

SYLLABUS – Organizing Communities: Advocacy, Activism, and Social Justice

Instructor Susan Eleuterio

Course Number CSP 650

Term and Dates: Fall 2022 August 22-December 9

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Welcome to our Course!

CSP 650 Organizing Communities: Advocacy, Activism and Social Justice.

The course introduces students to the methods and perspectives of activism, advocacy and community organizing. Cultural sustainability is often a matter of social justice and self-determination. As such, knowledge of community organizing and advocacy strategies becomes critical for cultural sustainability practitioners. Organizing, advocacy, and action strategies will be shared and assessed particularly as they pertain to matters of cultural democracy.

The course will provide students with an opportunity to explore in depth the philosophy and theory behind advocacy and community organizing including its many uses as a tool to question and challenge the status quo. Course readings will be used to inform, ground and challenge students as they explore in the classroom the complex and exciting dynamics inherent in community organizing for social change and justice. In addition to learning from readings, students are expected to fully engage in a series of additional learning activities, including community organizing skills training sessions and one or more guest speakers.

Main Course Topics

1. Organizing: Advocacy and Activism
2. Strategies to build communities
3. Ten rules of community organizing
4. Choosing and “cutting” issues
5. Organizational inventories
6. Past and current social movements
7. Organizing locally
8. Skill Training- strategic analysis, dealing with obstacles
9. Creating a plan for an organizing campaign

Program Objectives and Outcomes

1. **MACS Outcome 2:** Exhibit professional and ethical responsibility in managing partnerships that foster community self-determination and empower community efforts in cultural documentation, preservation, revitalization and social equity. (MACS2 Ethics)

2. **MACS Outcome 5:** Identify and demonstrate a range of professional management skills that contribute to organizational sustainability such as financial skills, communications, and leadership through collaboration, teamwork, and consensus building. (MACS5 Management)

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students are expected be able to do the following:

1. Create and interpret personal narratives in a social change framework.
2. Demonstrate fundamentals of organizational practice.
3. Research, analyze, and critique social issues and organizing strategies and objectives.
4. Define issues and interests and identify stakeholders and power structures.
5. Argue issues, listen to opposing points of view, and build common cause.
6. Critique campaign effectiveness.
7. Design, plan, and implement a strategy for an organizing campaign.

Required Readings

Textbook/s:

Textbooks for this course are available through the Goucher College bookstore or through online booksellers.

- Canning, Doyle and Reisborough, Patrick. 2009. Re-imagining Change: An Introduction To Story Based Strategy (PDF in Canvas) Creative Commons License.
<https://www.storybasedstrategy.org/reimagining-change-download>
- Leeds, Greg-Jobin and AgitArte. *When We Fight We Win! Twenty-First-Century Social Movements and the Activists That Are Transforming Our World. Real Stories of Hard-fought battles for Social Change, with clear Lessons and tips for activists to build powerful Movements.* 2015. The New Press.
- Mondros, J. and Wilson, S. 1994. *Organizing for Power and Empowerment.* New York: Columbia University Press. (Also available online)

Recommended Readings:

- Alinsky, Saul D. 1971. *Rules for Radicals.* Vintage Books Edition, 1989. New York: Vintage.
- Bobo, Kendal, Max. 2001. *Organizing for Social Change: A manual for activists.* Midwest Academy.
- Freire, Paulo. 1970. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* 30th Anniversary Edition. New York: Continuum.

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- Hardisty, Jean. 1999. *Mobilizing Resentment. Conservative Resurgence from the John Birch Society to the Promise Keepers*. Beacon Press.
- Lakoff, George. 2014. *The All New: Don't Think Of An Elephant! Know Your Values and Frame the Debate*. Chelsea Green Publishing.
- Sen, Rinku. 2003 *Stir It Up: Lessons in Community Organizing and Advocacy*. Jossey Bass.

Optional Reading:

- Tufekci, Zeynep. 2017. *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest*. Yale University Press.

