



Course title:	Skills and Techniques for Community Change	
Course #/term:	653 sec 1, Section, Winter 2021	
Time and place:	Monday, 2pm-5:00pm, virtual	
Credit hours:	3	
Prerequisites:	none	
Instructor:	Maureen Okasinski	
Pronouns:	She	
Contact info:	Email: mokasins@umich.edu	Phone: 313.303.8911
	You may expect a response within 24-72 hours	
Office:	3766	
Student hours:	Mondays, 12-1pm, 4-5PM by appointment	

1. Course Statement

a. Course description

This course will engage students in learning core cross-cutting skills needed for engaging in community change. It will use a framework of “Scan” - “Plan” – “Do” – “Review” to help organize skills. Learning to infuse cross-cutting principles including critical Praxis.

Scan- Assessment and Scanning Skills (individual to community).

Illustrative skills may include: social identity assessments, individual skills assessments, story of self/personal motivational assessments, community power mapping, asset/strength assessments, organizational/community scans, and neighborhood mapping

Plan- Planning Skills.

Illustrative skills may include: participatory community planning, strategy charts, implementation of planning steps, logic charts and theory of change

Do- Action Skills.

Illustrative skills may include: one-on-ones (formal and informal), facilitating

participatory meetings, coalition-building techniques and considerations, policy advocacy, program development, intergroup facilitation, and community mobilization

Review- Community reflection and Evaluation Skills.

Illustrative skills may include: critical reflection, program/organizational evaluation, monitoring, campaign analysis, and participatory evaluation

b. Course objectives and competencies

1. Understand and analyze the changing role of context in community change (EPAS 5, 9)
2. Understand contemporary social and political issues and their relationship to community change strategies and tactics. (EPAS 9)
3. Demonstrate skills in community assessment, leadership and organizational development, planning and conducting campaigns, and evaluating their results. (EPAS 6, 7, 8, 9)
4. Apply advanced skills to promote participation e.g., assessing community conditions, designing the process, representing diverse interests, understanding political dynamics of participation, increasing group dialogue and intergroup relations, building collaborative alliances, and finding common ground. (EPAS 6, 7, 9)
5. Develop group skills needed for increasing intercultural interaction and cross-cultural collaboration at the community level. (EPAS 6, 7, 9)
6. Develop skills for gathering, assessing, and using various forms of community data and practice-informed research. (EPAS 4, 6, 7, 9)

c. Design

The class will be very hands-on and will also utilize innovative resources in teaching content, including MOOCs, online training, webinars, videos, and simulations. Skills will be learned, practiced, and applied in class-based and project-based experiences.

Intensive focus on PODS

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of community change theories that will help students explore the connections between race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, and psychological and physical functioning, well-being and community change. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will provide students with tools to understand and apply theories to practice with diverse populations.

Community change takes place in different ways. The process can be very logical and linear, or very dynamic and unpredictable. However, every approach involves some common activities (e.g., skills and strategies). The phenomena of privilege, oppression, diversity, and (approaches to) social justice determine the course, quality and nature of the actions of community members, partners, and systems to

either support, oppose or remain neutral to community change. This course provides students with the tools to advance social justice (within the context of privilege, diversity and oppression) through the systematic, planful use of activities using the Plan-Scan-Do-Review toolkit of activities.

Briefly:

- Scanning methods refer to ways to identify and take into account a sense of the community, the issues it faces, the resources present, and the potential for change.
- Planning processes involve both community and issue assessment and planning for the most effective approach to change. Once organizers have taken stock of community conditions, they then need to assess and analyze how they can best approach the issues.
- Doing different approaches and strategies can be used to address community issues. The strategy selected should be appropriate for the issue and the communities' resources and limitations.
- Reviewing methods help an effective organizer reflect upon strategies used and how well they met the change goals. The process of reviewing strategies can be formal or informal. They should include the perspectives of different stakeholders and participants in the strategy.

