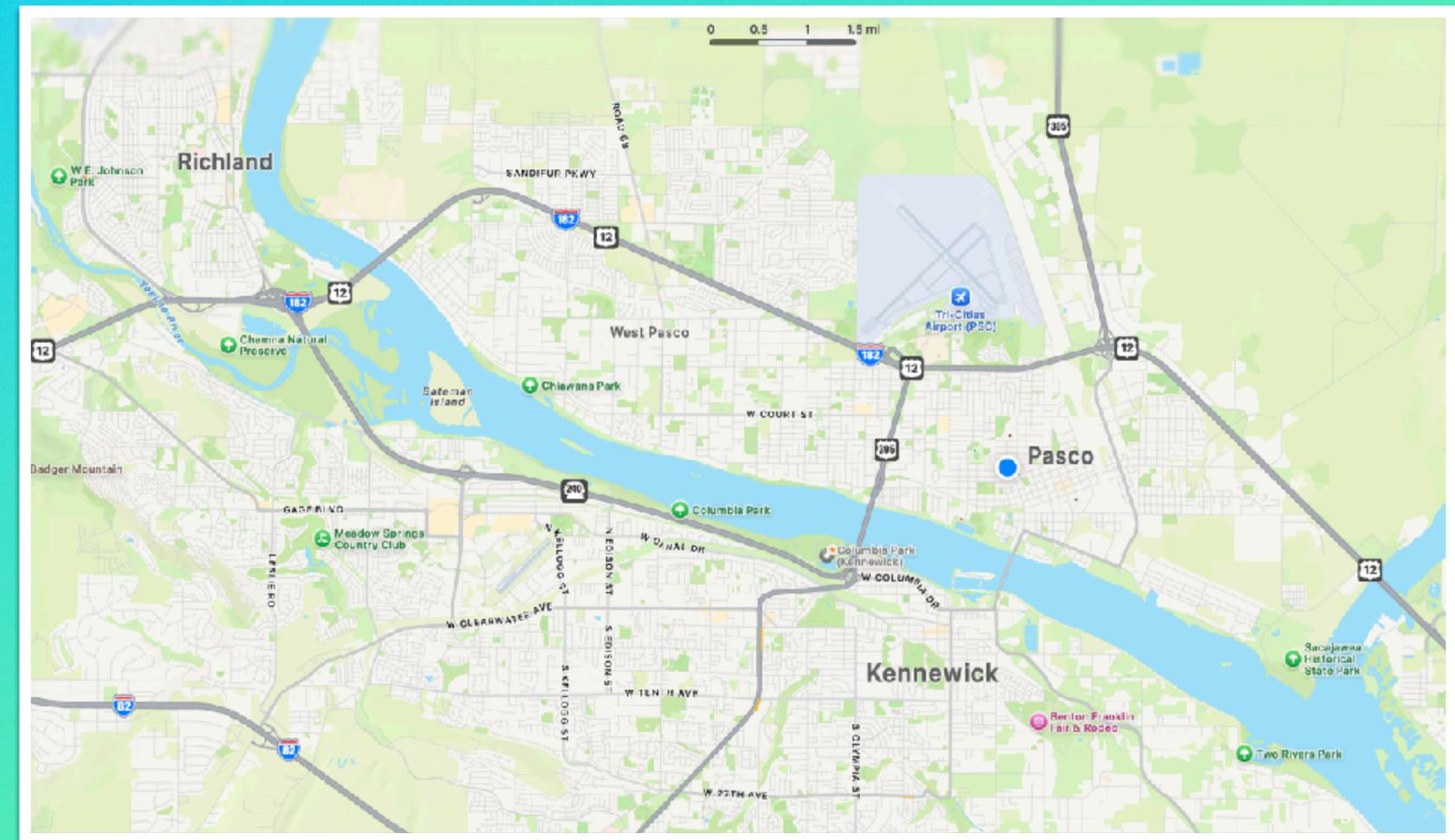


MACRO PRACTICE IN
COMMUNITIES

Understanding Neighborhoods & Communities



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at Heritage University

Spring 2026 SOWK 531 Week 7

Week Seven Plan

Agenda

Why community work

Functions of a community

Exploring data sources

Developing power as a change agent

Midterm feedback

Learning Objectives

- Identify the professional role of social workers in neighborhoods and communities.
- Utilize theoretical frameworks for understanding communities and neighborhoods.
- Examine and interpret community data from multiple sources to support a community assessment.



Community Work

Why Do We Do It and What is Our Role

Small Group Discussion

- What are some of the rationales for social workers engaging in macro practice in the community?
- What are some of the skills that we have as a profession for engaging in community work?

Why

We have an **ethical obligation** (code of ethics) and a **practice obligation** (makes direct/indirect impact) to engage in community work and social justice activities.

Skills

- Interagency collaboration
- Identifying service gaps
- Policy advocacy
- Legislative action
- Political engagement
- Opposing harmful organizations

(Warren, 1978, as cited in
Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2018)

Functions of Communities

and How To Apply Theory

How do you use it as a framework to describe and understand a community? Come up with examples to share.

