

Advocacy Lab: How to Make Change Happen

Few [people] have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation. ... It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a [person] stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he [or she] sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

Robert F. Kennedy

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Short: Advocacy Lab is meant for students interested in how change takes place in policy and politics – and what efforts are necessary to effect those changes. We explore in theory and practice the concepts and tools of advocacy and will work with those in the field to apply our learning. We will team with Make the Road, an immigrant support organization, to advocate for a range of supportive measures and actions to help immigrants of all kinds to secure a place in New York as the advocacy campaign for this year.

Long: Advocacy Lab is for those who could imagine social change that results from an entrepreneurial sense that my (and our) actions can be transformative. It may mean working in national or local advocacy organizations that make change happen or in a social purpose cross-sector setting that commits-profit organizations and corporations with a commitment to constructive social impact. A campaign could even take place on the most local level, even on college campuses. It is for anyone who wants to understand the art of issue advocacy as a method of social change. An advocacy campaign is one aspect of making change happen. It attempts to impact public policy, most often through changes in regulations and/or legislation and always entails new, effective narratives. There are a wide range of roles campaign workers can play from research and policy analysis, from education, public relations and organizing constituencies to reaching out to a wide range of influentials, legislators and other government officials. At the same time, the skills of public advocacy– listening, finding areas of consensus and building on that

consensus, finding ways to make change happen – are skills that can be applied to all professional and life settings.

The first part of the course this Fall course will provide an overview of and training in how to affect public policy through advocacy campaigns, legislative lobbying, issue branding, and community organizing in the United States. We will try to understand how power can be best employed to do good and how the courts could support and undermine our efforts. This includes exploring the different forms of policy issue advocacy and identifying its value base; exploring the strategies, tactics and activities of organizing and running such campaigns; and thinking about marketing, language and evaluation. We will have the opportunity to meet with advocacy leaders, from lobbyists to strategists, legal experts to grass roots organizers. We will also need to look at and gain insight from experts on using social media and on-line campaigns to effect the changes they seek. We hope that you will experience this not merely as simulation, but the real thing.

The goal of Advocacy Lab is to gain hands-on experience in taking on a social justice issue and make change happen.

Through readings, class activities, cases studies, speakers and reflection, students will examine skills and techniques for effective issue advocacy organizing while also learning from field experience and reflective engagement with fellow students, professors and mentors and those being served.

Theory is not enough for this course. The goal of Advocacy Lab is also to gain experience in how to make change happen. We will do so by focusing on and engaging with **Make The Road** to address issues of immigration. This class is not only an academic endeavor. In addition to training classroom activities, we will take our learning out into the community. The clinical part of the program which will take place in the second semester, will include training in a specific advocacy issue you can work on and developing the strategies, skills and courage to go out into the field to advocate for concrete change. During in-class practicums we will explore the range of tools and strategies for our advocacy campaign, share and analyze our experiences and plan the work that needs to be done. Students will be mentored in this work.

During the course of the year, you will be part of a team that, working with the professor, will address one or more aspects of an advocacy campaign and then go out in the field to do such things as meet people as an advocate, find partners and build coalitions, lobby decision-makers, contact media and do the things that an organizer for an issue advocacy campaign must do. You also will spend time researching the issue(s) so that you become an expert in the field. Hopefully, your work will move the advocacy campaign forward, although that is never assured (failure is unfortunately a real aspect of advocacy).