Resource Websites:

- When We Fight, We Win Podcasts <https://www.whenwefightwewin.com/podcast/>
- Faith in Action <http://www.piconetwork.org/>
- Center for Community Change – <https://ccc50.communitychange.org>
- Midwest Academy – www.midwestacademy.com
- MOB Lab: The 21st Century Advocacy Playbook <https://mobilisationlab.org/resources/21st-century-advocacy-playbook/>
- The Mobilisation Cookbook <https://mobilisationlab.org/resources/the-mobilisation-cookbook/>

Course Format

The content of this course is delivered online using the Canvas course management system and various third-party web tools. Concepts are acquired through active learning, collaborative projects, self-study, online peer discussions, and responses, as well as individualized professor feedback and comments. Students are expected to participate in asynchronous online learning activities and tasks, to engage in self-motivated learning and research, and to support each other through constructive criticism and resource sharing. The evaluation consists of self-evaluations, peer evaluations, and professor assessments using rubrics for course tasks

- Community organizing skills and strategy training
- PowerPoint lectures
- Videos and film
- Online links and reading resources
- Student summaries of assigned readings and podcasts
- Guest speakers
- Online postings through discussion posts
- Class discussions and presentations related to organizing strategies
- 15 required Class sessions on zoom. 1 Asynchronous session.

Assignment Descriptions

- 1) **Story of Self, Story of Us, Story of Now- class presentation.** Students will review Marshall Ganz 's Public Narrative Worksheet in class and develop a story of self, a story of "us", and a story of "now" to share with the class.
- 2) **Chapter Reviews/Class presentation:** Each student will choose a chapter from When We Fight We Win, to present to the class. (These may be done as partnerships) Review should include summary of issues addressed, what social movement is represented, analysis of which strategies of organizing were used, what story was told, what worked, what didn't work, lessons learned and/or gains made? **Note:** Students are encouraged to use art/graphics to explore these topics.
- 3) **Podcast Reviews/Class presentation:** Each student will choose a podcast from the When We Fight We Win website (or a podcast which reflects the community/topic you are interested in) to review for the class. Reviews should summarize the issue addressed, the community or social movement represented, and at least one example of a strategy/tactic used.
- 4) **Organizing campaign presentation.** This presentation will include the story of you/us/now , issue(s) , cultural context, capacity and resources, organizational development (ways you want your organization/community to be strengthened by this campaign), long and short term goals, strategy development, targets, constituents/stakeholders (allies and opponents), tactics, values, common ground and context, obstacles/challenges, and plans for reflection/evaluation/celebration of wins. Presentation can be based in either hypothetical or real communities but should be focused on issues you personally care about.

On-line Assignments

Discussion Posts - on-line written response to topics discussed in class. These should be completed before the next class meeting.

One 500-hundred-word essay on specific concepts of organizing, advocacy and social justice. We will discuss potential topics in class.

Written Reflection essay on your Organizing Campaign Strategy presentation.

Grading

Course components	Percent (or points)
In-class Discussion and participation	25%
Discussion posts and Story of Us, Self, Now	15%
Campaign presentation (Preparation, delivery and reflection on lessons learned)	30%
Chapter/podcast reviews and presentations	20%

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500-word essay (1)	10%
Total	100%

Grade Scale

A	93 or more points
A-	90 - 92 points
B+	87 - 89 points
B	83 - 86 points
B-	80 - 82 points
C+	77 - 79 points
C	73 - 76 points
C-	70 - 72 points
F	69 points and below

Course Policies

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

All final work products are to be the independent work of each student original to this course. Suspected violations of the [Academic Honor Code](#) will be referred to the Academic Honor Board.

ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES:

Please inform your instructor about any accommodations you need to participate fully in the course. Goucher College makes reasonable academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students requesting accommodations must make their request and provide appropriate documentation to the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS). Because classes change every semester, eligible students must obtain a new accommodation letter from the Disabilities Specialist every semester and review this letter with their professors so the accommodations can be implemented. The Director of OAS is available by appointment to answer questions and discuss any implementation issues you may have. For more information, please visit Goucher College's [Academic Accommodations](#) site.

COMMUNICATION:

- Faculty will be available at their Goucher email address and will respond to queries within 24 hours.
- Course participants are responsible for maintaining continuous involvement with faculty, fellow students, and student groups. In particular, participation in all discussions is required. Ongoing communication allows you to gain deeper insights into the content, activities, and assignments in the course. Please give notice of any obstacle that prevents this.
- You are encouraged to ask questions whenever information needs clarifying.
- For questions pertaining to your assignments: send an email directly to the instructor (please do not post personal questions in a discussion forum).
- For questions about assignments that may be interesting and helpful to other class members: please use a discussion forum.
- For problems with technical aspects of the Canvas course website: chat with [Canvas Support](#).

