

SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVISM, ADVOCACY, & CHANGE

HDF 3990C – 3 Credit Hours – Fall 2023

Tuesday: 1:15 pm – 4:15 pm

Waterman Building 423

LECTURER

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OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday, 12 pm – 2 pm or by appointment

“When we identify where our privilege intersects with somebody else's oppression, we'll find our opportunities to make real change.”

— Ijeoma Oluo

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A key component of UVM's common ground is **JUSTICE**:

“As a just community, we unite against all forms of injustice, including, but not limited to, racism. We reject bigotry, oppression, degradation, and harassment, and we challenge injustice toward any member of our community.”

But what does it mean to *unite against all forms of injustice*? How do we *challenge injustice toward any member of our community*?

This course allows students to garner social justice skills in activism, advocacy, and change. Students will not solely learn about previous social movements but put those skills into action in selected campaigns. Thus, this is not solely a class for *learning* but for *doing*.

The course uses an experiential social action model in which students read about theories of social change and apply their understanding to real-world, community-engaged campaigns of their choosing. Students work collectively to identify and define a social problem and develop concrete, quantifiable solutions (i.e., demands). Students select a campaign and are transformed through a direct experience of democracy with the opportunity to enact a policy (i.e., a rule, regulation, norm, or institutional practice) on campus or in the community.

Social action is key to civic engagement. The course will examine topics of issue development, change theory, building power and capacity, group dynamics, strategy and tactics, and campaign planning and implementation.

UVM's Civic Learning (CL) course designation:

- **Civic Foundations:** Students prepare for civic participation, active citizenship and/or community involvement.
- **Community Exploration:** Students are introduced to specific communities, observe, or participate in a community, and/or explore place-based cases of broader issues.

COURSE WEBSITE

Our course website is on Brightspace (<https://go.uvm.edu/brightspace>). The course will be divided into *Weekly Modules* in Brightspace. I will post assignments, lecture slides, additional readings, and announcements and maintain grades in Brightspace.

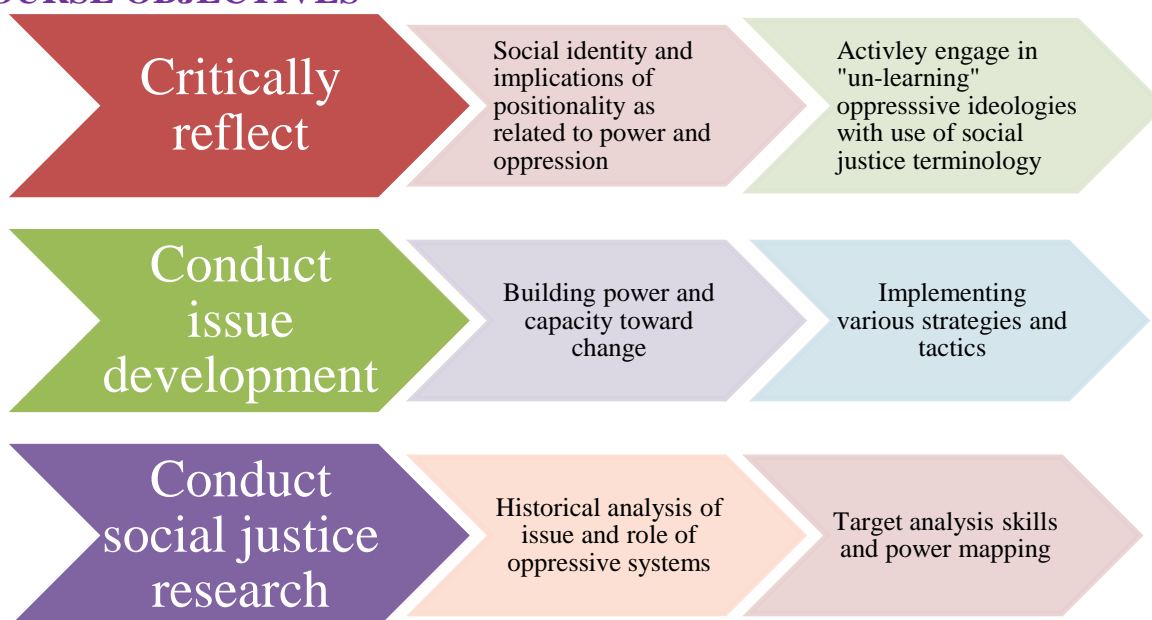
TEXTBOOK

CHANGE! A Student Guide to Social Action (2nd edition, Scott Myers-Lipton)

I will also assign empirical articles, social justice advocacy exemplars, and original essays will be assigned as required or supplementary and used for lectures and discussion throughout the semester. If required, a link to the essay will be provided.