There are no shortage of issues that the United States and the world face – from gun violence, unemployment and poverty to food justice, criminal justice reform and human and civil rights. Some of these issues could be very local, here at NYU and in New York, while others could be international in scope. Yet the skills and “on the balcony” assessments crucial to an effective

advocacy effort are learnable. Taking on an advocacy campaign will allow you to explore your own strengths and recognize the areas of growth you seek.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Distinguish issue advocacy from other approaches, including community organizing, 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.
- Consider how changes in civic engagement and voluntary associations impact community organizing and grassroots mobilization.
- Determine how to identify and engage community members and organizations that will get involved in an advocacy campaign and how to support their participation in decision-making processes and coalition building.
- Address the unique leadership skills that make for a successful advocacy campaign.
- Differentiate between the problems that affect individuals and communities and the issues around which advocacy campaigns are built, viewing social, economic and political problems from an advocacy perspective.
- Learn about and apply principles of communication, marketing and branding to advocacy and organizing in general and specifically to the development and implementation of issue campaigns.
- Articulate a theoretical, conceptual and practical knowledge of the legislative, budgetary and bureaucratic policy making processes and structures and the democratic processes and role of compromise critical to effective governance.
- Describe the key action points within the policy making processes in which professional lobbyists, legislators, advocates and their organizations can influence policy making.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

1. Careful preparation for and serious involvement in all seminar sessions. This means reading the materials and thinking about the topic before the session. Try your best to cover all the readings so that in class, you will be citing from the works that we assigned. In your reading, you are asked to:
 - Question the significance of the topic and the analyses you read – is the methodology solid; does the analysis comport with the results?
 - Search for what biases (and there are always biases) affect the choice of subject, data and analysis.
 - Check yourself out: In what ways do the evidence and analyses conform to your own experience and assessments, and in what ways do they challenge them?
 - Consider what institutional and organizational implications can be drawn from the readings, and what types of leadership responses would be most productive.

- Think about what you learn as a leader and manager, policy analyst and advocate for policy change.
2. Class participation is crucial and the quality and thoughtfulness of your involvement will be reflected in your final grade. **If speaking in public is difficult for you, please come to see us early on.**
 3. Assume leadership in class activities (alone and as part of a team) – there will be many opportunities for you to experiment with your own organizing skills.
 4. Students will be given a topic posted under assignments every two weeks covering issues that arose from the sessions that seem powerful, meaningful and/or problematic. You are to then write a one to two page single-spaced analysis. You will be responsible for **FOUR** such analyses staggered over the semester. Each analysis, while reflecting rigorous and careful reading, allows you to explore what excites you intellectually and how you imagine applying what you read and discuss in class to professional areas that interest you. Along with your readings, you may also use lecture, power-point presentations, in-class exercises and the presentations of guest speakers as resources, **theory and academic analysis – these reflections are in lieu of exams and therefore should reflect the academic learning to the best of your ability. Do not skimp on your writing. These are not book reports – I have read the material. Deep and thoughtful analysis is what you will be doing.** To get full credit, these four one-two pagers will be due no later than the following dates:

1 st Reflection	Friday, November 3rd, 2017	20%
2 nd Reflection	Friday, November 17th, 2017	20%
3 rd Reflection	Friday, December 1 st , 2017	20%
Final Reflection	Tuesday, December 12 th	30%

Note on the Final Reflection: For your fourth reflection and final memo, we are asking you to structure your responses a bit differently than the prior ones. What we would like for you to do is look back over the course, the issues we addressed in the context of a very complicated political environment where many of the channels once used for advocacy campaigns are being superseded - whether for good or bad, successfully or not. And consider the changes in the ways people engage in society. Choose three things (issues, theories, ideas) that represent significant learning for you – something you understand or understand more deeply as a result of the readings you have done for the class and the discussions that have ensued. These should be different and should reflect different readings, authors, and articles or chapters. We are particularly interested in challenges you may have found in mission, method, theory of change and understanding of how the world of advocacy works – and how you weigh in on the subject. That means you will be citing at least six different sources. You do not need to quote them, but tell us where you are looking in the readings (you can add the citations as footnotes). Create a memo to Make The Road of your thoughts on how their team needs to address the advocacy campaign issues you are thinking about and perhaps your idea not only of caution and/or awareness, but how they could address those issues. Give us three to four single spaced pages this time with tight insight, analysis, critique and application. That means about one page for each topic. This is a chance for you to make clear how effectively you have read

and can apply the theoretical academic elements of the class as you move forward to go into the field with Make the Road.

