

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING
SPRING 2012
SOC. 392

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Class hours: T & Th 12:45-2:30
Location: ED 305
Office Hrs: Weds. 11-1:00 or by appointment

**FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES OR SPECIAL NEEDS, PLEASE SEE US IF
THERE IS ANYTHING WE CAN DO TO HELP**

Course Description

After he graduated from college and before he entered Harvard Law School, President Barack Obama worked for three years as a community organizer on Chicago's south side. According to President Obama:

Organizing begins with the premise that (1) the problems facing inner-city communities do not result from a lack of effective solutions, but from a lack of power to implement these solutions; (2) that the only way for communities to build viable long-term power is by organizing people and money around a common vision; and (3) that a viable organization can only be achieved if a broadly based indigenous leadership -- and not one or two charismatic leaders -- can knit together the diverse interests of their local institutions.

In this course we will study, question, put into action, and reflect upon what President Obama was talking about. Through a combination of service-learning experiences in a community-based organization, readings that address activism and social change, and in-class reflection and discussion, this course brings together theory and practice to offer students an opportunity to learn how to become effective agents of change. During our seminar meetings, we will come to learn the theory and tactics of community organizing and thereby gain a stronger understanding of relations of power and tools to challenge such structures. A major component of this course is the mandatory service-learning. Over the course of the semester, students will spend at least 20 hours working with the 8th grade students at DeMarillac Academy in the Tenderloin. The course culminates with student created social change projects that draw upon hip hop culture to facilitate social change in our local communities.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- ◆ Demonstrate knowledge of how sociologists define, study, and analyze activism and social change through assigned readings, class discussion, papers and the social change project.
- ◆ Understand the philosophical, political and practical issues involved in community organizing
- ◆ Find, gather and interpret qualitative and quantitative information about communities and community organizations through papers and social action project.
- ◆ Distinguish community organizing from other approaches to addressing problems in communities.
- ◆ Examine the essential concepts of power – what it is, how it is used and how groups and communities expand and strengthen their political power through organizing – and consider how to apply this learning.
- ◆ Draw upon their service with a community partner to draft a community action proposal that examines the interrelated causes and pose potential solutions to social problems.
- ◆ Demonstrate an awareness of social and cultural issues, including considerations of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality via in-class discussion, papers and social action projects.
- ◆ Develop a greater understanding of human agency and recognize the significance of their contribution to community via the service-learning, reflection portfolio and community projects.
- ◆ Engage and assess their role as an active citizen through participation in community organizations and the social change project.

Service-learning at *De Marillac Academy*

Your service-learning activities are intended to put the University's mission to serve the larger community into action. In this capacity you are expected to work with the 8th grade students at *De Marillac Academy (DMA)* as well as act as a participant researcher, gathering data to help inform your understanding of the causes and consequences of social problems, activism, and social change. The primary goal of your service experience in the wider community is to bring to life activism such that, your practice will inform your ideas and your ideas will inform your practice. During the semester, you will be working with DMA's 8th graders to develop a social change project that address key areas of concern in their lives. This project will draw upon hip hop culture as a tool or vehicle to promote progressive social change. The nature of your project or product is a direct result of your work with *DMA* and reflects the needs of the 8th graders (as expressed by them), your learning, and creativity. We will integrate the service-learning experience with the course curriculum through such methods as directed readings, reflective writing, and group discussion. If you are unable to participate in the DMA project due to scheduling conflicts, you must develop an on-campus social change project.

The service-learning component of this course is mandatory. Your grade in the course will reflect the fulfillment of your service-learning obligations as well as your integration of your experience with course material. Failure to complete the fieldwork component may result in a failing grade for the course. The service-learning requires that you complete a **minimum** of 20 hours (approx 2 hours per week) of service with *DMA*. While serving at the community based agency, you will be expected to act in a responsible manner. You must keep scheduled work hours and complete assigned duties. You also are expected to maintain good working relationships with supervisors and peers. Conduct that is deemed unacceptable to the agency supervisor may result in you being dismissed from that placement. If this is a problem for you, you must see us as soon as possible.

Process for termination of a service-learning project

If at any point during the semester your service-learning experience no longer meets the above criteria, you should approach me immediately to discuss options to improve the situation, and/or terminate the service-learning. If the service-learning experience must be terminated for any reason, I will work with the student to secure a new placement, as soon as possible.

Students should not, under any circumstances, remain in a service-learning organization in which their personal, physical or emotional health is jeopardized or harmed.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

There are **2** required texts for this course.

5. Rubin, H. and I. Rubin. 2008. *Community Organizing and Development*. New York: Pearson. 4th Edition.
6. Su, Celina. 2009. *Streetwise for Book Smarts: Grassroots Organizing and Education Reform in the Bronx*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Recommended:

1. Pyles, Loretta. 2009. *Progressive Community Organizing: A Critical Approach for a Globalizing World*.

Course Requirements

Participation	100pts	Change Project	600pts
Midterm Exam	100pts		
Reading Journal Entries	100pts		
TBX Reflection paper	100pts		

There are several types of assignments you'll be asked to complete this semester. You cannot successfully complete this course without pursuing all of them.

