Community Immersion Worksheet

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Your community immersion paper must have the following sections: Introduction, Community Demographics, Community Characteristics and Culture, Community Decision-making, and Reflection and Conclusion. Each of these sections should be labeled with level-one APA format headings (bold, centered, capital letters beginning every significant word).
- For this paper, students are encouraged to include information taken from conversations with community residents and community leaders. This information will need to be cited as personal communications. Remember – standard APA style requires citation of personal communication in-text but not on the reference page.

INTRODUCTION

In this section, you will reflect and explain why it is important for social workers to understand the communities they work in. Additionally, you will “present” the community you visited by naming the community and providing any details that will help the reader “picture” it. You can also briefly discuss what you saw when you on your walkthrough, but do not use first person unless your professor has approved it. While introductions to APA papers typically include a thesis, in this paper, your thesis should actually be presented in the reflection and conclusion section.

Ask yourself:

- Why is it important for social workers to understand the communities they serve?
- How can I best describe the community I visited to the reader?

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

For this section, you will research, discuss, and analyze various community demographics. While there are many demographic variables that can be discussed, include those that you feel are most important to allow the reader to have a better understanding of the community. Additionally, explain why those demographics are important and whether you were able to “see” those demographics on your walk-through of the community.

Points to keep in mind:

- Demographics are statistical facts about the community, and are not opinion-based. Use sources such as the United States Census Bureau.
- When writing your analysis, be sure to back up your analyses with citations from either a peer-reviewed journal article, your textbook, or other reliable sources.
- Be sure to discuss your observations of the community in the context of the demographic you are discussing.
- Use the provided chart to help you plan for this section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Impact on Community</th>
<th>How I Saw It During My Walkthrough</th>
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Created by Esther Bursztyn :: Edited by Jennifer Nichols

http://libguides.usc.edu/socialwork/sowkwriting :: https://www.facebook.com/USCSOWKlearningsupport/
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COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS AND CULTURE

In this section, you will demonstrate your ability to analyze attributes of the community and how they affect the community as a whole. Specifically, you will identify community strengths, weaknesses and/or challenges - remember, no more than three of each. You will also discuss the impact of each of the strengths, weaknesses, and challenges that you have identified.

Points to keep in mind:

- Use the assignment guidelines for examples of areas of strengths, weaknesses, and challenges within communities.
- Utilize the Jansson textbook to help you identify and assess community characteristics.
- Use the provided chart to help you plan for this section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Strengths</th>
<th>Community Weaknesses</th>
<th>Community Challenges</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Impact:</td>
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COMMUNITY DECISION-MAKING

In this section, you will discuss community leaders, both formal and informal. See your assignment instructions for definitions of these two types of leaders. Aside from naming specific community leaders, you will also discuss how these leaders affect the community as a whole. Sources for this section can include personal communications, newspaper articles, and local community websites.

Ask yourself:

- Who are the formal leaders of the community? How are they affecting the community? Are they working for the benefit of most of the community?
- Who are the informal leaders of the community? How have they come to be in leading positions? How are they affecting the community? What are their aims and intentions for the community?
- Use the provided chart to help you plan for this section.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Formal Leaders</th>
<th>Informal Leaders</th>
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<tr>
<td>Who Are They?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effect on Community</td>
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REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION

In this section, you will respond to three main prompts. **Firstly, and most importantly, you will present your thesis about how well the community functions. Make sure to back this up with evidence from your paper!** Secondly, you will discuss which community issues you would most like to address as a professional social worker. Finally, discuss whether you’d like to live or work in the community, and explain why or why not.

Points to keep in mind:

- Your thesis is the backbone of your paper. Be sure to use this opportunity to present a thesis that can be well-supported by the various details in your paper!
- When discussing what you’d most like to address as a social worker in the community and whether or not you’d like to live there, keep in mind the demographics, strengths, and weaknesses that you addressed above. Additionally, answer this question within the context of your thesis.