



## **Introduction to Volume Two of the Special Issue: Developing undergraduate community psychology pedagogy and research practice**

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Welcome to the second volume of the Special Issue centering community psychology (CP) teaching and research within primarily undergraduate institutions. This Special Issue seeks to provide a much needed platform for developing and disseminating undergraduate-focused pedagogical and research-related practices. The introduction to Volume One describes in detail how this project emerged:

<https://www.gjcpp.org/en/article.php?issue=31&article=188>.

In Volume Two of the Special Issue, we are pleased to continue featuring the work of undergraduate students and undergraduate-focused faculty colleagues. Given the differences inherent in research, publishing, teaching, and service expectations for academics working within primarily undergraduate settings, this issue reflects an opportunity to highlight voices and work often overlooked or unseen in traditional CP publications. Special Issue authors, many writing from community colleges, liberal arts colleges, or regional universities developed these articles while teaching course loads ranging from five to ten classes a year, mentoring students, carrying intense on-campus service loads, and conducting meaningful and relevant community-engaged scholarship to develop future CP practitioners. The faculty authors represented in this Special Issue bring CP methods and values to their undergraduate teaching and research. They have developed and adapted their practice approaches to work with limited resources, condensed time

frames, high stakeholder turnover, and with populations who may have little understanding of CP. We are pleased to offer the second of two volumes dedicated to this important work.

The articles in this volume present information and practical tools for other undergraduate faculty. They also provide insights to strengthen our field as a whole. These two volumes are but a sample of the work being done in undergraduate settings. We reiterate our call to the field from Volume One to provide more opportunities to learn from our undergraduate focused colleagues. We hope that these seven articles, in combination with the continued efforts of the Community Psychology Practice in Undergraduate Settings interest group, will lay the groundwork for continued growth, visibility, and valuing of undergraduate-focused community psychologists.

### **Observations from this Collection**

The CP values of collaboration, participatory research, and critical reflection come alive through the practices described in the current volume. The articles included in this volume weave together multiple sources of evidence to understand the impact of CP skills, methods, and values in undergraduate focused settings. As community-based researchers, the authors conduct powerful teaching and research aimed at transforming the very institutions in which they reside. Volume Two highlights the range of settings undergraduate focused community psychologists work (i.e., a Hispanic Serving

Institution community college, regional public universities, a public liberal arts college, and undergraduate programs that also train graduate students in CP).

This issue explores the design, implementation, and impact of CP programs and courses through a variety of methodologies. Amie R. McKibban and Crystal N. Steltenpohl focus on research from three semester long case studies of community engaged learning projects that occurred in a CP class at a regional university in a rural, politically conservative area. Taking a reflective approach, Michèle Schlehofer and Juliet Vapsva present first-person instructor and student narratives of the impact of a CP course taught from a feminist pedagogical framework. Using student evaluations and personal reflections, Chanté D. DeLoach explores the potential of a CP course implemented at a Hispanic-Serving Institution community college to impact the discipline and uphold the values of CP. Rachel M. Hershberg and former undergraduates Olivia Andringa, Katheryn Camm, Halimatu Hill, Joshua Little, Rebecca Smith, and Sarah Wilkinson describe the use of Photovoice, a participatory action research method, in an undergraduate course as a tool for gaining applied, setting-specific, CP research experience. This work also highlights the ways in which this methodology might help students connect more deeply to CP principles, values, and practices.

Moving outside the classroom, Danielle Chiaramonte, Jake Quarles, Rachael Goodman-Williams, Trevor Strzyzkowski, Rachel Weber, Kelli Broessel and Timothy Thompson present a mixed methods investigation of the impact of students involved in CP research teams and explore the influence of these experiences. Ashlee Lien and a team of former and current undergraduate students including Alicia Fyne, Juliet DeVito, Oluwadara Ogunbo, Rhayna Prado and Julissa Chaparro present findings from a systematic reflection on experiences

attending and presenting at the national biennial CP conference. They provide explicit guidance to mentors and conference planners for supporting meaningful undergraduate participation. Finally, Christopher Keys, Olya Glantsman, Susan McMahon, and Leonard Jason step back even further from single classroom experiences to consider the life of an undergraduate program and the decade long challenges and successes of developing and implementing an undergraduate CP concentration program at a large private university.

