NONPROFITS AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION  
RPAD 616 – FALL 2015 

Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, University at Albany 
Department of Public Administration and Policy

Professor Jennifer E. Dodge

Class Location: Husted 013  
Class Time: Wednesday 5:45-8:35 pm  
Office Hours: Wednesday 2:00-3:00 pm and by appointment  
Office location: Milne Hall 308  
Email: jdodge@albany.edu  
Office phone: 442-5274

Course Description
This course addresses the role of nonprofits organizations in creating social change in a democracy. The course will focus on structures, strategies and tactics that nonprofit organizations can and do use to make change at individual, policy, and societal levels. Theoretical and case study readings focus on the challenges, paradoxes and successes of a variety of social change initiatives. A central organizing concept for this class is that creating social change is a challenging, long-term project, and that organizations trying to create social change must engage in a different kind of efficiency that has to do with what I call “doing double duty.” Doing double duty means making the most of one’s limited resources by working simultaneously toward multiple goals. This organizing concept will inform discussions of strategy, tactics, and goals of social change.

While this class will focus on nonprofit organizations, a central aim is to provide students who work or plan to work in nonprofits, government agencies or any other organization that has a public purpose with the opportunity to learn tools of social change. Through class discussions and exercises, a field mapping project that includes an organizational assessment, students will learn to apply these tools in diverse institutional settings and policy domains. The field mapping and organizational assessments provides students with opportunities to interact directly with nonprofit organizations in the Capital District, and apply theoretical ideas to real-world cases.

Course objectives: By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Analyze and assess opportunities for improving the effectiveness of social change organizations along these dimensions: mission, organizational strategy, and organizational structure  
2. Examine and critique the tactics and strategies that nonprofit organizations employ to pursue social change goals  
3. Analyze and describe social problems from a social justice perspective that acknowledges the efficacy of affected individuals and populations, and exposes root causes of the issue  
4. Apply a social justice approach to nonprofit work by learning how to:  
   a. Communicate social change efforts  
   b. Marshal resources to affect change  
   c. Identify ways of achieving impacts beyond specific organizational goals  
5. Identify how scarce resources can be most effectively used to meet multiple goals simultaneously
Text Books: You may purchase required books through Mary Jane books at 215 Western Avenue.

Required:

For doctoral students

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard at https://blackboard.albany.edu/. Use the same login and password required for MyUAlbany.

Assignments **Note: assignments for doctoral students are listed below.**

Commentaries
To practice applying course concepts to real world cases, students are required to submit short commentaries for designed classes that relate to the topic of the day. The assignment for each class is listed on the syllabus. Importantly, the commentaries should not be summaries of the reading. Instead they are opportunities to engage the reading to reflect on the challenges and opportunities of social change organizations work. Students should be prepared to share their commentaries in class each week. As a class, we will work together to discuss them for the purposes of developing your skills in analyzing and critiquing social change efforts.

- Assignments should be no more than 1 page in length, unless otherwise specified.
- Write all commentaries in complete sentences and paragraphs, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, Times New Roman 12 point font, and number the pages. Do not use cover pages.
- Submit all commentaries electronically on blackboard the day before class at 2pm on the designated date and bring a copy to class to discuss (electronic versions are fine). I will not accept late commentaries.
**Mapping the Nonprofit Sector in Albany**

To assess your understanding of how social change organizations operate within a broader field, students will work in teams of 3-5 students to map the nonprofit/third sector in Albany (or the Capital District) as it relates to one issue area. Each team will choose the issue area in consultation with Professor Dodge (e.g., poverty reduction or homelessness, etc.). For the purposes of this assignment, the field map may include organizations not formally incorporated as nonprofits, such as informal community groups. Part I of the field map will include a list of organizations in the field and their basic features. Part II of the field map will include assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the field for advancing social justice goals. Parts III and IV will more closely assess a single organization within the field through an organizational assessment. Each assignment requires students to use course materials to define and analyze social change efforts. Detailed instructions for each assignment will be distributed in class and posted on blackboard several weeks before the assignment is due.