- **Socialization:** The transmission of values, culture, beliefs, and norms to community members through both formal mechanisms and informal ones.
- **Production, Distribution, and Consumption of Goods and Services:** Communities serve as the context in which housing, food, and other essential goods and services are produced, regulated, and consumed by residents.
- **Social Control:** Communities set limits on behavior by creating and enforcing laws and standards, with social workers often serving as agents of this control function.
- **Mutual Support:** Community members take care of one another through both informal actions and formal services
- **Participation:** Communities provide residents with opportunities to interact and socialize with one another through recreation, gatherings, or online and virtual platforms.

Social control, which involves setting limits on behavior by creating and enforcing laws via police and other official bodies. In practice, social control is the enforcement of community norms and values... Social workers have been called “agents of social control” because in many positions, the practitioner’s job involves enforcing community standards.

Kirst-Ashman and Hull (2018) p. 297

Other Theories

Discussed in Text and Can Connect Assessment

- Ecological perspective
- Social systems perspective
- Community resource systems model
- Social structural perspective
- Human behavior perspective
- Community change concepts
- Power and stratification



Data

Working in small groups, explore some of the provided data sources. Be ready to share what you explored and how this data might be useful in community assessment.

Links in MyHeritage

General Community Demographics
Health & Wellbeing
Social Services / Mutual Support
Education
Economic / Goods & Services

I'd especially encourage some of the local information, such as Yakima Valley Trends, Healthy Youth Survey, CPWI Coalitions

Inspiring confidence of others and enhancing your status as a capable change agent

(Homan, 2016, pp. 220–221 as cited in Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2018)

Developing Power in As Change Agent

What Do You Do or What Do You Need to Work On

- Ensure each of your actions is designed to achieve your purpose.
- Don't apologize for acting legitimately to achieve your purpose.
- Stay focused on your agenda, and avoid getting sidetracked.
- Avoid arbitrary limits on what actions you will take.
- Remain flexible and unpredictable in your goal-seeking behavior.
- Assess each decision in terms of both short- and long-range consequences.
- Search for areas of agreement with your adversary.
- Allow your opponent some measure of influence in reaching agreements.
- Ensure that each agreed-to action is carried out on both sides.
- Recognize that each behavior is purposeful and designed to achieve some end.
- Seek forgiveness rather than permission when necessary to achieve change.
- Accept responsibility for your own actions; don't blame others.

Community Assessment Group Project

Monday 03/30/26

This assignment promotes students' ability to collaborate effectively with peers while demonstrating skills in community assessment and professional presentation. Students will apply theoretical frameworks from Kirst-Ashman and Hull (2018, Chapter 8) to examine a real community, assess its strengths and needs, and consider potential macro-level interventions.

Introduction to the Community: Paint a picture of your community covering demographics, geography, history, economics, government, and other key characteristics (at least 10).

Community Assessment: Describe what you did to assess the community, the scope of your assessment, and how it connects to theory from the textbook.

Findings: Present at least three key findings, balancing strengths and needs with a clear organizational framework.

Interventions and Potential Actions: Propose macro-level interventions that fit the identified needs and build on community strengths.

Showcase of Created Pamphlet: Walk through your pamphlet as a practical resource that distills your findings and proposed actions.

References: Include in-text citations on slides and a full reference list at the end.

Criteria	Highly Developed
<p>A thorough community overview that clearly orients the audience to the community.</p>	<p>The presentation provides a robust overview of the community, describing it from at least ten different aspects (e.g., location, population characteristics, income level, housing, geography, history, educational opportunities, social/cultural systems, commerce and industry, religion, government, political factors, health systems, distribution of power, etc.). The overview provides a well-rounded picture that clearly orients the audience.</p>
<p>The assessment process is described and connections are drawn to theory.</p>	<p>The presentation clearly articulates the steps and actions taken to understand the community and its needs. Artifacts of the assessment process (such as photos done during windshield survey) are included. The description of the community is connected to at least one theoretical framework drawn from the textbook (e.g., Warren's five functions of community, social stratification, power dynamics, ecological perspective, etc.), with explanation of how the theory informed the assessment.</p>
<p>A set of findings and their analysis is presented.</p>	<p>The presentation clearly describes at least three findings about the community (these can be strengths or needs). Each finding includes discussion that provides a balanced picture, considering factors such as strengths, gaps, opportunities, and challenges related to that finding.</p>
<p>Potential actionable macro interventions are identified.</p>	<p>At least three potential macro-level interventions are identified. They fit with the identified needs, build on community strengths, and are described in enough detail to understand how they might be accomplished.</p>
<p>The presentation is professionally delivered.</p>	<p>The presentation is professionally delivered, clearly conveys the assessment's details, and demonstrates strong presentation skills including organization, pacing, and visual aids.</p>
<p>A high-quality pamphlet is created.</p>	<p>The pamphlet is well designed and visually appealing, clearly showcases key information about the community (including findings and proposed actions), and could realistically be shared with community members or stakeholders as a useful resource.</p>

Midterm Evaluations

Please complete this and give me
feedback.



Also in MyHeritage

