URBAN COMMUNITY CHANGE PROGRAM

Overview

109/110 Main Hall
Urban Community Change Program (https://www.wcupa.edu/arts-humanities/RUCCAS/)
Hannah Ashley (hashley@wcupa.edu), *Director*

The purpose of this program is to equip future professionals to work in urban communities and with agencies and organizations that particularly focus on urban youth, including but not limited to schools, social service agencies, and youth and community development organizations. Through an experiential approach to learning and a philosophy of empowerment, the program will help WCU students to understand the complex context of American cities, the strengths and capabilities of families of diverse backgrounds, and the implications of public policy for large urban systems.

The minor will enable students who are preparing for urban careers to develop a deep understanding of the economic, social, cultural, and political context of urban social systems and community factors that affect youth. The Youth Empowerment and Urban Studies (YES) Minor is open to all students in every college.

Programs

Major

- B.A. in Urban Community Change (https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/arts-humanities/urban-community-change-program/urban-community-change-ba/)

Minor

- Youth Empowerment and Urban Studies (https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/arts-humanities/urban-community-change-program/youth-empowerment-urban-studies-minor/)

Policies

- See undergraduate admissions information. (https://catalog.wcupa.edu/general-information/admissions-enrollment/undergraduate-admissions/)
- See academic policies. (https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/)

All undergraduate students are held to the academic policies and procedures outlined in the undergraduate catalog. Students are encouraged to review departmental handbooks for program tips, suggested course sequences, and explanations of procedures. When applicable, additional policies for specific department programs may be listed below.

Faculty

Professors

Hannah Ashley (hashley@wcupa.edu) (2001)
Director, Urban Community Change Program
B.S., Cornell University; M.Ed., Ph.D., Temple University

Eleanor Brown (ebrown@wcupa.edu) (2005)
B.A., Haverford College; Ph.D., University of Delaware

Kristen B. Crossney (kcrossney@wcupa.edu) (2008)
Director, D.P.A. Program
Interim Chairperson, Criminal Justice
B.S., University of Maryland-Baltimore County; M.A., Temple University; Ph.D., Rutgers University

Ashlie B. Delshad (adelshad@wcupa.edu) (2011)
B.A., Austin College; M.A., Ph.D., Purdue University

Jacqueline S. Hodes (jhodes@wcupa.edu) (2012)
Chairperson, Educational Leadership and Higher Education Administration
Graduate Coordinator, Educational Leadership and Higher Education Administration
B.A., M.Ed., Ed.D., University of Delaware

Lisa C. Huebner (lhuebner@wcupa.edu) (2007)
B.A., Bowling Green State University; M.A., University of Cincinnati; Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh

Vicki A. McGinley (vmcginley@wcupa.edu) (1997)
B.A., University of Pittsburgh; M.A., Ph.D., Temple University

Kathleen Riley (kriley@wcupa.edu) (2013)
B.A., Colby College; M.A., American University; Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania

Associate Professors

David I. Backer (dbacker@wcupa.edu) (2016)
B.A., George Washington University; M.S., State University of New York, Buffalo; M. Phil., Columbia University; Ph.D., Columbia University, Teachers College

Casey Bohrman (cbohrman@wcupa.edu) (2014)
B.S., Boston University; M.S.W., Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania

Laquana Cooke (lcooke2@wcupa.edu) (2016)
B.S., New Jersey Institute of Technology; B.A., Rutgers University; M.A., New York University; Ph.D., Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Benjamin Kuebrich (bkuebrich@wcupa.edu) (2016)
B.A., Illinois State University; M.A., Miami University (OH); Ph.D., Syracuse University

Orkideh Mohajeri (omohajeri@wcupa.edu) (2018)
B.A., Carleton College; M.A., M.Ed., Ph.D., University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Yanira Rodriguez (yrodriguez@wcupa.edu) (2019)
B.A., Lehman College; M.A., M.F.A., Syracuse University

Latonya Thames-Taylor (lthames-taylor@wcupa.edu) (2001)
Director, African American Studies Program
B.A., Tougaloo College; M.A., Ph.D., University of Mississippi

Courses

RUX

RUX 110. Introduction to Urban Community Change. 3 Credits.
This course explores the idea that people critically understanding the world and how to act in and for themselves on the world to change it is an essential quality of humanity.
Gen Ed Attribute: Humanities Distributive

RUX 199. Urban Community Change Transfer Credits. 1-10 Credits.
Transfer Credits
Repeatable for credit.