2. Class Requirements

a. Text and class materials

Delgado, Melvin and Denise Humm-Delgado. (2013). [Asset Assessment and Community Practice](#). Oxford Press.-*this is available online through the UM Library*

- b. All required text/audio/video are listed and linked on the Canvas Modules. These are listed by week.
- c. Students should complete text, audio and digital media consumption prior to the class for which they are assigned. Classroom discussion and activities are based on this expectation.
- d. The agenda and materials to complete prior to class are posted in the week's Canvas Module. These are posted at least one week in advance.
- e. If changes are made to the schedule, assignments, text/audio/video requirements, these will be updated and an announcement sent, typically a week in advance.
- f. Supplemental readings are also posted on the week's agenda page. Students are encouraged to share new and useful material—I can upload these into our Canvas site.

a. Tentative Schedule {subject to change}

Week	Topics Covered	Out of Class Learning
1: 1/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Course • Build a learning community 	Syllabus, introduction vid, engagement goal
2: 2/1	<p>Scan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaching community change • Power, Self Interest & the Status Quo • Pick your Community Change focus • Skill Lab: self assessment 	Select 2 readings on privilege, leadership from the module links Delgado, Section One (Definitions, Values, Principles, Ethics)
3: 2/8	<p>Scan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory of Change • Skill Lab: framing an issue 	Article, Resolving complex community problems Delgado, Section 2 (framework, methods, mapping)
4: 2/15	<p>Scan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles as Change Agents • Skill lab: force field analysis 	Articles: Kurt Lewin's vision of organizational and social change and A Caring Economy Requires Building Bridges—Not Burning Them Delgado, Section 2 (framework, methods, mapping)
5:2/22	<p>Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision/Future Thinking and Challenges for Social Work • Skill Lab: creating a vision 	Reading selection on collective work and visioning: Stout and Brown Delgado, Section 3 Lessons for the Field

6: 3/1	<p>Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Change: Theory and Models • Facilitating Change • Skill lab: Appreciative Inquiry 	<p>Le, V. (2020, February). The problem with everything being all about relationships [Blog post].</p> <p>Whitney, D., & Cooperrider, D. (2011). Appreciative inquiry: A positive revolution in change. (CH. 3)</p> <p>Delgado, Section 3 Lessons for the Field</p>
7: 3/8	<p>Plan</p> <p>Community Change Continued</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision into Action • Creating Goals and Activities • Skill lab: writing goals and selected change model 	<p>Community Tool Box (2015). Ch 8: Develop a Strategic Plan.</p>
8: 3/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective Communication • Storytelling • Social Media's Role in Community Change • Skill lab: telling your story 	<p>Marshall Gantz- Why story telling matters Exploring Deep Narratives</p>
9: 3/22	<p>Do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Movements/Community Organizing Strategies • Multiple interests/ collaboration/conflict • skill lab: exploring change model 	<p>Avila, M. (2017). Transformative civic engagement through community organizing. Stylus Publishing, LLC. (Ch. 2)</p> <p>Power Mapping Toolkit</p>
10: 3/29	<p>Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation • Skill lab: evaluating change 	<p>Kelly, T. (2010). Five simple rules for evaluating complex community initiatives. Community Investments, 22(1), 19-22.</p>

11: 4/5	Review Leading teams through change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Five Whys • Skill lab: giving and getting feedback 	Serrat, O. (2017). The five whys technique. In Knowledge solutions (pp. 307-310). Springer, Singapore. Daring Feedback – The Engaged Feedback List Rosenberg, M. B., & Chopra, D. (2015). Nonviolent communication: A language of life: Life-changing tools for healthy relationships. Puddle Dancer Press. (CH. 3)
12: 4/12	Do <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to Sustain Change • Overcoming Resistance to Change 	Schuler, A. J. (2003). Overcoming resistance to change: Top ten reasons for change resistance Rosenberg, M. B., & Chopra, D. (2015). Nonviolent communication: A language of life: Life-changing tools for healthy relationships. Puddle Dancer Press. (Page 164)
13: 4/19	Review Wrap up and presentations	

b. Assignments

The assignment description in the syllabus is a general overview. Details, format and rubrics are found in Canvas Assignments. Following the rubrics leads to good scores on assignments, as does beginning your assignments early. I expect your work to demonstrate concise yet thoughtful, evidence-based, integrative and deep work. The course uses individual and group project, as consistent with social work practice. In the structure and grading of these, I seek to balance accountability and professional performance expectations.

