

SW 395K SOCIAL CHANGE AND COMMUNITY PRACTICE
Spring 2011/Tuesday 11:30 to 2:30 SSW 2.140
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on models of community practice and engagement strategies to promote community development and social change. The course will focus on understanding the politics and systems of social change, blending methods of community practice and social innovation, and designing effective strategies for change. The course will take up the challenges and mutual benefit of good business and good community as a case in point for exploring and understanding the dynamics of social change and effective engagement. In particular, the course will explore the ways in which Social Work's understanding and engagement with human systems and relationships can be coupled with business models and methods to promote the overall health and vitality of a community

The primary course assignment will enable students to create a "hands on" community-based project in which they will identify a local social issue they want to impact and design a strategy for effectively engaging that issue.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Understand models of social change, social justice, human systems, and resilience.
2. Demonstrate a knowledge base of values and ethical issues in social work community practice and social change.
3. Understand models of effective community practice with an emphasis on assessment, innovation, intervention, and evaluation.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the social work roles involved in promoting social change, i.e. designer/innovator, organizer, policy analyst, mediator, and advocate.
5. Know and demonstrate community organization skills i.e., entering the community, assessment of power structure, coalition-building, social innovation.
6. Understand the relationship between power, culture, diversity, sustainability, and the assets/strengths in designing effective social change strategies.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Homan, Mark (2007). *Promoting Community Change: Making it Happen in the Real World*, 4th Ed., Brooks Cole.
- Pascale, Richard, et.al. (2010). *The Power of Positive Deviance: How Unlikely Innovators Solve the World's Toughest Problems*, Harvard Business Press.
- Yunus, Muhammad (2010). *Building Social Business: The New Kind of Capitalism that*

Serves Humanity's Most Pressing Needs, Public Affairs Books.

Other Readings/Materials will be posted to Blackboard

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation/Exercises 20%: Because this is a course in leadership and influence, the classroom will itself become a “living laboratory” for exploring and engaging community change issues. Throughout the course of the semester, students will participate in a range of exercises designed to build their capabilities and help them develop an operational theory of social change.

Mapping and Scenario 20%: Students will map the systemic factors out of which the community challenge they want to engage emerges. They will also construct at least two different scenarios for how the challenge could develop and change over time.

Theory of Change 20%: Given what they’ve learned in the mapping and scenarios exercises, students will develop their own theory of change for the particular issue they want to engage.

Community Change Project 40%: For this capstone assignment, students will apply the theories, models, and practices they have learned during the course in order to create a plan for change for a community issue they currently work with or would like to work with in the future. In addition to the actual plan students will produce collateral materials (e.g., a detailed strategic plan, a workbook, a website) as well as a rationale explaining how and why they designed the session.

Social Change and Community Practice Schedule of Topics

1/18	Course Introduction	
1/25	Defining a Starting Point	(Starting Point Exercise)
2/1	Systems and Interconnections	(Meadows—“Leverage Points”; “Building Networks”)
2/8	Mapping and Scenarios	
2/15	Positive Deviance	(Pascale)
2/22	Positive Deviance	(Maps/Scenarios Due)
3/1	Theories of Social Change	(Homan Chapter 1 and 2)
3/8	Social Change cont	(Kahane—“Kahane in Boston”)
3/15	Spring Break	
3/22	Social Change Theory Presentations	(Social Change Theories Due)
3/29	Building a Plan	(Yunus/Homan Part II)
4/5	Business Models	(“Business Planning”; “Business Model Generation”)
4/12	Building Resources	(“Ten Non-Profit Funding Models”)

4/19 Spreading Your Idea
4/26 TBD
5/3 Final Presentations

CLASS POLICIES

1. Students are expected to attend class weekly and on time as discussed above. Students who are absent after the break will be considered absent for the entire class, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.
2. Except under extremely unusual circumstances, assignments must be completed on the due date and turned in at the beginning of class on the due date.
3. If students are concerned about their class performance, the instructor is more than willing to work with students to help them improve either their understanding of group theory, use of self in understanding group process, or becoming more comfortable in group interaction. The instructor can meet with students privately either before or after class, or by appointment.
4. Student feedback is welcome. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback either in class, during office hours, and by appointment if they desire.
5. Small groups are expected to resolve challenges within their group context. The instructor is willing to serve as a consultant if groups have worked diligently to resolve their difference but have been unsuccessful.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Professional Conduct in Class

The professor expects students to act like professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

As part of professional courtesy in class, cell phones, laptops (unless otherwise indicated due to a learning disability), text-messaging, etc. will not allowed during class hours, other than at the designated break time.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>).

Documented Disability Statement

Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

Religious Holidays

By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

Safety

As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.