

## Syllabus DRAFT

**Title:** SHOW ME THE MONEY: Rural Communities, Rural School Funding in NY and How to Write a Grant Proposal

**Course #:** UGR & GR

**Semester:** Fall

**Credits:** 3

**Days/Times:** Tu/Th 2:30-4pm

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**Office hours:** TBA

### Description

This course explores recent historical trends in rural community demography, issues of community vitality and increasing poverty, and the challenge of offering a sound and relevant education for all children in rural communities. Building on this recent history, students will learn the mechanisms of school funding, identify and explore inequities in such funding, and partner with local school leaders to supplement state and local funding with grant funding.

Partnering with rural NY school districts, each of whom will bring two initiatives they would like funded – one small and one large – we will closely examine relevant characteristics of these districts and their communities, and connect these to the historical and political forces that influence local contexts. We will learn about project planning using logic modeling and apply it to partners' initiatives. We will learn where additional funding opportunities exist, what they require, and how to determine best match to partners' initiatives. Using knowledge created throughout this course, student groups will prepare and submit a funding proposal in support of the partners' small initiatives. Building on this, students will work with their district partners to prepare several elements for a larger project proposal, looking ahead at the life cycle of the initiative and funding, and building a timeline and supporting materials for our partners to use in the coming years when they will no longer have our direct assistance.

This is an engaged course where students will partner with a team from a New York rural school district throughout this course. Students will gain grant seeking skills, data collection and analysis techniques, matching, and writing skills. Additionally, students will gain a broader understanding of the complex interactions between rural communities and their schools, as well as opportunities for leadership in today's economic and political climate in which rural communities and schools operate.

As Deputy Director of the Rural Schools Association of NY, Gretchen Rymarchyk has been listening to and working with rural districts to design this course in a manner that builds capacity for districts as well as students, utilizing district-based guest speakers, and inviting participating district teams to sit in on the entirety of the course.

The graduate students in this course will have additional readings, lead project work teams with development and assessment of meeting agendas and be solely responsible for the Monitoring and Evaluation assignment.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- **Participants will be able to describe how national & global forces have impacted rural areas and education in the US and NY, including specific impact on their team's locality. Participants will consider ways that this same locality has impacted broader contexts as well.**
- **Students will utilize methods of project planning and team management to facilitate an effective and engaged team.**
- **Participants will submit a small proposal in support of a district initiative, and produce several elements for a "kit" that districts can use to apply for larger grant monies in the future, including community and school profiles, logic models for a proposed project, and monitoring and evaluation strategies.**

## Course design

You and your team will behave as consultants with our school partners. We will meet twice a week, beginning with orientation and preparation to work on teams, and meeting and getting to know our partners. Starting week 3, we will use Tuesdays as workshops with our school partners – you will have created an agenda to run the meeting such that progress is made on assignments each week, and everyone has clear responsibilities and accountability.

Thursdays will be geared toward Cornell students, where we will process and trouble shoot the previous meeting, and introduce new information, skills, resources for your next steps with your team. You'll then have the weekend + 2 weekdays to work individually and with your team to progress with your project and develop an agenda for the upcoming meeting.

Weekly work assignments consist of readings, videos, reflective writings, responding to surveys, creating community and district profiles, monitoring and evaluation plans/templates, proposal writing, and developing materials in support of the funding timelines. You will also post your meeting agendas for each week, post progress on each of these, and rationale/connections to the next meeting agenda.

## Course Components: Graduate students will lead work teams.

- **Attendance (15%)** – Because this is an engaged course and there are community partners depending on us to work with them, attendance is paramount, as is being on time and offering your professional and thoughtful participation.
- **Assignments** –
  - **Weekly Reflections & Reports (10%)** - Each week that you meet with your district team, you will create a meeting agenda and complete a structured assessment of how the meeting went.
  - **Team logic model (10%)**
  - **Annotated Bibliography (10%)** - Each student will locate 3 relevant sources and annotate each; coordinate with your team members so that you end up with 9 total with no duplicates.
  - **Small grant application (15%)** - Apply for a small grant with your team, including a M&E plan, and a timeline for grant implementation, data collection & reporting.
  - **Grant kit (40%)**
    - **District Profile:** Needs assessment at the district level that includes district demographics, fiscal and student performance indicators and trends, assets.
    - **Community Profile:** Community inventory that includes community demographic, fiscal, social indicators, trends, and assets.
    - **GRADS ONLY - Monitoring and Evaluation Plan** for proposed project.
    - **Timeline template** – filled in as an example for the large grant project chosen
    - **LM template** – filled in as an example for the large grant project chosen
- **Readings/required texts**

- **Hollowing Out the Middle, P.J. Carr & M. J. Kefalas 2009**
- **Why Community Matters, N.V. Longo 2007**
- **Rural Communities: Legacy & Change, C.B. Flora & J.L. Flora, 2012**
- **The Geography of Prosperity, R. Nunn, J. Parsons, & J. Shambough 2018**
- **The Economic Status of Rural America in the President Trump Era and Beyond.** S. J. Goetz, M. D. Partridge, & H. M. Stephens. Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy, 2018, V. 4, no. 1, pp. 97-118.
- **A variety of articles on rural contexts, Ecological Systems Theory, and Monitoring and Evaluation, TBD**
- **Added readings for graduate students, TBD**

