

APPENDIX: COURSE SYLLABUS AND ASSIGNMENTS

International Studies 332: The Politics of Social Movements and Grassroots Organizing

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

--Martin Luther King, Jr.

This course introduces students to the politics of activism and advocacy both within the United States and abroad. We will focus predominantly on urban-based movements seeking to represent communities who have been politically marginalized on the basis of class, race, ethnicity, gender and/or sexuality. How have participants in such movements addressed perceived injustices and social problems? To what extent have they served identifiable communities, influenced policy making, and redefined politics? What strategies have they used to mobilize support and persuade others? We will investigate activists' strategies through comparative analysis of local/national activism and movements that have emerged overseas. Students will become familiar with important conceptual tools and theoretical approaches, which we will apply to particular case studies of activism and social movements in countries as varied as Bangladesh, Bolivia, Russia, and Spain.

Community-engaged learning is a significant requirement of this course. All students will work with local community partners involved in different forms of advocacy and activism. Community-based learning provides opportunities for critical analysis, reflection, and a deeper understanding of our course materials; in addition to facilitating your learning, it encourages personal and social growth and civic responsibility. The course's workload has been adjusted to accommodate the time spent in the community.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Knowledge

1. Gain familiarity with theories and concepts that pertain to social movements, activism, and community organizing.
2. Apply these to a variety of cases of activism in the US and abroad. Understand how individuals and groups promote, create, and sustain social, political, and policy change.
3. Critically assess existing scholarship.

Skills

4. Develop skills for success working in diverse community settings.
5. Learn to work effectively as members of a team.

Values

6. Reflect on your personal commitments and/or responsibilities to communities that exist locally and globally.

Requirements

Your final grade is based on the following components:

Reflection and analysis papers	45%
Reading review	15%
In-class exercises	10%
Class participation	10%
Community placement log	10%
Community placement evaluation	10%

Reflection and Analysis Papers: These entail guided reflections about your experiences in your site placements and with community partners, making connections to our course materials, and linking the local to the global. Learning through experience is not automatic: reflection is essential for you to transform your “service” experience into “learning.” Detailed instructions are included below.

Review of Readings: You will prepare one short paper (of approximately 4 pages) that critically evaluates an assigned reading. You will also serve as discussion leader for that class session with the help of a classmate. This entails circulating your review the evening before and preparing questions, handouts and/or other materials that will facilitate discussion. Guidelines for writing these papers and leading discussion will be provided.

In-class exercises: These unannounced exercises usually consist of brief questions on readings and are designed to encourage active, engaged reading before each class.

Community placement log: This will serve as a record of the 18-20 total hours you spend at your community placement. You will make weekly entries to document your experiences. Individual entries do not have to be extensive and may describe work/projects that you are doing, an informative or influential conversation with someone, a lesson learned, and/or other observations. These will help you complete the more in-depth reflection and analysis papers. The entries need not be lengthy: aim for 2 high-quality paragraphs (around ½ a page or 1 page, single-spaced). Logs are due when noted on the syllabus.

Community placement performance evaluation: Your engagement with community partners is an essential part of this course. The overall quality of your work, your professionalism, and your conscientiousness will all be taken into account and assessed by your supervisor.

Participation: This grade is determined by your attendance record and your in-class contributions. The format of this course is a combination of lectures and discussions (in large and small groups). Contributing to class discussions entails the following:

1. Engaging thoughtfully with the assigned reading or other materials before class;
2. Bringing a copy of the text and/or your notes to class;
3. Listening carefully and respectfully to your classmates;
4. Expressing your ideas clearly, concisely, and respectfully. Supporting your views with evidence whenever possible.

Course schedule

Important: Readings must be completed before the class meetings under which they are listed. Some of the assigned readings and films address topics (or give voice to views) that you may find disturbing and/or offensive. Examples include gender violence, racial prejudice, ethnic stereotyping, etc. Read and view these course materials with your own self-care in mind. If you are concerned about specific topics, please feel free to consult with me; I will do my best to provide advance notice.