5. Please submit all written assignments electronically. Your final class grade will reflect your participation in class sessions, your three one-two page analyses, your fieldwork and journal reflections, and your final group presentation and final memo to the next class

NYUClasses and Readings:

1. Much of the reading, many announcements, class related documents and other useful class information will be posted at the NYUClasses site so make sure to check that out regularly.
2. Also, check your NYU email regularly for any other announcements.
3. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader in order to view some of the materials. Make sure that you have it installed.
4. Books will be placed on reserve in the library.

Academic Integrity

As a professional, you will need to use many resources that have been developed, authored and/or organized by others. Making great use of the work of others is a valuable professional tool – originality is not axiomatically a virtue. Honoring the hard work of those who prepared what you borrow and use is an issue of integrity. That lesson begins in your academic work. To refresh yourself on the rules of academic integrity, see <https://wagner.nyu.edu/current/policies/>

Please refrain from checking your emails or doing other computer/PDA activity during class other than that which is connected to the class– if you think that we do not notice, you are wrong.

Pre-Readings and Book Purchase:

Most of your readings are on-line or provided under NYU Classes Resources for Advocacy Lab. One very important book you should purchase is **This Is An Uprising** by Mark and Paul Engler (Nation Press NY: 2016). You can find it on line for about \$9. We will be reading most of the book.

The opening sessions of this course are intensive with a great deal to learn. We encourage you to prepare by reading in advance if you can. In addition to the readings listed in the syllabus, please do read the following all of which are linked below:

- 1) Make the Road New York mission: [here](#) (good to also read our history [here](#) and about our community [here](#))
- 2) Make the Road New York theory of change (NYU Classes Session 1)
- 3) A couple of recent publications worth reading

- 2016 state policy report ([here](#))
 - 2017 immigrant health care access report ([here](#))
 - 4. Health: primer on immigrants and access to health care [here](#).
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THERE IS MUCH WE WILL NOT KNOW ABOUT THIS SEMESTER OR CANNOT ANTICIPATE BECAUSE YOUR ADVOCACY ENGAGEMENT DEPENDS ON MORE THAN YOUR OWN ACTIONS. THERE MAY BE CHANGES IN SESSIONS IF EVENTS CALL FOR THAT. THE SCHEDULE OF DELIVERABLES MAY ALSO CHANGE DEPENDING ON WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE CAMPAIGN. AS GRADUATE STUDENTS WHO ARE ENGAGED IN REAL FIELD WORK, FLEXIBILITY IS A CRUCIAL ASPECT OF THE LEARNING. PLEASE NURTURE THAT CAPACITY FOR THE UNEXPECTED

COURSE SESSIONS:

Session I

Mission and Vision: A Theory of Change and Organizational Mission

October 24, 2017

Students will refresh or acquire the basic vocabulary that is critical to issue advocacy and organizing such as: deep listening and collaborative skills, standing on the balcony and turning up the heat, dialogue and debate, SWOT and other strategic-change models of engagement to produce change. We will begin to develop a Theory of Change applied to the organization(s) with which we are working.

We also will explore the ways that Americans organize for change, the web of relationships and a network of associations that provide significant benefits of social capital, personal meaning and tribal affiliation well beyond the confines of any particular institution. What roles do voluntary associations and social capital derived from participation in voluntary associations play in fostering civic engagement in the context of American democracy? Of particular interest is whether voluntary associations, the core of American public service commitment, demand participatory behavior in a world moving from a place in time to virtual associations no longer dependent on geography. The core questions:

- What impact will the shifts in the ways Americans participate as active citizens have on grassroots mobilization and community organizing?
- What is issue advocacy in the context of organizing and how it is different from other approaches to addressing community problems?
- We will identify the issue(s) that will engage us this semester and begin to learn about what needs to be done.

