

Hunter College / Introduction to Community Organizing

Course #s: ANTRO 303.50; COMHE 400.50; SOC 235;
WOMENSTUD300.15; URBS 403.95; POLSC 317.06

Spring 2006: Friday 11:10 AM-2:PM

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Course Description

Organizing is overwhelmingly about personal relationships. It is about changing the world and changing how individuals act together Bobo, J. Kendall, S, Max

The purpose of this course is to provide you with an introduction to the field of community organizing. Using the urban environment as our laboratory we will examine organizers, issues, and organizations involved in the practice of community organizing. We will explore the diverse roles, goals and strategies used by community organizers to affect social change. Models of community organizing including mass mobilization, social action, grass roots empowerment, leadership development and advocacy, as well as newer community building approaches are included. These methods will be assessed for effectiveness within the context of the current conservative climate. Special attention will be paid to issues of gender, class, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation in organizing.

The course objectives are as follows:

KNOWLEDGE

1. To build an understanding of the various concepts of community and they're application to community organizing.
2. To recognize the diverse types of goals, roles and strategies in organizing.
3. To appreciate the ways in which differences in values, power and resources impede community organizing and development.

SKILLS

1. To develop the capacity to assess the strengths and weaknesses of geographic (neighborhoods) and functional (interests) communities.
2. To begin to apply models of community organizing to specific social change endeavors.
3. To acquire basic organizing tools and techniques such as running meetings, public speaking, and use of the media.
4. To cultivate and apply the skills of critical analysis and problem solving.

VALUES

1. To appreciate the complexity of / and competence needed for the organizer role.
2. To value citizen, community, client/consumer participation and empowerment.
3. To appreciate the struggles and conflicts inherent in organizing for social and economic justice within a democratic framework.

Course Requirements

1. Class participation (10%) -- Class members are expected to be present and prepared to discuss the days reading assignments. Participation means being on time, taking an active role in class discussions and in group activities! You will be assigned to different work groups during the semester. This will allow for working with different class members and changes in-group dynamics. At the end of the semester, I will provide members of the group with a group evaluation form! You will evaluate your self, each group members' participation and recommend a grade. The evaluations will be factored into your overall participation grade at the end of the semester.

2. Logs of Selected Readings: (15%) --You are expected to do all the readings and come prepared to discuss them in class. At mid-semester, do a critical comparison and analysis (in 4-5 typed pages) of the major themes and learning points of the readings. Focus on the different theories of community organizing, and the major issues for organizers in the field; and their relevance to community organizing theory and practice. **(Minimum 10 readings, one from each Unit, not including Bobo, Kendall & Max Text.)**

3. Meeting analysis (5%) -- Attend a meeting of either a community organization, a local government body, civic association or neighborhood organization (i.e. block association, tenant association, women's group, local community board) concerned with a neighborhood or issue. In 4-5 typed pages, describe the meeting in detail and analyze it. Guidelines will be provided.

4. Group Neighborhood observation, assessment and presentation (40%) --With your group select a neighborhood and take a walk around the geographic area. Using your five senses (and your sixth sense!) begin to understand the neighborhood. **The group is responsible for a 20 min. oral presentation and a 10 page typed paper which answers the following questions about the neighborhood you observed:** What is the community's history? What does it look like, feel like, smell, sound and taste like? Based upon your observations, What are the strengths of the neighborhood? What are the visible problems? Is this a stable area? Is the area in transition, improving, deteriorating? What additional questions have emerged as a result of your observation? What other fact finding and assessment do you feel is needed? And most importantly, what is the potential organizing issues that emerge from the assessment -- needs for programs, services, resources, campaigns to improve some aspect of the community. The group can supplement their submission with photos, drawing, maps, etc. (10 pages of writing, plus artwork).

