



NYU

**ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

EXEC-GP/PADM-GP 2106.001

Organizing for Change: An Introduction to Community Organizing Fall 2021

“It always seems impossible, until it’s done.”
Nelson Mandela, Former President of South Africa

“That government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall
not perish from the earth”
Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address

“Consciousness + Commitment = Change” Coalition
of Immokalee Workers

Instructor Information

- Professor Noelle Damico
- Email: noelle.damico@nyu.edu
- Mobile: 914-525-7040
- Office hours: by appointment
- Class Sessions:
 - Saturday, 2:30-6:00 pm: September 19, October 3, October 16, October 30, November 13, December 4, December 18
- Class Location: 194 Mercer St, Room 306A

Course Description

Organizing for Change will provide an overview and introduction to the fundamentals of organizing to win, implement, monitor, and sustain change in the private and public sectors. We will compare, contrast different forms of participatory community organizing and explore the linkages between community organizing and social movement building in the 21st century. We will probe the moral values and priorities imbedded in different organizing approaches and cultivate concrete skills in active listening, leadership

development, strategic analysis, campaign design, research, coalition-building, mobilization, design and use of non-violent direct action, communication (including use of symbols and art), assessment, role of funders, and, importantly, monitoring and sustaining change.

Through readings, class activities, speakers, reflections, and a final organizing project, students will emerge with an enlarged vocabulary and set of models for organizing, the skills to catalyze and build organizations, and the ability design campaigns to achieve and sustain change.

Course and Learning Objectives

1. Understand different approaches to organizing and the role of the organizer within them.
2. Examine concepts of power – what it is, how it is used, and how groups and communities expand and strengthen their political power through organizing.
3. Consider how changes in civic engagement, voluntary associations, and cultural/political landscape impact community organizing and grassroots mobilization.
4. Determine how to identify and engage community members, develop leaders, and support participatory decision-making processes
5. Differentiate between problems that effect communities and issues around which communities can be organized.
6. Learn how to develop a campaign, message effectively, mobilize and evaluate.
7. Explore various ways to ensure gains that are won are implemented and monitored.
8. Understand the significance of non-violent direct actions, why they are used and how to design and carry out large-scale, multi-day engagements.
9. Learn how to build and manage coalitions of diverse partners toward a common aim.
10. Examine the funding landscape and different approaches to resource cultivation to promote social change.

Learning Assessment Table

Course Learning Objective Covered	Corresponding Assignment Title
#1 - # 10	Assigned Readings Notecards Post-class, one-page reflection papers Final reflection, three-page – synthetic.
Course Learning Objective Covered	Corresponding Assignment Title

Course Requirements

1. Careful preparation for and serious involvement in all seminar sessions. This means reading the materials and thinking about the topic before the session. In your reading, you are asked to:
 - a. 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.
 - b. 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?
 - c. Consider what institutional and organizational implications can be drawn from the readings, and what types of leadership responses would be most productive.
 - d. Think about what you learn as a leader and manager, policy analyst and community builder.
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 me early on.
3. Assume leadership in class activities (alone or as part of a team) – there will be many opportunities for you to experiment with your own organizing skills.
4. **By Thursday, September 16, please submit a bio** (no more than one page) that is suitable for sharing with the class using the Brightspace Discussion Forum. Please take a look at your classmates' bios before our first class on Saturday, September 18. Your bio should include your name, your current profession or field of interest and a little bit about yourself. Let us know what stirred you to learn about organizing and what is one social change or policy that has impacted your life and how, as well as what you hope to gain from this class.!
5. For the first six classes please prepare a notecard (index card) with (a) one salient quote from the week's readings/video (b) one sentence about the significance of the quote in relationship to the broader argument of the

reading/video (c) a specific question about the quote. Bring your notecard with you to class for the first class; upload it to the Notecard discussion topic for submission.

6. Students will choose an assigned reading, something said by one of the speakers, a lingering doubt, or meaningful interaction from class following each session that seems powerful and/or problematic and then write **a one-page, single-space analysis following the first – fifth classes**. This analysis, while reflecting rigorous and careful reading, allows you to explore what excites you intellectually and how you imagine applying what you read. Each **paper must also reference at least two of the readings for the class. These five one pagers should be submitted the Wednesday following the Saturday class.** (For example, the Class I, Sat. Sept. 18 reflection will be due on Wed., Sept. 22 by 11:55pm). Please, please put your name on the paper itself and in the file name!!
7. For the last session, you will prepare a plan for a grassroots advocacy campaign as part of a team on an issue you consider to be significant for which community organizing could be effective. You will choose a project that most interests you from among case studies provided. You'll have chosen your case study by early November allowing time for you to plan and develop your team's campaign plan. This means locating the challenge that must be faced, imagining the stakeholders and the conflicting issues, researching the topic, analyzing models that have succeeded or failed, and, as part of the in-class presentation, dramatizing one aspect of the organizing process. On the last day, your team will present to the class a summary of your campaign, accompanied by an outline form written description, and then a dramatization of one point in the organizing process. These are not exhaustive campaign plans (no more than 5 pages, single spaced), but rather informed designs which efficiently and clearly present your issue and provide pathways to address the questions that arise on the subject.
8. You will have until **Monday, December 20 at 11:55pm**, to offer a final reflection on the course and your experience – what you learned, what you wished you would have learned, what you plan to explore, and what readings or experiences had a particular impact. This is a synthetic paper – please do not cut and paste from earlier weeks' reflections. This paper should be **no more than three pages single-spaced maximum**; additional pages for the sake of volume are not of value here. **You must also reference and cite at least five of the readings** for the course.
9. Please submit all written assignments electronically via Brightspace.