## Course Agenda

	WORKSHOP WITH TEAM	Lecture/Talk/Guest	Homework		
Week	Tues Class	Th Class	Read	Write	Due
1		Introductions. Orient to course, to engaged learning. What is "rural?"	Readings on what is rural	Prep a 1-minute personal intro for schools	Reflection: Expectations & personal learning goals for the course.
2	Introductions and schools present projects they want funded.	Discussion on readings/materials what is rural. Sipple - education funding and rural NY schools	Economic Issues paper		Survey: Rank projects in order of interest & explain.
3	Teams assigned, using agenda, learning about district. More in-depth information on proposed project. Assessing Team capacities. Create a LM.	Project planning, logic models & leading a productive team. Workshop agenda development. Sources for small grant projects; matchmaking.	Geography of Prosperity	Start annotated bibliography.	Meeting agenda
4	Teams meet, facilitated by students: Review new material; discussion; review progress on work since last meeting; what is needed from districts; next steps. Get feedback from school partners.	Process Tuesday; Discuss reading; <b>Grant writing vs academic writing</b> ; Guest speaker: S. Miller on economic convergence & divergence.	Why Community Matters. Ch 1-3	Update LM; Assigned reflection.	Meeting agenda, Progress report & how this informs future steps

5	Teams meet, facilitated by students: Review new material; discussion; review progress on work since last meeting; what is needed from districts; next steps. Get feedback from school partners.	Process Tuesday; Discuss reading; District profiles: Sipple & DelaHunt	Why Community Matters Ch 4-7;	Assigned reflection; Start District Profile	Meeting agenda, Progress report & how this informs future steps
					Submit Annotated Bib & LM
6	Teams meet, facilitated by students: Review new material; discussion; review progress on work since last meeting; what is needed from districts; next steps. Get feedback from school partners.	Process Tuesday; Discuss reading; guest speaker: US rural history as it has shaped NY trends - Robin Blakely Armitage &/or David Kay? Discuss reading.	Rural Communities 1st half	Update district profile	Meeting agenda, Progress report & how this informs future steps
					Submit Team Logic Model
7	Teams meet, facilitated by students: Review new material; discussion; review progress on work since last meeting; what is needed from districts; next steps. Get feedback from school partners.	Community Profile – Heidi. Shanna Rattner’s work on wealth creation	Rural Communities 2nd half	Start Community Profile	Meeting agenda, Progress report & how this informs future steps
					Submit District profile
8	Teams meet, facilitated by students: Review new material; discussion; review progress on work since last meeting; what is needed from districts; next steps. Get feedback from school partners.	Bronfenbrenner’s eco systems theory. Phobe Singer on disrupting local communities with technology; intro to collective impact & community capitals.	Ecological Systems Theory article(s)	Update community profile	Meeting agenda, Progress report & how this informs future steps

9	Teams meet, facilitated by students: Review new material; discussion; review progress on work since last meeting; what is needed from districts; next steps. Get feedback from school partners.	Discussion: reading; connect to district projects; Guest <b>speaker - on funding sources - where to find, best purposes for each, grant cycles, matchmaking</b>	Hollowing Out the Middle, first half.	Find 2 small grant sources & 2 large that you think "fit" & present these next week to team for feedback/assessment of fit.	Meeting agenda, Progress report & how this informs future steps
					Submit community profile
10	Teams meet, facilitated by students: Review new material; discussion; review progress on work since last meeting; what is needed from districts; next steps. Get feedback from school partners.	Review grant writing vs academic writing; Guest speaker on Rural contexts	HOTM 2 <sup>nd</sup> half	Start small grant application (to include LM)	Meeting agenda, Progress report & how this informs future steps
					Submit Community Profile
11	Teams meet, facilitated by students: Review new material; discussion; review progress on work since last meeting; what is needed from districts; next steps. Get feedback from school partners.	Initiating and maintaining community partnerships	Readings on monitoring and evaluation	update small grant application	Meeting agenda, Progress report & how this informs future steps
12	Teams meet, facilitated by students: Review new material; discussion; review progress on work since last meeting; what is needed from districts; next steps. Get feedback from school partners.	Monitoring and evaluation	Readings on rural contexts.	start M&E AND timeline	Meeting agenda, Progress report & how this informs future steps
					submit small grant application.

13	Teams meet, facilitated by students: Review new material; discussion; review progress on work since last meeting; what is needed from districts; next steps. Get feedback from school partners.	Rural Contexts	Readings on rural contexts.	update M&E And timeline	Meeting agenda, Progress report & how this informs future steps
14	Teams meet, facilitated by students: Review new material; discussion; review progress on work since last meeting; what is needed from districts; next steps. Get feedback from school partners.	Rural Contexts	Readings on rural contexts.		Meeting agenda, Progress report & how this informs future steps
					Submit M&E plan
					Submit timeline
15	LAST CLASS: Learning Exchange; debriefing, engaged wrap-up				Complete Grant Kit due