

**Organizing for Social Change 37:575:359:01/38:578:613:01
Fall 2021**

Thursdays 12:55-3:55 pm
Room 133 Labor Education Center
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Office hours: flexible, by appointment

Course Overview

Organizing is how people come together to pursue their collective interests. Organizing is moving people into Relationship, Reflection, Story-telling, Leadership, Team-Building and Action in order to:

- Build their collective power
- Take greater control over their own lives
- Achieve shared goals

It is a life skill that students will need no matter the field they end up pursuing or the community in which they end up settling.

How do people come together, build a base, work together effectively, develop a strategy and take action to win on the issues they care about? What is power, how does power operate and how do organizations build it and leverage it to win?

The curriculum and examples are drawn from my twenty-plus years working as an organizer and trainer before entering academia and from classics of organizing, political science, sociology, urban studies, economics, public policy and anthropology that shed light on key ideas.

The course will cover the building blocks of organizing including:

- Recruitment and Building the Organization
- Forms of Power
- Public Narrative
- Strategic Research and Power Analysis
- Strategy
- Effective Actions and Turnout
- Building Teams
- Coaching

We will read both practical and scholarly work on these topics and explore them through class discussions, exercises, and roleplays.

The Learning Objectives of this course are to:

- 1) Examine critically the theory and practice of organizing
- 2) Learn a set of concrete organizing skills

- 3) Analyze the role of organizing as an empowerment strategy in disadvantaged and marginalized communities and think about its relationship to broader movements for social change
- 4) Engage in dialogue and debate around issues of power, inequality, organizing, and politics
- 5) Understand theoretical perspectives on concepts related to organizing drawn from political science, sociology, history, anthropology, urban planning, and political theory
- 6) Write an essay that puts forward an argument

Course Requirements:

Weekly Reaction Papers:

In order to help prepare for discussions during class, students must submit one page of written reactions to the readings and class discussions each week through the Canvas assignment list.

- Homework cannot be handwritten.
- You have the option to skip TWO weeks of your choice.
- These papers must be handed in on the day they are due (**AKA the day prior to that week's class**).
- More than a day late, ten points off
- More than two weeks late will not be accepted

Organizing Practicum:

In order to receive full credit for this course (4 credits), you can choose a *campus organizing organization* or *off-campus organizing organization* and actively participate in it over the course of the semester including planning, organizing and participating in at least one action or conducting ten one-on-one meetings and building a functional team in an organization. Teaching Assistants are available to help with matching students to organizations. Students must choose an organization and notify me of their choice by September 23rd, and begin working with the group from that week on. You will submit one paragraph per week along with your homework, beginning September 30th, about your organizational experiences.

If you plan to sign up for the 4th credit, you must get approval from me and then e-mail Amy Marchitto, amarchitto@work.rutgers.edu at the LSER Credit Office to register for it.

*Please note: I strongly support doing community service but for the purposes of the class, the practicum **must** be with an organization engaged in organizing. Specific groups that are partnering with the class include NJ Organizing Project, New Labor, USAS Ridgewood for Black Liberation, Coalition to Save Lincoln Annex, Make the Road NJ, and the Newark Water Coalition.*

Other examples include AFT/AAUP, URA, Rutgers One Coalition, Cosecha, Take Back the Tap, Food and Water Watch, Planned Parenthood, Work Environment Council, Unity Square, Black Lives Matter, New Jersey Communities United, Wind of the Spirit, New Jersey Working Families, New Jersey Citizen Action, CWA, NJ AFL-CIO, other gender, racial, environmental and social justice organizations.

Essays: Students will write two short essays based upon their reflections on the main issues and themes that emerged in the readings, lectures, role plays and class discussions. Please remember

that you MUST substantively refer to **several** different class readings pertaining to the question (this means you cannot just mention the article, you must engage with it).

Essay #1: What is power? Where does it come from? What is the relationship between power and social change?

DUE: October 14th, 2021

Essay #2: What is organizing? What are the most essential elements of building an organization? What is the difference between organizing and mobilizing? What is the relationship between organizing and social change?

DUE: December 2nd, 2021

Group Assignment

Strategy Chart: Over the course of the second half of the semester, student groups of 5 students per group will collectively choose an issue and then meet weekly to work on each column of the strategy chart. Students will need to work on the chart and **conduct research on the issue and the components of the chart outside of class and present a power point of a full strategy chart, along with a timeline** in lieu of a final exam. To ensure that all group participants are contributing, students will be asked to grade their peers.