Grading

Your grade will reflect your participation in class sessions, your thoughtful planning and facilitation of the activities in the class sessions, your five one-page analyses, your five note cards, your final group design and presentation, and your final reflection. The combination thus reflects your analytic skills, your ability to cogently present and also participate in discussions, and your ability to link your study to anticipate future community building.

Assignments are due as listed below. For the one-page reflections you'll write following every class, they are due on the Wednesday following the Saturday class at 11:55pm.

Late assignments: We all have emergencies and unexpected difficulties. If you will not be able to hand in your assignment on time, please email me at noelle.damico@nyu.edu to discuss options. If your assignment is 1-3 days late and you did not communicate with me, your grade will be diminished by 1 numeric grade (e.g. an excellent paper that would have received a 4 will receive a 3). If it is 4-7 days late, it will be diminished by 2 grades. If it is more than 7 days late it will be diminished by 3 grades. Please communicate with me if something unexpected arises or if you know in advance that due to work or some other situation you cannot deliver on time. I am committed to working with you, but it is your responsibility to reach out.

Individual Class Participation (20%). You are expected to complete all readings in advance of the class, to attend all classes, and to thoroughly engage in discussions and activities. The use of electronic devices for purposes other than taking notes is not appropriate. Peer reflections on your participation in the teams for the final project will be factored into this grade.

Notecards (5%). In preparation for each class (except the last) you will prepare a notecard/index card with (a) one salient quote from the week's readings/video (b) the significance of the quote in relationship to the broader argument of the reading/video (c) a specific question about the quote. You should take a photo and submit them via NYU Classes to the appropriate Notecard folder in the Forum section. These are graded Pass/Fail. The idea here is that notecards can only contain a little bit of info on them! If you don't want to put it on a notecard and would prefer to type on a page, that's fine, but keep it short – as if you WERE writing on a notecard! 😊

One-Page, Single-spaced Reflections in 12-point Times New Roman Font, (25%). After each of the first five classes, (not the sixth or seventh) you will choose an assigned reading, something said by one of the speakers, a lingering doubt, or meaningful interaction from class following each session that seems powerful and/or problematic and then write a one-page, single-space analysis paper. This is a tightly written piece – you can't say everything; focus on responding to one aspect/argument that made you intellectually curious or "hit home." For example, the synopsis will likely be one to two sentences. Writing tightly is challenging and it is a critical organizing skill. If you're not used to it, don't worry, you'll get lots of practice in this class! See below for the reflections' grading rubric. And please take a moment and read the "paper guidance" document that will walk you through examples.

Final Project (30%). Following the third class, you'll be notified by email that the case studies for the final project will be opened on Brightspace. **You'll have the opportunity to read these case studies and choose one case study to work on with others.** Your teams will be finalized by October 30. The teams for each case study will work together to develop and present a community member-led grassroots organizing campaign and/or advocacy plan of your choosing that will offer a clear mission, a narrative, methods of assessment, potential stakeholders, a strategy to achieve your objectives and ultimate goal, and an ideal example of implementation and how your achievement would be sustained. These will be presented in class and provide the resource for assessing what has been learned through the course.

The final project outline and summary description are due Monday, December 13 and should be submitted via Brightspace by a designated individual from your group. Outlines should be no more than 5 pages, single spaced, 12-point font. The file name should include your group identification as well as the assignment and all team members names should be listed on the document itself. **The class presentation will be on Saturday, December 18,** during which the entire class will discuss and provide feedback to you on your project.

Your Campaign Outline will be graded on the cogency of the overall project, the effectiveness of your power analysis, the logic and relation between the steps planned, the identification of problems or uncertainties as well as objectives, and the plan for sustaining your win. You will also be graded on your class presentation for clarity, the involvement of the class in experiencing an aspect of the organizing process, involvement of all members of the team, and response to class feedback.

For the in-class presentation, you'll want to quickly orient us to your plan (5m) and then embark on dramatizing a key moment of the organizing process. Past classes have used PowerPoints, created brief videos or flyers to help in the dramatization. Your classmates become part of your dramatization. We might be community members at your first meeting, or we could be divided into different constituencies that you approach for support or maybe we're the general public that you're surveying. Have fun with this!

All team members are responsible for conducting a peer assessment of each of your teammates' contributions and the quality of those contributions. This assessment is required and graded with a "checkmark" - as turned in or not turned in. **It is due Monday, December 20, at 11:55pm.**

Final Reflection (20%). Your final reflection will look back over the entire course no more than three pages maximum, in 12-point NY Times font, single spaced and refer to at least five of the readings for the course. This is an opportunity to express what you learned, what you wished you would have learned, and what you'll carry forward with you. Concision, synthesis, and insight is more important than length. **This final reflection is due Monday, December 20, at 11:55pm,** and should be submitted via Brightspace. File names should include the student's name as well as the assignment name. *You should be sure to put your name on the document itself.* The two keys for grading in this final reflection are: did you synthesize by making relevant or new

connections between and among the themes of the course and did you reference and cite five sources.

