

Professor: Marisa Denker
Teaching Assistant: Michael Gulino
Fall 2021
M 5:15 - 8:15 pm
Williams Hall 5
Office Hours: By appointment

PARTICIPATORY CITIES

URBS 314-401

What is a participatory city? What has that term meant in the past, what does it mean now, and what will it mean going forward? Against the backdrop of increasing inequality and inequity, and the rise in a search for solutions, what role can citizens play in co-creating more just cities and neighborhoods? How can citizens be engaged in the decision making processes about the places where we live, work, and play? And most importantly, how can we work to make sure that all kinds of voices are meaningfully included, and that historically muted voices are elevated to help pave a better path forward?

This course will connect theory with praxis as we explore together a snapshot of the history, challenges, methods, and approaches, and impact of community participation and stakeholder involvement in cities

Key Topics

Core topics that will be explored in this survey course include:

- The history of public participation and its evolution over time
- Understanding of different approaches and levels of involving communities in decision-making processes in cities
- Challenges and barriers within these processes
- Understanding of Philadelphia's ecosystem around engagement
- Methodology and tactics to bridge divides and build equitable engagement processes
- Facilitation and leadership of meaningful dialogue and discourse
- Examination of the outcomes of participatory processes

Learning Objectives

1. How to participate (in your world, your neighborhood, your school)
2. Sharing and shifting power: recognizing privilege and amplifying the voices of others
3. Different lenses for observing the world: noticing gaps and issues, recognizing inequality, process for deciding what actions to take
4. Skills of quality equitable engagement work: how to meet people where they are and enable voices to be meaningfully heard

Course Materials:

1. Online Canvas links to readings
2. Guest speakers may provide notes, reference materials or other documents that will supplement their time in the class.

Grading Scale

A 93 and above; A- 92-90
B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B- 80-82
C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72
D+ 67-69; D 63-66; D- 60-62
F 59 and below

Classroom Policies and Expectations

- This course requires regular attendance, timeliness and engaged participation. Absences are only considered excused if they are medical or family emergencies or for religious observance. Please notify the professor ahead of time and provide documentation. You are responsible for all material missed in class (get notes from a classmate).
- Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Please review the University's official policy at: <http://www.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html>.
- Students will be respectful of the differing perspectives that will inevitably emerge from engaging honestly and openly with the learning experiences facilitated as part of the class.
- Late assignments will go down one grade increment for each day late (i.e. A to an –A)

Group Norms (from Emergent Strategy)

- Small is good, small is all (The large is a reflection of the small)
- Change is constant (Be like water)
- There is always enough time for the right work.
- There is a conversation in the room that only these people at this moment can have. Find it.
- Never a failure, always a lesson
- Move at the speed of trust. Focus on critical connections more than critical mass - build the resilience by building the relationships
- Less prep, more presence
- What you pay attention to grows

Grading

- A. Classroom Participation (20% of Grade)
 - a. *Attendance:* Attendance at all sessions; prior notification if possible for excused absence
 - b. *Timeliness:* This is fundamental to building our learning community. It shows respect and care for your peers to arrive on time. If you are running late, please just shoot Michael an email.
 - c. *Preparation for Speakers:* As a key tenet of inclusive community engagement is hearing from and learning from other voices, almost every class will feature a guest speaker. To prepare for this, you will be expected to each develop **at least**

1 question to ask the speaker, to be submitted by **Thursday** before class at the latest via the associated Google Form provided in Canvas before our next class. This will allow your speaker to have time to reflect on your questions and shape their discussion to connect with your interests. These questions can also feed into the Q & A portion of each speaker visit.

- d. *Active Reading:* Ahead of each class (by 11:59 PM EST the night before class), you are expected to
 - i. complete the readings
 - ii. provide a brief (200 words) critical reflection on the readings for that week
 - iii. develop one discussion question for the class
 - iv. contribute one brief comment / response to another's post referencing either their question / discussion comments
 - e. *Engagement in Classroom Discussion:* A key part of the classroom experience will be discourse - participation in large and small-group discussions and projects.
- B. 2 Short Reflection Papers (15% of grade)
- For any **2** of the **3 sections** of the course, you are expected to write a brief reflection paper on your learning experience from the course material. They are meant to be personal reflections and critical thinking about the material, connecting it to your personal and/or professional life.
 - Word Count: 500 - 750 words per each of the 2 reflection papers
 - Due Date: These should be submitted **1 week after the end of each course section**. Please submit them by the day the Canvas assignment is listed under. They are due at 5:14 PM EST before class for the relevant weeks.
- C. Assignment #1: Observation and Analysis of 2-3 Engagement Tactics (20% of grade)
- Outside of class time, you will be expected to observe / attend / participate in 2-3 community engagement efforts. This could mean a pop-up event, a community meeting, a town hall, a virtual public meeting, etc. A list of opportunities will be provided to you, though we are happy for you (and encourage you) to find your own either.
 - After seeing 2-3 engagement tactics in action, analyze the tactics from the lens of 3 of the articles read thus far
 - Word Count: 1000-1500 words
 - Due Date: November 15th
- D. Assignment #2: Final - Practical Project and Presentation (45% of grade)
- This is where you will have the opportunity to put your learning into practice. SEPTA has agreed to give our class the chance to support the comprehensive bus network redesign going on right now. This will be a group project where you will be placed into groups of 4-5. SEPTA will provide you with background materials needed to complete the