- Submit assignments electronically on blackboard at 11:59pm on the designated date. Upload only one assignment on a designated team member’s blackboard page.
- Written text should be no longer than 5 pages in length.
- You may provide tables and figures to support your arguments; place them at the end of the paper. Bibliographies, tables and figures do not count towards page length.
- Write all assessments in complete sentences and paragraphs, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, Times New Roman 12 point font, and number the pages. Do not use cover pages. **I will return essays that do not meet these guidelines to be rewritten, and the late penalty will apply (see grading below).**
- All sources should be in MLA citation style. For guidelines on Citations and Sources see Appendix A.

To improve the quality of your work, the team will submit for feedback a one-page outline of the field map one week before each is due. Submit your outline electronically via blackboard, do not email me. I will provide you with feedback within two days, via Blackboard. **I will not accept late submissions of outlines.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date of Outline</th>
<th>Due Date of Final Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Map Part I</td>
<td>September 8 at 2pm</td>
<td>September 18 at 11:59 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Map Part II</td>
<td>October 6 at 2pm</td>
<td>October 16 at 11:59 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Map Part III</td>
<td>November 3 at 2pm</td>
<td>November 13 at 11:59 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Map Part IV</td>
<td>December 1 at 2pm</td>
<td>December 11 at 11:59 pm</td>
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Assignments for doctoral students

Doctoral students will be expected to read the materials for each class and come prepared to participate in class discussion.

Literature Reviews

In lieu of the above assignments, doctoral students will be expected to write four literature reviews related to four topics covered in the course. Professor Dodge will provide a preliminary list of readings by topic. You may select a different topic related to social change nonprofit organizations in consultation with Professor Dodge if you wish. Doctoral students will meet at the end of each unit to discuss their literature reviews with each other and with Prof. Dodge. You may choose to write commentaries and organizational assessments, but these will not be required and will not be graded. Detailed instructions for each literature review will be distributed in class and posted on blackboard several weeks before the assignment is due.

- Submit all literature reviews electronically on blackboard at 11:59pm on the designated date.
- Assignments should be no longer than 10 pages in length.
- Write all literature reviews in complete sentences and paragraphs, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, Times New Roman 12 point font, and number the pages. Do not use cover pages. **I will return reviews that do not meet these guidelines to be rewritten, and late penalties will apply (see grading below).**
- You may provide tables and figures to support your arguments; place them at the end of the paper. Bibliographies, tables and figures do not count towards page length.
- All sources should be in MLA citation style. For further guidelines see Appendix A.

To improve the quality of your literature reviews, you may submit for feedback a one-page summary of the major threads of your argument one week before each assignment is due. Submit your summaries electronically only via blackboard, do not email me. I will provide you with feedback on the summaries by class the next day, via Blackboard. **I will not accept late submissions of summaries.**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date of Summary (Optional)</th>
<th>Due Date of Final Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review 1</td>
<td>September 8 at 2pm</td>
<td>September 18 at 11:59 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review 2</td>
<td>October 6 at 2pm</td>
<td>October 16 at 11:59 pm</td>
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<td>Review 3</td>
<td>November 3 at 2pm</td>
<td>November 13 at 11:59 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review 4</td>
<td>December 1 at 2pm</td>
<td>December 11 at 11:59 pm</td>
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Grading

Student performance in the course will be determined as follows:

- Commentaries: 12% (2% for each assignment x 4; last commentary is worth 4 points)
- Outline Field Maps: 8% (2% for each assignment x 4)
- Field Maps: 80% (20% for each part x 4)

For doctoral students:
- Literature reviews: 100% (25% for each review)
Late assignments - For every 24-hour period that an organizational assessment or literature review is late, the grade will be reduced by 10%. The first 24-hour period begins on midnight the day the assignment is due.

Grading Scale

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A−</td>
<td>90-92</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B−</td>
<td>80-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-70</td>
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<td>C−</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>D−</td>
<td>60-61</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>below 60</td>
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Grading Criteria

Commentaries – Your commentaries will be evaluated based on the degree to which you demonstrate 1) that you have read the material and 2) that you have applied course readings critically and thoughtfully to the organization/social change effort.