Grading Rubric for All Reflection Papers

Area	1 Submitted	2 Passable	3 Good	4 Excellent
Synopsis	No synopsis of argument (s)	Partially accurate or incomplete synopsis of argument (s)	Good synopsis of argument(s)	Concise, clear synopsis of argument(s)
Critical engagement with quote, reading, speaker’s arguments: interesting, banal, counterintuitive, confusing? Quality of data? How would we know if they were wrong? Evidence for claim(s) about arguments?	No real engagement with argument(s)	Partial engagement with argument(s) but reasoning faulty or incomplete	Good engagement with argument(s) with clear and sound reasoning and evidence (highlights strengths, flaws, gaps, limits or weaknesses in arguments)	Excellent Clear, systematic, engagement with argument. Provides evidence for claims about argument(s) from readings.
Discusses relevance to broader themes in course	No clear connections made; like a stand-alone book report	Makes some effort at making connections to other readings and/or issues	A good connection made to other readings and/or issues	Makes creative and integrated connections to other readings and/or issues
Area	1 Submitted	2 Passable	3 Good	4 Excellent
Discusses application in professional area of your interest	No clear application made	Some effort at application; not clear	Clear application is made	Thoughtful and reflective application
Writing Style	Not well written; Clearly not proofread; multiple grammar and spelling errors	Manageably written	Well-written; 1 or 2 minor errors.	Beautifully written; No errors.

Assignment Due Dates

Assignments will be posted to the “Assignments” tab of Brightspace and completed assignments should be uploaded there. File names should always include the student’s name (or the team number), the numerical date as well as the assignment name. You should also be sure to put your name on the document itself.

All assignments should be submitted via the assignments tab on NYUClasses, with the exception of your Bio which should be submitted via the forums tab and the notecards which you’ll bring with you to each class. All assignments are due by 11:55pm on the due date.!

Due Date	Assignment
Thursday, September 16	Bio
Saturday, September 18	Class I Notecard, Readings
Wednesday, September 22	Reflection Paper on Class I
Saturday, October 2	Class II Notecard, Readings, Social Identity Wheel Exercise
Wednesday, October 6	Reflection Paper on Class II
Saturday, October 16	Class III Notecard, Readings
Wednesday, October 20	Reflection Paper on Class III
Saturday, October 30	Class IV Notecard, Readings (teams established)
Wednesday, November 3	Reflection Paper on Class IV
Saturday, November 13	Class V Notecard, Readings
Due Date	Assignment
Wednesday, November 17	Reflection Paper on Class V
Saturday, December 4	Class VI Notecard, Readings
Monday, December 13	Final Project Outline and Written Description
Saturday, December 18	Final Project Class Presentations

Monday, December 20

Peer Review of Participation in Final Project Due **and** Final Reflection Paper

NYU Classes

1. Much of the reading, many announcements, class-related documents, and other useful class information will be posted to the NYU Classes site so make sure to check that regularly.
2. Also, check your NYU e-mail 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.

Required Readings

You are expected to complete all readings prior to the class session. Classes will not be repetitive of the readings, rather they will use the readings as a basis for discussion and departure. The first several classes are very heavy with reading in order to give you the broadest possible foundation quickly. We will be returning to earlier readings later in the course to recapitulate themes in a new key. Later sessions are deliberately lighter in reading so as to allow you time for planning your final project and for synthesizing what you are learning.

1. I suggest you purchase Joan Miniere's **Tools for Radical Democracy** (Chardon Press Series). Many mandatory readings are from this book and it is a very useful book to have in your library.
2. While you are not required to read all of Saul Alinsky's **Rules for Radicals** (Vintage Books, 1989) in this course, I suggest you purchase and read it as it is a classic text for community organizing.
3. All other readings will be available on NYU Classes or on the Internet as noted. Otherwise, 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](https://wagner.nyu.edu/current/policies), see <https://wagner.nyu.edu/current/policies>.

Academic integrity is a vital component of Wagner and NYU. All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by [Wagner's Academic Code](#). All Wagner students have already read and signed the [Wagner Academic Oath](#). Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated and students in this class are expected to report violations to me. If any

student in this class is unsure about what is expected of you and how to abide by the academic code, you should consult with me.

Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at NYU

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the [Moses Center for Students with Disabilities \(CSD\) website](#) and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab or call or email CSD at (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

[NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#) states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify me in advance of religious holidays that might coincide with exams to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.

Covid-19 Requirements

Every member of our NYU community is [required to wear face coverings](#) when on NYU property or in NYU facilities, including our classroom. You must also follow the [COVID19 Screener](#) requirements for campus and classroom access. See the [information safety and health protocols](#).

Course Sessions

Class I: September 18, 2021, (2:30 – 6:00pm)

Unit 1: Overview of the Course, Introduction to Organizing

In this session, we will introduce ourselves to one another and become acquainted with key organizing practices by thinking through a case study together. Please submit a bio via Brightspace to the Discussion topic: Bio (no more than one page). And please read everyone's bio. Feel free to comment; that's why they're in the discussion section!