RUX 215. Liberation Psychology: Sustaining Community Change. 3 Credits.
This class will take a Liberation Psychology approach to examining the cross section of societal forces and our individual lives as "community change workers" such that we can sustain ourselves and those we might work with professionally and in the community. Students will be introduced to a toolkit of practices for sustaining their own resilience, well-being, and engagement in community change framed critically to combat oppression and internalized oppression (ranging from Cognitive Behavioral self-help tools to mindfulness, peer support to movement building, and more). Students will gain in-depth practice in using active listening, reflection, and interpersonal communication as one way to process the effects of oppression. Students will also have opportunities to learn presentation skills, including final projects that will allow them to explore in more depth one or more of the strategies studied by formulating a model of sustaining self for the future, a model that aims to be aware of the critical perspectives on psychology and structural injustices studied in this course.
RUX 215 Prerequisite: Successful completion of RUX 110, YES 250, PSY 100, or PSY 120, with minimum grades of D-.
Gen Ed Attribute: Speaking Emphasis
Equivalent courses: PSY 215

RUX 377. Community Organizing: Strategies and Practice. 3 Credits.
This is a course that explores strategies and practice of organizing for social change. This course will study and engage social problems and the agencies (NGOs, non-profits, Not-for-profits, religious, and governmental) which deal with social problems through the strategic organizing. The course will examine the way social change occurs and how and why people organize with a focus on social, political, and economic justice and radical democracy. Students will be exposed to a variety of methods and practical strategies for nonviolent community organizing. While time is given to theory, this course will focus on the practice of social change and the development of practical skills for capacity building, strategic design, and organizing logistics.
RUX 377 Prerequisite: Successful completion of PAX 200, RUX 110, or YES 250, with minimum grades of D-.
Equivalent courses: PAX 377

RUX 400. Critical Urban Work Practicum Seminar. 6 Credits.
This course is a capstone experience for Urban Community Change students to apply their critical study of the assets and challenges of urban communities; deepen their investments in urban communities; and synthesize practice, theories, and histories of community change with an in-depth field placement with an organization in Philadelphia or another urban location. Students will use knowledge developed in previous courses and fieldwork to focus on how to collaboratively build and sustain change publicly, within groups and institutions, and within themselves. Contemporary topics in urban community change, including research and practice, will be presented each week. Students will integrate their praxis into a model of transformative community building practices within the urban social context. This course may be taken twice for credit.
RUX 400 Prerequisite: Successful completion of RUX 110; PAX 377 or RUX 377; PSY 215 or RUX 215; and YES 300, all with minimum grades of D-. One may be waived by permission of the instructor or program advisor. Attendance at a meeting the previous semester with the RUCCAS faculty and staff is also required.
Gen Ed Attribute: Writing Emphasis (select both)
Repeatable for credit.

YES

YES 199. Youth Empowerment and Urban Studies Transfer Credits. 1-10 Credits.
Transfer Credits
Repeatable for credit.

YES 250. Intro to Youth and Urban Community Work: Urban Prof Workshop. 3 Credits.
This course addresses professional dispositions for working in the urban environment. Students gain an awareness of the strengths of communities, their ethical responsibilities as community and youth workers, as well as the forms of oppression that youth may experience in the urban environment.
Gen Ed Attribute: Ethics Requirement

YES 300. Youth Empowerment and the Urban Context. 3 Credits.
This course will immerse students in theories, historical contexts, and practices of leadership and democratic action through study, reflection and a semester-long partnership with an elementary or middle grades classroom in an urban school.

YES 301. Seminar in Youth-Led Media and Inquiry. 3 Credits.
Students will participate in a six-week intensive seminar on service learning/CEL and youth-led media as a particular strategy of CEL.