5. Community organizing volunteer field experience: written and oral presentation (30%) -- This course is designed around the premise that the best way to learn is through experience. As you all know, you are required to volunteer for a **minimum of 20 hours during this semester** with a community organization. The purpose is to experience the real world of organizing through getting to know the organization and providing some

support to it, in exchange for the organization providing you with an experiential learning opportunity. **You will be provided with a list of organizations from which to choose.** You will be expected to negotiate and arrange this field experience on your own. **[STUDENTS MAY ALSO ELECT TO DO AN ADDITIONAL 3 CREDIT INTERNSHIP –SOSCI 397 FOR AN ADDITIONAL 80 HRS. PLUS A BI-WEEKLY SEMINAR.]**

A. During the final weeks of the semester you will be required to do a 5min.oral presentation in class on your experiences (dates to be announced). You are required to submit a final paper (3-4 pgs) which links your 20 field experience with your readings for the semester (as in # 2 above). **[Students who are also doing Sosci 397 (100 hrs) will use this paper as a foundation for a second oral presentation in that seminar.]**

The paper and presentation should answer the following questions:

1. What model or approach to organizing is being used by the organization?
2. What are the strengths/weaknesses of the organization's work?
3. Describe the allies/opposition to its efforts?
4. What roles do the organizers and leaders play?
5. Describe the accomplishments and failures?
6. What lessons have you learned from the experience?

At the conclusion of the volunteer field assignment you will need to get a one page "letter of recommendation" from your field supervisor. This letter serves multiple purposes--it documents your activities, identifies the ways you have assisted the organization, and it provides you with a ready made letter of reference for use in potential employment in the future --- experience is key in the working world! We will provide samples.

Office Hours: I will be available to meet by appointment, Room 1440 East at the Center for Puerto Rican Studies. If there are difficulties in your groups or with your projects, or you just want to chat, I am always available for discussion and consultation.

(I don't bite!). Group issues should be handled early on and are not reasons for not completing the assignments on time.

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Required Texts

The 2 texts for this course are available at the Hunter branch of Barnes and Noble -- under "Soc.235 -- Professor Martell / Mizrahi."

The course packet (PKT) -- A selection of required readings have been copied and bound into a course packet entitled " Introduction to Community Organizing."

The Text (TXT) Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, Steve Max (2001), Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990s, third edition. (California: Seven Locks Press).

Tentative Schedule of Readings Assignments

I. Community Organizing -- History, Goals and Purposes

- T. Mizrahi (1993), "Community Organizers: For A Change," in B. Morgan & J. Palmisano (eds.), Mental Health and Social Work Career Directory, 1st Edition. Detroit, Visible Ink. **(PKT# 1)**
- H. Rubin & I. Rubin (2001), "A Thumbnail Sketch of the History of Community Organizing (Chap. 3) in Community Organizing & Development, 3rd. Ed. (Columbus, OH: Merrill Pub'ing), **(PKT # 2)**
- H. Zinn (1995), "The Unreported Resistance," in A People's History of the United States, 2nd Edition (New York, NY: Harper), **(PKT # 3)**
- G. Delgado (1994), "Roots of the CO Movement," in Beyond the Politics of Place: New Directions in Community Organizing, (Oakland, CA: Applied Research Center), **(PKT #4)**
- Rinku Sen (2003) "Community Organizing: Yesterday and Today." In Stir It Up. Chardon Press pgs. XLIII- LXV **(PKT #5)**

II. Defining and Understanding "Community" in Community Organizing: Places, Spaces, Symbols, Shared Heritage and Sentiments

- Fellin, P. (2001) "Defining Communities." (pgs. 49-69) In The Community and the Social Worker- 3rd Ed. Peacock Press **(PKT # 6)**
- Warren & D. Warren (1977), "Which Neighborhood Are You Talking About?" in The Neighborhood Organizers Handbook, (Southbend, University of Notre Dame Press), **(PKT #7)**
- R. Hester Jr. (January/February 1990), "The Sacred Structure in a Small Town: A Return to Manteo, NC," Small Town, **(PKT # 8)**

III. Defining "Organizing" in Community Organizing: Models, Types, Auspices & Levels

Geographic/Neighborhood-Based Functional/Issue-Based Ideological/Value-Based Constituency/Identity-Based