COURSE OBJECTIVES



COURSE EXPECTATIONS

A typical class will be broken down into two primary parts:

Lecture &
Discussion

Campaign
Teamwork

- *All students must be involved in social action.* This will require a minimum of 1½ to 2 hours per week of campaign work (25 hours minimum over 15 weeks, with about one-half of the time *DOING campaign activities* (e.g., tabling, flyer-ing) or *campaign actions* (marches, rallies, etc). Thus, you must complete 1.5 – 2 hours of campaign work a week and log hours.
- Social action engagement can be on or off campus to better fit y'all's busy schedules.
- Class time will be dedicated to your social action campaign so you can complete some of your organizing in class.

CAMPAIGN REQUIREMENTS:

Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 students minimum on a team, no more than 5
Passion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select an issue you are passionate about!
Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group seeks to change some type of policy or practice

The campaign you choose to work on may come from a liberal, conservative, social democrat, or libertarian perspective...or it may have no ideology. Whatever campaign you choose to do, I will teach you about democracy, power, and how to bring about change.

Importantly, there is no political indoctrination. Students develop and choose what campaigns to work on *and* can change campaigns at any point in the semester.

- My role is to offer guidance on social action and help students consider the options available, with the students deciding how to move forward.

If, for any reason, a student wants to leave a group, please contact the professor. At that time, the student and professor will discuss what group you would like to join. After the student makes a choice, I will contact the other group. If the group believes there will be little disruption to the group, then the student can join. However, if the group feels that there would be a disruption to the group, that group has the right to say no. If the student has no group to join, then the student will be given an independent study with no negative repercussions to her/his/their grade.

CLASS CLIMATE EXPECTATIONS

To facilitate a productive and safe learning environment, we must commit to **engaging with one another and disagree civilly and respectfully**. All opinions and perspectives will be given a voice in this class, but intentionally malicious, bigoted, or degrading comments will not be tolerated. If you disagree with a perspective, take the time to “dig deeper” by asking yourself: Why do I believe this? What motivates this belief? Controversial subject matter may sometimes be distressing or uncomfortable. Some campaign topics may feel too personal, given previous life experiences. Please communicate your needs, and I will do my best to provide accommodation. It is important to take care of yourself first and foremost.

Another important way we must commit to **respecting one another is by minimizing distractions** for everyone’s benefit.

REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS

A 3-credit class requires about 9 hours of work per week, including class time. We meet 3 hours per week, which leaves you 6 hours for reading and other assignments, including campaign activities and actions. All work, particularly writing, should be of the highest quality. Use *Grammarly* as a tool to improve your writing.

1. **Class Attendance & Participation (20%).** Attendance and participation will be recorded for each class period.
 - Regular class attendance and active participation are expected. Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned readings.

- Students are encouraged to engage in discussions actively. For those who always participate, create space for all voices. For those who tend not to participate, you are encouraged to do so.
- Students are expected to arrive at class on time and stay until the end of class. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late or leave more than 15 minutes earlier (without prior approval), you will not receive full attendance credit.
- You are expected to work during Campaign Teamwork time during the second part of the class. Participation will be self, and group assessed.

ABSENCES: Please communicate with me as soon as possible about any absence. Documentation is required to be considered an “excused” absence. However, please communicate if documentation is unattainable. *I want you to be successful!* Please communicate *as soon as possible* if you encounter a life situation or are ill, and we will figure it out together. The key to success in this course is communication and flexibility. You cannot miss more than 25% of the class and earn a passing grade.