Field Map – I will assess field maps based on a rubric that will be posted on Blackboard along with the instructions. In general, submissions will be assessed according to 1) the degree to which the student answers the assigned question in a sophisticated manner, 2) the quality of the reflexivity of the analysis, 3) the degree to which the student illustrates a complete understanding of the course material, 4) overall organization and professionalism of the paper, and 5) the degree to which formatting and citation guidelines are followed. A rubric with these criteria will be posted on Blackboard along with more detailed instructions.

Literature reviews (for doctoral students only) – Your literature reviews will be evaluated based on 1) the degree to which you demonstrate a thorough understanding of the diverse theoretical perspectives and empirical research related to a particular topic, 2) the degree to which you summarize key answered and unanswered questions related to a particular topic, 3) the quality of your critique of the existing literature (especially in terms of its ability to inform practice), 4) overall organization and professionalism of the paper, and 5) the degree to which formatting and citation guidelines are followed. A rubric with these criteria will be posted on Blackboard along with more detailed instructions.

Communication - Students are invited to ask questions in class, during office hours, or via email. The best way to contact me outside of class is by email. I will usually respond to emails within 24 hours. If you send an email after 6pm, I may not respond until the following day. Please check your email regularly for emails from me as well.
Other policies

Academic Integrity - As members of the SUNY community, we are all expected to adhere to high standards of intellectual and academic integrity. You can view our Academic Code at: http://www.albany.edu/content_images/AcademicIntegrity.pdf. Violations of these standards will result in one of the following penalties or some variant: revision and re-submission of the assignment, reduction of the grade or failure of the assignment, reduction of the course grade or failure of the course, filing of a case with the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility, suspension, or expulsion. In all cases, a Violation of Academic Integrity Report will be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies to be placed in your university file, with copies provided to you, the department head, and the Dean of Rockefeller College.

- Students with needs consistent with the Americans with Disability Act should inform the instructor during the first week of class so that reasonable accommodations can be made.
- This syllabus serves as a general outline. The instructor reserves the right to deviate from the plan if necessary. Students will be notified promptly of any modifications.
- See Appendix B for a description of how this course seeks to prepare students to develop their competencies in the five areas identified by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA).
Course Schedule

Class 1 (August 26): Introduction to Nonprofits and Social Change
  o Read only: The Research Findings: A framework of social change leadership, p. 268 – 279 (which reflect the figure on page 256).

UNIT ONE: FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL CHANGE NONPROFITS

Class 2 (September 2): Integrating Social Movement Work into Organizations that Provide Services
- Kivel, P. 2007. “Social service or social change?” In INCITE (ed). The Revolution will not be funded: Beyond the Nonprofit Industrial Complex. (pp. 129-149).

Commentary 1 (due September 1 at 2pm; bring to class): What do you observe about the consequences of service providing nonprofits moving toward – or not moving toward – broader social change efforts? How does this relate to your own experience, if any, of working in a nonprofit? Be sure to engage the assigned readings in your response.
Class 3 (September 9): Community Building: Building Bridges across Individuals & Communities

- Smock, Chapter 4: Building a Community’s Capacity. 65-96. SKIP The Civic Model and the Women Centric Model.
- Case: Shaleshock Action Alliance Listening Project: http://shaleshock.org/resources/the-listening-project/

Field Map Part I: Outline (due September 8 at 2:00 pm on blackboard): Instructions will be handed out separately.

Literature Review 1: Summary: for doctoral students only (due September 8 at 2:00 pm on blackboard): Instructions will be handed out separately.

Class 4 (September 16): Collaboration and Partnerships: Building Bridges across Organizations

- Kanter, B. & A. Fine. (2010). The Networked Nonprofit: Connecting with Social Media to Drive Change, PA: Jossey-Bass. Chapters 1,3,5,& 9. (These are short and easy to read.)
- Case: New York Immigration Coalition

Recommended:

Field Map Part I: (due September 18 at 11:59 pm on blackboard): Instructions will be handed out separately.

Literature Review 1: for doctoral students only (due September 18 at 11:59pm). This assignment is for doctoral students only. Instructions will be handed out separately.