DUE: Draft: Goals, Organizational Considerations, Preliminary Research List: October 21st, 2021

DUE: Draft: Allies, Constituents and Opponents and Actual Research: November 4th, 2021

DUE: Draft: Targets, Tactics and Message: November 18th, 2021

FINAL FULL STRATEGY CHART AND TIMELINE DUE: December 9th, 2021

Attendance: Class meets only once a week and attendance is mandatory. You should have no unexcused absences. **After the second unexcused absence, you will be marked down one letter grade per unexcused absence.** This means that if you are at a B+ you would receive a B. **You must also arrive at class on time.** Students arriving more than ten minutes late will be penalized.

One-on-Ones and Class Discussions:

- The richness of our larger conversations about the reading will be totally dependent upon having done the reading ahead of time and bringing thoughts and ideas to the larger discussion. I will be keeping track of who is participating.
- Each week at the start of class, students will engage in a one-on-one conversation with each other.
- Most weeks students will also meet in small groups to plan role plays and exercises, discuss the reading assignments or work on strategy development. You must pull your weight in the group.

Readings

1. All of the required articles are available on the web through Canvas. Go to <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/>

2. Enter your Rutgers ID and password in the upper right corner
3. Click on the tab that says Courses, then 2021SP- ORGANZ FOR SOC CHNG 37:575:359:01
4. Click on “modules” at the left
5. Scroll down to this week’s module and click “Week X: To Do” for links to that modules readings

Click on the folder for the week you want, then the file you want to download. Many of the readings are in Adobe Acrobat format. If your computer doesn’t have it, you can download the reader for free at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

Grading

Reaction Papers	50%
Essay One	20%
Essay Two	20%
Group Assignment	10%

Week 1: September 2, 2021

***See if you can download and read prior to the first class:

- Barack Obama. 1990. "[Why organize? Problems and promise in the inner city.](#)" In Peg Knoepfle (ed.). *After Alinsky: Community Organizing in Illinois*. Springfield, IL: Illinois Issues, University of Illinois at Springfield.
- Isabel Wilkerson, “When Will the North Face its Racism?” NY Times, Jan. 10, 2015. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/11/opinion/sunday/when-will-the-north-face-its-racism.html>
- Ben Austen “The Death and Life of Chicago” NYTimes, May 29, 2013 http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/02/magazine/how-chicagos-housing-crisis-ignited-a-new-form-of-activism.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1&

Introduction to Organizing: This class will begin by asking students to think about their own beliefs and passions. It will go on to provide students with an understanding of what organizing is and isn’t.

Week 2: September 9, 2021

Relations of Power: What is power? The next two classes will provide students with an understanding of the nature of power and the use and sources of power in organizing for social change.

Readings for Week 2:

- Saul Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals*, Chapter One: What is a Radical? 3-23
- Michael Gecan, *Going Public*: Preface: Why Organize? xi-xix Introduction: 1-16
- Kim Bobo, Kendall and Max *Organizing for Social Change*: 6-13
- Rinku Sen, *Stirring it Up* Introduction: Community Organizing-Yesterday and Today
- Keanga Yamahatta-Taylor, How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective, pp. 9-14,61-64

Choose One

- Yvonne Bynoe, Still We Rise: Student Activism on a Global Scale, in *Stand and Deliver: Political Activism, Leadership, and Hip Hop Culture*, 133-144
- Jelani Cobb, The Matter of Black Lives: A New Kind of Movement Found Its Moment, What Will It's Future Be? March 14, 2016 *New Yorker*
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/03/14/where-is-black-lives-matter-headed>

Optional additional reading on these topics:

- Gary Delgado, *Organizing the Movement* Chapter Two: The Sixties Movements: Roots of Community Organization 13-38

Week 3: September 16, 2021

Organizing Practicum Choice due February 4th

Relations of Power, continued

Readings for Week 3:

- John Gaventa: *Power and Powerlessness*, Power and Participation 1-32
 - Cultural Hegemony, Beautiful Trouble, 222-223
 - Ed Chambers, *Roots for Radicals: Organizing for Power, Action and Justice* pp. 27-31
- Choose One:**
- Hahrie Han, Elizabeth McKenna, Michelle Oyakawa, *Prisms of the People*, pp. 69-83
 - Jennifer Jihye Chun, *Organizing at the Margins: the Symbolic Politics of Labor in South Korea and the United States*, pp. 13-19
 - Zeynep Tufekci, *Twitter and Tear Gas*, Signaling Power and Signaling to Power, 189-222