2. **Assigned Readings & Content Check (CC) (20%).** *Every class, you are required to read a chapter, a series of articles, or watch a video and complete a content “check”*
 - Each class module in Brightspace includes assigned readings from your chapter, a link to the required reading, or provides information on where to access it.
 - The content checks are worth 10 points and are due before class. Each content check will be available in the weekly module in Brightspace. The top 10 content checks will be included in your final grade.

3. **Social Justice Campaign Portfolio (SJCP, 30%):** *I do not believe in formal exams as they tend to uphold classist and racist standards that make educational success harder for historically underrepresented populations in higher education.* Thus, you are required to complete SJCP critical reflection exercises throughout this course in which I can assess your understanding of the content concerning yourself and the world around you. Your SJCP is where you can demonstrate your knowledge of the course content (i.e., readings, videos) in light of your social action experiences. Each portfolio prompt is designed to allow you to demonstrate deeper insight, understanding, and connection of content related to social justice and your campaign. You must demonstrate learning by connecting course material (i.e., readings, videos) to your social action experiences. You are encouraged to think *intersectionally* about your various social locations or identities. **You are required to integrate course content with your campaign work throughout each portfolio.**

GRADING: You cannot receive above a C on your portfolio without content integration. If you complete fewer than 25 hours a semester, you will most likely not receive a portfolio grade higher than a C since reflecting on activities/actions you are not engaged in is difficult. You can speak with your teammate about the prompts, but all portfolio exercises must be your own work. Please review the rubric before starting and before submitting your portfolio. Submit all portfolios through Brightspace. You will see a reminder with due dates in your weekly folder and course schedule and will be reminded in class.

The professor is a mandated reporter:

TITLE IX Disclosure:

As an instructor, I am a Responsible Employee, meaning I am responsible for reporting to the Title IX Coordinator instances of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, harassment, and discrimination disclosed to me, including the name of the person that disclosed to me, for institutional review. Suppose you would like to speak confidentially with someone (i.e., someone not required to make a report for institutional review). In that case, you may contact the following resources directly for support: Campus Victim's Advocate, Counseling & Psychiatry Services, or Student Health Services.

4. Campaign Log (10%)

Again, you are expected to complete a minimum of 1½ to 2 hours per week of campaign work (25 hours minimum over 15 weeks, with about one-half of the time *DOING campaign activities* (e.g., tabling, flyer-ing) or *campaign actions* (marches, rallies, etc). Thus, you must complete 1.5 – 2 hours of campaign work a week and log your hours. The social action log can be found in Brightspace. It is your responsibility to keep up with your hours and activities. Doing so will help you assemble the full Campaign Binder & Presentation (see below).

5. Campaign Binder & Presentation (20%)

Campaign Binder: Your group will evaluate your campaign and produce a campaign binder to summate your group's experience that serves as a historical record of your campaign. Please provide depth of knowledge. There are nine sections to the campaign evaluation, including 1) issue identification, 2) leadership, 3) change theory, 4) building power & capacity, 5) research, 6) group dynamics, 7) campaign activities, 8) campaign actions, and 9) lessons learned.

Campaign Presentation: Your group will design a visual presentation that explores what your group learned from social action. You can highlight several topics from the campaign binder or focus on a specific social action accomplishment. Your presentation should be highly informative, engaging, and demonstrate how your team moved the campaign forward.

Mural Board: Your Campaign Team will utilize a mural board (or other decided-upon tool) for teamwork and campaign planning. I will regularly check on your progress.

GRADE BREAKDOWN Grades will be recorded in Brightspace.

Assignment	Points	Total	Percentage
Attendance & Class Participation	50 points attendance 50 points participation	100	20%
Assigned Reading & Content Check	Top 10 checks @ 10 points	100	20%
Social Justice Campaign Portfolio	10 @ 15 points	150	30%
Campaign Log	50	50	10%
Campaign Presentation & Binder	Presentation: 40 points Binder: 60 points	100	20%
Total		500	100%

A+ = 98+	B = 83-86.99	C- = 70-72.99
A = 93-97.99	B- = 80-82.99	D+ = 66-69.99
A- = 90-92.99	C+ = 77-79.99	D = 60-65.99
B+ = 87-89.99	C = 73-76.99	F = < 60

PROGRAM & UNIVERSITY POLICIES

DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT/COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

CHDF is committed to supporting BIPOC students and Working Toward Racial Justice. See our [HDF Program Statement](#).