assignment. The core idea of the assignment is for you to develop and pitch engagement strategies to SEPTA for a key stakeholder segment at Penn and a key stakeholder segment in greater West Philadelphia.

OUTLINE

Your Team

- Introductions, who you are, lens you bring

Approach to Engagement

- Your team's approach to engagement process
- What theories, models, etc are you inspired by / do you work from – and why?
- What values/principles are intrinsic to how you design your engagement processes – how do you live out those values?

Audience/Target Stakeholders

- Overview / Mapping of stakeholder types at (A) Penn representing a university and B) Greater West Philly
- Stakeholder Analysis: Explanation of target Stakeholder Group within A) Penn and B) Greater West Philly
 - o Power dynamic, Influence, etc
 - o Key Considerations per Stakeholder Group A & B in relation to designing engagement strategy ie power dynamic, level of influence, etc (utilize an analysis tool from the readings, language, lifestyle, 'persona')

Recommended Strategy (for each of your stakeholder groups)

- Draw on the lenses and best practice from readings, conversations with speakers, and stakeholders directly in your two selected target communities - in order to develop and justify your strategy. Include the below in this section:
 - o Overall Strategy and Rationale
 - o Mix of Engagement Tactics for Stakeholder Group A
 - o Mix of Engagement Tactics for Stakeholder Group B
 - o Include the what, why and the how of each tactic
 - § What is the intention behind the tactic? What is the purpose?

§ Why did you choose the particular tactic? What is your desired outcome?

§ How would the tactic work? How would you go about developing each tactic? What steps would you take?

Key Considerations

- Analysis of your overall strategy in terms of: Strengths / Weaknesses / Opportunities / Threats
- Share additional key suggestions, tips, insights based on this
- *Bring in key learnings from your Prototype of one of the above engagement tactics

Monitoring, Tracking, and Reporting (Outcomes and Measures)

- How do you suggest measuring and tracking outcomes?
- Snapshot of data gathered from prototype

Appendix

- Detail on your prototype in the Penn Community
 - o Mini-Plan
 - o Materials/Content
 - o Findings
 - o Outcomes

**PROTOTYPE – Additional Detail
Prototype: Engagement Tactic in Action --- Date of implementation: mid Nov to Dec 6 --- Test out one of your tactics on the Penn community --- Adapt questions / content from online survey out next week

FINAL PRODUCT:

Shorter presentation – to present to SEPTA, gather feedback on

Longer presentation – to go in depth in all above topics, with rationale, references, etc

- E. EXTRA CREDIT: Live Project Experience (One grade level increase (ie A- to A))
- Throughout the semester, small opportunities for participating in Professor Denker's live projects will arise to sign up for. This is a chance to gain practical experience in community engagement projects across the city of Philadelphia and beyond with partners including the City of Philadelphia, SEPTA, South Street Headhouse District, and more. Each opportunity will require approximately 2-5 hours of work in total. Some may be in person and some may be virtual. Opportunities may include but are not limited to:
 - Facilitation, note taking or development support for community engagements events, focus groups, town halls, interviews etc
 - Analysis of responses from community engagement efforts ie survey analysis
 - Community stakeholder research and analysis
 - Attendance / networking at community engagement event
 - Support in pilot to measure the impact of community engagement

Class Breakdown

5:15 - 6:00 (Reflection): Brief Lecture & Discussion on Key Takeaways

6:00 - 6:15: *Break*

6:15 - 7:15: (Insight): Speaker Talk & Q and A

7:15 - 7:20: *Break*

7:20 - 8:00 (Practice): Project / Group Work (using Canvas Collaborations)

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

September 13 - Course Introduction

- Review the syllabus, learning outcomes, typical class breakdown, discussion group roles, and baseline expectations.
- Co-create group norms, share about yourselves, build an understanding together of why we are here, what we want to learn, expectations of each other, and how we can accomplish our course goals together (we'll venture outside for this talk if we can!)
- Explore two frameworks for engagement (Ladder of Participation, IAP2) and 3 case studies to introduce the concept of community engagement and its various forms.
- Introduce final project / assignments - explain assignments
 - *Readings for 9/13:*
 - *Arnstein's Ladder of Participation:*
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01944366908977225?needAccess=true>

