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, short analytical assignments and a class project, students will learn to apply these tools in diverse policy domains. The class project 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
Required Text Books: You may purchase required books at the university book store or online.

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

Assignments

Short assignments:

To practice applying course concepts to real world cases, students are required to submit short assignments for designed classes that relate to the topic of the day. The assignment for each class is listed on the syllabus. Importantly, the short assignments should not be summaries of the reading. Instead they are opportunities to apply concepts from the reading to nonprofit organizations’ social change work. Students should be prepared to share their short assignments in class during the designated 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.

- **Submit all short assignments electronically on Blackboard the day before class at 11:59pm on the designated date and bring a copy to class to discuss (electronic versions are fine).**
- **I will not accept late short assignments.**
- **Short assignments should be no more than 2 pages in length.**
- **Write all short assignments 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.**

Reflection

To practice assessing social change tactics, students will be required to attend a public event related to social change either on or off campus (e.g., Soul Fire Farm event on October 11 at 1:15pm). Before attending the event, students should get approval from Professor Dodge to ensure the event meets these criteria: involves a nonprofit organization (or a coalition) and involves a social change focus (e.g., the work directly engages affected publics and/or addresses root causes of social problems). Students should write a 2-page reflection that assesses the tactics of the social change organization or coalition using concepts from the readings and lectures. The assignment should answer these questions: What tactic(s) has the organization used to engage in social change work? (You must discuss a tactic related to a specific topic such as recruiting participants, framing issues, fundraising, partnerships or any other topic on the syllabus. You may also choose another topic in consultation with Professor Dodge, as long as it is specific.) How effective is this tactic in achieving its goals (e.g., to recruit, to fundraise, etc.)? I encourage students to do this assignment after getting feedback on the first short assignment, as I will hold you to the same standards in terms of applying course concepts to the cases.

- **Submit reflections electronically on Blackboard before December 1. I will not accept reflections after this date.**
- **Reflections should be no more than 2 pages in length.**
- **Write reflections 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.**
To learn how to define social problems from a social justice perspective, identify publics affected by the issues, and engage affected publics directly, students will work in teams to study and intervene in a social change problem of their choice. Each team will choose the social problem and design an approach to engage affected publics in consultation with Professor Dodge. The class project includes four assignments: 1) defining a social change problem, 2) identifying affected publics, 3) designing a small-scale initiative to engage affected publics (e.g., organize a public dialogue), and 4) implementing the initiative. Each assignment requires students to use course materials to define, analyze, and/or implement social change activities. Detailed instructions for the assignments will be handed out in class along with a grading rubric. The assignments and their due dates are included below. Follow these guidelines in submitting your assignments:

- **Submit all assignments electronically on blackboard at 11:59pm on the designated date. One team member will upload team assignments. All team members will individually submit team evaluations.**
- **Page limits will be included on assignment instructions.**
- **You may provide tables and figures in your assignments; place them at the end of the paper. Bibliographies, tables and figures do not count towards page length.**
- **Write all assignments 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 assignments that do not meet these guidelines to be rewritten, and the late penalty will apply (see grading).**
- All references should be cited in APA style. Formatting instructions can be found at [http://library.albany.edu/cfox](http://library.albany.edu/cfox) and a list of appropriate sources see Appendix A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Project Assignments:</th>
<th>Due date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>September 23 at 11:59pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>October 28 at 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>November 25 at 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 4</td>
<td>On or before December 17</td>
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**Grading**

Student performance in the course will be determined as follows:

- 3 short assignments & revisions 30 % (5% x 6)
- Class project: assignment 1 10 %
- Class project: assignment 2 & 3 30 % (15% x2)
- Class project: assignment 4 25 %
- Reflection 5 %

**Grading Scale**

A: 93-100  
A-: 90-92.99  
B+: 87-89.99  
B: 83-86.99  
B-: 80-82.99  
C+: 77-79.99  
C: 73-76.99  
C-: 70-72.99  
D+: 67-69.99  
D: 63-66.99  
D-: 60-62.99  
E: below 60

**Late assignments** - For every 24-hour period that a class project assignment or reflection is late, the grade will be reduced by 10%. The first 24-hour period begins on midnight the day the assignment is due.
Grading Criteria

Short assignments and reflection – Your short assignments and reflection will be evaluated based on the degree to which you demonstrate 1) that you have read the relevant course material, 2) that you have applied course readings critically and thoughtfully to the organization, social change effort or case, 3) the overall organization and professionalism of the paper, and 4) the degree to which formatting and citation guidelines are followed.