MAJOR in Human Development and Family Sciences (HDF): Our interdisciplinary perspective makes HDF a distinctive major. You will take courses in the behavioral and social sciences, the humanities, physical and biological sciences, and multi-cultural education. These liberal studies provide you with the vital knowledge and perspectives you need to fully appreciate the complex interaction of individual psychology and biology, social relationships, families, communities, societies and cultures. Please see [Major Requirements](#).

GREEN & GOLD PROMISE:

The [Green and Gold Promise](#) clearly articulates UVM's expectations for students, faculty, and staff to remain compliant with all COVID-19 recommendations from the federal CDC, the State of Vermont, and the City of Burlington.

LIVED NAME AND PRONOUNS

UVM allows all students, staff, and faculty to use a lived name in university records and systems when a legal name is not required. Important updates have been made to the UVM Directory that create a more respectful, inclusive campus community. These updates resolve most issues with pronouns and lived names that many have experienced with Microsoft Teams and other campus systems. Click [here](#) for more information about lived names and pronouns.

- To set your pronouns, [login to the UVM Directory](#). A preview box will allow you to see how this information will appear in systems such as Microsoft Teams. Entering your pronouns is strongly encouraged to help create a more inclusive and respectful campus community.

GENDER INCLUSIVE RESTROOMS

The University recognizes that health and safety are critically important to the learning, working and residential environments on campus. Creating a welcoming environment is providing safe, accessible, and convenient restroom facilities. Many individuals benefit from accessible, gender-inclusive restrooms, including those with disabilities and others who have caregivers or attendants of a different gender; people accompanying small children; and transgender, nonbinary, and gender non-conforming individuals who may be subject to harassment or violence when using gender-specific restrooms. Accordingly, the University supports the option of individuals to use the restroom that meets their individual needs or in which they feel safest. Find gender-inclusive restrooms on the [campus map](#).

POTENTIAL CHANGES DURING THE SEMESTER:

The University of Vermont reserves the right to make changes in the course offerings, mode of delivery, degree requirements, charges, regulations, and procedures contained herein as educational, financial, and health, safety, and welfare considerations require, or as necessary to be compliant with governmental, accreditation, or public health directives.

<http://catalogue.uvm.edu/>

Intellectual Property Statement/Prohibition on Sharing Academic Materials:

Students are prohibited from publicly sharing or selling academic materials that they did not author (for example: class syllabus, outlines or class presentations authored by the professor, practice questions, text from the textbook or other copyrighted class materials, etc.); and students are prohibited from sharing assessments (for example homework or a take-home examination). Violations will be handled under UVM's Intellectual Property policy and Code of Academic Integrity.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The UVM Code of Academic Integrity will be strictly enforced in this course. All assignments and exams shall be considered graded work, unless otherwise noted. All aspects of your coursework are covered by the Code and suspected violations will be promptly reported. The [Academic Integrity policy](#) addresses plagiarism, fabrication, collusion, and cheating.

Code of Student Conduct:

[UVM's Code of Student Conduct](#) outlines conduct expectations as well as students' rights and responsibilities.

FERPA Rights Disclosure:

The purpose of UVM's [FERPA Rights Disclosure](#) is to communicate the rights of students regarding access to, and privacy of their student educational records as provided for in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974.

Research and Citation Help:

For help selecting research topics, finding information, citing sources, and more, ask a librarian. The UVM Libraries are eager to help. You may ask questions by phone, e-mail, chat, or text, or make an appointment for an individual consultation with a librarian.

Howe Library: <https://library.uvm.edu/askhowe>

Dana Medical Library: <https://dana.uvm.edu/help/ask>

Silver Special Collections Library: <https://specialcollections.uvm.edu/help/ask>

Final Exam Policy:

The University [final exam policy](#) outlines expectations during final exams and explains timing and process of examination period.

Grade Appeals: If you would like to contest a grade, please follow these [policy procedures](#).

Grading: [This link](#) offers information on grading and GPA calculation.

