report should be a fully fleshed out documentation of your research and analysis, reflecting on your outline development, and incorporating feedback received throughout all project stages.

8-10 pages, double-spaced, 12pt font

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### **Assignment 1: Public Participation + Community Planning Meetings**

In the next month, attend two different types of public meetings:

1. A public meeting that is part of the City of Detroit public process, such as a City Council meeting hearing or committee meeting, Historic District Commission meeting, and/or other commission meeting. Comparable meetings at the State or County level or in other cities also qualify.
2. A community meeting that is part of a City of Detroit neighborhood planning process or a community-led planning process. *Block club or other community meetings also qualify.*

Write an evaluation of your experience, including the following considerations:

- What was the format of the meeting?
- What was discussed?
- Did the format accommodate the content?
- Who presented information?
- Who represented the public?
- What were the main engagement activities?
- What was the format for public comments/feedback?
- Was there back and forth dialog/sharing of information?
- How were public comments received?
- Was there a dialog?
- Were there plans to follow up?
- What other observations do you have?
- What recommendations do you have?

*Do not merely answer these questions, but rather write a cohesive and well-organized essay, including a summary of the meetings, an analysis of engagement strategies, and relevant lessons.*

4-5 pages, double-spaced, 11-12pt font

Please use proper grammar and spelling and MLA citations for all assignments. Please proofread.

**Due June 11.** Come prepared to discuss in class.

#### **Resources**

<http://www.detroitmi.gov/Government/City-Council/City-Council-Sessions>

<http://www.detroitmi.gov/Government/Boards>

<http://detroitmi.gov/Calendar-Events>

<https://detroitmi.gov/departments/planning-and-development-department>

#### **Possible Upcoming Meetings**

Eastside Community Network  
CDAD/MCR Events  
Detroit Future City  
Fiat Chrysler  
Restorin' East Warren  
Wayne State

#### **City Planning Areas**

Greater/North Corktown  
Russell Woods/Nardin Park  
Eastern Market  
Warrendale/Cody Rouge  
East Jefferson  
...



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### **[Mini] Assignment 2: Community Engagement Process Case Study**

Read about and review an example of an engagement *process* from Detroit or elsewhere. Discuss who ran it, who participated, what strategies were used, what the goals were, and what it achieved. The intent of this assignment is to expose us all to more examples of contemporary engagement practices and processes and to start cataloging case studies and best practices in community engagement. Case study options will be presented and discussed in class. Reference a minimum of two sources, at least one primary source. Do not reference Wikipedia. Note: this assignment is not intended to be a critique.

**Due May 28.**

Written:

Use the Case Study Template: 1-2 pages, single-spaced

Presentation:

Use the Case Study Template:

Five slides with summary content AND IMAGES!:

- 1 Who, what, where, when
- 2 Goals
- 3 Stakeholders
- 4 Strategies
- 5 Outcomes
- 6 Lessons Learned
- 7 References

*Possible case studies:*

Lower Eastside Action Plan, Detroit, 2012

Neighborhoods First Engagement Model

Detroit Works Project Long Term Planning, Detroit, 2012

Create NED

Seattle Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide

Detroit's Citizen District Councils

We Stay/Nos Quedamos (Bronx)

PUSH Buffalo

Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative

City of Detroit Neighborhood Planning Process (Jefferson-Chalmers, etc.)

*Other organizations to look into:*

Opportunities Industrialization Center

Harlem Children's Zone

Hester Street Collaborative

Center for Urban Pedagogy

*Other case studies encouraged.*

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### **Assignment 3: Engagement Theme Research Project**

This project is an in-depth research inquiry, presentation and critical paper on one aspect or theme within community engagement. This project could focus on: how multiple organizations address engagement around one issue; one method of engagement deployed in different places; and/or major themes in engagement practices. The intent is for each student to investigate an area of community engagement of interest and share their body of knowledge with the class. All themes should include specific examples and also explore general lessons, strategies and tactics associated with the engagement topic. Selected themes should be investigated in terms of:

- a broad contemporary understanding of how organizations and communities are approaching community engagement through the thematic lens with examples from several locations;
- examples of case studies from communities effectively engaging around the issue;
- takeaway lessons, strategies and tactics that can be compiled and drawn from the examples and processes researched.

Your research should address the following considerations (and more!):

- Who, what, where, when, why.
- What are the objectives and how are they met (generally and specific examples)?
- What is key to successful engagement in this realm?
- What are pitfalls and challenges?
- How does the engagement issue vary across geographies, constituencies, etc.?
- What makes this issue unique in terms of basic characteristics, opportunities and challenges?
- How is this issue responsive to local communities?
- What is the history of engagement in this community/context?
- Reference organizations and methods from multiple places.
- Reference writings and theory from this course.

Possible topics include, but are by no means limited to, the following:

- *Youth engagement methods* and best practices
- *Human Centered Design*
- *Methods for engaging senior citizens, immigrants, rural populations, and/or other specific demographic groups*
- *Participatory budgeting* as an engagement strategy, and the tactics that ensure effective and inclusive processes
- The innovative and effective *use of technology* for meaningful engagement.
- *Placemaking and engagement through arts and culture*
- The *history of civic participation in Detroit*, including effective methods, processes and organizations over time
- Etc.....

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### **[Mini] Assignment 4: Tactic Case Study**

Read about and review one type of creative community engagement tactic. Discuss the intention, application and efficacy. Find and document a *real-world* example of the tactic in use. Stray away from meetings as a tactic, but feel free to focus on a *specific innovative meeting activity*. The intent of this assignment is to expose us all to more examples of engagement tactics and gain experience evaluating their impact. Reference a minimum of two sources.

### **Due July 9.**

Written: Use the Tactic Template on Blackboard: 1-2 pages, single-spaced

Presentation slides (use template on Blackboard) with summary content AND IMAGES!:

- 1 What is it?
- 2 Where has it been done before?
- 3 What are the goals?
- 4 How does it work?
- 5 What are related lessons/takeaways?
- 6 References

Case study options will be discussed in class. Several sources for tactics to consider are available in class and in the assignment folder on Blackboard.

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### **Assignment 5: Engagement & Evaluation Plan**

Apply lessons from this class and create an engagement plan that relates to one of your projects (we can discuss). The plan will include both a set of engagement strategies as well as an evaluation strategy for ensuring that your efforts are successful. This could be your MCD capstone project, studio project, or work project. If you do not have a relevant project, we will develop an alternate scenario using a real Detroit project underway. You may work in a team if appropriate to the project.

The plan should include:

- Who are you trying to engage? Why? Provide background information on the communities you hope to work with.
- Engagement goals.
- Strategies to reach those goals.
- Set of tactics that support your strategies and are specific to your project and community. Include a description of each tactic, why you have chosen it, and what you hope to achieve. You may come up with more tactics than you are reasonably able to implement.
- Engagement timeline.
- Draft engagement materials – surveys, posters, flyers, agendas, etc. (TBD based on plan.)
- Evaluation plan including ways to measure impact and metrics for success for the process as a whole as well as specific tactics. This may take the form of a series of questions with metrics tied to both strategies and tactics. Include a written description of the rationale for your evaluation approach. Remember that you are developing a plan to evaluate the *engagement process*, not the project itself.
- List of additional related resources for community members.
- No page specifications.

**July 23 – Project ideas/initial framing + teams due, Q&A in class**

**July 30 – Preliminary Draft Plan Due (outline form)**

**August 6 – Final Written Plan & 10 Minute Overview Presentation Due**