Community & Social Change
Master’s Program

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES
PROGRAM OVERVIEW
The Master’s degree program in Community & Social Change (C&SC) is designed to prepare a new generation of creative and community-engaged leaders for the human service sector. The vision of the program centers on the philosophy that leaders in community organizations must be knowledgeable in research, theories, and practice. Leaders must be specifically trained to translate knowledge of individual, organizational and community well-being into action, engaging in praxis with the community. The 30-credit master’s program in Community & Social Change is designed to accommodate a variety of students by offering courses in the evening, on weekends and during summer interim sessions. Generally, full-time students are able to complete the program in one to two years.

MISSION STATEMENT
The mission of the program in Community & Social Change is to prepare globally aware leaders, researchers, and agents of change who create, inspire, and engage community organizations to foster well-being in diverse community settings.

VISION
The University of Miami Community and Social Change Master’s Program will be the hub for innovative and applied leadership in community based settings, focusing on well-being and social change.

PURPOSE AND GOALS
The program is designed to enhance our students’ abilities to:

- Lead, administer, and inspire within educational and community settings;
- Lead group processes and consultations;
- Develop and evaluate programs;
- Engage in ethical practices;
- Develop collaborative efforts to address social issues;
- Think and act as advocates and agents of change;
- Think and act in ecological, multicultural, and global ways;
- Understand and utilize theory and research;
- Understand power dynamics, systems, and social sources of well-being;
- Communicate well in oral, written, and electronic media formats
CORE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Theory & Skill-building (12 credits)

- Community Well-being and Change: Theory and Practice – This course is designed to promote an understanding of the factors associated with healthy communities. It provides a comprehensive overview of the relevant skills and theories including: ecological/systems theory/models; community theories (sense of community, social capital, environmental psychology); and critical social theory, social justice, and social determinants of well-being.

- Multicultural Communities in a Globalized Society – This course examines the relationships between diversity, globalization, and community well-being. Topics include the dimensions of human diversity, liberation and oppression; identities and acculturation; immigration and adaptation; gender and power; ableism; children and youth; social inclusion; health disparities; poverty; racism; colonization; inequality; globalization and global dimensions of well-being.

- Development and Change in Community Organizations: Theory and Practice – This course is designed to promote an understanding of the factors associated with effective community organizations. It provides a history of organizations in the human services, the non-profit sector, faith-based organizations, and community agencies. Additional topics include the development and process of groups and teams; community organizational vision and mission development; and community organizational systems and structures.

- Organizing for Social Change – This course examines the meaning of social change and the nature of power, examine past and present social movements, and learn about the methods groups have used to build community and deploy collective power in their efforts to change minds, systems, institutions, policies, communities, and nations. Students will learn critical theories of power, collaboration, systems, and social mobilization, and look at real-life cases to see how theory can be applied in practice. In addition to reflecting on values and assumptions as agents of change, students will develop skills for facilitating engaging discussions, recruiting and motivating community members, developing a shared social analysis, mobilizing resources, and building coalitions for social change.
Research (6 Credits)

- Essentials of Research in the Social and Behavioral Sciences – The study of the standards, methods and techniques of research in the behavioral and social sciences. Brief orientation to quantitative and qualitative procedures used in the analysis and interpretation of research data are emphasized. Students will gain an understanding of applied social science research design and methods approaches consistent with the values and principles associated with conducting effective research in community-based, organizational and policy settings.

- Program Evaluation: Documenting the Impact of Human Services – This course will provide students with a foundation of knowledge and skills on planning and designing an evaluation of a community/human service program. Students will gain basic understanding of evaluation methods, how to develop a logic model in program evaluation, how program evaluation is used in program planning and implementation and will be exposed to a variety of case studies and illustrations from small scale to large scale evaluations.

Electives/Cognate (9 credits)

Elective courses allow for deeper specialization in a student’s area of interest. Depending on a students’ place of residence, they may choose to take additional courses within the School of Education and in other Schools and Colleges at UM, or students can find relevant elective courses at other accredited institutions. Students may take up to 6 credits of approved courses at other institutions subject to their advisor’s approval.

Students may look across the University of Miami graduate programs and courses to develop an “Individualized Cognate”. In consultation with their advisor, students may design an interdisciplinary concentration with specific elective courses that match their interests and needs.