Class projects – I will assess class projects 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 demonstrates an understanding of theory and how to apply it, 2) the quality of the substance of the arguments and evidence to support them 3) the degree to which the student illustrates an understanding of the complex organizational and policy issues, 4) overall organization and professionalism of the paper, and 5) the degree to which formatting and citation guidelines are followed. The final class project will be an intervention and grading criteria will include an assessment by participants in the intervention.

Incomplete Grades – I do not allow students to receive an incomplete grade in this class. The University at Albany incomplete grade policy can be found here.

Class participation – Students are expected to attend all classes. While I do not grade for participation in this course, students who miss three or more classes for any reason cannot be expected to reasonably complete the course requirements and will be required to drop the class.

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 response 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.

Accommodation for disabilities - Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please notify the Director of the Disability Resource Center (Campus Center 130, 518-442-5490, DRC@albany.edu). That office will provide the course instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations.

Syllabus Revisions – The instructor reserves the right to deviate from the syllabus if necessary. Students will be notified promptly of any modifications.

Public Administration Competencies – 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

UNIT ONE: FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL CHANGE NONPROFITS

Class 1 (August 30): Introduction to Nonprofits and Social Change
- Building Movement Project: Root Cause Analysis.

Class 2 (September 6): Mission and Theory of Change
- Smock, Chapter 2: Models of Community Organizing, p. 10-34.
- Case: Koreatown Youth and Community Center.

Guiding questions for readings: Considering the Koreatown case, do you think the organization has lost track of its mission? Why or why not? What is its mission? What are its intended impacts (including beneficiaries and benefits) and its theory of change? Do these make sense?

Short Assignment 1 Draft (due September 5 at 11:59pm; bring to class): Using concepts from the Colby et al article (including impacts, beneficiaries, benefits and theory of change), describe Koreatown’s theory of change and intended impacts. Is the theory of change clear and appropriate for guiding decision making? If not, what adjustments would you recommend and why?

Class 3 (September 13): Structures of Social Change: Accountability and Legitimacy
- Smock, Chapter 5: Building a community governance structure, p. 97-148.
- Chetkovich & Kunreuther, Chapter 4: Organizational structure: Legitimacy and accountability, p. 83-110.


Short Assignment 1 Final (due September 16 at 11:59pm): Revise your short assignment 1 incorporating feedback you received on the draft.
UNIT TWO: CORE ACTIVITIES OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Class 4 (September 20): Integrating Social Movement Work into Organizations that Provide Services
- Building Movement Project. Asking Powerful Questions.

Resources:

Guiding questions for readings: Where do you stand on the debate about whether or not service providing organizations can serve broader social change goals? How do you respond to the other side of the debate? What are the consequences of service providing nonprofits moving toward – or not moving toward – broader social change efforts? Considering the “Bread for the City” case, what are the challenges of moving toward social change from its perspective? What is it doing well to move toward social change? How could it improve its efforts?

Class Project Assignment 1 (due September 23 at 11:59pm). Instructions will be handed out separately.

Class 5: (September 27): Incorporating Advocacy – “Cutting the Issue”
  - Read page 1-12. Ignore the material about the corresponding case studies.
- Blee, Chapter 4: What’s the Problem?, p. 81-108.
- Case: Crude Oil Transport in the Port of Albany. Read up on the crude oil transport issues by following these links from the nonprofit organizations involved in the case:
  - Riverkeeper: https://www.riverkeeper.org/campaigns/river-ecology/crude-oil-transport/
  - Catskill Mountain Keeper: http://www.catskillmountainkeeper.org/crude_oil_transport
  - Earth Justice: https://earthjustice.org/features/map-crude-by-rail

Guiding questions for readings: Given the range of nonprofit organizations involved in the Crude Oil Case, how would you define the problem and “cut the issue”? Why would you do this? In other words, why are your choices strategic toward social change goals (as you might define them)?
Class 6 (October 4): Incorporating Community Organizing – Recruiting Participants

- Case: Crude Oil Transport in the Port of Albany. Review your research on the Crude Oil Case from last week and create a list of main community groups who are impacted by the issues. (Community groups are affected publics, not businesses, government agencies, or already organized interests.)

Guiding questions for readings: Considering the crude oil transportation case in Albany, who do you think are the primary affected publics? How would you approach recruiting them to take part in addressing the problem? How would you engage them? What would you want to know from them? What would you ask them to do?

***Note the public event next week for reflection assignment.***

Class 7 (October 11): Strategy in Social Change Organizations

  - Skip Issues 3 “First Who.”

Guiding questions for readings: How would you assess the Fortune Society’s strategy in developing Castle Gardens based on the Phills reading? Does it have a strong strategy or not? Why?

