



<b>Course title:</b>	Theories and Practices for Community Action and Social Change	
<b>Course #/term:</b>	SW 305-002, Fall 2022	
<b>Time and place:</b>	Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:30 – 2:00 p.m., Room B780	
<b>Credit hours:</b>	3	
<b>Instructor:</b>	Adisa Chaney	
<b>Contact info:</b>	<b>Email:</b> adisa@umich.edu	<b>Phone:</b> 734-352-0385
	You may expect a response within 48 hours	
<b>Office hours:</b>	By Appointment	

## Course Statement

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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 develop competencies that will help students envision what community action and social change look like, identify and implement steps towards social change, build on positive sources of power, indigenous knowledge and experiences of individuals, groups, and communities who are engaged in social change efforts.

## Core Competencies

- Students will examine their own identity development (race, class, gender, sexual/relational orientation, religion, nationality, ability, other), recognize multiple social identities, and engage in critical analysis of power, privilege, and oppression.
- Students will explore the meaning of community and social change.
- Students will develop skills in interviewing, relationship-building, and group facilitation.
- Students will gain awareness of historical framework and theory regarding community action and social change.
- Students will engage in policy and structural analysis regarding community action and social change.
- Students will develop an understanding of community-building and organizing skills.

## Class Requirements

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- a. All readings will be posted to Canvas.
- b. To fully engage in the course topic and become a competent and skilled practitioner, it is expected that students will complete all required readings.
- c. Class Calendar

### I. BUILDING COMMUNITY (Week 1-3)

#### **Week 0: Introduction to Community Action and Social Change (August 30)**

*What is Community Action and Social Change? What is the CASC Minor? What is 305 and where does it fit?*

*What is social work as a field? How does SW relate to community action and social change? What are the critiques? What are the possibilities?*

*What should you expect for this class? What goals do you plan to set for yourself? What do you want to learn? What do you want to gain?*

#### **Week 1: Understanding our Story: Why are We Here? What do we care about? (September 6)**

*What are our stories? How do we explore our own ideas, experiences, and interests in the context of community action & social change?*

*Why do stories matter for community change work? How can and have stories been used to facilitate change? How are our stories tools for change? How has storytelling motivated others to take risks and create change?*

*How can storytelling help build community?*

*What does vulnerability have to do with community action and social change?*

Readings:

- Szakos & Szakos, We Make Change – Chapter 1

- Pyles, Chapter 2 – Self-Aware Organizer

## **Week 2: Building Community with a framework of PODS (September 13)**

*What is needed to explore community action and social change through a lens of privilege, oppression, diversity, and social justice?*

*What are the dynamics involved? What are the core concepts and skills needed?*

*How does language matter for community change work? How can we critically reflect on language and our own perspectives? What would a common language include?*

Readings:

- Iris Marion Young, Five Faces of Oppression
- Pharr, S. Readings for Diversity and Social Justice
- Johnson, A. Readings for Diversity and Social Justice

### **CASC Check-Ins (September 15)**

## **Week 3: Community Change as a Process: Systems, Structures, Power (September 20)**

*What does community change look like in practice? What are the frameworks? What are some examples?*

*What are the systems structures and power in play in understanding community change? How do we explore root causes and structural forces? Why does this matter?*

*What are frameworks for exploring power and counter power mapping? What and how can these tools be critical to community change efforts?*

*What do different frameworks bring to CASC work? What questions does it raise about the continuity of what it means to do CASC work?*

Readings:

- Checkoway Core Concepts
- Warren, M. – How CO Works
- Reisch – Defining SJ in an unjust world

Thursday, September 22 – ENGAGE Lecture Series –

Alternatives to Policing: Unarmed Crisis Response and the Role of Social Workers

Police violence against Black bodies rightfully has forced society to look more closely at our policing and public safety practices. The #BlackLivesMatter movement has highlighted the racist origins of policing in this country, and how excessive use of force often targets Black people with deadly results.

Disproportionately, police are forced to respond to social, economic, mental/physical health emergencies. Today, community leaders and elected officials are working together to “reimagine our public safety,” by creating, for example, “unarmed crisis response teams” who work alongside police departments. What is the role of social workers in this “reimagined” public safety system? Does our involvement violate any of the professional standards in our NASW Code of Ethics?

Join us to hear from an array of panelists working on this issue in communities, including Assistant Professor at UM Social Work, Daicia Price; Senior Pastor of Vineyard Church Ann Arbor, and member of the Coalition for Re-envisioning our Safety (CORS), Donnell Wyche; and Chair of the Ann Arbor Independent Community Police Oversight Commission (ICPOC), Dr. Lisa Jackson.

