**Paper choice #1 and #2 Descriptions**

Paper choice #1: Community Analysis

An aim of community psychology is to understand the relationship between individuals and the communities in which they are imbedded. The elements of communities include many social structures at multiple levels, including networks of peers or extended family, workplace, school, community organization, religious congregations, neighbourhoods and wider environments, society and culture. The “individual in community” is understood in terms of the relationships the person has with the elements of his or her community, not in isolation from them.

Communities may be considered in terms of either locality, that is city blocks, neighbourhoods, small towns, cities, and rural regions, or as relational, that is, the interpersonal relationships and sense of community that may not be limited by geography, such as Internet discussion groups, mutual help groups, peer groups and student clubs.

**Write a 6 page (*maximum*) paper (double-spaced, 12pt.) on the community in which you grew up, that is, spent your formative years anywhere up to about age 15 or 16 years. The community could refer to your neighbourhood, larger community, your immediate or extended family, peer group, or the town or city in which you grew up.**

**First**: Identify an issue in your community.

**Second**: Using an ecological systems approach, identify two or three system factors or community characteristics (e.g., family, peers, schools, economy, culture) that represent both **risk factors** and **protective factors** with respect to this issue in your community. Demonstrate how these system levels interact. The description of these community characteristics should be specific, i.e., they need to describe *your* community, not some generic community Explain how they affected you or other children’s development (e.g., attitudes, beliefs, values, interests, skills).

**Third:** In no less than 3 pages, describe the implications of these community factors for *developing* a community-based **primary prevention** program or service for children, adolescents, adults, families, or neighbourhoods. Your objective is to show how the community characeristics you identfied can be used in the development an effective primary prevention program for community-based services? I would like you to be concrete and specific by providing one or two examples to illustrate your points. Pretend that money is no object. Be creative. Consider the following questions: i) What is the social issue you want to address? ii) How will you get the targeted group(s) to participate in the program’s development? iii) How will your program incorporate identified risk and protective forctors? iv) Demonstrate how your program reflect the characteristics of a primary prevention program?

**Fourth**: Incorporate five concepts and principles of community psychology outlined in the text into your descriptions. The first five chapters are your best source.

Remember, your program has to be focused. Limit your discussion to *a single* community program development. Target two (or a maximum of three) system levels (e.g., peers, parents, school board, culture, media) and the way they interact. You will not be able to develop sufficient detail if you try to address too many factors. *See additional paper guidelines posted on moodle.*

**Your paper will be marked for the overall quality of the product including (a) identification and description of community-specific factors. (b) integration of relevant community psychology principles and concepts (c) content and thoughtfulness of your analysis; (d) organization and structure, and (e) grammar and spelling.**

Paper Choice #2: Alternate Paper Assignment:

**Choose a single issue of interest. Write a 6 page (maximum, double-spaced, 12pt) academic review paper on risk and protective factors associated with this issue and discuss their implications for research or policy development.**

Sample topics might include (but are not limited to) issues such as:

Teen pregnancy, smoking, drug use, academic success,

Juvenile and youth crime

Gangs, Recidivism

HIV/AIDS

Hospitalization or institutionalization for a specific mental illness diagnosis

(e.g., depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder etc.)

Quality of life related to elder care issues

Issues associated with developmental delay (e.g, school, employment)

Child protection issues

Violence against women

Identify three **risk** and three **protective factors** in empirical literature (N.B. published *research* articles in peer reviewed journals, *not* *review* articles). Use Canadian research material wherever possible.Adopt an ecological systems approach when choosing risk and protective factors to discuss. In other words, the factors should representative different systems levels. (They should not, for example, only identify inidividual risk and protective factors). Your presentation of risk and preventative factors should also include both **proximal** and **distal** factors.

Review the information on public policy as a means of social change outlined in Chapter 5 in the text and the associated lecture slides. Review the guiding concepts associated with community psychology. Based on your literature review, develop five *policy recommendations* meant to promote **primary prevention**. Explain how the factors you identified in the literature review have guided your recommendations for policy development. Additionally, demonstrate how the recommendations you develop incorporate a minimum of five guiding community psychology concepts presented in the course. Identify these relevant concepts in principles in **boldface.**

**Your paper will be marked for: (a) overall quality of the product; including (a) identification and definition of varied system-level risk and protective factors, (b) integration of five relevant community psychology principles and concepts (c) a demonstrated understanding of three principles guiding community psychology research and/or public policy functions. (d) content and thoughtfulness of your analysis; and (e) grammar and spelling. References according to APA style. *See additional paper guidelines posted on moodle.***