1. **Participation (Attendance, Punctuality, & Leading Class Discussion): 100pts**

My philosophy of the teaching/learning experience is an interactive one. This is your class. I expect each of you to contribute to this experience by **coming to class prepared by having already read the required reading and through active discussion**. This requires that you not only read the material, but that you also interact with the reading. In addition, each student will be responsible for leading at least one class discussion. A handout detailing the requirements will be available on Blackboard.

Obviously one must attend class to participate. Unexcused absences and tardies will result in a reduction of participation points. **More than FIVE unexcused absences (which includes KARAMUS) may result in a failing grade.** Students are responsible for all information provided in class. If you have to miss class, I strongly encourage you to borrow notes from one of your classmates.

2. Reading Journal Entries: 100pts

Each student is responsible for a weekly online reading journal that reflects on the weekly readings. This is a chance to think out loud about the readings and ask questions. In addition, each student will lead one class discussion. See handout on Bb for more details.

3. TBX Reflection: 100pts

Those students that went on the TBX will write a paper (3-5 page dbl spaced) discussing the significance of the trip for developing your understanding of the EMDS concept of "Crossing Borders, Discovering Home."

4. Midterm Exam: 100pts

There will be one exam for this course. The exam will consist of essays questions, short answer, and definitions that draw upon the material presented in the readings, lectures and films.

5. Change Project Portfolio: 600pts

The social action or change project is composed of **SEVEN (7)** components and combined accounts for 60% of your final course grade. Students will meet with community members to create an action project that supports local organizing efforts. Projects should be designed to achieve some measurable outcomes by the end of the semester. The Change Project has several key components:

A. Reflection Paper #1: 50 pts

Over the course of the semester you will write **TWO** reflection papers. In each paper you must **INTEGRATE** the readings from the text (and possibly the classroom discussion) with what you are observing, experiencing and learning from your community experience. You must **MAKE CONNECTIONS!!!** These papers give you an opportunity to reflect on social problems and social change in the hopes that by writing about what you personally are learning, you can come up with new ideas and/or evaluate your own practice. A handout describing the 2-4 page assignments will be posted on Blackboard. Each paper will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. A passing paper is worth 50 points, a failing paper worth 0 points. To pass, the paper must carefully discuss at least two (2) readings and your service-learning experience. Failing papers maybe eligible for revision and resubmission.

B. Issue Paper on Social Problem being addressed by your Social Change Project: 100 pts

This 5-7 page paper will address the social problem(s) being addressed by your social change project with *DMA*. Specifically, this paper will identify what is known about the social problem as well as identify and evaluate efforts aimed at ameliorating this problem. A handout describing this assignment will be available on Blackboard.

C. Community Description and Organizational Assessment: 100 pts

This paper, approximately 5-7 pages in length, provides a history and overview of the community/organization identified by your social change project. A handout describing this assignment will be available on Blackboard.

D. Change Project Proposal: 100 pts

Based upon the research gathered on your social problem, your knowledge of community organizing, and your experiential learning opportunities this semester, your goal is to work with the *DMA* students to propose a strategy for change. This proposal has several key components: Introduction / Problem Statement, Description of Site/Community (Comm Description/Org. Assessment), Literature Review (Issue Paper), Description of Change Project and Proposed Method of Evaluation. A handout describing this assignment will be available on Blackboard.

E. Change Project: 100 pts

Each student (or team) must complete their change project by April 26th 2012.

F. Reflection Paper #2: 50 pts

See description in "A".

G. Presentation & Portfolio: 100 pts

Each student or team will present their project to the class, EMDS supporters and our community partner.

CLASS POLICIES

Course Evaluation Criteria:

I know that on occasion, it's difficult to figure out what a professor expects of you in order to **EARN** a particular grade. In order to assuage that concern, here is the set of expectations I have of you during this semester; please note that they are *not* listed in order of importance:

- **Be "in time" and "on time."** Consistent attendance in class sessions, with you having read the materials, prepared to discuss the materials, and prepared to pose any questions that you have;
- Attendance in my office hours whenever you have a question or need help in understanding the materials or issues under discussion;
- Professional and respectful service with the community partner.
- Thoughtful reflection on the course materials and issues in your written assignments;
- The diligent pursuit of all assignments, with you committed to doing your best work on each one.

You will be evaluated in relation to a pre-established standard based on the grading scale below. This means that we will not grade on a curve.