Readings:

- ****This is An Uprising:** Introduction, Chapter 1: The Strategic Turn and Chapter 4: The Pillars
- Theda Skocpol, **Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life**, Univ of Oklahoma Press, 2003, chapter 6 “What We Have Lost.”
- Minieri, J. **Tools for Radical Democracy**. Introduction - Chapter 1;
- Reid, Elizabeth. 1999. Nonprofit Advocacy and Political Participation. In Boris, ET and Steuerle, Eds.: *Nonprofits and Government: Collaboration and Conflict*. Chapter 9: 291-325.
- ****A Guide To Effective Nonviolent Action (2007)**, ch. 1 *The First Step: A Vision of Tomorrow*, http://canvasopedia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/CANVAS-Core-Curriculum_EN.pdf
- ****Peter Ackerman, *Strategic NonViolence is Not Civil Resistance*, Sept. 2017,** https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/blog_post/strategic-nonviolence-not-civil-resistance/
- Greg Jobin-Leeds, ***When We Fight, We Fight To Win***, (New Press, 2016) chapter 4

Session II

Power and the Advocate as an Agent of Change

October 31, 2017

We will focus on a definition of power and the ways that power is used in the world of advocacy and organizing. In this context, we will begin to explore the role of an issue advocacy organizer and begin to assemble the qualities and skills that are crucial for a successful campaign. What allows us the right to intervene in the lives of a community? More important, we will take the issues of power head-on: What is power all about – for whom, over whom, with whom?

Readings

- ****This is An Uprising:** Chapter 2: Structure and Movement and Chapter 6: The Act of Disruption
- ****Strolovitch, *Affirmative Advocacy: Race, Class and Gender in Interest Group Politics***, Chapter 3
- ****Naim, *The End of Power***, Basic Books, 2013, chapter 2: Making Sense of Power
- Frances Poletta, *Freedom is an Endless Meeting: Democracy in America*, Univ. of Chicago, Chicago, 2002 (sections TBD)
- **The Community Toolbox**, Univ. of Kansas, 2010, Chapters 30-35: Organizing For Effective Advocacy
- ****A Guide To Effective Nonviolent Struggle (2007)**, ch. 2 *Power In Society*, http://canvasopedia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/CANVAS-Core-Curriculum_EN.pdf
- The Public Policy Institute, The Realclout Toolbox, <http://realclout.org/materials/toolbox>
- Jobin-Leeds and Agitarte, ***When We Fight We Win***, Chapter 4

Case Study: Make the Road Stakeholder analysis, allies, influential, targets and enemies

1st Reflection

Friday, November 3rd, 2017

Session III

Terms of Engagement and Can A Revolution Be Tweeted?

November 7, 2017

For millennia, advocacy meant face-to-face action: petitioning the ruler, standing on a soap box in the public square, nailing your manifesto to the church door and storming the castle. There were serious limits to how far and wide you could engage others in your quest for change. Clearly, the conditions and capacities to effect change have dramatically increased, but does tweeting and posting on Facebook really qualify as advocacy? We will look at traditional forms of advocacy mobilization and engagement – door knocking, community organizing and union halls that lead to rallies and marches and then enter the cyberspace that could reach over 100 million people to sign on to Kony 2012. Students will examine various cases of advocacy engagement and begin to imagine the next stages of political action and advocacy.

Case Studies: Will be assigned

Readings:

**Malcolm Gladwell, *Small Change, Why The Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted*,

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/10/04/small-change-malcolm-gladwell>

**Zeynep Tufekci, *Twitter and Tear Gas*, (Yale Univ. Press 2017), ch 1 A Networked Public and Epilogue: The Uncertain Climb

**David Karpf, *The Move On Effect*, (Oxford Studies In Digital Politics 2012), Chapter 4

**Black Code: The Movie (trailer) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gv6bU-kOR14>

Session IV

Brand Character: Imagining a Public Opinion Advocacy Campaign and Getting the Message Across: The Medium is the Message