Some current options for cognate areas of study at UM and partner institutions include:

- Public Administration (Department of Political Science)
- Graduate Business Certificate Program (School of Business Administration)
- Measurement and Evaluation (Department of Educational & Psychological Studies)
- Counseling and Therapy (Department of Educational & Psychological Studies)
- Latino Mental Health Counseling (Department of Educational & Psychological Studies)
- Higher Education (Department of Educational & Psychological Studies)
- Early Childhood Studies (University of Florida, College of Education)
- Public Health (School of Medicine)
- Communication & Social Change (School of Communication)
Practicum (3 credits)
The community based field experience is designed to integrate students’ didactic learning with practical experience. Students work with community partners to translate the community, organizational skill-building and leadership tools learned in the classroom to a real-world environment. Community partners in the past have included Children’s Movement of Florida, Radical Partners, Children’s Trust, The Miami Foundation, Educate for Tomorrow and so on. The Practicum offers students an integrated means of getting involved in the Miami-Dade community, developing a professional skill set and network that will be useful after graduation.

The field experience will:
- Involve 120 hours in a community placement for a period of one year, supported by in-class meetings during a core course: Seminar in Community & Social Change.
- Provide opportunities to integrate theory, research, practice, and ethics.
- Provide opportunities to build skills and practical knowledge for social change.
- Culminate with a final paper/project and poster presentation.
CAPTSTONE EXPERIENCE

The purpose of the capstone requirement is to provide a culminating experience that synthesizes student learning and allows students to demonstrate mastery in the field. In consultation with faculty advisors, students choose ONE capstone from among four options:

1. Comprehensive Exam – Students must pass a three-hour written exam of general knowledge of their field of study at the end of the fourth academic term. In the event of failure, the student may petition the department to allow a second attempt at the end of the next academic term. The exam will be administered once a year. It will cover expected knowledge of all graduating C&SC Master’s Degree graduate students. Included in this material are a fundamental understanding of theories of community and social well-being and change, methods and practice of community organizational and community psychology, aspects of multicultural and global communities, research methods, basic statistics and theories and practice of program evaluation.

2. Independent Community-based Project – Students and/or faculty advisors with an established working relationship with existing community organizations may opt to have students develop and conduct an independent community-based project that is conceived and carried out in collaboration with the organization to fulfill or satisfy an existing need. The timeline will vary based on the details of the project with a deadline for completion by the final weeks in the spring term of the student’s final year. In addition to completing the project the student will complete a detailed report that explicitly characterizes the project processes and outcomes in relation to the theories and methods of community psychology. The report will be read and graded by the student’s advisor and a program faculty ‘second reader’ selected for expertise in the project domain. Examples of potential independent projects may include formal program evaluation conducted for a school or community, comprehensive needs assessment and consultation report for a community or educational organization, or a small scale or feasibility-stage program prevention or intervention design and implementation. If the project or report is deemed insufficient for passing, the student may petition the department for one academic term allowance to correct, adapt, or revise the project and/or report.

3. Portfolio – The Capstone Portfolio is the culminating activity of all of the classroom and field experiences, reflective of not only of the student’s experiences, but also of the knowledge, strategies, and skills acquired and/or applied during these experiences. The Capstone Portfolio is an intentional repository of evidence reflecting the scholarly and professional progress, goals, and reflections of the learner; integrating knowledge, theory, and skills from multiple sources. The portfolio is the property of the student and is largely student-driven. Because the portfolio is largely student-directed, the learner is free to demonstrate creativity and artistic design that are not generally allowed by other
forms of assessment. The portfolio can be delivered in hard copy or digital formats.

4. Master’s Thesis – In some cases, students may wish to complete a master’s empirical or theoretical thesis. This option is currently an exception rather than the norm, but the program will support students who have a strong desire to complete a thesis project. Students considering this option should 1) have an existing community project that offers an opportunity for data collection and analysis, 2) have a compelling reason for wanting to complete a master’s thesis (e.g. interest in a Ph.D. program), and 3) have the support of core faculty in the program.