II. FRAMEWORKS AND APPROACHES (WEEK 4-6)

**Week 4: Exploring Approaches: CASC in Practice (September 27)**

*ON THURSDAY (9/29), WE’LL SHARE OUR PROPOSALS WITH THE CLASS!*

*What are the approaches? Single Approaches? Multiple Approaches? How do we understand CASC in Practice?*

*What’s the relationship between direct service and direct action?*

Readings/Materials:

- Checkoway: Approaches/Six Strategies
- Wernick, L. & Kulick, A. Youth Participatory Research/Riot Youth: LGBTQQ Activism

### **Week 5: Learning From History & Theory (October 4)**

*What can we learn from history and theory to guide community action and social change work?*

*How can we engage in liberatory theory development in and through community change work?*

*What are the major movements and organizations that have shaped community practice? What lessons and ideas can we draw from these movements for our own work in community change?*

*On Thursday (Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>) we will discuss our Learning from History Papers.*

### **Week 6: A Film Presentation – The Next American Revolution (October 11)**

### **Week 7: Voices From The Field – Guest Lecturer (October 18)**

*Thursday, October 20 – ENGAGE Lecture Series –*

*Fines and Fees: Punishing the Poor & Increasing Disparity*

This discussion is co-sponsored by the University of Michigan Ford School of Public Policy's Poverty Solutions.

From the cash bail system, to fines and fees while incarcerated, to the cost of reentering society, our society functions on a punitive system of fines and fees that often catapults those already experiencing hardship into a spiraling cycle of debt and repayments - never fully able to catch up. Join us as we explore the inequity surrounding fines and fees in our criminal justice system and its role in increasing race-based disparities. Featured panelists include Washtenaw County Prosecutors Eli Savit and Victoria Burton-Harris; and Dr. Meghan O'Neil, Research Scholar at the Population Studies Center, Institute for Social Research. This panel will be facilitated by MSW Student and Co-founder of Michigan Liberation, Nicholas Buckingham.

### **Week 8: Voices From The Field – Guest Lecturer (October 25)**

### **III. SKILLS, PRACTICES & SPECIAL TOPICS**

### **Week 9: CASC CHECK-INS (November 1)**

## **Week 10: Organizing, Strategy, and Action (November 8)**

What is community organizing as a specific approach? What is critical about organizing as an approach to change? How and why does strategy matter for creating change?

Readings:

- A Match on Dry Grass, Chapter 5
- Organizing for Social Change, Chapter 4
- Progressive Community Organizing, Chapter 3

Thursday, November 10 – ENGAGE Lecture Series –

### Media's Role in Social Justice Movements

From #BlackLivesMatter to the #MeToo movement, social media has been used to galvanize social movements and has spurred domestic terror attacks. It also has been used to spread misinformation and has helped create “cancel culture.” Join us for a special virtual discussion with activists and social media influencers who have been part of movements or who teach about social media and social justice.

Speakers include Chidimma Ozor, clinical social worker, therapist, consultant, researcher, educator, & founder of Chidimma Ozor Consulting & Conscious + Aligned; Florence Alexander, Program Assistant for the Center for Equitable Family and Community Well-Being and former 2020 Electoral Justice Project Fellow with the Movement for Black Lives; and Darlene Nichols, U of M Social Work Librarian and Lecturer on misinformation.

## **Week 11: Reality of Community Change: Sustainability & Self-Care (November 15)**

What is the reality of CASC? Given the complexity of systems, how do we think about our work and our potential for change? What are strategies for approaching community action social change work?

Readings

- Tempered Radicals

**NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Recess – Week of November 22**

## Week 12: FINAL CASC GROUP CHECK-INS (November 29)

## Week 13: CLASS PRESENTATIONS (December 6 and 8)

### d. Assignments

#### Learning From History (30%) DUE: Oct. 4<sup>th</sup>

Students will select a historical social justice movement, key social change leader, or organization. Students will conduct research and write a 3-5 page double spaced paper based on your research that addresses the following questions:

- What is the movement/organization about? What is its history?
- Why did/does the movement occur? What are the social justice issues that it is/was trying to challenge/change?
- Underlying perspectives/frameworks/core values of the work?
- What approaches used?
- What can you learn from this movement for your own work?
- Why and how does this movement matter?