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E2CAMPUS EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM:

In an ongoing effort to better disseminate information during emergencies and campus closings, Goucher has implemented the e2Campus Notification System. The notification system will only send information regarding emergencies and campus closings as text messages to your mobile phone. To receive these messages, you must be registered in the system. Click the following link for information about how to create your [E2Campus account](#).

INCLEMENT WEATHER:

Please defer to Goucher College emergency communications, and/or to your instructor, for statements concerning contingency plans for inclement weather.

LATE POLICY:

For proper student learning to occur, pacing of content mastery is critical. Therefore, assignments are to be completed on time. If extreme circumstances prevent an assignment to be completed in a timely manner, please notify your instructor before the assignment is due so a new date can be negotiated.

MISSED WORK:

You are responsible for material covered in the course. It is your sole responsibility to obtain any materials missed.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY:

Goucher College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, sex, age, disability, marital status or genetic information in its programs and activities. The college has adopted a [Nondiscrimination Policy](#). Further details and contact information for the college's Title IX coordinator can be found on [Goucher's Nondiscrimination Notice and Policy page](#).

RELIGIOUS OBSERVATION POLICY:

If you need to request accommodation for religious observance, fill out the [Religious Observation Form](#) and submit it to your instructor as soon as possible and at least two weeks before the observance. If you communicate in a timely manner and complete any mutually agreed upon make-up work, any such absences or schedule changes will be excused and will not adversely affect your grade.

RESOURCES:

Students are provided with and encouraged to use the following resources:

[Academic Accommodations](#)

[Financial Aid Office](#)

[Career Education](#)

[Student Support and Outreach](#)

[Library](#)

Graduate Writing Center <https://www.goucher.edu/learn/graduate-programs/current-students/virtual-writing-center>

[myGoucher](#)

[Distance Learning Resources](#)

SCHEDULE

Class Date	Description	Due Dates
WEEK 1 – August 22 Introduction to Advocacy and Community Organizing		
	Topics: Course schedule review, introductions and “Check In” Overview of <u>When We Fight We Win</u> text Experiential learning activities KWL	
	Required Readings: Chapters 1,2,3 In <i>Organizing for Power and Empowerment</i> by Mondros and Wilson, <i>Re-imagining Change Introduction to Story Based Strategy</i> (in Canvas) Introduction and Chapter 4 in <i>When We Fight We Win!</i> (<i>Please read</i> before our first Zoom class)	8/22
WEEK 2 – August 29 Power of Story Strategies to Build Communities Choosing and Cutting Issues		
	Topics: Story of Self Ten “rules of organizing. Choosing and cutting issues.	
	Discussion Post: Please write a brief response to one of your classmate's stories from today. From "coaching good stories": What worked in that story for you? What was the challenge? What was a choice made? What specifics did you notice? Consider the stories told in Chapter 4 of <i>When We Fight, We Win</i> . How could your classmate’s personal story be connected to organizing? Post your answer by September 5	9/5
	Required Readings: Chapters 4,5 and 6 in Mondros and Wilson. Choose Chapters from <i>When We Fight We Win</i> to prepare for class presentation. Coaching Good Stories. Suggested Reading: <i>Rules for Radicals</i>	9/3
WEEK 3 – September 5 Story of “Us” Film: Saul Alinsky and His Legacy		
	Topics: Creating a Story of “us”	
	Discussion Post: What “Stories of Us” did you notice in the Alinsky video? How did these movements put the people impacted at the center? What were the wins? Who was the “us” in each of the movements?	9/12
	Required Readings: Chapters 4,5 and 6 in Mondros and Wilson. Start reading your selected chapter from <i>When We Fight We Win</i>	9/12
WEEK 4 – September 12 Story of Now Developing a Strategy Organizational Inventories		
	Topics: Creating a story of “now” Developing organizational inventories	
	Discussion Post: How could you use a community/organizational inventory to plan for your story of Now? Use one of the tools we discussed to create an inventory.	9/19