Handouts:Models of Organizing-Rosenthal & Mizrahi; Fisher

A. Overview and Alternative Models: From the 1960s to Current Times

- K. Bobo, J. Kendall, S. Max (2001), "Organizing Models: The Underlying Structure of Organizations" Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990s, Third edition (California: Seven Locks Press), **Ch. 6 in TXT**.
- B. Checkoway (January, 1995), "Six Strategies of Community Change," in Community Development Journal, Vol 30, No. 1, **(PKT# 9)**
- G. Speeter (1978), "Approaches to Organizing, etc. Power: A Repossession Manual: Organizing Strategies for Citizens, (Amhurst, MA: Center for Organizational and Community Development) **(PKT# 10)**
- Eichler, M. Consensus Organizing—Sharing Power to Gain Power. National Civic Review, Summer/Fall 1995 pg. 256-261.**(PKT # 11)**

B. Case Studies

- A. Dumois (1971), "Organizing A Community Around Health," in Social Policy, (PKT#12)
- C. Poindexter (1999). "Promises in the Plague: Passage of the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resource Emergency Act as a Case Study for Legislative Action. Social Work 46 (1) pp. 63-78 (PKT#13)
- R. LeBaron (2001). "Crumble in the Bronx (on Banana Kelly). City Limits. Dec, pp-20-23,31 (PKT #14)
- C.S. Carter (2000). "Church Burning: Using a Contemporary Issue to Teach Community Organization. Journal of Social Work Education. Winter. pp 79-88 (PKT # 15)

IV. Steps in Developing a Community Organizing Campaign:

Focusing on the External

- K. Bobo, J. Kendall, S. Max (1994), "The Fundamentals of Direct Action Organizing," **Ch. 2 in TXT**; "Choosing an Issue," **Ch. 3 in TXT**; "Developing a Strategy," **Ch. 4 in TXT**; "A Guide to Tactics," **Ch. 5 in TXT**; "Designing Actions," **Ch. 7 in TXT**.
- M.J. Brown. Chap. 10 Organizing pathways to change. In Building Powerful Community Organizations. Pgs. 265-301.
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V. Steps in Building An Organization: Focusing on the Internal membership: recruitment/motivation Leadership: cultivation/development

- K. Bobo, J. Kendall, S. Max (1994), "Recruiting," **Ch. 10 in TXT**; "Developing Leadership," **Ch. 11 in TXT**;
- S. Burghardt (1983), "From Leadership Development to Critical Consciousness," Ch. 5 in The Other Side of Organizing, Shenkman Publishers, (PKT # 16)

VI. Specialized Skills

A. Gathering and Analyzing Information:

The Role of Research, Data Collection and Dissemination as Organizing Tools

- K. Bobo, J. Kendall, S. Max (1994), "Tactical Investigations," **Ch. 19 in TXT**.
- W. Collette (1984), "Research for Organizing," Staples, ed., Roots of Power, NY: Praeger, (PKT #17)
- Rinku Sen (2004) Chapter 6-"Take back the facts." Pgs. 116- 134 (PKT # 18)

B. Organizing and Running Meetings

- K. Bobo, J. Kendall, S. Max (1994), "Holding Accountability Sessions," **Ch. 8 in TXT**;
"Planning and Facilitating Meetings," **Ch. 12 in TXT**.
- E. Schindler-Rainman, R. Lippitt & J. Cole (1988), "Designing Participatory Meetings...etc." (PKT#19)

C. Community Relations, Outreach and Publicity

- K. Bobo, J. Kendall, S. Max (1994), "Being a Great Public Speaker," **Ch. 13 in TXT**;
- "Using the Media," **Ch. 14 in TXT**. "Working with Community Organization Boards," **Ch. 16 in TXT**; "Working with Religious Organizations," **Ch. 17 in TXT**;
- "Working with Local Unions and Central Labor Councils," **Ch. 18 in TXT**.

VII. Allies and Adversaries: Cultivating Support and Minimizing Opposition

A. Coalition Building

- K. Bobo, J. Kendall, S. Max (1994), "Building and Joining Coalitions," **Ch. 9 in TXT**.
- T. Mizrahi & B. Rosenthal.(1992).Managing Tensions in Building Coalitions. adapted from T. Mizrahi & J. Morrison, Eds. Community Organization and Social Administration.Haworth Press. **(PKT# 20)**
- D.Z. Fleischer & F. Zames (1998). "Becoming More Political (in Disability Rights): Coalescing with other Movements. Social Policy. Spring, pp 52-55. **(PKT# 21)**