Please be prepared to share with the class a 2-minute (max) response to the following questions from your bio What is your name?

What is your field of study/profession?

What is one burning question you wish to explore about organizing for change?

Case Study: Organizing for Child-Centered Recess Rights in White Plains Elementary Schools

We will learn the what's and how's of organizing by working together to think about how we would organize to establish recess that promotes elementary students' physical, cognitive and social well-being. This is a real-life case, so we will compare our process and proposals with what occurred and is continuing to unfold.

Key topics and skills to be explored are: moving from problem to issue, understanding power, ensuring streams of accountability, identifying decision-makers, developing a critical mass, types of action, fostering new leaders, going outside traditional channels, reading the room, practicing, decisions about media, assessment of progress, building deep and wide.

Approaches to Organizing

- Minieri, J. Tools for Radical Democracy, Introduction, pp. xix - xxx
- Asbed, G. "Golpear a Uno es Golpear a Todos!" in Soohoo et al., *Bringing Human Rights Home* (University of Pennsylvania, 2008), pp. 1-24.
- [America Will Be, A New Poor People's Campaign](https://art.poorpeoplescampaign.org/portfolio/america-will-episode-1/),
(<https://art.poorpeoplescampaign.org/portfolio/america-will-episode-1/>)

Supplemental reading

- Smock, K., Democracy in Action, Introduction, pp. 3-34
- Sen, R. Stir it Up: Lessons in Community Organizing and Advocacy

Unit 2: The Context in Which We Organize

What are the web of relationships and network of associations through which people participate in life together, gain social capital, personal meaning, and develop their worldview? How are corporations impacting our identity and democracy? What has the pandemic challenged and revealed?

Readings on Context

- Muncy, Robyn; *Journal of Social History*, Summer2005, Vol. 38 Issue 4, p. 1170, Review of Theda Skocpol, "Diminished Democracy."
- Levitsky, Steven and Daniel Ziblatt, "This is How Democracies Die," *The Guardian*, January 21, 2018.
- Koleva, Spassena PI, Jesse Graham, Ravi Iyer, Peter H. Ditto, and Jonathan Haidt, Tracing the threads: How five moral concerns (especially Purity) help explain culture war attitudes, *Journal of Research in Personality* 42 (2012) pp. 184-194.
- Klein, N., No Is Not Enough: Resisting Trump's Shock Politics and Winning the World We Need, (Haymarket Books, 2017), Introduction and Chapter 1.
- Anderson, C., White Rage, (Bloomsbury, 2016), Prologue, pp. 1-6.

- Inequality and Covid-19, <https://inequality.org/facts/inequality-and-covid-19/> , <https://inequality.org> a project of the Institute for Policy Studies.

Supplemental Reading

- Skocpol T., *Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life* (Unv. Of Oklahoma Press, 2003), chapter 6, “What We Have Lost”.

Class II: Saturday, October 2, 2021 (2:30pm – 6:00pm) Unit

3: Diversity and Privilege in Community Organizing

It is a truism to say that people are different and those differences matter. Our identities are chosen, imposed, inherited, and can and do change. Our race(s), class, national origin and ethnicity, sexual identity and gender, religion, and culture impact how we describe and live in the world as it is and into the world as we believe it should be. Organizing often seeks to redress prejudice and injustice that follows from systemic discrimination. In organizing – and in this class --we bring our fullest selves to the process and learn from one another, while recognizing that undue privilege and protection have been conferred upon some of us in varying degrees while others of us have been disregarded, excluded, or harmed because of our identities. In this unit, we will foreground this discussion of the multiple ways we are situated and how the ways in which we identify ourselves and others shape our participatory organizing, and then allow it to permeate our discussions throughout the semester.

Social Identity Wheel Exercise (please complete in advance of class and bring it with you to class) The worksheet prompts you to fill in various social identities (such as race, gender, sex, ability disability, sexual orientation, etc.) and further categorize those identities based on which matter most in your self-perception and which matter most in others’ perception of you.

Readings

- Mason, Nicole C., [Leading at the Intersections, Women of Color Policy Network](http://www.intergroupresources.com/rc/Intersectionality%20primer%20-%20Women%20of%20Color%20Policy%20Network.pdf), RCLA Wagner, (http://www.intergroupresources.com/rc/Intersectionality%20primer%20-%20Women%20of%20Color%20Policy%20Network.pdf)
- McIntosh, Peggy, [White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](https://nationalseedproject.org/images/documents/Knapsack_plus_NotesPeggy_McIntosh.pdf), Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, (https://nationalseedproject.org/images/documents/Knapsack_plus_NotesPeggy_McIntosh.pdf)
- Baldwin, James, [No Name in the Street](#), excerpt from “To Be Baptized,” (published in 1972),

(<http://ezproxy.library.nyu.edu:8807/cgi-bin/asp/philo/bltc/getvolume.pl?S11367pp>). 163-197.

Unit 4: Power and the Community Organizer

We will focus on a definition of power and the ways that power is used in the world of community organizing. In this context, we will begin to explore the role of an organizer and begin to assemble the qualities and skills that are crucial for a successful organizer. What allows an organizer the right to intervene in the lives of a community? What's the difference between an organizer and a leader? How does one go about organizing? More important, we will take the issues of power head-on: What is power all about – for whom, over whom, with whom? And we'll practice doing a power analysis.