- IAP2 Spectrum:
https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum_8.5x11_Print.pdf
- Comparison of Ladder and Spectrum: **(Optional)**
<https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2018-06/apo-nid178271.pdf>

Part I. History and Theories of Engagement

September 20 Understanding Foundational Models for Participation and Why it Matters

- Dive deeper into evolution of models for public participation
- Explore and discuss why public participation matters
- Discuss Final Project - with SEPTA representative
- **GUEST SPEAKER(S): Dan Nemiroff of SEPTA & Leah Anderson of Paideia**
 - Readings for 9/20:
 - International Public Participation Models from 1969-2020:
<https://www.bangthetable.com/blog/international-public-participation-models/> (read full article; each student will have been assigned 1 model to deep-dive into and discuss in small groups)
 - A Brief History of Public Participation in Planning:
<http://goodspeedupdate.com/2008/2223>

September 27 Defining Good Public Participation

- Explore the question: what is a good public participation process?
- Compare and contrast case studies together of best practice and 'worst' practice community engagement
- **GUEST SPEAKER(S): Chris Satullo of Keystone Civic Ventures**
 - Readings for 9/27
 - "What Is a Good Public Participation Process? Five Perspectives from the Public." <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s002670010160>
 - Bright Spots in Community Engagement:
<https://knightfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/BrightSpots-final.pdf>
 - GUEST SPEAKER READING:
 - https://www.inquirer.com/philly/opinion/20090305_Nutter_hears_from_citizens_on_budget.html
 - <https://why.org/articles/10-years-later-civic-vision-for-central-delaware/>

October 4 Snapshot of Theories of Practice

- While there are a plethora of approaches that feed into contemporary engagement practice today, we will hone in on design thinking/systems thinking, community organizing, and civic capacity.

- **GUEST SPEAKER(S): *Adriana Abidzadeh of Kensington Corridor Trust***
 - Readings for 10/4:
 - Co-Design/Design Thinking: [Case Study of Codesign](#) - Co-Designing Black Neighborhood Heritage Conservation
 - [Community Organizing](#): Rules for Radicals by Saul Alinsky
 - [Civic Capacity](#), What Why and Whence by Clarence Stones
 - GUEST SPEAKER READING: [Communities Need Neighborhood Trusts](#)

October 11 Reframing Participation - The Role of Power and Inclusion in Participation Processes

- Understand the shortcomings and opportunities for improvement of traditional engagement models in relation to equity and power imbalances
- **GUEST SPEAKER(S): *Imani Stewart-Jackson of Philly Counts***
 - Readings for 10/11
 - "Reframing Public Participation: Strategies for the 21st Century." Institute of Urban & Regional Development. UC Berkeley.
<http://escholarship.org/uc/item/4gr9b2v5>
 - Deliberative Democracy and the Problem of Power:
<https://delibdemjournal.org/article/id/326/>
 - Distinguishing Participation and Inclusion:
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0739456x11410979>

October 18 Values and Principles

- Review samples of sets of values and principles for modern community engagement practice.
- **GUEST SPEAKER(S): *Lily Reynolds of OTIS (City of Philadelphia)***
 - Readings for 10/18:
 - Beyond Inclusion - Equity in Public Engagement: Community Engagement Can't be a Checklist: Community Engagement Can't be a Checklist:
https://shelterforce.org/2021/02/25/centering-equitable-practice-in-community-engagement/?utm_source=sfweekly&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=030121&fbclid=IwAR1qI4jOMMWWMA3V9rwdjMQLu1x3V0A-4budzEmGT08Np1DMBDPkjGLr07oM
 - GUEST SPEAKER READING: Chapter 1 of Jan Gehl's *Cities for People*

Part II. Strategies and Tactics for Engagement

October 25 People-First Methodology - *Starting with the 'Who'*

- Explore the basics of designing community engagement processes
- Dive into the first steps of stakeholder and context analysis
- Uncover key barriers to effective engagement processes
- **GUEST SPEAKER(S): *Joel Mills of the AIA***
 - Readings for 10/25:

- Community Engagement Primer:
<https://metro council.org/Handbook/Files/Community-Engagement/PublicEngagementPrimer.aspx>
- Core Principles for Public Engagement by NCDD and IAP2:
<https://ncdd.org/rc/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/PEPfinal-expanded.pdf>
- Democratizing Public Participation Processes:
<https://delibdemjournal.org/article/id/356/> (Case Study - what went wrong)
- GUEST SPEAKER READING(S):
 - <https://www.nationalcivicleague.org/facing-our-john-gardner-moment/>
 - <https://www.nationalcivicleague.org/ncr-article/an-urban-reality-check-lessons-learned-from-covid-19/>