September 23 *** NO CLASS – YOM KIPPUR ***
UNIT TWO: CORE ACTIVITIES OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Class 5: (September 30): Incorporating Advocacy
- Case: Research the issue that the class selected in week 4.

Commentary 2 (due September 8 at 2pm; bring to class): What do you observe about how advocacy is conducted in the solid waste case? Be sure to engage the assigned readings in your response.

Class 6 (October 7): Framing and Communications in Social Change Work
- Case: Coalition of Immokalee Workers Fair Food Campaign. Background: http://ciw-online.org/campaign-for-fair-food/. Go to link for Student/Farmworker Alliance and watch the two videos: http://www.storybasedstrategy.org/studentfarmworker-alliance-building-a-fair-food-nation.html. Pay attention to the messages. What do you notice?

Field Map Part II: Outline (due October 6 at 2:00 pm on blackboard): Instructions will be handed out separately.

Literature Review 2: Summary: for doctoral students only (due October 6 at 2:00 pm on blackboard): Instructions will be handed out separately.
Class 7 (October 14): Incorporating Community Organizing


Field Map Part II: (due October 16 at 11:59 pm on blackboard): Instructions will be handed out separately.

Literature Review 2: for doctoral students only (due October 16 at 11:59pm). This assignment is for doctoral students only. Instructions will be handed out separately.

Class 8 (October 21): Unleashing Human Potential: Tapping into Member Knowledge, Interests, & Desires


Commentary 3 (due October 20 at 2pm): What are your observations about the techniques used to unleash human potential? Be sure to engage the assigned readings in your response.
Class 9 (October 28): Mission and Theory of Change

- Smock, Chapter 2: Models of Community Organizing, p. 10-34. SKIP The Civic Model and the Women Centric Model.
- Case: Koreatown Youth and Community Center.

Commentary 4 (due October 27 at 2pm): What do you observe about mission in the Koreatown Youth and Community Center case? Read the case and review the organization’s website to inform your answer. Be sure to engage the assigned readings in your response.

Class 10 (November 4): Strategy in Social Change Organizations

  - SKIP Issues 3 “First Who.” We will get back to this later in the semester.
- Case: Levine et al 2008. The Justice Project

Field Map Project Part III: Outline (due November 3 at 2:00 pm on blackboard): Instructions will be handed out separately.

Literature Review 3 Summary: for doctoral students only (due November 3 at 2:00 pm on blackboard): Instructions will be handed out separately.
Class 11 (November 11): Structures of Social Change: Accountability and Legitimacy

- Chetkovich & Kunreuther, Chapter 4: Organizational Structure: Legitimacy and Accountability, p. 83-110.

*Field Map Project Part III (due November 13 at 11:59 pm on blackboard): Instructions will be handed out separately.*

*Literature Review 3: for doctoral students only (due November 13 at 11:59pm). This assignment is for doctoral students only. Instructions will be handed out separately.*

November 18 *** NO CLASS – DR. DODGE IS TRAVELING BUT THERE IS STILL WORK TO DO! ***

*Keep working on your projects!*

*Commentary 5 (due November 17 at 2pm): What do you need to learn more about in order to develop your own skills as a social change leader? What readings have inspired you, challenged you or informed you in this regard? Be sure to engage the assigned readings in your response. * 4 points *

November 25 *** NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING ***
UNIT FOUR: MARSHALLING RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Class 12 (December 2): Raising Money for Social Change


Field Map Project Part IV Outline: (due December 1 at 2:00 pm on blackboard): Instructions will be handed out separately.

Literature Review 4 Summary: for doctoral students only (due December 1 at 2:00 pm on blackboard): Instructions will be handed out separately.

Class 13 (December 9): Managing Staff & Volunteers in Contexts of Scarcity

- Chetkovich, C. and F. Kunreuther, Chapter 2: Doing the Work (p. 28-51); Chapter 3: Leadership (p. 52-82).

Field Map Project Part IV: (due December 11 at 11:59 pm on blackboard): Instructions will be handed out separately.