Readings

- Minieri, J. Tools for Radical Democracy, Powering Up and Building a Base for Power – Chapter 2, pp. 23-36.
- Madonna Thunder Hawk. Native Organizing before the Non-Profit Industrial Complex. *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, Duke University Press Books; Reprint edition (February 3, 2017)
- Rothstein, R, "What is an Organizer," in Shutz et al., *People Power*, pp. 43-48
- RCLA Leadership for a Changing World, Transforming Lives, Transforming Communities

Guest Speaker: Juanita Lewis, Community Voices Heard Juanita is the Executive Director of Community Voices Heard. She was born and raised in Saint Paul, MN. She graduated from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities with a B.A. in History and Political Science, and with her Masters of Advocacy and Political Leadership Degree from the University of Minnesota-Duluth. She began her work as a community organizer with the Minnesota chapter of ACORN. Since 2004, she has worked on numerous electoral campaigns at the city, state and federal level in different staffing capacities. Juanita develops community members into leaders that work on strategic, issue-based campaigns that bring the issues of low-income people to the forefront.

Class III Saturday, October 16, 2021 (2:30 – 6:00pm)

Unit 5: Developing a Campaign: Strategy, Mobilization, Evaluation

We will explore how to develop a campaign and plan, effective messaging that is tailored to reach key allies, establish a range of take action opportunities (protests, direct action, shareholder actions, popular theatre), discuss the role of symbols in framing actions, best practices in mobilizing, and different approaches to evaluate success each step of the way. We'll discuss research, power-mapping, and the principle of escalation.

Readings

- [Map the Power: Research for the Resistance](#), LittleSis (Read “What’s Up” and “Where to Begin”);
- Mineri, J. Chapters 8, 10, and 13, “Researching the Politics of an Issue,” “Planning a Comprehensive Campaign” and “Evaluating a Campaign from Beginning to End”
- Sen, R, Stir it Up, Chapter 3: “Picking the Good Fight”
- Peruse the Fund Excluded Workers site: <https://fundexcludedworkers.org>

Supplemental Reading

- Webinar: [Sunrise Movement, Momentum and Political Alignments](#)

Guest Speaker: Bianca Guerrero, Make the Road – NY, Lead Organizer for Fund Excluded Workers Campaign.

Unit 6: Engaging a Community

Who are the stakeholders, where do we find them, and how do we engage communities and work with new constituencies? We will look at various approaches for involving people, building community among diverse people, maintaining accountability and democratizing power.

Readings

- Minieri, Tools for a Radical Democracy, Chapters 3 and 4
- Barber, W.J. *The Third reconstruction: Moral Mondays, Fusion Politics, and the Rise of a New Justice Movement*, Chapter 2, “My First Fight,” pp.15-28
- Peruse <https://marchforourlives.com>

Guest speakers: Jess Moskowitz and Jack Kelly from [March for Our Lives](#)

Unit 7: Projects of Survival and Mutual Aid

In this unit, we will explore the importance of projects of survival and mutual aid as practical support, political education, and community-building efforts that literally help people survive so they can organize. Such projects, when used strategically, can also be a tactic for bringing pressure on local systems and powerful decision-makers to take appropriate responsibility.

Readings

- Shames, S. and Seal B., “Survival Programs,” *We Want Freedom*, Abrams Press: New York, 2016, pp. 74-91.
- Chen, T. [“NYU Students are Receiving Venmo Payments from Strangers in Response to the Quarantine Food Debacle,”](#) BuzzFeed, August 21, 2020 • Theoharis, L, [“Don’t Stop Organizing,”](#) The Nation, June 5, 2020

- [Cheri Honkala & KWRU's Clintonville](#), 1999, YouTube.

Class IV Saturday, October 30, 2021 (2:30 – 6:00pm) Unit

8: Leaders and Leadership Development

In this unit, we will explore what leadership is and different models of exercising leadership. How do you as an organizer work with members to identify the different leadership roles needed by your organization and within your campaign? How do you identify leaders and cultivate their skills for running meetings, campaigns, and negotiations; for public speaking, media work, and education? How do leaders identify and develop other leaders? What are the types of ongoing support that leaders need? To whom and how are leaders accountable? How do leaders ensure transparency and participation in decision-making?

Readings

- Baptist, W, [The 4 C's of Leadership](#)
- Minieri, J. Tools for Radical Democracy, chapter 5, "Developing Leaders from All Walks of Life"

- RCLA Leadership for a Changing World, “Don’t Just Do Something, Sit There.”
- Sen, R. Stir it Up, Chapter 5 (To learn more about the groups Sen describes, see the Profiles section which begins on p. xxv).
- Please peruse <https://treeageteam.org>

Guest speaker: Shiv Soin, founder of TREEage. TREEage, which first began as a coalition of strikers, has transformed into a robust organization, advocating for climate justice from every political avenue. We are a coalition of youth leaders, activists, and organizers, working tirelessly to ensure that climate justice is a top priority of our elected officials, policies, and futures. At TREEage, we understand that climate justice cannot exist without racial and social justice. We promote leaders and policy that prioritize a just transition and dismantle systemic environmental injustice.

