A Service-Learning approach to Implementation Research and Practice

This course at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (JHSPH) is designed to be a supplement to a larger course called “Implementation research and practice.” Implementation Research examines how programs and policies (that were developed in research settings) are implemented in real world settings. A critical component of implementation science is partnering with local organizations and learning about the context in which programs/policies are implemented.

In the larger course, students are introduced to implementation science methods and theories. Thus, they will gain knowledge and skills in the larger course then apply the knowledge and skills through partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs) in this service-learning course.

This is a relatively small course, so we plan to recruit 1-2 CBO projects. Students, who will work in teams of 3-5, will develop an implementation product in partnership with local CBOs.

Some examples of implementation science projects include:

1) **An interview guide** to learn about what types of programs your clients want and if your program is a good fit for them.

2) **An agency readiness assessment.** This type of tool will assist organizations in determining if they have existing resources and capacity to develop a new program. This assessment will identify areas that need to be strengthened.

3) **A fidelity assessment.** A fidelity assessment is a tool that will determine how adherent a program is being delivered as it was intended to be.

In addition to developing a product for the organization, students will also meet with the organization to describe what to do with the product. In early November, students will have an initial meeting with the CBO to learn about a program. Then, the instrument will be developed between November-December.

**Participating CBOs will be expected to (October-December 2020):**

1) Identify an existing program or a new program that the CBO is planning to implement.

2) In mid-October, talk with the course instructor (Dr. Davey-Rothwell) to review potential projects.
3) In early November, meet with students for an initial consultation. In this consultation, students and the CBO will discuss the project that will be the focus of the course.

4) In late November, review a draft of the students’ product and provide feedback in a face-to-face meeting.

5) In December, review the final version of the product and provide feedback.

6) Be present for the students’ final virtual presentation (TBD).

7) Facilitate access to staff involved in the program such as the facilitator, project manager, supervisor, etc.

8) Communicate regularly with students throughout the course to ensure smooth flow of activities and that organization needs are met. We anticipate 3 face-to-face meetings and email/phone correspondence as needed.

**Students will be expected to (2nd Term late October – late December 20, 2020)**

1) Meet with CBO staff to discuss the proposed project.

2) Work in a group to develop an initial plan for completing the projects.

3) Give the CBO a draft of the implementation product to get mid-term feedback.

4) Communicate clearly with the CBO (e.g. delineate what help they need from the CBO to facilitate meeting with interviewees, etc.).

5) Provide a written report which will include the implementation instrument, purpose of instrument, and instructions for data collection and interpretation.

6) Give a presentation to the CBO to disseminate the results.

7) Communicate regularly with CBO staff during the course of the term to ensure smooth flow of activities and that organization needs are met. We anticipate 3 face-to-face meetings and email/phone correspondence as needed.

**The CBO will receive:**

1) A draft of the implementation instrument to provide feedback.

2) A final report which will include the implementation instrument, purpose of instrument, and instructions for data collection and interpretation.

3) A brief powerpoint presentation, or another format that is agreed to by both the students and the CBO.
Course timeline and assignments (specific deadlines will be set once the course is finalized)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>2nd Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct 26-Nov 6</td>
<td>CBO will meet with the students for initial consultation</td>
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<td>Week of Nov 16</td>
<td>Students will share 1st draft of deliverable with the CBO for feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week of Dec 7</td>
<td>Last week of class</td>
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<td>Final assignment due: Write-up of implementation deliverable and 10 minute class presentation</td>
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Project proposal submissions are due by **Wed, October 8, 2020**

To propose a project, [complete the short online form here](#). The form collects contact information, and a description of your desired project and deliverables.

**Questions?** Please contact Mindi Levin, SOURCE Founder and Director, at [mlevin@jhu.edu](mailto:mlevin@jhu.edu) or by cell phone 443-801-3038.

**ADDITIONAL DETAILS:**

**What is implementation Research and Practice?**

Implementation Research and Practice (IRP) examines how programs and policies that were developed in research settings are implemented in real world settings. In this field, researchers partner with agencies such as CBOs or local government to implement a program/policy and learn more about the process. Unlike evaluation where the focus may be on outcomes, IRP is interested in what happens over the whole course implementing a program or policy. The whole process may include 1) Pre-implementation which includes preparation or getting ready (what do we need to do and what resources are needed before we start); 2) Implementation which means the actual delivery of the program (what is happening once we start the program/policy?); and 3) Post implementation which occurs when we have completed the program or policy (what did we learn at the end?)

Some of the questions that can be answered include:

- Is my organization ready to implement a new program?
- What resources does our organization need before we can implement a new program?
- How does our staff feel about a new/existing program?
- What have been some of the barriers and facilitators we have experienced with this program/policy?
- Are we delivering the program the way we should be? (i.e. fidelity)

These questions are just a snapshot of questions that can get answered by IRP. Many more questions may be answered so feel free to send us an email to learn more.