Optional additional readings on power:

- Richard Healey and Sandra Hinson:
http://www.strategicpractice.org/system/files/power_and_social_change.pdf
- Lawrence Goodwyn *The Populist Moment*, Introduction
<https://ratical.org/corporations/PMSHAGIntro.html>
- E.E. Schattschneider, *The Semi-Sovereign People*, Chapter One.
- Bernard Loomer "Two Conceptions of Power" *Process Studies*, pp. 5-32, Vol. 6, Number 1, Spring 1976.
- Martin Gilens and Benjamin I. Page "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens" *Perspectives on Politics*, September, 2014, Vol 12/No. 3.
- Peter Dreier (2003) The Future of Community Reinvestment: Challenges and Opportunities in a Changing Environment, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 69:4, 341-353, DOI: 10.1080/01944360308976323
- Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, "Rulemaking, Rulebreaking and Power" 1-44.

Week 4: September 23, 2021

Strategy and Designing Campaigns: The essence of effective organizing is strategy and planning campaigns that accurately identify and concentrate power on specific targets for the achievement of specific goals. This class will lay out a key tool from the Midwest Academy called the Strategy Chart which will form the basis for the semester-long group assignment.

Brief training and Role Play on How to Run A Meeting

Readings for week 4: 136

- Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years: 1954-1963*, Chapter Five: The Montgomery Bus Boycott 120-196
- Dara T. Mathis, “King’s Message of Nonviolence has been distorted”
- Mark Engler and Paul Engler, *The Strategic Turn*, pp 1-27

Additional reading:

- Doug McAdam *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*, pp. 125-142.
- Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change*, chapters 3, 6 and 7
- Rachel Meyer and Janice Fine “Grassroots Citizenship at Multiple Scales: Rethinking Immigrant Civic Participation” *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, December 2017, Volume 30, Issue 4, pp 323–348.
- Nell Irvin Painter, “Mother of the Movement” *NYT Book Review*, March 31, 2013.
- November 30, 2012 “Young Immigrants Say It’s Obama’s Time to Act”
Julia Preston,
http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/p/julia_preston/index.ht
- [Michael Specter “How Act Up Changed America” a book review of *Let the Record Show...* by Sarah Schulman](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/06/14/how-act-up-changed-america)
<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/06/14/how-act-up-changed-america>

Handouts:

- Bobo, Kendall and Max, *Organizing for Social Change* “Developing a Strategy” 20-34, Fine Revised Strategy Chart and Blank strategy charts
- Bobo, Kendall and Max, “Planning and Running Meetings” 95-102

Week 5 September 30, 2021

More on Campaign Strategy Development: In this class we will further explore strategy. Students will also choose the issue they will develop into a full-blown strategy chart.

Movements and Organizations: What is the difference between movements and organizations and how should we think about the relationships between them?

Special guest: Erica Smiley, Executive Director of Jobs with Justice

Readings for Week Five:

- Rinku Sen, Picking the Good Fight, in *Stirring It Up*, 48-78
- Rinku Sen “Movement Moments” <http://www.colorlines.com/articles/occupying-organizing-and-movements-demand-both>
- Alicia Garza “The Meaning of Movement” in *The Purpose of Power: How We Come Together When We Fall Apart* pp. 141-148
- Engler and Engler, Structure and Movement in *This is an Uprising*, 31-56
- Marshall Ganz, *Why David Sometimes Wins*, Chapter One, Introduction: How David Beat Goliath 3-21

Additional Reading:

- Andrew Boyd and Joshua Kahn Russell, “Action Logic” pp 208-209 *Beautiful Trouble*
- John Harwood, “A Sea Change in Less Than 50 Years As Gay Rights Gained Momentum” NYT March 26, 2013, A16.

Handout: Campaign Strategy Exercise: Sludge Incinerators in Providence, Rhode Island

Week 6: October 7, 2021

Strategy Continued: Tactics and Actions, Organizer’s Math

This session will instruct students in the basics of preparing for (including doing systematic turnout), executing and evaluating actions.