Assignment	Due date	Percent of overall grade
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Social Work Change Agents Skills Labs	Wednesdays at 11:59pm submitted via Canvas	25%
Course Engagement	In class and submitted via discussion board on Canvas	25%
Community Change Initiative - Portfolio	Due 4/16 by 11:59pm submitted via Canvas	35%
Community Change Initiative - Presentation	Due 4/19, scheduled with instructor	10%

Assignment 1: Social Change Agent Skills Labs (25% of grade)

Due: Wednesdays at 11:59pm
 Course Framework: Scan, Plan, Do & Review

Each week in class you will be asked to practice a skill related to community change theory to demonstrate the connection between theory and practice. This might consist of something you are turning in or a presentation or reflection on the skills you practiced during class time. This includes activities related to analysis, meeting facilitation, communicating change concepts to professionals outside of social work, power analyses, strategic issue selection, among others. You will have the opportunity to complete these skills labs in class. However, your evidence of skills labs (a completed handout, writings, photos of notes, etc.) are due on Canvas by 11:59pm the Wednesday following our synchronous class. Due dates are reflected on Canvas. It is highly encouraged to submit your Skills Labs immediately following class.

These ten (10) skills labs will relate directly to your final portfolio– each element you work on in class can be used in your final – some WILL be used in your final (i.e., The Force Field Analysis and Visioning) and some MIGHT be used in your final depending on the approach and focus of your change idea (i.e., Storytelling, appreciative inquiring, etc.).

Assignment 2: Course Engagement: Attendance, Participation, Reflections and Contributions to Praxis & Critical Consciousness (25% of grade)

Course Framework: Scan & Review

Students are expected to attend every class session, come on time, remain for the entire class period, participate in class discussions and exercises. Class time is planned to make the most of being together in a group. We discuss, make plans, reflect and practice our knowledge and skills and your prior-to-class reading of assigned materials. Your preparation, attendance and participation are essential to learning. Students are expected to fully engage in the course through discussion, activities, listening and leadership and contribute to a meaningful learning community. If you are unable to attend a session, please communicate with me in advance if possible, contact a peer to ask about what you missed and review the readings, handouts and materials from that session. Students who are using electronic devices not related to class activities will see the impact in this grade. The SSW Policy on Class Attendance is found in the MSW Student Guide.

Four (4) times throughout the semester, as part of our asynchronous course materials, you will be asked to complete critical consciousness task that engages you in the cycle of praxis through theory, practice and, the purpose of this assignment, reflection. The Praxis and Critical Consciousness reflections will be posted in the Canvas discussion board and available through the weekly modules. If for any reason you have trouble locating the discussion board post, please reach out to your instructor immediately. These reflections will relate directly to your final portfolio and developing a sense for your social work practice as it pertains to community change – each element of praxis and critical consciousness will provide some additional course content for you to engage with along with prompts for you to reflect on. You are expected to complete this asynchronous work within a week.

Assignment 3: Community Change Initiative (50% of grade)

Course Framework: Scan, Plan, Do, Review

Assignment Rationale

As a change agent in the field of social work, you will have the opportunity to work on change initiatives at the organizational and community level. Initiatives can be local, statewide, national or international. *Organizations* are faced with constant change; at times the change is forced from the outside, like funding or policy changes; at other times the change comes from within, an idea for a new way of working, a change in organizational structure or culture. *Community change* is often about either addressing local problems or inequities, or addressing social problems (lack of affordable housing, stigma of mental illness, violence) at multiple levels. A typical change process results in developing a new program, which is **not** the focus of this course.

Assignment Overview

In groups of three, you will select a specific and small-scale setting where you would like to create change and apply change strategies. This may work best if it is an actual setting (community or organization) where you live or currently work/intern. You and your trio will complete portions of this assignment throughout the quarter in your weekly “skills labs”. The final portfolio should be updated and edited portfolio by the end of Session 12. During the last week of class, you will meet with your instructor to present on your change idea, your theoretical basis, change approach, strategy, and vision. Each group will have up to a 20-minute time frame during which you will discuss your portfolio and process of creating this change initiative.

Part 1: The first three sections are things you should have done in some capacity before in your foundation courses such as: SW 650 (Community Practice), SW 530 (Policy), SW 590 (SW Practice), and Social Justice and Diversity in Social Work (SW 504). These are touching on ideas like, problem identification, systems analysis, critical thinking and critical analysis of institutions and systems and evidence-based practice.

- Present your Case/Issue
- Explain Why This Change is Essential
- Analyze the Context of the Issue.

