

PSCI/HSOC 335

HEALTHY SCHOOLS:

Community based participatory research, planning and action

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Tuesdays, 1:30-4:30pm
Leadership Hall Seminar Room
3814 Walnut St.

This academically based community service and “Ideas in Action” seminar will develop a pilot program to test the efficacy of using service-learning teams of undergraduates and graduate students to facilitate the development of School Health Councils (SHCs), whose members will include members of the administration, staff, teachers, students, parents and community members in two West Philadelphia elementary schools. These Councils will use the School Health Index, developed by the Center for Disease Control, to assess the school health environment on such issues as: nutrition (quality and participation in school meals and other sources of food in school); physical education and fitness; the physical environment (bathrooms, cafeterias, hallways, classrooms, playgrounds, gyms); tobacco use prevention; asthma; and violence prevention (anti-bullying programs; after school programs). The goal of this assessment is to develop a realistic and meaningful *school health implementation plan* and ongoing action projects to put this plan into practice.

Course readings will focus on related issues in urban education, public health, action oriented participant/ observer research, and the specific areas of interest in the School Health Index. Course speakers will include representatives from local and national agencies that have used the School Health Index to improve school health environments. If this model for the use of Penn service-learning teams is successful, it will form the basis of an ongoing partnership with the School District’s Office of Health, Safety & Physical Education to expand such efforts to more schools.