Action Role Play

Group Work on Goals, Organizational Considerations and Research Needs column of the strategy chart

Reading for week 6:

- Michal Gecan, *Going Public*, The Habit of Action, 49-99
- Jane McAlevey, *No Shortcuts*, Introduction, 1-22
- Alicia Garza, *The Purpose of Power* No Base, No Movement, 212-218

Choose One

- Bobo, Kendall and Max: Designing Actions, 34-40, 48-54, 56-69
- Show, Don’t Tell, *Beautiful Trouble*, 174-175
- Put Your Target in a Decision Dilemma, *Beautiful Trouble*, 166-167

Week 7: October 14, 2021

FIRST ESSAY DUE

Actions and the Act-Recruit-Train Cycle

Guests:

Amanda Devecka-Rinear, New Jersey Organizing Project

Readings for week 7:

Choose 2:

- Alicia Garza Chapters 6&7 “Trayvon, Obama and the Birth of Black Lives Matter” and “Rebellion and Resistance” in *The Purpose of Power* 95-137
- Cristina Jimenez and Peter Dreier, “How Undocumented Youth Moved the Immigrant Rights Movement” Gettysburg Case Study, Spring 2015

Additional Reading:

- Janice Fine, *Community Unions: Beyond the Politics of Particularism*, “Climbing Jacob’s Ladder: Solidarity and Baltimore” pp. 201-247
- David Karpf, *Analytic Activism: Digital Listening and the New Political Strategy*, “The Organizational Logic of Petition Platforms” 59-92

- Douglas Rushkoff, “Removing Humans from the Equation”, *Throwing Rocks at the Google Bus*, pp. 13-44

Week 8: October 21, 2021

Understanding People is Key to Organizing People

Emotional Intelligence

Hand Model of the Brain

Triggers

Reappraisal

****Coaching*

DUE: Group Work on Goals, Organizational Considerations and Research Needs column of the strategy chart

Readings for Week 8 (choose three):

- Alicia Garza, “Imposter Syndrome and the Patriarchy” in *The Purpose of Power* 196-211
- JM Smucker, “Life of the Oppositional Group”, *Hegemony How-To*, 46-62
- Zeynep Tufekci, *Twitter and Tear Gas*, Movement Cultures. 83-112
- Sanford F. Schram, “Middle-Class Melancholia” *The Return of Ordinary Capitalism: Neoliberalism, Precarity, Occupy*, 32-44
- Francesca Polletta and James M. Jasper “Collective Identity and Social Movements” *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 27 (2001), pp. 283-305.
- Jane McAlevey, “What #MeToo Can Teach the Labor Movement”
- <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2017/12/28/what-metoo-can-teach-labor-movement>
- Ed Chambers, *Roots for Radicals*, “The World As It Is and the World As It Should Be” 21-43

Self-care:

- <https://twitter.com/randallito/status/1397675715542192130>
- “Pace Yourself”, in *Beautiful Trouble*, 158-159
- Sustainability Documents from Selah/Jewish Funds for Justice including:
 - Monthly Tool: Personal Ecology
 - Energy and Wellness Index Parts 1 and 2
 - Time Management Matrix
 - Urgency Index

Week 9: October 28, 2021

Building the Organization: The essence of all effective organizing is recruitment, leadership development, having clear roles on teams and coaching. Drawing upon ideas and exercises from Northeast Action, the IAF, Marshall Ganz, Momentum, PowerLabs and others, the next four classes will focus on the analyses, strategic approaches and concrete skills necessary to recruiting participants to an organization and involving them in building and leading it.

Guest presenter: Mike Gecan, Co-Director of the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) and author, *Going Public*

Handout: "Effective Organizing for Congregational Renewal" Mike Gecan, Industrial Areas Foundation

Group Work on: Constituents, Allies and Opponents and Actual Research

Readings for Week 9

- Michael Gecan, *Going Public*: Part I. The Habit of Relating: 19-32, 33-46 and
- Hahrie Han, Chapter 3: "Choosing Strategies for Building Power" *How Organizations Develop Activists*, 62-88
- Robert Cialdini, *Harnessing the Science of Persuasion*, 2-9
- Ziad Munson, "How People Become Pro-Life Activists"
<https://scholars.org/contribution/how-people-become-pro-life-activists>
- Climate Advocacy Lab: 9 Evidence-Based Insights for Action-taking

Week 10: November 4, 2021

Due: Constituents, Allies and Opponents and Actual Research

Building the Organization continued

Readings for Week 10:

- Mike Gecan, *Going Public* Part III. The Habit of Organization 129-166

Choose One

- Janice Fine, Jill Hurst and Allison Porter "Solving for Growth" 1-15
- Janice Fine, "Is it Important for Members to Pay Dues?"
- Gordon Whitman, *Stand Up! Team, Finding a Home Base in a Movement for Change* pp. 83-108
- Han, Chapter Five: Mobilizing, 123-151

Additional Optional Reading:

- James M. Jasper, *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography and Creativity in Social Movements*, University of Chicago Press, 1997, pp. 69-99.
- Debra C. Minkoff, "Bending with the Wind: Strategic Change and Adaptation by Women's and Racial Minority Organizations," *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 104, No. 6 (May 1999) pp. 1666-1703.
- Mark Leach and Laurie Mazur, "Creating Culture: The Promising Practices of Successful Movement Networks" *The Nonprofit Quarterly*, Fall/Winter 2013.