Part 2: The last five sections are new skills, concepts, and knowledge you will learn in this class over the course of the semester. They also follow your skills labs and are scaffolded throughout your semester so all you will need to do by the time your final presentation and portfolio is due is revisit your work from the semester, edit and change as needed and then prepared for a discussion about the content and presentation of your portfolio to your professor.

- Complete a Force Field Analysis of the Issue or Change Effort
- Write a Vision for Change
- Explore One Change Goal
- Select and explore a Change Model
- Develop an Evaluation Plan

Part 3: each group will complete a final presentation in the last two weeks of class sharing with other students and the instructor. This will be about 20 minutes. You will present on your change idea, your theoretical basis, change approach, strategy, and vision.

Grading

Grading on assignments is completed within two weeks of submission. Grades and comments on scores identifying strengths and areas to improve are in the Canvas

Assignment rubric. For further information, consult the MSW Student Guide policies on [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#) as well as [Student Grievance procedures](#) and the [policy for grading in special circumstances](#).

Grading is done using a 100-point system. The final letter grade is assigned according to the following formula:

A+ 100+%	B+ 87-90%	C+ 77-80%	D <69% (no credit)
A 95%-100%	B 84-86%	C 74-76%	
A- 91%–94%	B- 81-83%	C- 70-73%	

Assignment Practices

- a. **Drafts:** students may submit a draft of their assignment for review in advance of its due date. I will provide ungraded feedback based on the rubric. The latest you may submit a draft to me is one week before its due date-this provides me with the time necessary to provide quality feedback and you with time to respond to it.
- b. **Peer review:** Be prepared to share a completed document of the days with scheduled peer reviews. Done in a supportive environment, peer review is an intentional learning strategy that aids in critical thinking, further development of thoughts and ideas and feedback skills.
- c. **Due dates:** All assignments are due dates and times are in the Canvas assignments. For one assignment, I will grant a grace period of one week in which you can submit your assignment if you request this prior to the day it is due, without a grading penalty. I will not accept a draft for review during the grace time. After the first late assignment, I will accept other late assignments, however, the points awarded will be reduced by the equivalent of ½ letter grade. Exceptions to this will need permission of the instructor one week prior to the due date and will only be made in extenuating circumstances.
- d. **Resubmission:** Sometimes despite your best effort, the peer review, and/or your submission of a draft to me for review, your assignment misses the mark. You may choose to resubmit one assignment (note: you must have submitted an assignment in the first place). If you would like to resubmit, let me know prior to the last scheduled date of class. To resubmit, you must meet with me or have received significant written feedback about the needed improvements to the assignment. A resubmitted assignment will be accepted up until one week past the last class date.
- e. **Submission format:** Documents will be professional in style, 11/12-point font, single spaced and citations will follow APA. Principles of good design are expected in assignments and accounted for in the rubrics. Additionally, well-written, error free narrative using professional language and tone are expected. I do not accept assignment via email. All assignments go into Canvas.

c. Class Recording and Course Materials

I will be recording every class session. Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording being done. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. If the instructor chooses to record a class, they will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on the course management website. On days when classes are recorded, students will be notified a recording is occurring. Class recordings and course materials may not be reproduced, sold, published or distributed to others, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the instructor.

d. COVID-19 Statement

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. By returning to campus, you have acknowledged your responsibility for protecting the collective health of our community. Your participation in this course on an in-person/hybrid basis is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including maintaining physical distancing of six feet from others, and properly wearing a face covering in class. Other applicable safety measures may be described in the Wolverine Culture of Care and the University's Face Covering Policy for COVID-19. Your ability to participate in this course in-person/hybrid may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the Office for Institutional Equity. If you are unable or unwilling to adhere to these safety measures while in a face-to-face class setting, you will be required to participate on a remote basis. I also encourage you to review the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities and the COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

e. Health-Related Class Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as

soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a doctor's note) for medical excuses is *not* required.

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: <https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources>. They include:

- *Safety and emergency preparedness*
- *Mental health and well-being*
- *Teaching evaluations*
- *Proper use of names and pronouns*
- *Accommodations for students with disabilities*
- *Religious/spiritual observances*
- *Military deployment*
- *Writing skills and expectations*
- *Academic integrity and plagiarism*



LEO Lecturers' Employee Organization, Local 6244, AFL-CIO