Unit 9: Building Partnerships and Coalitions

In this unit, we will explore when and how to form coalitions of organizations to address issues. For successful change, it is almost always necessary to build partnerships or coalitions. How can this happen well among groups that have never worked together in the past; or even among groups that have a degree of tension between them? How do we marshal the different literal and figurative languages that we speak as a strength? How can organizations maintain collaborative work on different fronts without losing their sense of mission/purpose? How do such coalitions develop accountability among different powerful groups? How can “unusual” partnerships or “unexpected” allies find synergy across other points of opposition? How can we ask for what organizations can do and respect what they cannot? What are ways of evaluating when to continue or disband work together? How are funders “partners” and how are they not?

Readings

- Minieri, J. Tools for Radical Democracy, chapter 14, “Forging Partnerships for Power”
- “[Why Consumers Matter in Realizing Workers’ Rights](#),” Asbed, Damico, Nova, Huffington Post.
- Watch the video [Lakeland: The Final Day of the March for Rights, Respect and Fair Food](#)

Unit 10: Non-violent Direct Action

In this unit, we will zero-in on creating and carrying out non-violent direct actions as part of a campaign. Non-violent direct action reveals injustice that has been obscured by the every-day operations of systems, demonstrates relations of power, and makes a moral appeal to the opponent. Such actions are especially important to and used by people who do not have access to regular channels for seeking change. We will examine the dimensions of non-violent direct action in leadership development, communication of core issue and urgency, overtures to opponents, and as the meeting of survival needs themselves and/or how survival needs are met by groups of human beings whose human rights are in question.

Readings

- Dear, J. “What Martin Luther King, Jr. Can Teach Us About Non-Violence,” National Catholic Reporter (January 17, 2012)
<https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/road-peace/what-martin-luther-king-jr-can-teachus-about-nonviolence>
- King, Jr., Martin Luther “The Sword that Heals”, Chapter 2, in *Why We Can't Wait*, Beacon Press, 1964 (republished 2011).
- Damico, N. [Fast Journal at the Coalition of Immokalee Workers Hunger Strike Outside Taco Bell in Irvine, CA](#), 2003,
(<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B8AMHn2zxY6oRWgtVGJXejdIMEk>)

Supplemental Reading

- “Gandhi and the One-Eyed Giant,” Thomas Merton in *Gandhi, M.K. Gandhi on non-violence: selected texts from Mohandas K. Gandhi's non-violence in peace and war*. New Direction Publishing, 1964, 1965.

Class V Saturday, November 13, 2021 (2:30 – 6:00pm)

Unit 11: What Makes Structural, Sustainable Change Possible

In this unit we will weave together threads of earlier units to look at how the Coalition of Immokalee Workers' organizing evolved from organizing the Immokalee farmworker community to national movement that has effected structural change. In addition to

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looking at the evolution of the CIW's Campaign for Fair Food, the achievements of the Fair Food Program and how they are being sustained as well as translated into other supply chains and industries. We will focus especially on how an opponent can be made into a partner, how to evolve a campaign successfully, how to implement and sustain the gains achieved. Instead of thinking about "winnable issues" CIW decided to change the very terrain upon which assumptions of winnability were built.

- Browse [Coalition of Immokalee Workers website](#).
- Browse the [Fair Food Program website](#). Watch the video The Story Behind Your Food.
Browse the [WSR website](#).
- Watch TedMed: [How Farmworkers are Leading a 21st Century Human Rights Revolution](#)
- Chotiner, I, "Why the Marriage Equality Movement Succeeded," *The Atlantic*, June 10, 2021

Guest Presenter: Gerardo Reyes Chavez, Coalition of Immokalee Workers

Gerardo Reyes Chavez is a senior staff member with the award-winning human rights organization, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW). Mr. Reyes is a farmworker and has worked in the fields since age 11, first as a peasant farmer in Mexico and then in the fields of Florida picking oranges, tomatoes, blueberries, and watermelon. A CIW member since 1999, Mr. Reyes has worked with consumer allies to organize national actions in the Campaign for Fair Food. As part of the implementation of the Fair Food Program, Mr. Reyes conducts workers' rights education with thousands of farmworkers on participating tomato farms. Mr. Reyes speaks regularly about the Fair Food Program at events across the country, such as Yale the Harvard Law School, the Aspen Institute, Labor and Worklife Program Convening on Farm Labor Challenges and the Interfaith Council on Corporate Responsibility's Multi-Stakeholder Roundtable on Ethical Recruitment. The Aspen Institute named him a 2018 Ricardo Salinas Scholar.

Unit 11.5: Digital Organizing

We'll welcome NYU Professor Amanda Alampi who will lead us in a whirlwind review of how to organize effective digital campaigns.

Amanda Alampi is a social media strategist specializing in digital advocacy, developing campaigns to help advance human rights and social change. She currently leads global digital advocacy for Human Rights Watch as their Senior Campaigner. Previously, she

worked at MWWPR as a Vice President in Digital Strategy overseeing a portfolio of public affairs, nonprofit and corporate clients including Voto Latino and the Anti-Defamation League's #StopHateForProfit campaign. Amanda also worked for Amnesty International USA where she oversaw social media, creative and brand for the U.S. Amanda is an alumni of the NYC based firm Sunshine Sachs working with clients like Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Center for Reproductive Rights, Alicia Keys' Keep a Child Alive and Malaria No More. Her digital advocacy work has been featured in outlets like TMZ, the Washington Post, Business Insider, Teen Vogue and the New York Post. Amanda currently teaches at Fordham University and NYU's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, helping to empower the next generation of digital activists. She has a BA and MPA both from NYU.