First day: Greetings & introduction to the course

Week One, Tuesday: Community-based learning I

- Majora Carter, “Greening the Ghetto” (Ted Talk), available at: https://www.ted.com/talks/majora_carter_s_tale_of_urban_renewal?language=en
- *City Life/Vida Urbana* (news story on anti-eviction advocacy in the US). *Bill Moyers Journal*. Available at: <http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/12182009/watch2.html>
- Community-based learning responsibilities: Review information on community partners and think about possible placements.

Week One, Thursday: Community-based learning II

This week we’ll participate in a training workshop that explores different social action roles.

- Westheimer, Joel, and Joseph Kahne. 2004. “Educating the ‘Good’ Citizen: Political Choices and Pedagogical Goals.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 37 (2): 241-247.

Week Two, Tuesday: Community-based learning III

We'll continue preparing to engage in community-based and service learning.

- Chs. 4, 7 & 8. Stoecker, Randy, and Elizabeth Tryon, and Amy Hilgendorf. 2009. *The Unheard Voices: Community Organizations and Service Learning*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Community-based learning responsibilities: Submit your rank-ordered preferences for site placements.

Week Two, Thursday: Social movement theory: An introduction

- Intro & Ch. 11. Doug McAdam, John McCarthy and Mayer Zald, eds. 1996. *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Cultural Framing*. Cambridge University Press.
- Community-based learning responsibilities: Meet your site contact and begin any training or orientation activities. Devise a schedule. Work on the community-based learning agreement.

Week Three, Tuesday: Conceptual and theoretical tools: Framing and discursive strategies

- Benford, Robert and David Snow. 2000. "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment." *Annual Review of Sociology* 26: 611-639.
- "Introduction." Gaventa, John and Rosemary McGee. 2010. "Introduction: Making Change Happen: Citizen Action and National Policy Reform." In *Citizen Action and National Policy Reform: Making Change Happen*, ed. John Gaventa and Rosemary McGee. London: Zed Books.

Week Three, Thursday: Conceptual and theoretical tools: Intersectionality and alliance building

- "Combahee River Collective Statement." 1977. Available at: <http://circuitous.org/scraps/combahee.html>
- Mission Statement from Black Men for the Eradication of Sexism, Morehouse College.

Week Four, Tuesday: Non-violent resistance

- Ch. 1 & 3. Nepstad, Sharon Erickson. 2015. *Nonviolent Struggle: Theories, Strategies, and Dynamics*. Oxford University Press.
- Required documentary: *Cesar's Last Fast* (2014).

Week Four, Thursday: The US Civil Rights Movement: A Progenitor Movement

Class excursion to the National Civil Rights Museum. More information is available at:
<http://civilrightsmuseum.org/visit/>

- Gladwell, Malcolm. 2010. "Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted." *The New Yorker* (Oct. 4).
- Ch. 8. Nepstad, Sharon Erickson. *Nonviolent Struggle...*

Week Five, Tuesday: LGBTQ rights in comparative perspective

- Corrales, Javier. "LGBT Rights and Representation in Latin America and the Caribbean: The Influence of Structure, Movements, Institutions, and Culture" (2015). Available at: https://globalstudies.unc.edu/files/2015/04/LGBT_Report_LatAm_v8-copy.pdf
- Open Society Foundations. "Transforming Health: International Rights-based Advocacy for Trans Health." Available at: <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/transforming-health-20130213.pdf>

Week Five, Thursday: Women's rights, gender violence, and sexual harassment in comparative perspective

- Chs. 4 & 5. Johnson, Janet Elise. 2009. *Gender Violence in Russia: The Politics of Feminist Intervention*. Indiana University Press.
- Burke, Louise. 2018. "The #MeToo shockwave." *The Telegraph* (Mar. 9). Available at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/world/metoo-shockwave/>

Week Six, Tuesday: Migrant communities in the US

- Sellers, Emily. 2015. "Access to Justice for Undocumented Immigrant Victims of Domestic Violence." *UMKC Law Review* 84 (2).
- Required documentary: *La Marcha* (2005).