November 14, 2017

What if you call for an advocacy campaign and nobody comes? The reasons may not be apathy but a failure to frame the issues and move effectively from vision to implementation. At the core of an effective implementation strategy is branding and marketing. While corporations may have millions to invest to market their products – or to invest in political campaigns and issue advocacy,-- social justice activists running an advocacy campaigns generally have to work with less. Yet we have many cases of successful grassroots campaigns that made great use of networking, media presence and on-line activity

As the Opportunity Agenda explains: Too often the social justice community must counter well-financed communication efforts that support inequitable and unjust policies. To successfully counter these efforts, social justice leaders need support to tell compelling and evocative stories that drive policy and culture change. The goal is to move hearts and minds, driving lasting policy and culture change and bring the inspirational voices of opportunity and possibility to social justice issues through communication expertise and creative engagement.

To advance the impact of the social justice community, it is critical to shape compelling narratives and messages; build the communication capacity of social justice leaders through training and resources; and engage with artists, creatives, and culture makers as powerful storytellers to shift the public discourse.

Here is our chance to learn techniques and skills that can be applied in a wide range of professional settings.

While it is exciting to get an op-ed into the newspaper, there are many other ways to influence the influentials – legislators, newspapers and commentators, clergy and the moneyed class – as well as all those people you would want distributing or signing petitions, door-knocking and voting. With the help of professionals in the field, we will explore traditional media advocacy methods and then imagine what advocacy will be like ten years from now.

- ****This Is An Uprising:** Chapter 7: The Whirlwind and Chapter 8: The Dividers
- ****Timothy Snyder, *On Tyranny*** (Tim Duggan Books, NY: 2017) Chapter 9: Be Kind to Our Language and Chapter 17: Listen for Dangerous Words (NYUClasses)
- Kahn, ***Organizing: A Guide for Grassroots Leaders***, NASW Press, 1991, chapter 12: Communication and chapter 13: Media
- ****Groundswell: Inspiring Faithful Action to Repair the World** <http://www.groundswell-mvmt.org/>

Case Study: Creating an ad campaign for immigration reform: What are the competitive images, language and heuristics?

2nd Reflection

Friday, November 17th, 2017

**Session V: The Legislative Process: How Laws Move From an Idea to a Reality
November 21st, 2017**

The fact is, we want communities to organize and those most hurt by public policies to stand up and fight for the cause and assure that negative policies are changed. The reality is that this seldom happens. Revolutions are driven by small, dedicated individuals who can mobilize large constituencies and find effective ways to move decision-makers to change course. Along with all

we have learned, we must understand where an advocate can have impact on the legislative process. How can we affect legislative action? To whom do we need to speak? How do we get bills on the floor of the legislative bodies and see them passed and signed in to law? This session will train us to be effective lobbyists on our issue.

There is no magic in the legislative process. It is often a slug match, slogging with glacial speed, attacks from all sides to ensure that the final bill accomplishes what each of the competitive stakeholders demand. Knowing who the stakeholders are, where the leverage is, who is allied with whom, what bureaucratic expectations will be from bill passage to implementation, what or who will clog or even shutdown the process, and, of course, the roles that advocates and citizens can play. We will be guided through the ups and downs that experienced advocates have learned in getting legislation enacted.

- ****The Rules of Lobbying:**
http://www.senate.gov/reference/reference_index_subjects/Lobbying_vrd.htm
- Kahn, *Organizing: A Guide for Grassroots Leaders*, NASW Press, 1991, chapter 17: Politics
- **** Lobbyist Regulation (state)** <http://www.ncsl.org/research/ethics/lobbyist-regulation.aspx>
- ****Anthony J. Nownes, *Total Lobbying***, Cambridge Univ. Press, N.Y., 2006
- ****Avner, Marcia. Minnesota Council of Nonprofits. 2002. *The Lobbying and Advocacy Handbook for Nonprofit Organizations: Shaping Public Policy at the State and Local Level***. Saint Paul, MN, Amherst Wilder Foundation,
Chapter 4: Nonprofit Lobbying and the Law. 121-129; Appendix C: Legislative Guide. 147-154. Chapter 2: Get Set! Develop Your Lobbying Plan. 33 – 57. Chapter 3: Go! Implement Your Lobbying Plan. 85 – 119.