#### Semester-long Community Action and Social Change Group Project (30%)

##### DUE: December 6<sup>th</sup>

- The goal of the CASC project is to recommend ways in which an organization can effectively engage the community and deliver programming during a global pandemic.
- Students will develop an individual or group project based on their shared passions or interests/desires to learn about or further their efforts in Community Action & Social Change
- **Proposal: DUE September 27<sup>th</sup>**
- Each individual or group will prepare a one-page (double spaced) written document to discuss their overall topic and project action. In addition to describing their project, students should include any areas they feel they will need support around. Students will get feedback (either written or in person) to support their project plan. Students will develop an action project. Examples of projects include:
  - Resource guide/Tool Kit with curriculum, websites, student organizations around a topic (e.g. educational justice, prison reform, racial justice) or approach to community change work (e.g. community organizing, community facilitation, popular education)
  - Develop an organizational strategy/action plan for an organization, program or a campaign for campus (could be current or proposed)
  - Facilitate a one-day workshop on a specific social justice topic

- Conduct 4 Interviews with current social justice leaders on issues, transcribe the interviews, and analyze the takeaways across the interviews
  - Develop a set of media materials around a specific social justice topic (e.g. communications materials, website, messaging in campaigns)
  - Conduct a research project on a social justice topic that could inform campus or community action.
- Students will develop a PowerPoint Presentation for their project. The PowerPoint should include: 1) an overview of the project, 2) description of the activities/project work, 3) skills gained from completing the project, 4) core lessons learned and reflections from the project.
  - Students will be prepared to share their work with the class via an oral presentation. Presentation days are December 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>.
  - Your PowerPoint presentation must be submitted by December 6, 2022.

#### Lecture Reflection Papers (10%)

Students will submit 2 reflection papers over the course of the semester. These reflection papers will present the student's reactions and thoughts regarding the lecture for the week and will address the following questions.

- Did you learn anything that might be helpful as you work through your CASC project? Please explain.
- Did the lecture raise any questions for you? If so, please explain.

Each paper is worth 5 points and should be no longer than 2 pages double spaced. Please submit your papers on the following dates.

- October 25<sup>th</sup>
- November 15<sup>th</sup>

#### Class Participation (15%) DUE: throughout semester

Active participation will enhance the class discussion and make possible the exploration and exchange of ideas that are critical in this course. Class participation involves thoughtful engagement with the material, contributions that are pertinent to the topic being discussed and all forms of respectful verbal and non-verbal behavior, such as being attentive, asking questions of the professor and other students, sharing reasons why one agrees or disagrees with different ideas, and practicing supportive listening. Respectful behavior also includes being willing to meet individually with the professor upon request. **Failure to exhibit respectful behavior can result in the loss of all 15 points.**



**Also, please note that ringers on cell phones should be turned off when class begins. Texting is not allowed in class but laptops are permissible for note taking and in-class research. If you have an urgent phone call or text message, please leave class to deal with this.**

Finally, if and when our class meets virtually, students are expected to attend the class zoom meetings with their cameras on and keep their cameras on throughout the class session. Students will lose points if their camera remains off during class.

#### Class Attendance (15%) DUE: throughout semester

Attendance will be recorded for each class session. Students with one or no absences will earn 15 points. After the first absence, 1 point will be deducted for each additional absence. Arriving more than ten minutes late or leaving class early will be counted as half an absence.

Exceptions to the absence and attendance rule will be determined by the professor on a case-by-case basis but generally include events for which a student has no control. Here are some examples: jury duty, a summons to appear in court, required military service, and being in a car crash on the way to school.

#### Assignment Expectations

Due dates are firm. I reserve the right to mark down papers 5 points for each day late in fairness to classmates who turn papers in on-time. Please note, I will not accept papers beyond a week after the due date. All written assignments must be submitted electronically via Canvas on the day they are due by **12:30 p.m.** Additionally all assignments must have a cover sheet. The title of your assignment along with your name(s) and date should appear on the cover sheet. Lastly, please use **APA Style Citation Format** on all assignments for this course.

#### e. Grading and Assignments

The class requires a set of assignments aimed at:

- 1) gaining critical awareness about one's self as a community change agent
- 2) building knowledge about historical frameworks, theory, and key people, and
- 3) applying the lessons and learning to one's current interest or work.

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:

94-100=A  
91-93=A-  
87-90=B+  
84-86=B  
81-83=B-  
77-80=C+

74-76=C  
71-73=C-  
67-70=D+  
64-66=D  
60-63=D-

f. Class Recording and Course Materials

*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.*

g. 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](#).

h. 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. Students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or be 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.

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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*