Grade	%	Points		Grade	%	Points
A+	100-97	1000-970		C+	79-77	799-770
A	96-93	969-930		C	76-73	769-730
A-	92-90	929-900		C-	72-70	729-700
B+	89-87	899-870		D+	69-67	699-670
B	86-83	869-830		D	66-63	669-630
B-	82-80	829-800		D-	62-60	629-600

Only a verifiable emergency will be considered as a valid excuse for not turning in an assignment on the assigned date. If an emergency arises and you must turn in an assignment late, you **MUST** contact us on or before that day by calling our offices. If we are out of the office, be sure to leave a message on the voicemail, including a number where you can be reached. Be sure to keep an extra copy of all assignments in case the copy meant for us gets lost! Late assignments will be penalized! They will be marked down to the next lowest grade (e.g., from A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) for each day past the due date, including non-class days and weekends.

Academic Dishonesty

Although I do not expect anyone to do so, we must remind you that absolutely **NO** form of academic dishonesty (defined as the use of prohibited materials during an examination and the representation of another's work as your own whether the work was purchased or freely offered) will not be tolerated in this course. Any act of academic dishonesty will be met with an immediate failure on the assignment and handed over immediately to university administration for charges of academic misconduct. We will discuss how to avoid plagiarism; for additional details, see your student handbook.

COURSE SCHEDULE			
Week 1	T. 1.24	Welcome Back!	
	Th. 1.26	What is Community Organizing? Rubin Ch. 1, 2 & 10	Reflection Paper #1 Due 3:15-4:00 @ DMA Overview of project & Sociology
Week 2	T. 1.31	Theories & Model of Social Change Pyle Ch. 3 & 5	
	Th. 2.2	Prep for Hip Hop Lesson Rubin, Ch 12 & Epilogue	TBX Reflection Due! 3:15-4:00 @ DMA DMA to present
Week 3	T. 2.7	3 Pillars of Organizing Rubin, Ch. 4-6	Lesson Plan for DMA
	Th. 2.9	Run through Hip Hop Lesson	3:15-4:00 @ DMA USF to Teach Hip Hop
Week 4	T. 2.14	Problems, Programs & Precedents Rubin, Ch. 7-9	Lesson Plan for DMA
	Th. 2.16	Cecilia Discuss Community/Org Paper Run through DMA activities	3:15-4:00 @ USF Brainstorm key issues facing DMA students/community
Week 5	T. 2.21	Social Mobilization Sandra Rubin, Ch. 14-16	Community/Org Paper Lesson Plan for DMA
	Th. 2.23	Run through DMA activities	3:15-4:00 @ USF Brainstorm potential ways to address issues
Week 6	T. 2.28	Social Mobilization Draya Rubin, Ch. 17-19	Lesson Plan for DMA
	Th. 3.1	Run through DMA activities	3:15-4:00 @ DMA Create a draft plan of project
Week 7	T. 3.6	Building Capacity Keyaira Rubin, Ch. 17-19	
	Th. 3.8	Discuss Issue Paper	
SPRING BREAK 3.12-3.16			
Week 8	T. 3.20	Community Development Nykki Rubin, Ch. 20-21	Issue Paper Due
	Th. 3.22	Prep for DMA Lesson Plan for DMA	3:15-4:00 @ DMA Finalize Project
Week 9	T. 3.27	Prep for Fight the Power Discuss Proposal	
	Th. 3.29	Run through DMA activities & Feedback on Paper Lesson Plan for DMA	3:15-4:00 @ DMA Finalize timeline & workplan

Week 10	T. 4.3	Prep for Fight the Power	Proposal Due Fight the Power
	Th. 4.5	Prep for Fight the Power	Fight the Power
FIGHT THE POWER EVENT 4/4			
Week 11	T. 4.10 <i>Shea</i>	Streetwise for Book Smarts Su, Ch. 1 & 2	Work on final paper & change project
	Th. 4.12	Run through DMA activities	Work on final paper & change project
Week 12	T. 4.17 <i>Wes</i>	Streetwise for Book Smarts Su, Ch. 3 & 4	Lesson Plan for DMA
	Th. 4.19	Run through DMA activities	3:15-4:00 @USF Complete Project
Week 13	T. 4.24 <i>Michael</i>	Streetwise for Book Smarts Su, Ch. 5 & 6	Work on final paper & change project
	Th. 4.26	Run through DMA activities	3:15-4:00 @ TBD Complete Project
Week 14	T. 5.1 <i>Nico</i>	Streetwise for Book Smarts Su, Ch. 7 & 8	Work on final paper & change project
	Th. 5.3	Run through DMA activities	3:15-4:00 @ DMA End of Project
May 4th Draft of Final Paper Due			
Week 15	T. 5.8	Prep for DMA & Feedback on Paper	Work on final paper & change project
	Th. 5.10	Prep for DMA	3:15-4:00 @ USF Debrief & Party
	Th. 5.17	CHANGE PROJECT PRESENTATION 12:30-2:30 pm	PORTFOLIO DUE Reflection Paper #2 Due