Short Assignment 2 Draft (due October 10 at 11:59pm; bring to class): What is The Fortune Society’s strategy (as reflected in the Castle Gardens project)? Use the concepts from the Phil’s reading in your answer including competitive advantage, scope and logic. For logic, reproduce figure 2.2, which also includes execution and resource generation. Do you think The Fortune Society has a strong strategy? What would you change to improve it, if anything? (Figure does not count toward page length.)

***Public Event for Reflection Assignment: Amani Olugbala, Assistant Director of Education, Soul Fire Farm—October 11, at 1:15 PM – location TBD.***
Class 8 (October 18): Unleashing Human Potential: Tapping into Member/Client Knowledge, Interests, & Desires

- Blee, Chapter 5: How should we treat each other?, p. 109-133.
- Building Movement Project: Developing the Leadership of Recipients
- The Fortune Society. (Undated). Employing your mission: Building cultural competence in reentry service agencies through the hiring of individuals who are formerly incarcerated and/or in recovery. New York: The Fortune Society.

Guiding questions for readings: What tactics work well to incorporate opportunities for people with low levels of power to transform into leaders?

Short Assignment 2 Final (due October 21 at 11:59pm): Revise your short assignment 2 incorporating feedback you received on the draft.

Class 9 (October 25): Building Networks: Human Rights and NGOs

Guest Lecturer: Susan Appe, Phd., Assistant Professor, Rockefeller College

- Case: Colombia – materials will be available on Blackboard two weeks before this session.

Guiding questions for readings: What are some of the challenges of organizational collaboration and partnership in the nonprofit sector? Are they worth overcoming? What is a good approach to partnerships in a competitive environment? What are the assumptions of partnership and networking captured in Keck and Sikkink’s boomerang model? What might you change or add to it?

Class Project Assignment 2 (due October 28 at 11:59pm). Instructions will be handed out separately.

Class 10 (November 1): Community Building: Building Bridges across Individuals & Communities

- Smock, Chapter 4: Building a Community’s Capacity. 65-96.
- Building Movement Project: Building Community from the Inside Out
- Case: Shaleshock Action Alliance Listening Project. See link and documents on Blackboard.

Guiding questions for readings: Is the listening project approach a good way to build “bridging” social capital? Why or why not? Is this an approach that you could use in your class project? Why or why not?
Class 11 (November 8): Framing and Communications in Social Change Work


Guiding questions for readings: *Is the messaging of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers Fair Food Campaign effective? Why or why not? Minch’s tips on communication might help you formulate your answer.*

**Short Assignment 3 Draft (due November 7 at 11:59pm; bring to class):** Chose one of the leadership practices that we have discussed in this unit (unleashing human potential, building bridges across organizations, building bridges across communities, or framing) that you would like to analyze for your final short assignment. Select a current social change initiative. Using concepts from the relevant course readings on the leadership practice, describe how the nonprofit (or coalition) is implementing this leadership practice and assess how well it is implementing it and what could be improved.


- Dr. Dodge will be traveling to the ARNOVA conference this week and so will not be in class. Students are expected to come to class and use the time to work on their Class Projects – Assignment 3 (NOT the short assignment 3 final draft). There will be a sign in sheet and students will report their progress during the next class session.

**Short Assignment 3 Final (due November 18 at 11:59pm):** Revise your short assignment 3 incorporating feedback you received on the draft.

*** November 22 – No class – Thanksgiving ***
UNIT FOUR: RAISING MONEY & ACHIEVING BROADER IMPACT

Class 13 (November 29): Raising Money for Social Change
- Chetkovich & Kunruether, Chapter 5: Resources: Spinning straw into bricks, p. 111-131.
- Case: To be determined.

Guiding questions for readings: Does fundraising for social change need to be different than fundraising for any other kind of nonprofit organization? How so? And why or why not?

Class Project Assignment 3 (due December 2 at 11:59pm). Instructions will be handed out separately.

Class 14 (December 6): Achieving Broader Impact, Planning Final Class Projects and Pot Luck
- Building Movement Project: Nonprofit Service Organizations and Civic Engagement.
- Building Movement Project: Advancing Community Level Impact.

Class Project Assignment 4 (due before December 17). Instructions will be handed out separately.

Author: Jennifer Dodge, Ph.D. Fall 2018
Appendix A: Citations and Sources

Citations. 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 APA style. See the on-line help sheets at University at Albany’s citation fox website at http://library.albany.edu/cfox#top. 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.

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 for your class projects. 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 your research. 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.