Guest: David Farber

David Farber combines his experience in both litigation and public policy to solve client needs. Having been trained as a litigator, Mr. Farber maintains a strong complex multiparty litigation practice, including serving as first chair in health care litigation, False Claims Act cases, and other commercial disputes. Mr. Farber also maintains a strong government advocacy practice before both the Congress and federal agencies, and has drafted and had passed legislation, as well as influenced and changed Agency policies, principally in the health care and insurance fields.

Session VI: Status, Legislation and the Courts: How to have impact on the Legal System to effect change

November 28th, 2017

Often the greatest advocates for right rights have been the courts that overturned laws or referenda that oppressed individuals or identity groups. In other cases, courts have ruled unconstitutional legislation passed in support of civil and human rights. While courts claim impartiality, no one really believes that. Courts are aware of public opinion. So advocacy

campaigns also can be applied to impact judges (and even juries). We will look at the legal process itself and then cases that, from our standpoint, were affected by advocacy campaigns that changed the hearts and minds of judges.

Questions to Consider:

1. How have the courts crafted principles that address status and where have the conflicts been?
2. What are the key court rulings that affect advocacy issues we see today?
3. What is happening in immigration law at this very moment – Federal, state and local? **To prepare, please read recent articles about the status of travel ban executive orders, challenges by states, cities and individuals, court rulings, and advocacy action.**

Materials:

- ****A Fluid Boundary: The Free Exercise Clause and the Legislative and Executive Branches**
<http://pewforum.org/newassets/images/reports/freeexercise2/freeexercise2.pdf>
- ****Court Debate Over US Travel Bans**, Jurist, Sept 2017, (URL)
- ****Supreme Court 101: Primer for non-Lawyers**, Heritage Foundation (URL)

Case Study: The Battle over Immigration: Refugees, asylum, undocumented?

Guest: Julie Ehrlich

Prof. Ehrlich is the Assistant Dean for Strategic Initiatives and Chief of Staff as well as an Adjunct Professor of Clinical Law. Her specialty is reproductive rights

3rd Reflection Friday, December 1st, 2017

Session VII: Determining Success Before Success: Evaluation and Other Assessment Criteria December 5th, 2017

A campaign is ultimately successful if its mission is achieved and change takes place. Yet there are many steps in this process, success may be delayed and evaluation is crucial to succeed. There is an additional skill to acquire, for constant self-evaluation (personal and institutional) demands are ubiquitous and come in a variety of ways – 360 degree personal/professional evaluations, group assessments, responses to funding proposals, donor and government driven evaluations, media scrutiny, or successful or failed elections. Our interest is to apply our learning to the assessment and evaluation of an advocacy campaign. Evaluation is a crucial tool, allowing organizations and individuals to know where they are going and whether they are on track or, if not, to change course as needed.

Readings:

- ****This Is An Uprising:** Chapter 5: Declare Victory and Run and Chapter 10: The Ecology of Change
- ****The Community Toolbox,** Univ. of Kansas, 2010, Chapters 40-44: Maintaining Quality and Rewarding Accomplishments
- ****Resiman, et al., "A Guide to Measuring Advocacy and Policy,** (Annie E Casey Foundation, 2007)
- **James McDavid, *Program Evaluation and Performance,*** Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA., 2006
- ****Evidence of Change: Exploring Civic Engagement Evaluation,** Building Movement Project, http://buildingmovement.org/pdf/EvidenceofChange_BMP.pdf
- ****Greg Jobin-Leeds, *When We Fight, We Fight To Win,*** (New Press, 2016), Epilogue

Task: Preparing to Evaluate Make the Road

Final Reflection Tuesday, December 12th