

The Graduate Diploma in **Community-Engaged Research & Evaluation** at McMaster University's School of Social Work offers:



Knowledge and Ideas

- Foundational courses focused on the historical, theoretical and ethical bases of community-based research
- Analysis of the contemporary pressures and contexts surrounding evaluation in social services and communities



Models and Perspectives

- A range of methods and approaches to community-engaged research
- A range of models for justice-oriented evaluation practice



Professional Development and Skills-Building

- Undertake a community-engaged research or evaluation project in an agency where you work or volunteer
- Receive support, guidance and feedback from the faculty seminar facilitator and other students



Community

- Opportunities to share knowledge, stories and strategies, and to reflect on research and evaluation practice, with community colleagues who share similar goals

Graduate Diploma in Community-Engaged Research & Evaluation



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Community-Engaged RESEARCH & EVALUATION

Do you have a BA or BSW and experience working in social services or communities?

This Graduate Diploma offers the opportunity to develop your knowledge and skills in community-engaged research and evaluation, and to contribute to community and agency learning, effectiveness, and change.

McMaster School of Social Work graduate programs are designed in part to respond to contemporary trends in social services and community work. Research and evaluation are taking on increased importance in these sectors. Emphasis is placed on 'evidence-based' practice, clear definition of intended outcomes, and formal evaluation of program and policy initiatives (usually tied to funding).

Yet in many cases evidence is too narrowly defined to capture and document individual, group and community needs, aspirations and changes. Many agencies and groups also have their own questions about their communities, about the services they provide, and about ways of achieving their visions for a better world. They sometimes have mountains of unanalyzed data, and certainly have lots of untapped insight. Many appreciate, as well, the transformative potential of participatory research for communities, staff and service users.

In this program students will craft locally relevant research questions and/ or frame evaluation processes useful for both agency/ community and funder purposes, and build their capacities for conducting participatory, justice-focused research and evaluation.

Meet some of our instructors; people who have years of practice, research and advocacy experience, and are deeply connected with their communities.



STEPHANIE BAKER COLLINS has worked in social policy analysis, research, public education and advocacy at community and national levels. Stephanie examines the impact of public policy on the lives of marginalized groups, conducting research in partnership with community organizations and advocating for justice in public policy. Her policy research on socio-economic issues has included writing and presenting briefs before Standing Committees of Parliament. Her current projects focus on the intersection of disability and homelessness for youth, and policy impacts of the social assistance system in Ontario. Stephanie teaches SOC WORK 743.



SAARA GREENE has worked in a range of social work positions and settings including as Director of Research and Evaluation at Fife House, an agency providing supportive housing for people living with HIV/ AIDS. Saara is committed to community based research and to developing models of CBR that address methodological and ethical challenges. Her research focuses on the needs and experiences of women living with HIV in relation to housing instability, pregnancy, birth and motherhood, and the criminalization of HIV non-disclosure, paying attention to the ways that racism, colonization and sexism intersect in women's lives. Saara teaches SOC SCI 701.

COURSES:

SOC SCI 701: CRITICAL APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH

This course provides students with a working knowledge of the theoretical foundation and history of community based research; a practical understanding of the methods and methodologies taken up within community based research; and an entry into the practice of community based research with an attention to: developing a critical analysis of collaboration; analyzing and evaluating strategies aimed at community-based participation and leadership; developing a critical analysis of community-based research ethics; developing a critical understanding of engaging in research for social change.

SOC WORK 743: CRITICAL APPROACHES TO EVIDENCE AND EVALUATION IN SOCIAL SERVICES AND COMMUNITIES

This course explores both the doing and discourses of evaluation and accountability as they relate to critical practice in social services and communities. It supports students to apply critical conceptual frameworks to evidence and evaluation, develop an awareness of the organizational context for evaluation, learn about evaluation methods, and examine ways to use more conventional methods of evaluation for social justice ends.

SOC WORK 744: RESEARCH EXPERIENCE AND SEMINAR

Involves a research experience in a community agency and participation in a seminar designed to support, and foster reflection on, the research experience. The course builds on the intellectual foundations, preparation and proposals developed in SOC SCI 701 / SOC WORK 743. In seminar discussion, students bring ideas and concepts from the foundation courses to bear on the research they are doing and their learning in the community agency. Supported by seminar discussion and readings students further develop their proposals and carry out the projects in dialogue and collaboration with agency representatives, service users and community members.