COLLOQUIA, SERIES, SPECIAL SEMINARS, OR CONFERENCES

The Dunspaugh-Dalton Community and Educational Well-Being Research Center, affiliated with the School of Education, offers a monthly Brown-Bag series that gives faculty and students an opportunity to present and discuss current research in the School. Each semester, the Center presents a speaker on a topic relevant to Community and Educational Well-Being. C&SC faculty members, in partnership with faculty from other departments and schools have also been holding a monthly “intellectual forum” on community and social change where topics, theories, issues, and practice are being discussed. Additionally, current graduate students in the department of Educational and Psychological Studies are sponsoring a monthly “Social Justice Breakfast” where students and faculty come together to discuss research and practice related to issues of social justice. These are just a few of the opportunities that will be available to students in the C&SC program.
# COMMUNITY & SOCIAL CHANGE FACULTY

## CORE FACULTY
- **Ashmeet Oberoi, Ph.D.**  
  Department of Educational and Psychological Studies
- **Dina Birman, Ph.D.**  
  Department of Educational and Psychological Studies
- **Edison Trickett, Ph.D.**  
  Department of Educational and Psychological Studies
- **Guerda Nicolas, Ph.D.**  
  Department of Educational and Psychological Studies
- **Laura Kohn-Wood, Ph.D.**  
  Department of Educational and Psychological Studies
- **Scot Evans, Ph.D.**  
  Department of Educational and Psychological Studies
- **Todd Warner, Ph.D.**  
  Department of Educational and Psychological Studies

## C&SC AFFILIATED FACULTY
- **Carol-Anne Phekoo, Ph.D.**  
  Department of Higher Education Administration
- **Elizabeth Harry, Ph.D.**  
  Department of Teaching and Learning
- **Isaac Prilleltensky, Ph.D.**  
  Department of Educational and Psychological Studies
- **John Murphy, Ph.D.**  
  Department of Sociology
- **Jonathan West, Ph.D**  
  Department of Political Science, Public Administration Program
- **Marilyn Neff, Ed.D.**  
  Department of Teaching and Learning
- **Ora Prilleltensky, Ed.D.**  
  Department of Educational and Psychological Studies
- **Soyeon Ahn, Ph.D.**  
  Department of Educational and Psychological Studies
- **Susan Mullane, Ph.D**  
  Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences
- **Eugene Provenzo, Ph.D.**  
  Department of Teaching and Learning
FUTURE CAREERS

Students who complete the program will be prepared to play these roles in the community settings detailed below:

- Leaders
- Activists
- Advocates
- Administrators
- Consultants
- Evaluators
- Managers
- Organizers
- Program developers
- Researchers

Students will be prepared to play the above roles in a variety of community settings, including:

- Community Organizations
- Consulting agencies
- Educational settings
- Faith-based organizations
- Global agencies
- Government organizations
- Self-help organizations
- Health organizations
- Humanitarian agencies
- National organizations
- Neighborhood associations
- Philanthropic organizations
- Policy/advocacy/ research institutes
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS
Requirements for Admission and Retention
1. Admission to the Master of Science in Education is based on the following:
   a. Completion of a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution;
   b. An undergraduate grade point average of 3.0 or better. (Applicants with undergraduate GPAs below 3.0 but with other advanced degree or full-time paid or volunteer experience in non-profit settings may also be eligible for consideration);
   c. A minimum Graduate Record Exam (GRE) score of 153 verbal, 144 quantitative reasoning, and 40 writing taken within the past five years. International applicants whose native language is not English must also pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language [TOEFL] and in addition to the GRE.
   d. Three letters of recommendation (2 academic and 1 community);
   e. An interview (in person or telephone);
   f. A personal statement describing the following:
      i. Personal characteristics relevant to training in community-based work and social change;
      ii. Previous experience, if any, with community-based work
      iii. Reasons for applying to the program;
      iv. Goals upon graduation.
2. A School of Education faculty advisor in the student’s major will be appointed to meet with the student to design a Program of Study. The Program of Study must be on file in the Associate Dean’s Office by the end of the first semester of study or future registration will not be permitted.
3. All students are required to submit a signed Student Responsibility Checklist and the Graduate Student Honor Code by the end of their first semester of enrollment.
Financial Aid information
Information regarding Financial Assistance is available through the Office of Admissions and the Office of Financial Aid.

Scholarships
A complete list of resources for obtaining scholarships is located on the Graduate School website under fellowships.

Loans
Low-interest loans are offered to most domestic students. For information and eligibility information, please contact the UM Office of Financial Assistance Services at 305-284-5212.

State Financial Assistance
The State of Florida Department of Education also offers grant and scholarship programs administered by the Office of Student Financial Assistance.