Unit 12: Concepts of Power and Values

In this unit, we will explore different concepts of power within different organizing models and how community organizing marshal power to effect change. We will investigate how the ethical values embedded in various community organizing models impact both organizing and solutions. What are we organizing for? Is it possible or desirable to be “ideology-free?” What is the relationship between means and ends? Are there any approaches that are off the table? Who gets to architect strategies and solutions and why? How do words and assumptions frame what is possible? Where do campaign opponents fit in a sustainable solution?

- Alinsky, S. “Of Means and Ends” and “A Word About Words,” in *Rules for Radicals*, (Random House, 1971), pp. 24-62.
- Stout, J. Chapter 9, “On the Treatment of Opponents,” in *Blessed Are the Organized*. (Princeton, 2010), pp. 114-124.
- Damico, N. “Turning the Tide Together Against Forced Labor: An Ethical Examination of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers’ WSR Model”, The 14th High-level *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons* conference: Ethical Issues in Preventing and Combatting Human Trafficking, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Class VI: Saturday, December 4, 2021 (2:30-6:00pm)

Unit 13: Communications

In this section we will examine how to frame and make an effective public argument for your campaign. We’ll explore different forms of communication including narrative,

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persuasion, symbols/art, analysis, and interviews as well as the ever-important factors of audience, timing, medium, and landscape. We'll discuss best practices for identifying and developing relationships with journalists, pitching a story, effective press releases, prepping for interviews with media, as well as when and how to correct a story.

Readings

- Explore the framing and language of the Movement for Black Lives, [Defund the Police Campaign](#).
- [We Must Talk About Race to Fix Economic Inequality](#)
- [The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action](#), Audrey Lorde
Peruse the Instagram feed of Artist and Arts Organizer, David Solnit
<https://www.instagram.com/davidsolnit/?hl=en>

Guest presenter: Meghan Cohorst Meghan Cohorst served as the Acting Director of Communications for UNITE/HERE, managing all press and communications for this union that represents 300,000 working people across Canada and the United States, who labor in the hotel, gaming, food service, manufacturing, textile, distribution, laundry, transportation, and airport industries. She was one of the coordinators of the Student Farmworker Alliance in Immokalee, Florida and has worked in graphic design as well as US watermelon fields.

Unit 14: Tapping all your Resources

In this unit we'll explore ways to tap into resources that build institutional and collective support for your campaign. You'll be introduced to the foundation world, how to identify potential funders and how to put your best foot forward. We'll also explore how funders and funds can disrupt organizing and ways for you to keep people most affected in the driver's seat and focused on your community's goals.

Readings

- Spend 10 minutes exploring data about the state of human rights funding on <http://humanrightsfunding.org/>
- "[Funding the Frontlines: The Value of Supporting Grassroots Organizing](#)," Hilal Baykara, Sabanci Foundation, Philanthropy News Digest, August 25, 2016.

- ["The Gentrification of Movements: 4 Ways Funders Can Stop Putting Raisins in the Potato Salad,"](#) Vanessa Daniel, Sept 2018
- Logic Model from the Kellogg Foundation

Watch videos with insights on Participatory Grantmaking:

- Mutisya Leonard, UHAI EASHRI: <http://www.grantcraft.org/videos/insight-onparticipatory-grantmaking-mutisya-leonard-uhai-eashri>
- Diana Samarasan, Disability Rights Fund: <http://www.grantcraft.org/videos/insight-on-participatory-grantmakingdiana-samarasan-disability-rights-fund>
- Kaberi Banerjee-Murthy, Brooklyn Community Foundation: <http://www.grantcraft.org/videos/insight-on-participatory-grantmaking-kaberibanerjee-murthy-brooklyn-commun>

Guest Presenter: Gratiene (Sienna) Baskin. Sienna Baskin is the Director of NEO Philanthropy's Anti-Trafficking fund. She brings extensive senior level work in fighting for the rights of sex workers and survivors of trafficking. Baskin was managing director, and, before that, Equal Justice Works Fellow/staff attorney for the Urban Justice Center's Sex Workers Project. While there she developed mission and strategy to protect the rights of victims of trafficking; acted as chief counsel in legal cases; managed human rights documentation research; and was a principal media spokesperson on the issue. Prior to that she worked on reproductive health and criminal justice issues at the Philadelphia Woman's Center, and she recently conducted research as a U.S. Fulbright Scholar on New Zealand's decriminalization of prostitution. She holds an undergraduate degree from Hampshire College and a law degree from The City University of New York.

Class VII: Saturday, December 18, 2021 (2:30-6:00pm)

Unit 15: Final Project Class Presentations

Each group will develop a community member-led grassroots organizing campaign and/or advocacy plan of their choosing that will offer a clear mission, a narrative, methods of assessment, potential stakeholders, a strategy to achieve their objectives and ultimate goal, and examples of implementation. You will be provided various concrete situations from which each small group will choose. These will be presented

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in class and provide the resource for assessing what has been learned through the course.