Religious Holidays:

Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. If you need to miss class to observe a religious holiday, please submit the dates of your absence to me in writing by the end of the second full week of classes. You will be permitted to make up work within a mutually agreed-upon time. The complete policy is [here](#).

Promoting Health & Safety:

The University of Vermont's number one priority is to support a healthy and safe community:

Center for Health and Wellbeing

Counseling & Psychiatry Services (CAPS) Direct Phone Line: (802) 656-3340

C.A.R.E. If you are concerned about a UVM community member or are concerned about a specific event, we encourage you to contact the Dean of Students Office (802-656-3380). If you would like to remain anonymous, you can report your concerns online by [visiting the C.A.R.E. Team website](#).

Writing Center and Tutoring: [Undergraduate/Graduate Writing Center](#), [Supplemental Instruction](#), [Learning Co-op tutors](#), supplemental course materials)

Student Learning Accommodations:

In keeping with University policy, any student with a documented disability interested in utilizing ADA accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS), the office of Disability Services on campus for students. SAS works with students and faculty in an interactive process to explore reasonable and appropriate accommodations, which are communicated to faculty in an accommodation letter. All students are strongly recommended to discuss with their faculty the accommodations they plan to use in each course. Faculty who receive Letters of Accommodation with Disability Related Flexible accommodations will need to fill out the Disability Related Flexibility Agreement. Any questions from faculty or students on the agreement should be directed to the SAS specialist who is indicated on the letter.

Contact SAS:

A170 Living/Learning Center;

802-656-7753

access@uvm.edu

www.uvm.edu/access

Course Evaluation

All students are expected to complete an evaluation of the course at its conclusion. Evaluations will be anonymous and confidential, and all information gained, including constructive criticisms, will be used to improve the course.

*Early informal evaluations will be conducted via Brightspace or in class for early course improvements.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Reading Assignments	Campaign Activities/Actions
Class 1: August 29	Review Syllabus & Class Design	Read Syllabus 😊	Campaign Brainstorm & Local Campaign Search Campaign selected by class 2
Class 2: September 5	Issue Development: Set the Tone	Ch. 1(pp. 1-16) & Ch.2 (pp. 20-25) Content Check (CC)	Team finalized and named Develop 1-3 demands Team Mural Board created and shared with Jaz
Class 3: September 12	Change Theories	Ch. 3 (pp.28-40) & articles CC	Refine demands
Class 4: September 19	Change Theories	Articles in Brightspace CC	Select a social justice paradigm
Class 5: September 26	Building Power & Capacity	Ch. 4 (pp. 44-57) Articles in Brightspace CC	Develop recruitment tools, social media leads Begin recruitment (tabling, class presentations)
Class 6: October 3	Building Power & Capacity	Articles in Brightspace CC	Write organizational rap, build allies, continue recruitment
Class 7: October 10	Research	Ch. 5 (pp.61-69) & articles CC	Conduct research
Class 8: October 17	Research & Group Dynamics	Ch. 6 (pp. 72-79) Articles in Brightspace CC	Make group dynamic commitments, continue research
Class 9: October 24	Strategy & Tactics	Ch. 7 (pp.81-97) & articles CC	Stakeholder development Interview stakeholders
Class 10: October 31	Strategy & Tactics	Articles on Brightspace CC	Tactic for campaign kickoff – create campaign message (2-3 lines)
Class 11: November 7	Campaign Kickoff	Ch.8 (pp. 99-112) & articles CC	Plan Kickoff, write & send press release, contact media
Class 12: November 14	Live Campaign	Ch. 9 (pp. 114-120) & articles CC	Hold Campaign Kickoff
National Day of Mourning / National Family Recess Week Nov 20-Nov 24			
Class 13: November 28	Evaluate Campaign	Ch. 10 & 11 (pp. 122-129) CC	Create Binder
Class 14: December 5	Campaign Binders	TBD CC	Create PowerPoint
Class 15: December 12	Reading Day/ Final Exams	Final Campaign Presentations	Turn in Campaign Binder

This is a tentative schedule that is not exhaustive of readings or assignments. Changes may be made to provide more time for class discussion or Campaign Teamwork.