Literature Review 4: for doctoral students only (due December 11 at 11:59pm). This assignment is for doctoral students only. Instructions will be handed out separately.
Appendix A: Citations and Sources

Citations. Include a bibliography in each Organizational Assessment. Students are to cite sources in a manner consistent with academic honesty policies. I would rather you include too many citations rather than too few. As a general rule of thumb, provide a citation for something you did not know before you began your research. In-text citations and the bibliography should be formatted in MLA style. See the on-line help sheets at University at Albany’s citation fox website at http://library.albany.edu/cfox?type=mla. This reference explains how to cite references in the works cited section (bibliography) of your paper and how to cite references in the text of your essay.

When citing government documents, follow the formatting guidelines in Rubin’s Modified MLA Formatting for Government Documents, posted on Blackboard under course content/writing resources.

Acceptable Sources. You may use primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include, but are not limited to, government or nonprofit reports, legislative hearings and testimonies, court decisions, and government auditor reports. Secondary sources are summaries and interpretations of primary sources. Secondary sources include, but are not limited to, articles from major newspapers and news magazines, network and cable news programs, and academic research. Blogs and Wikipedia are not acceptable sources for unbiased information but may be used as data in organizational assessments. Be an intelligent consumer of information by evaluating secondary sources for potential political bias. If it is well known that a particular source is liberal or conservative, you must compensate for this in the paper. Acknowledge its bias and balance the information with something from a source on the other side of the political spectrum. Here are some places to start with your research, but feel free to consult other sources:


- Case descriptions that might be found in sources such as The New York Times Magazine, The Chronicle of Philanthropy, or at centers such as Board Source, Center for Charitable Statistics, the Research Center for Leadership in Action, Synergos, etc. (Keep in mind that these sources might be biased in the sense that they put forward a positive spin on the organizations and might be less likely to provide analyses of their challenges and problems.)

- Books that provide academic case analyses of specific organizations or networks such as Bargaining for Brooklyn, Fighting for Our Health, and so on.
Appendix B: MPA Core Competencies

On the first day of Welcome Week and at the beginning of PAD 507, master’s students are introduced to the five competencies identified by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA). Overall, the competencies are intended to ensure MPA students are well-rounded academically and professionally in the core subject areas important to the field.

What are competencies?

- Competencies are integrative. Competencies are a bundle of knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors that, when fully integrated, define successful performance. Competencies are broader than knowing how to use Excel or being able to define what marginal cost means.
- Competencies describe the characteristics of the person who does the job best. In this way, competencies describe the whole person and their total performance. Competencies are broader than job tasks.

The five NASPAA competencies are:

1. The ability to lead and manage in public governance
2. To participate in and contribute to the policy process
3. To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions
4. To articulate and apply a public service perspective
5. To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry

This course is designed to build student competency in all five areas. For example:

- Competency #1: Students will discuss various organizational strategies that nonprofits might adopt to advance social change agendas. Students will develop an understanding of the different ways these strategies shape organizational choices in terms of making decisions, and structuring nonprofit organizations to be accountable to diverse stakeholders. We will discuss different means for achieving accountability from these different organizational and social change strategies.
- Competency #2: In this course, students will learn different ways of conceptualizing theories of change that may focus on policy change, individual change, or social change. Students will learn how nonprofit implement these theories of change through various organizational strategies and through different relationships including partnerships and networks with other actors, including nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and even for-profit corporations.
- Competency #3: Through case studies, we will analyze myriad problems that nonprofit organizations face at the organizational, policy and societal levels. We will have ample opportunities to assess the mistakes and successes of others, to break down problems into component parts, analyze the problems from the perspectives of different stakeholders, and develop proposed solutions.
- Competency #4: Issues of equity, inclusiveness, and justice are fundamental to social change efforts. We will discuss these values as part of a public service perspective writ large, and discuss how to achieve these values through organizational and network strategies, emphasizing how different emphases might produce different outcomes.
- Competency #5: Writing assignments will require students to evaluate cases, using evidence to support arguments, and to communicate analysis in a highly-organized manner. Work in small-groups will develop skills in working with diverse groups and providing constructive feedback. Students will also be asked to examine – through course readings and other materials – social problems faced by a diverse citizenry.