As you prepare, you may wish to consider some of the following questions:

- How do community members define the problem(s) they are experiencing?
- What is the process by which you identify, together, the issue around which you will organize to solve to the problem?
- Who are the stakeholders: the constituents directly affected by the issue, the leaders of the campaign, the allies, the potential opposition, the bystanders?
- What additional research was necessary and what did you discover?
- What is the target of the campaign (corporation, government, organization etc.)?
- What are the specific demands of your campaign and how do they forward the mission of your organization?
What is your strategy for changing the behavior of the decision-maker so that your goals are met?
- What are the specific actions that you will take based on this strategy? Please describe in as much detail as possible.
- How will your team carry share leadership responsibilities for the campaign and ongoing involvement of new members?
- What kinds of choices has the organization faced in developing, planning and implementing this campaign? How do members, leaders and any staff of your organization address these choices?
- What kinds of opposition do you anticipate and how did you prepare for it?
- How will you assess the effectiveness of this campaign? What are the different areas that you'll evaluate? (Meeting concrete demands, leadership development, cultivation of allies, sharpening or expanding the mission of your organization, building a public presence, increasing your base etc.)
- Thinking ahead to the successful achievement of your goals, how will the program or practices or policy be implemented? How will accountability to the community be ensured? How can these changes be sustained over the longhaul?

A Limited Bibliography

1. Alinsky, S. **Reveille for Radicals**. New York: Vintage, 1946 (reissued 1989).
2. Alinsky, S. **Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals**, New York: Random House, 1971.
3. Bai, M. **The Argument: Billionaires, Bloggers, and the Battle to Remake Democratic Politics**. New York: The Penguin Press, 2007.
4. Baldwin, J. **No Name in the Street**, London: Michael Joseph, 1972, (republished New York: Vintage, 2013).
5. Barber, W.J. **The Third reconstruction: Moral Mondays, Fusion Politics, and the Rise of a New Justice Movement**, Boston: Beacon Press, 2016.
6. Bobo, K., Kendall, J. and Max, S. **Organizing for Social Change: Midwest Academy Manual for Activists**. Santa Ana: Seven Locks Press, 2001.
7. Branch, T. **Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-1963**. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989.
8. Brown, M. **Building Powerful Community Organizations: A Personal Guide to Creating Groups that Can Solve Problems and Change the World**. Arlington, MA: Long Haul, 2006.
9. Fine, J. **Workers Centers: Organizing Communities at the Edge of the Dream**. Ithaca, New York, 2006.
10. Friere, Paulo, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, **Continuum International Publishing Group**, 1970.
11. Engler, M. and Engler, P. **This is an Uprising: How Nonviolent Revolt is Shaping the Twenty-first Century**. New York: Nation Books, 2016.
12. Gandhi, Mohandas K. **Gandhi on non-violence: selected texts from Mohandas K. Gandhi's non-violence in peace and war**. New York: New Direction Publishing, 1964, 1965 (reprint 2007).
13. Garrow, D. **Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference**. New York: HarperCollins, 1986.
14. Hawken, P. **Blessed Unrest**. New York: Penguin, 2007.
15. Marquis, S. **I am Not a Tractor: How Florida Farmworkers took on the Fast Food Giants and Won**. New York: Cornell Press, 2017.
16. Medoff, P. and Sklar, H. **Streets of Hope: The Fall and Rise of an Urban Neighborhood**. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1994.
17. Minieri, J. and Getsos, P. **Tools for Radical Democracy: How to Organize for Power in Your Community**. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007.
18. Sen, R. **Stir it Up: Lessons in Community Organizing and Advocacy**. San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons, 2003.
19. Shames, S. and Seale, B. **Power to the People: The World of the Black Panthers**. New York: Abrams, 2016.

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- 20. Smock, K. **Democracy in Action: Community Organizing and Urban Change**. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.
- 21. Stout, J. **Blessed Are the Organized**. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.
- 22. Szakos, K. and Szakos, J. **We Make Change: Community Organizers Talk About What They Do and Why**. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2007.
- 23. Welton, N., and Wolf, L. **Global Uprising: Confronting the Tyrannies of the 21st Century: Stories from a New Generation of Activists**. New Society Publishers, 2001.

Annotated Bibliographies

Additional extensive, annotated bibliographies about community organizing are available as library reserves on NYU Classes. See the following:

1. Smock, Kristina. Bibliography
2. Szakos, Kristen. What Organizers Read and Watch; Where Organizers Work
3. Welton, Nina. Resources

4. Brown, Michael. Bibliography and Other Resources

Online Resources

1. www.comm.org: [Articles; queries; discussions about organizing; national job listings](#)
2. www.citylimits.org: [Under-the-radar news items; event announcements; listings for social change jobs, primarily in New York City](#)
3. www.fcyo.org: [see Resources: Occasional Papers Series](#). A series of reports about youth organizing – origins; connections with youth development; regional applications.
4. www.midwestacademy.com and www.ctwo.org: [The Midwest Academy](#) in Chicago and the [Center for Third World Organizing](#) in Oakland – National listings for organizer trainings and social change jobs.