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	Required Reading: Chapter you've chosen from <i>When We Fight We Win</i> and Chapter 7 in Mondros and Wilson	
WEEK 5 - September 19 Framing the Issues Past and Current Social Movements		
	Topics: Women's March, Reproductive Rights, Tea Party, Trumpism, Nationalism	
	Discussion Post: Create a brief organizational inventory of one of the movements we discussed in class today- what did the activists, advocates, and organizers of this movement know before they took action?	9/26
	Required Reading: Chapters 8, 9, 10 in Mondros and Wilson Suggested Reading: <i>Mobilizing Resentment: Conservative Resurgence from the John Birch Society to the Promise Keepers.</i>	9/26
WEEK 6 – September 26 – Framing the Issues Black Lives Matter and Climate Action Note: We will not meet online this week		
	Topics: Framing the issues Assignment: Watch Black Lives Matter Detroit Ron Norwood https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPyYDGclTX4	
	Watch : Black Lives Matter Chicago https://www.injusticewatch.org/commentary/2020/essential-work-china-and-miracle/	
	Look at Resources from these two movements: The Climate Reality Project https://www.climate realityproject.org/environmental-justice-101 Climate Strike Movement https://www.climatestrike.net/	
	Discussion Post: Use the Climate Action planning worksheet to analyze one of the actions used by organizers in one of this week's videos and/ or resources. What worked? What didn't work? How was this action part of a larger strategy? Suggested reading: <i>Don't Think of An Elephant</i>	10/3
WEEK 7 – October 3 Guest Speaker TBD Creative Placemaking in Organizing/Advocacy		
	Topics: Placemaking (and TBD by guest speaker)	
	Discussion Post Week 7: Use the narrative power analysis outline to analyze how our guest speaker uses social media and images in their work to encourage people power? What aspects of placemaking did you notice in their presentation- how do connections to placemaking work in terms of building community?	10/10
	Resources:	
	https://artsanddemocracy.org/uploads/CreativePlacemaking_webinar_SLIDEDECK.pdf Suggested reading: <i>Stir It Up</i>	
WEEK 8 – October 10 Multi-Issue Advocacy and Organizing Models Practice issue cutting		
	Topics: Multi-Issue Advocacy and Organizing Models, practice issue cutting Chapter Presentations <i>When We Fight We Win</i> (2 chapters)	

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	Practice issue cutting with a partner	
	Discussion Post: How can you work with others to organize and advocate using your story of “now” in terms of multiple issues? What are the organizing models which most appeal to you? Why?	10/17
	Suggested Reading: <i>Organizing for Social Change</i>	
WEEK 9- October 17 When We Fight We Win Chapter Presentations (3) Dealing With Obstacles		
	Topics: Dealing with obstacles	
	Discussion Post: Choose one of your classmates’ presentations from today. What obstacles did the people involved have to deal with? What strategies did they use?	10/24
	Suggested Reading: <i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i>	
WEEK 10 October 24 Social Media Podcast Reviews Assessment and Evaluation Capacity Tool Strategy Chart practice		
	Topics: Assessment and evaluation Resources : https://communityactionworks.org/resource/social-media-actions https://communityactionworks.org/resource/design-for-organizing/	
WEEK 11- October 31 Case study of community drawn from interests of the class. Campaign Presentation prep. Use the Tactic star- pair and share about tactics and strategies. Outline cultural context, capacity and resources, organizational development, long and short term goals, targets, constituents, strategy development, values, common ground, obstacles and challenges.		
Resources: Tactic Star		
WEEK 12 November 7 – Case study of community drawn from interests of the class. Campaign Presentation Prep – work with a partner Outline plans for reflection, evaluation and celebration of wins.		
WEEK 13 November 14 – 500 Paragraph essay review topics Images and Advocacy Guest Speaker TBD		
WEEK 14 November 21 Advocacy and Organizing Tool Kits Work with a partner to identify which tool kits would be useful in your work and for your campaign presentation		
Topic: tool kits		
WEEK 15 November 28 – Campaign Presentations		
WEEK 16 December 5 – Campaign Presentations Evaluation and assessment of Presentations		
	500 word paragraph essay	
	KWL review of what you’ve learned about Organizing Communities	

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