

PHLT 238/PSCI 216: Spring 2023
Environmental Health and Justice in the Rochester Community
Tues 2-3:15; Thus 2-4:40 in LeChase Room 184

Instructor: Katrina Smith Korfmacher, PhD
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Course Description: Environmental justice is a key to health equity. This course explores community problem-solving in the face of decades of policy, economic, and social forces that have created and sustained patterns of inequity. There are many ways to approach environmental justice. This class uses the conceptual frame of “Policies, systems, and environments” (PSE); changing the institutions, rules, norms, and practices that drive social determinants of health. Particularly in the environmental field, these efforts focus on how communities, researchers, and government can collaborate to promote health equity. We will focus on the role of research, analysis, and data in informing community solutions. This course will provide students with the tools to use their multidisciplinary skills to promote PSE change through engagement with environmental justice issues in Rochester, New York.

This course provides students with a methodological, conceptual, and experiential foundation in addressing problems at the local level. Students will have the opportunity to interact with local people, places, and programs through community visits and independent projects. Students will engage in benchmarking research, practice diverse data collection strategies, and gain experience integrating multidisciplinary information. A semester-long community engaged project will leverage analysis, research, and synthesis to address a locally-identified environmental justice need.

Prerequisites: Not open to first year students. Prerequisites; PHLT 101, 116, or 102; or by permission of instructor for students with significant policy, community change, or environmental background.

Learning Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Define environmental justice in the context of urban revitalization in the U.S.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of science in community-engaged policy processes
- Analyze institutional, structural, and cultural barriers to collaborative problem-solving.

Student Evaluation: Students’ process and products will be evaluated accordingly to determine the final grade for the course:

- Module synthesis products (3 short papers)

Several chapters will be assigned from:

- Korfmacher, Katrina Smith. 2019. Bridging Silos: Collaborating for Environmental Health and Justice in Urban Communities. MIT. FREE DOWNLOAD:

Module synthesis products: Students will produce three synthetic products (short papers) for each section of the course (10% each, 30% total).

Independent project: Equitable Climate Refuge project (product, report and presentation): Each student will undertake an independent project to help Rochester implement to share their findings with the community, write a 5-10 page report analyzing the issue, and present to the class. (30% total)

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Students and faculty at the University must agree to adhere to high standards of academic honesty in all of the work that we do. Incoming University of Rochester students must read and sign an academic honesty policy statement to indicate that they understand the general principles upon which our work is based. The College Board on Academic Honesty website gives further information on our policies and procedures: www.rochester.edu/college/honesty. Suspected violations will be pursued vigorously following the College's procedures for academic dishonesty. Forms of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following:

Plagiarism: representing someone else's work or writing as your own. *When in doubt, cite the source of your information, and never use someone else's text in your work without putting it in quotes and fully citing.*

Cheating: using unauthorized information or sources for an assignment or exam.

Assisting others in academic dishonesty, falsifying information, or using your work from another course or project as work in this class.

You are encouraged to discuss course readings and assignments with your fellow students. However, all written work must be done independently and not in collaboration with another. I encourage you to consult with the College Writing Center. All graded work will require citations and "Works Cited" following the MLA format.

Tentative Class Schedule (DRAFT as of 1/23/23):

CLASS	Topic
1 (1/12)	Introduction to the course and environmental justice