Many of the articles in both volumes of the Special Issue make specific calls to action we encourage the field to support. Combining these with our experiences working on undergraduate issues within institutions and SCRA and editing these two volumes we offer insights for action, outlined in Volume One, next we highlight the movement made on those calls.

#### *Avenues for Action*

In the introduction to the first volume of this Special Issue, we outlined a call to action for the field of CP to value and support faculty working at primarily undergraduate institutions and their students. In summary, we asked SCRA and the broader field of CP to:

- Include social justice teaching as a valued CP practice competency.
- Identify Scholarship of Teaching and Learning as relevant to our field and provide dedicated, ongoing journal space.
- Recognize and respond to the discrepancies in non-research workload demands and access to resources between colleagues at primarily research institutions and teaching institutions.
- Integrate Train-the-Teacher Institutes for undergraduate education.

- Encourage and provide support for collaborating and publishing with undergraduates.

In the months following publication of Volume One, we worked with SCRA leadership, including current president Brad Olson and the Council on Education, and Community Psychology Practice in Undergraduate Settings interest members to begin moving forward on these issues.

Initial conversations focused on making the upcoming SCRA Biennial more inclusive for undergraduate students and undergraduate-focused CP practitioners. These efforts resulted in the implementation of two events designed specifically for undergraduates and undergraduate mentors at the biennial. First, an orientation session will be held during the first day of the conference. This event, organized by Ashlee Lien, Amber Kraft, and Sheree Bielecki, aims to prepare undergraduate students and other first time conference attendees for what to expect from a professional academic conference and tips for navigating the environment (see Lien et al's piece in this volume for more recommendations on supporting positive undergraduate conference experiences). Elizabeth Thomas, Adele Malpert, and Katy Morgan are organizing an undergraduate student and mentor networking lunch session to connect undergraduate students with potential mentors, engage in discussion, and build support systems. We appreciate the responsiveness of the conference planning committee and all involved.

There is much work to do, however. Results of a member survey, indicated that cost is a major barrier to undergraduate student attendance at the Biennial Conference. Conversations are underway with the SCRA national student representative (Erin Godley-Reynolds) and other SCRA leadership to explore funding options, including the development of travel grants specifically geared for undergraduate students so that

they are not competing with graduate students for these essential travel dollars. We hope the shifts made at the 2019 Biennial will only be the beginning of efforts to create specific spaces for our undergraduate colleagues and their faculty mentors.

In addition to Biennial-focused development, conversations with members of the Council on Education to explore mechanisms, spaces, and opportunities for publishing CP pedagogy and scholarship of teaching and learning are underway. We call to CP journals to make room for publishing work in this context. While CP training in collaborative and participatory processes helps to envision *how* students can be co-authors and co-producers of research, getting this work published can be a challenge. We believe these two volumes illustrate the impact undergraduate CP practitioners have on their students and the field. Community Psychology's unique methods and values mean encountering distinct challenges in both teaching CP and evaluating those efforts. Disseminating pedagogical practice and evaluation strategies and successes would benefit CP educators while joining existing discussions of social justice pedagogy.

Based on our experience editing this special issue, structuring and formatting the scholarly presentation of this work is challenging. Graduate education in our field does not include training on how to write about pedagogy or how to conduct research on teaching and learning. We worry that in addition to the barriers of heavy teaching and service loads, more CP pedagogy work does not get published because of the lack of dedicated space or guidance on format for this unique form of scholarly contribution. The standardized format for presenting social science research does not align with teaching practice. A shared, recommended structure for documenting and disseminating teaching theory, lesson plans, and assessments of impact would support the development of a

coherent body of CP Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

We are thankful for the Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice for supporting two volumes on this subject. We hope that we can continue to develop spaces with journal editors to highlight and disseminate this work, as teaching practice ultimately makes us all better educators and expands and strengthens our field.

Finally, we re-invite community psychologists to exam the mental models of what constitutes legitimate CP professional practice. Undergraduate CP education should be a valued career within the field, one that is

viewed as an *intentional* career path, not as a fallback or backup to more 'prestigious' research-oriented positions. As we suggested in our first volume introduction, CP competencies should reference and include teaching practice. Moreover, graduate programs should develop more support for CP teaching and pedagogy development. Offering avenues for CP graduate students to pursue careers in teaching would help expand the field of CP-trained psychology majors and potentially enhance the pipeline into CP graduate programs. If you are interested in connecting to these efforts, we invite you to join the SCRA interest group- Community Psychology Practice in Undergraduate Settings.