Community Based Needs Assessment

5 pages Due Date: 12/10

As citizens and servant leaders we have a responsibility to understand and engage in social issues in our communities. One of the foundational components of becoming an advocate/active citizen is to learn and understand a social issue in-depth and how it is impacting the community. This project will encourage you to look at a community issue through research and analysis of research and data and a needs assessment. Further, you have the option to interview people in your community who are actively involved in this issue. Examples of community issues can be related to: homelessness, juvenile delinquency, education, health disparities, hunger on campus, or issues focused on a specific population as it relates to poverty. Utilize the Packet on Community Organizing, and the language of Social Change Model 7C’s

Community Issues

A. Identify and follow an issue of concern in your community. There are many examples of issues that face communities all around you. Listen to the news and choose a topic that is particularly meaningful to you, then come together with your group and agree on an issue to further research.

B. Compile a file of materials related to the issue (e.g., newspaper clippings, fliers, news articles and at least two research articles related to your issue). You must use a minimum of 5 resources/references.

C. Using Needs Assessment information, identify physical and cultural features of the community where this issue is most apparent. You need to identify 5 features and it can be any combination of physical/cultural features.

D. How is this community impacted by this issue? What data did you find to support this?

E. Through this analysis, identify some of the main participants/stakeholders in the conversation about this issue in the community. Who makes decisions? Who is impacted? Who can make change? How is this change made? Determine their stances. Identify and evaluate conflicting points of view. You can interview someone in the community and ask specific question of how this issue is being addressed.

F. From information gathered what steps are being taken or can be taken to help solve this issue in the community. Do you have any information on why this tactic/or solution is being implemented?

G. Write an email (last page of your paper) to an audience you identify (e.g., city council member, nonprofit, or civic group), stating the issue and making suggestions based on what your group learned, or encourage other people in the community impacted to get involved based on your investigations. Include references to the materials you collected about the issue. You must include the actual address and proper title/salutation in your email (particularly if it is an elected official). Add the response if you get one back.

H. Create a summary PowerPoint presentation of your community project of 5-10 slides to share in class as a group. Bring in any information to make this presentation come alive. PowerPoint should:
   1. identify the issue and its significance in your community,
   2. summarize what you learned, and
   3. include your groups recommendation for addressing the issue.

Everyone does this last part separately:

I. Write a reflection about your experience working on this project, working with your group and what you took away. Some items you might which to include 1) your feelings about the issue before and after conducting the research 2) your observations about how “active citizenship” is or isn’t being carried out by community members and/or yourself in relation to the issue, 3) a reflection of what you learned about yourself and others as a result of this project, and 4) how this project applies to your future work as a engaged community member.