Week Six, Thursday: Migrant communities in the US II

- Chs. 2 & 3. Pallares, Amalia. 2015. *Family Activism: Immigrant Struggles and the Politics of Noncitizenship*. Rutgers University Press.
- Freeman, Terri Lee. 2018. "How Are the Children?" *National Civil Rights Museum* (June 20). Available at: <https://www.civilrightsmuseum.org/news/posts/how-are-the-children>.

Week Seven, Tuesday: Migrant communities overseas

- Kleres, Jochen. 2018. "Emotions in the Crisis: Mobilising for Refugees in Germany and Sweden." In *Solidarity Mobilizations in the 'Refugee Crisis'*, ed. Donatella Della Porta. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Karakayali, Serhat. 2017. "Feeling the Scope of Solidarity: The Role of Emotions for Volunteers Supporting Refugees in Germany." *Social Inclusion* 5 (3).

Week Eight, Thursday: Structured Reflection

- No reading assignment. Come ready to discuss your experiences at your site.

Week Nine, Tuesday: Urban poverty and homelessness in the US

- Amster, Randall, and David Cook. 2009. "Homelessness as Nonviolent Resistance." *Journal for the Study of Peace and Conflict* (Jan.).
- Cress, Daniel, and David Snow. 2000. "The Outcomes of Homeless Mobilization: The Influence of Organization, Disruption, Political Mediation, and Framing." *American Journal of Sociology* 105 (4): 1063-1104.

Week Nine, Thursday: Guest speakers from community

Week Ten, Tuesday: Right-to-housing and economic justice movements

- Flesher Fominaya, Cristina Maria, and Antonio Montañés Jimenéz. 2015. "Transnational Diffusion Across Time: The Adoption of the Argentinian Dirty War 'Escrache' in the Context of Spain's Housing Crisis." In *Spreading Protest: Social Movements in Times of Crisis*, ed. Donatella Della Porta and Alice Mattoni. ECPR Press.
- Flesher Fominaya, Cristina Maria. 2015. "Debunking Spontaneity: Spain's 15-M/Indignados as Autonomous Movement." *Social Movement Studies* 14 (2): 142-163.

Week Ten, Thursday: Right-to-housing and economic justice movements II

- Milkman, Ruth, Stephanie Luce, and Penny Lewis. 2014. "Occupy Wall Street." In *The Social Movements Reader* 3rd ed., ed. Jeff Goodwin and James M. Jasper. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Vale, Lawrence, and Annemarie Gray. 2013. "The Displacement Decathlon." *Places Journal* (April).

Week Eleven, Tuesday: Combating police brutality and abuses of authority in US cities

- Ray, Rashawn et al. 2017. "Ferguson and the Death of Michael Brown on Twitter: #BlackLivesMatter, #TCOT, and the Evolution of Collective Identities." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40 (11): 1831-1846.
- Lindsey, Treva. 2015. "Post-Ferguson: A 'Herstorical' Approach to Black Viability." *Feminist Studies* 41 (1): 232-237.

Week Eleven, Thursday: Opportunities and challenges in transnational advocacy: Child labor I

- Fontana, Lorenza, and Jean Grugel. 2017. "Deviant and Over-Compliance: The Domestic Politics of Child Labor in Bolivia and Argentina." *Human Rights Quarterly* 39 (3): 631-656.
- Required documentary: *The Devil's Miner* (2005).

Week Twelve, Tuesday: Child labor II

- Chs. 2 & 3. Hertel, Shareen. 2007. *Unexpected Power: Conflict and Change Among Transnational Activists*. Cornell University Press.

Week Twelve, Thursday: Structured Reflection

- No reading assignment. Come ready to discuss your experiences at your site.

Week Thirteen, Tuesday: Struggles for environmental justice I

- Ch. 3. Simon, Suzanne. 2014. *Sustaining the Borderlands in the Age of NAFTA*. Vanderbilt University Press.
- Required documentary: *Maquilapolis* (2006).

Thanksgiving Recess

Week Fourteen, Tuesday: Struggles for environmental justice II

- Wright, Beverly. 2003. "Race, Politics, and Pollution: Environmental Justice in the Mississippi River Chemical Corridor." In *Just Sustainabilities: Development in an Unequal World*. MIT Press.
- Stroud, Ellen. 1999. "Troubled Waters in Ecotopia: Environmental Racism in Portland, Oregon." *Radical History Review* 74: 65-95.