Week 11: November 11, 2021

Building the Organization continued

Relational Organizing and Telling Our Stories

Rohit Gawande: Leading Change Network

Group Work on: Targets, Tactics and Message

Readings for Week 11:

- Malcolm Gladwell "Six Degrees of Lois Weisberg" *the New Yorker* Jan. 11, 1999 52-63
- Marshall Ganz, "The Power of Story in Social Movements", *American Sociological Association Annual Meeting*, 2001, 16 pp.
- Marshall Ganz and the New Organizing Institute, "Creating Shared Story: Story of Self," "Story of Us" and "Story of Now".

- Charles M. Payne “Give Light and the People Will Find a Way: The Roots of an Organizing Tradition” 67-102 in *I’ve Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*, University of California Press.

Week 12: November 18, 2021

Due: Group Work on Targets, Tactics and Message

Circles of Commitment, Leadership Pathways, Systems and Structures

Guest presenter: Vera Parra

GROUP WORK ON TARGETS, TACTICS AND MESSAGE

Readings for Week 12 (choose four)

- <https://powerlabs.io/people-powered-campaign-training/how-cosecha-uses-facebook-messenger-to-recruit-and-mobilize-new-supporters>
- <https://powerlabs.io/online-to-offline-mobilization-with-thais-marques/>
- https://courses.socialmovementtechnologies.org/p/twitter-why-every-campaigner-should-use-it?link_id=6&can_id=45097ce7f4e408692c2cb47d7eed4be1&source=email-smt-is-hiring-full-time-part-time-freelance-all-remote-5&email_referrer=email_822887&email_subject=free-digital-campaigning-resources-trainings
- The Cellular Church, How Rick Warren’s Congregation Grew Malcolm Gladwell, September 2005
- Bobo, Kendall and Max: *Organizing for Social Change*, Chapter 20 “Tactical Investigations” 162-192 (read the first ten pages and skim the rest)
- Peter Dreier, unpublished article, “When Is Business Bluffing? Progressives’ Dilemma Over Capital Mobility”
- Arnie Graf, "Cops vs. EDF" Lessons Learned: Stories from a Lifetime of Organizing, 40-76
- Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson, "Business Power and Social Policy: Employers and the Formation of the American Welfare State" pp 277-28
- Naomi Klein, “The Right is Right” *This Changes Everything*, pp 32-63
- Narrative Power Analysis, *Beautiful Trouble*, 244-245

Additional optional reading:

- David Vogel, “Why Businessmen Distrust Their State: The Political Consciousness of American Corporate Executives” *British Journal of Political Science*, 1978 pp. 45-78.
- Colin Gordon “Why No Corporatism in the United States? Business Disorganization and its Consequences” *Business and Economic History*, Volume 27, no. 1, Fall 1998.
- Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, “Who Passes Business’s ‘Model Bills’? Policy Capacity and Corporate Influence in US State Politics” *Perspectives on Politics*, September 2014, Vol. 12, No. 3.

NO CLASS ON THURSDAY NOVEMBER 25TH THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 13: December 2, 2021

Second Essay Due

Building Teams in Organizing

Readings for Week 13:

- McKenna and Han, *Groundbreakers*, Creating a Structure to Share Responsibility: Neighborhood Teams, 130-152
- Team Effectiveness Discussion Guide

<https://rework.withgoogle.com/guides/understanding-team-effectiveness/steps/introduction/>
<https://rework.withgoogle.com/guides/understanding-team-effectiveness/steps/identify-dynamics-of-effective-teams/>

<https://6teamconditions.com/6-team-conditions/>

<https://6teamconditions.com/bibliography/the-team-diagnostic-survey-and-the-60-30-10-rule-for-coaching-teams/>

<https://powerlabs.io/sunrise-movement-volunteer-teams>

Why Teams Don't Work, An Interview with J. Richard Hackman

Week 14: December 9, 2021

Strategy Chart presentations