B. Handling Conflicts and Opposition

- L. Staples (1984), "The Seven D's of Defense," in *Roots of Power* (NY: Praeger), **(PKT #22)**
 - B. Lakey, G. Lakey, R. Napier, J. Robinson (1995), "Dealing With Conflict" in Grassroots and Non-Profit Leadership , Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, **(PKT # 23)**
 - D. Jones (1979), "Not in My Community: The Neighborhood Movement and Institutionalized Racism," Social Policy, 13 (2), pp. 44-46 **(PKT # 24)**
- * M. Reisch & F. Rivera. Ethical and Racial Conflicts in Urban-based Action Research. Journal of Community Practice, 6 (2), 1999, PP.49-62 **(PKT # 25)**

XIII. Race, Class, Age, Gender and Sexual Orientation Issues in Organizing-

A. Concepts

- S. Burghardt (1982), "Democracy and Equality: Fighting Bias Inside the Organization" in Organizing for Community Action (Newbury Park, CA: Sage), **(PKT #26)**
- R. Severson (June/July 1995), "How to Break the Cycle of Racism," The Neighborhood Works (Chicago, IL: Center for Neighborhood Technology), **(PKT # 27)**
- J. Anner (June/July 1995), "Working Together: Building Successful Multicultural Movements," The Neighborhood Works (Chicago, IL: Center for Neighborhood Technology), **(PKT# 28)**
- Rinku Sen, Chapter 2: "Organizing New Constituencies," pg. 24-47 **(PKT # 29)**
- B. Joseph, et. al (1989), "A Framework for Feminist Organizing: Values, Goals, Methods, Strategies and Roles. Education Center for Community Organizing. **(PKT #30)**

B. Case Examples

- M.M. Lazzari, HR.Ford, & KJ Haughey. (1996). "Building Latina Women's Leadership" Social Work, 41, pp. 197-205. (PKT # 31)
- A. Hsiao, "The Hidden History of Asian American Activism in New York City. Social Policy Summer 1998 (Pgs.23-30) (PKT# 32)
- D. Brown "Senior Power" in Social Policy, Spring 1998, pg. 4345 (PKT # 33)
- G. Rotello, "Gay & Lesbian Rights." Social Policy Spring 1998, pgs 56-59 (PKT # 34)

IX. Focusing on the Organizer: Thriving for the Long Haul

- K. Bobo, J. Kendall, S. Max (1994), "Working for the Long Haul," in **TXT.Ch. 25**
- S. Burghardt (1982), "Know Yourself: A Key to Better Organizing," in Organizing for Community Action (Newbury Park, CA: Sage), (PKT #35)
- B. Lakey et al. "Facing Yourself for the Journey: How to Avoid Burn-Out and Thrive While Working to Change the World. Chapter 15. In Grassroots and Non-Profit Leadership. Pp. 195-208. (PKT # 36)

X. Contemporary Organizing Issues

- J.L. Flynn & B. Checkoway. (1998). Young People as Competent Community Builders: A Challenge to Social Work. Social Work, 43, pp. 335-345. (PKT # 37)
- R.G. Blundo et al., "Internet and Demystifying Power Differentials: A few Women on Line and the Housing Authority. Journal of Community Practice, 6(2) 1999, 11-26 (PKT # 38)
- I. Wilhelm (2001). "Faith Accompli" City Limits. Sept/Oct., pp. 21-25. (PKT # 39)
- L. Schwartzol. "Making Change: Good Neighborhood Policies. City Limits April 2002 (PKT # 40)
- H. Russ "Making Change: The Silence of the Lambasters—After 9/11/) City Limits. March 2002 (PKT # 41)
- L. Featherstone "The Student Movement Comes of Age." The Nation. Oct. 16, 2000. (PKT # 42)
- C. Feldman & D. Nathan, "The Politics of Paint." City Limits. Sept./Oct. 2003 pg. 16-21,40. (PKT # 43)
- R. Neuwirth. "The Stealth War" (rent control). City Limits. June, 2003, pg. 19-23. (PKT # 44)
- A. Appelbaum. "Beyond the Boards (public schools). City Limits. March 2003, pgs. 11-14. (PKT # 45)