Week Fourteen, Thursday: Struggles for environmental justice overseas

- Required documentary: *Gasland Part II* (2013).

Last class meeting: Structured reflection and assessment of community-based learning

- Come prepared to discuss your experiences this semester in small groups.

Community-Based Learning Logistics

Placements: Arrangements have been made with Hospitality Hub, Refugee Empowerment Program, World Relief, and Su Casa Family Ministries. Some basic information on these organizations is included below. You will have an opportunity to rank-order your preferred sites.

Community-based learning agreement: This required form will help you as you begin to communicate and collaborate with your site supervisors. Some placements may require you to complete additional paperwork. All will provide on-site training and orientation, which are mandatory.

Time commitment: The community-based learning experience must entail 18-20 hours over the course of the semester. Strive to spend time every week in the organization (approximately 2 hours on average). You will work closely with your community partners to devise a schedule that helps build a healthy work relationship and that works well for everyone.

Keeping track of hours and responsibilities: Please be reminded that you are responsible for recording your hours and observations in your community placement log. You will be graded on the entries submitted after the first eight weeks and during finals week.

Community placement performance evaluation: As a reminder, your supervisor will complete an evaluation, which is factored into your grade for the course.

Expectations and Responsibilities:

Students are expected to:

Fulfill their total number of required hours and complete projects.

Agree to a precise work schedule with the site supervisor and adhere to it.

Participate in any required orientation/training in their work site.

Provide a minimum of 24 hours notice of absence except in an emergency.

Follow work site rules and norms, respect all colleagues, respect people served or empowered by the organization.

Serve in a manner that reflects positively on the College.
Reflect on experience and share insights during class discussions.
Complete all assignments.

Site supervisors are expected to:

Provide meaningful work related to skills, interests, and available time.
Provide any necessary orientation and training.
Agree to a precise work schedule and giving students advance notice if the schedule needs to be modified.
Endeavor to treat students as an integral part of the organization.
Offer sound guidance, instructions, and feedback.
Provide opportunity for the student to make suggestions and receive feedback.
Notify the professor if the student does not complete the required number of hours.
Complete a performance evaluation at the end of the semester.

Community Partners: Essential Information

Hospitality Hub

The Hospitality Hub connects individuals with the resources they need to begin their journey out of homelessness. People in situations of homelessness can receive a number of essential services at its location downtown.

<http://www.hospitalityhub.org/>

Examples of community-based learning opportunities: Observe intake process and eventually serve as intake counselors. Volunteers may also be asked help with other tasks as needed.

Refugee Empowerment Program

REP addresses the needs and concerns of the local refugee community through empowerment programs and community outreach. It recognizes education as the most basic and urgent need of the population it serves.

<http://www.repmemphis.org/>

Examples of community-based learning opportunities: Most of the opportunities at REP entail working with children and teens. There are opportunities in the nursery and pre-K programs that meet while parents are in ESL class. The after-school program provides tutoring to children in Pre-K through high school.

World Relief

World Relief Memphis serves refugees and the broader immigrant community with immigration legal services, refugee resettlement, and employment services. A faith-based organization, World Relief empowers local churches in the US and overseas so they can serve the most vulnerable groups.

<https://worldreliefmemphis.org/>

Examples of community-based learning opportunities: Students will choose a particular day/time to come in each week to assist with either casework or employment services.

Su Casa Family Ministries

Su Casa Family Ministries is a faith-based organization that serves as a community center for Latinx communities and migrants, with a primary focus on adult ESL classes and childcare. Su Casa primarily uses education as a way to reach out to immigrants and assimilate them into their new community.

<https://www.sucasamemphis.org/aboutus/>

Examples of community-based learning opportunities: Students may serve as co-instructors or substitutes for adult ESL classes. There are also opportunities to work with children while their parents take classes. Volunteers may also be asked help with other tasks as needed, including office support and special projects.