November 1 Community Engagement Design - *Connecting Who to How*

- Hone in to process development, discussing how to ask the right questions, how to gather insights that can feed into the decision-making process, how to choose the best-fit tactics
- Review of case studies of a snapshot of engagement processes around the world
- **GUEST SPEAKER(S): *Majeedah Rashid of Nicetown CDC***
 - Readings for 11/1:
 - Keeping People Connected Toolkit:
<https://www.publicagenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Keeping-People-Connected-neighborhood-engagement-toolkit-1.pdf>
 - Case Studies:
 - Effective Community Engagement during the Environmental Assessment of a Mining Project in the Canadian Arctic:
<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s00267-021-01426-5.pdf>
 - 'Best practice' community dialogue: The promise of a small-scale deliberative engagement around the siting of a carbon dioxide capture and storage (CCS) facility:
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1750583615301547>

November 8 Best Practice Engagement Tactics & Tools - *Deep Dive on the How Part 1*

- Review evolution of tactics from traditional public meetings to more nontraditional methods
- Debate pros / cons of different tactics, tools, and strategies
- **GUEST SPEAKER(S): *Alex Peay of Rising Sons and One's Up***
 - Readings for 11/8:

- Toolkit - How to put citizens at the heart of decision-making:
http://www.sharedpractice.org.uk/Downloads/involve_publication.pdf
- Future of Civic Engagement:
<https://www.nlc.org/article/2017/02/16/the-future-of-civic-engagement/>
- Frontiers of Participatory Public Engagement
<https://canvas.upenn.edu/courses/1613339/files/100876780?wrap=1>
- Racial Equity Tools:
<https://www.racialequitytools.org/resources/act/strategies/community-engagement>
- GUEST SPEAKER READINGS: TBD

November 15 Skills for Implementation - *Deep Dive on the How Part 2*

- Provide primer on key skills needed to lead / co-lead a successful engagement process ie facilitation, two-way communications, accessibility, trauma-informed approaches
- **GUEST SPEAKER(S): *Patricia Codina of Impact Services***
 - Readings for 11/15
 - Trauma informed engagement:
<https://www.traumainformedcommunity.org/>
 - Case study of lessons learned from equitable youth engagement:
https://dl.airtable.com/.attachments/247a91f264aa0c8a3a3a58b487cc7041/2a6edfa0/Horizon_YPLAN_Pilot_Partnership_Final.pdf
 - Trauma Informed Engagement Toolkit -
<https://canvas.upenn.edu/courses/1613339/files/100877805?wrap=1>

Part III. Impact and Future of Engagement

November 22 Impact Measurement

- Discover current thinking on measuring the impact of engagement
- Critically discuss and develop new ideas together
- Add and apply this learning to your Final Project
- **GUEST SPEAKER(S): *Ellen Hwang of Knight Foundation***
 - Readings for 11/22:
 - Engagement Scorecard: <https://scorecard.publicagenda.org/s3/demo>
 - Evaluate Public Involvement Activities:
<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-09/documents/evaluate508.pdf>
 - Tracing the Impact of Proposals from Participatory Processes:
<https://delibdemjournal.org/article/id/515/>
 - How Do I Measure Impact as a Placemaker?
https://placemaking-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/TOOL_Manual_The-impact-of-placemaking.pdf

- Social impact assessment and stakeholder engagement in the Russian Federation:
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0195925518302385>
- GUEST SPEAKER READING(S):

November 29 Future of Engagement

- Learn about where engagement is headed coming out of the pandemic
- Brainstorm new options and opportunities for what could be next to drive engagement to the next level and enable more equitable and authentic approaches
- **GUEST SPEAKER(S): *Donna Carney of City of Philadelphia - Citizens Planning Institute***
 - Readings for 11/29:
 - Multiple intelligences framework:
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/15575330.2011.621086>
 - Article: APA Planning by MD and Adrienne (Link incoming)
 - The future of citizen engagement in cities:
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0016328717301763>
 - Smart Citizens: Exploring the Tools of the Urban Bottom-Up Movement:
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10606-016-9249-6>
 - GUEST SPEAKER READING(S):

December 6 Presentations to Class / SEPTA

- Present polished drafts of your final projects to SEPTA directly, then support each other on improving your final products based on feedback from SEPTA and from each other. You will have the opportunity to further edit / revise your final product in order to submit it on December 15th.