



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Course title:	Theories and Practices for Community Action and Social Change	
Course #/term:	SW 305/SOC 326, Fall 2021	
Time and place:	Monday 1:00-4:00, 1636 SSWB	
Credit hours:	3	
Prerequisites:	None	
Instructor:	Katie Richards-Schuster, Associate Professor, Director CASC Minor, School of Social Work	
Pronouns:	She/Her/Hers	
Contact info:	Email: kers@umich.edu	Phone: 734-730-6572
	You may expect a response within 24-48 Hours	
Office:	SW 3850	
Office hours:	Monday 12-1 and by appointment	

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Course Description

This foundation course for the Community Action and Social Change Minor is designed to prepare students to be informed and active participants in the process of community building and social change. The course uses a multidisciplinary framework to (1) develop competencies that help students envision what community action and social change can look like, (2) identify and implement steps towards social change, and (3) build on positive sources of power, historical and

indigenous knowledge, and experiences of individuals, groups, and communities who are engaged in social change efforts.

Core Competencies

Praxis: Reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it

-Paulo Freire, The Pedagogy of the Oppressed

1. Students will examine their own identity development (race, class, gender, sexual/relational orientation, religion, nationality, ability, other), recognize multiple social identities, and critically analyze power, privilege, and oppression.
2. Students will explore the meaning of community and social change.
3. Students will develop skills in interviewing, relationship-building, and group facilitation.
4. Students will gain awareness of historical frameworks and theories regarding community action and social change.
5. Students will engage in policy and structural analysis with regard to community action and social change.
6. Students will develop an understanding of community-building and organizing skills.

Class Materials

All materials will be posted to Canvas.

Grading and Assignments

The class requires a set of assignments aimed at:

- gaining critical awareness about oneself as a community change agent both inside and outside the classroom
- building knowledge about core concepts, historical frameworks, and key people,
- developing and engaging with peers in critical discussion of key ideas and issues, and
- applying the lessons and learning to one's current interest and future work

An outline of the assignment and due dates are listed in the assignment section of the canvas for your reference.

Assignment Expectations

I expect that assignments will be turned in on the day they are due unless there are extenuating circumstances and/or you have talked with me in advance. Please do reach out if you need extra time or support in any way.

Learning Environment

This class is based on a collaborative learning model—one in which students are both “teachers and learners” in the classroom. During the class, we will have regular opportunities for peer-based learning and teaching activities. This model requires that students be prepared to participate, take risks and share ideas, respect diverse opinions, and challenge themselves in each class.

Updated 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. Your participation in this course is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including [properly wearing a face-covering in class](#) and compliance with the [University COVID-19 Vaccination Policy](#). Other applicable and additional safety measures may be described in the [Campus Maize & Blueprint](#). Your ability to participate in this course 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](#) and those seeking an exemption related to the vaccination requirement should submit an exemption request through [WolverineAccess](#). 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](#).

Recording of Class (Audio & Video)

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 in advance that a recording will occur and be provided with an option to opt-out. 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.

Attendance Expectations & Health-Related Class Absences

This class is based on a participatory and engaged model of learning. As such, my expectation is that students will actively participate in class, come to class having reviewed the materials, and be ready to start at 1:00. That said, I understand that there are things that come up for students—so PLEASE reach out to me as soon as possible if you cannot attend a class and/or if are facing ongoing challenges that may impact your participation. I want to support you and your ability to be successful in class. In addition, my commitment is to create an environment where people feel a part of a community. We will follow all safety protocols for these sessions as established

by the School of Social Work and the University of Michigan. We will continue to monitor this and make adjustments as needed.

IMPT- This semester- if you are sick, DO NOT come to class. If you feel ill, you are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. 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.

Plagiarism

I take plagiarism seriously. Plagiarism is when you attribute others' ideas and/or exact words as your own. This includes ideas and/or passages from the readings, class activities, peers, and from the Internet, among others. I expect that all sources used will be cited or referenced. If I suspect plagiarism, I will follow the University's protocol for disciplinary action. This could mean a loss of points, failure of a grade, and/or other consequences. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Personal Issues and Special Accommodations

Please see me if you have any concerns about the class, your participation in the class, or have personal issues that relate to the class. I am more than happy to meet with you at any point to discuss your situation or to address any special accommodations. I am also available to assist you with accessing school or university-based resources you may need during the semester.

As a reminder, if you will require special accommodations for class and/or assignments, please see me as soon as possible.

Class Policies

This is a Social Work course, and therefore we follow the policies and practices of the School of Social Work. For more information, please see:

<https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources>.

Grading Rubric

Scores on the preceding assignments are cumulative and will be converted to a final letter grade at the end of the semester according to the following scale. Note that CANVAS captures recorded grades, but not all assessments are recorded in CANVAS.

94-100 =A

91-93 = A-

87-90 = B+

84-86 = B

81-83 = B-

77-80 = C+

74-76 = C

71-73 = C-

Under 70 = D/D-/F

ASSIGNMENTS

Course Summary:

Date

Mon Sep 27, 2021

Details

[Core Concept Mixed Tape](#)

Assignment

Fri Oct 8, 2021

[Individual Action Project Proposal](#)

Assignment

Mon Nov 1, 2021

[Learning From History](#)

Assignment

Mon Dec 6, 2021

[Extra Credit](#)

Assignment

[Individual Social Action Project](#)

Assignment

Fri Dec 10, 2021

[Letters to Our Future Selves](#)

Assignment

[History Assignment Topics](#)

Assignment

[TQEAs & Reflections](#)

CLASS CALENDAR

1	Aug 30	Introduction & Community Building
2	Sept 6	Labor Day
3	Sept 13	Understanding Our Story: Being aware of who we are as change agents. What informs our perspectives? What skills do we bring?
4	Sept 20	Understanding Community Action and Social Change Terms & Perspectives
5	Sept 27	Community Change as a Process: Systems, Power & Impacts
6	Oct 4	Exploring Approaches: CASC in Action
7	Oct 11	Key Frameworks & Theory for CASC Part I: Power of Critical Consciousness, Socio-Political Participation: Learning from the Work of Paulo Freire, Myles Horton, Ella Baker & Septima Clark
8	Oct 18	Fall Break
9	Oct 25	Key Frameworks & Theories for CASC Part II: James and Grace Lee Boggs
10	Nov 1	Learning from History: Social Movements & Key Figures
11	Nov 8	Part I: Getting Started: What Makes for a Good CASC Change Agent
12	Nov 15	Part 2: Strategy & Relationships
13	Nov 22	Asynchronous Class: Part 3: Working in Coalitions Special Project- Site Visit/Service Project (TENTATIVE)
14	Nov 29	Class Presentations 1
15	Dec 6	Finish Class Presentations Part 4: Reflections & Self Care