Reflection and Analysis Papers

1. Self-assessment paper: Before you begin working with your assigned community partners, you should reflect on your goals for this experience. What do you hope to gain from engaging in community-based learning this semester? Outline 2-3 objectives. What expectations do you have about the organization in which you've been placed (or the people this organization serves or empowers)? At this point in time, where do you position yourself according to Westheimer and Kahne's framework (in "Educating the 'Good' Citizen: Political Choices and Pedagogical Goals")?

This paper should be between 2-3 pages, double-spaced.

2. Issue analysis paper: Select one of the local issues, grievances, or “problems” identified by the community partners with whom you are working. Summarize the most important aspects of this issue. What is at stake? Why are different communities organizing around this issue?

Dedicate around 2 pages of the paper to a discussion of global-local connections. How is this issue affecting overseas communities? Do a brief case study that draws from outside sources (preferably scholarly works).

This paper should be between 4 and 5 pages, double-spaced.

3. Strategy analysis paper: Provide a detailed analysis of the strategies that have been used by community partners to address the issues/problems discussed in your issue analysis paper. How are they trying to make a difference? What sorts of activities are they engaging in, and why?

Again, dedicate around 2 pages of the paper to a discussion of global-local connections. Provide evidence of activists (or communities) overseas doing similar work or using similar strategies. Do a brief case study that draws from outside sources (preferably scholarly works).

This paper should be about 5 pages, double-spaced.

4. Final reflection paper:

Describe an experience and/or interaction that reinforced or challenged a theory, concept, or debate discussed in class or in our readings.

In the second part of the paper, revisit the goals and expectations included in your first reflection paper. Did you meet these objectives? Did you accomplish other things that you didn't write about back then? Discuss 2-3 “lessons learned” while engaging in community-based learning.

This paper, which should cite a variety of course materials, should be between 5 and 6 pages, double-spaced.

Structured Reflection: Class Discussions

Structured Reflection I

- Briefly share your main responsibilities and tasks (so far) at your site.

If you'd like, feel free to share one of the observations included in your community placement log (e.g., an interesting conversation, a lesson learned, etc.).

- Have you modified the community-based learning goals that you originally outlined since you started your work (for instance, in your first reflection paper)? Why or why not?
- Have your experiences challenged any of the preconceptions or ideas you initially had about your site? The people who work there? The communities that they serve and/or empower?
- Relate your experiences to the opportunities and challenges that working in a diverse community setting entails (recall our class discussions about diversity, intercultural competency, empathy, etc.).
- Relate your experiences to the different social change roles we've been discussing this semester. If there's time left, feel free to draw once again from Westheimer and Kahne's framework.
- Have any of the readings or course themes discussed so far been especially relevant to your work? In what ways were they relevant?

Structured Reflection II

- Briefly share your main responsibilities and tasks (so far) at your site.

If you'd like, feel free to share one of the observations included in your community placement log (e.g., an interesting conversation, a lesson learned, etc.).

- Share a small victory or success you've enjoyed at your site. Discuss a problem or challenge that has arisen -- and how you helped resolve the problem or how you overcame the obstacle.

- Provide a quick overview of an issue or problem you've been learning about so far (i.e., the one you analyzed in your second reflection paper).
- Do some brainstorming and comparative analysis of this issue/problem as a group. What are some of the global or international dimensions of this issue? What overseas cases or contexts might one examine?
- Now do some brainstorming that will help you write the third reflection paper.

The assignment asks you to analyze the strategies used by (or actions taken by) activists and community partners to address this issue/problem. How are they trying to make a difference? Why are they adopting those strategies?

Structured Reflection III

- Have your community-based learning experiences changed your views on the different social change roles we've been discussing this semester? Where would you position yourself along the spectrum at this point in time?
- What are some of the lessons you've learned this semester about:
 - your site placement?
 - the people/communities it seeks to serve or empower?
 - yourself (strengths/weaknesses, professional goals, academic goals, etc.)?
- Do you see yourself working on similar issues in the future (e.g., by volunteering, doing service and/or community-based learning work, etc.)? Would you work in a similar type of community organization?
- Which community-based learning experience and/or interaction are you writing about in the final reflection paper? How does this experience reinforce or challenge a theory, concept, or debate discussed in class or in the readings?