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ENST 520.01: Environmental Organizing

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ENST 520: ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZING
Spring Semester 2014
Fridays 1:10-4:00 Education Bldg., Room 214
(Unless otherwise noted!)

“Participation – that’s what’s gonna save the human race.”
~ Pete Seeger (1919-2014)

Facilitators:

Neva Hassanein. Ph.: 243-6271. Email: neva.hassanein@umontana.edu (the best way to reach her). Office hours: If Neva can be of assistance, please see her by signing up for a meeting time on the sheet posted across from her office door in Rankin (room 101A). Office hours are: **Wednesdays 10:20-11:40 and Thursdays 11:00-12:20.** If these are impossible for you, contact Neva to make an appointment.

Tom Roy

Ph.: 728-8319 Email: tomandsue@bresnan.net
Tom will not hold regular office hours, but is happy to meet with you by appointment.

Overview of the course:

The overarching goal of this course is to deepen your understanding of the theory and practice of social change. The specific objectives of the course are to:

- (1) Expand your knowledge of how non-profit, social movement organizations operate and are sustained over time;
- (2) Develop your understanding of various styles of leadership and explore the passions, values, and skills that you bring to this work; and
- (3) Increase your knowledge and skills regarding theories and approaches to social change, including such topics as: issue campaigns; community organizing; new and traditional media; diversity and alliance building; facilitation and group process; and power analysis.

We will achieve the course objectives through a series of hands-on assignments, reflective writing, and thoughtful participation during our sessions.

In addition, all students in this course (and in the 1-credit ENST 595 option) will participate in four workshops that constitute this semester’s **Environmental Leadership Series**. These provide intensive opportunities for you to engage in professional training sessions with several very highly-skilled and experienced trainers. The dates are noted on the schedule here, but the Series is described completely in a separate document.

Course materials: All enrolled students will have access to a Moodle site - go to <http://umonline.umn.edu> - for this course. There you will find assignments, readings,

and other materials. In addition, the following required texts are available in the UC bookstore:

McKibben, Bill. 2013. *Oil and Honey: The Education of an Unlikely Activist*. New York: Times Books, Henry Holt and Co.

Shaw, Randy. 2013. *The Activist's Handbook: Winning Social Change in the 21st Century*. Second Edition. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Course requirements:

Class Participation: One of your main tasks is to participate thoughtfully and respectfully and with an open mind. We hope you will find it instructive to attend all class sessions and the Environmental Leadership Series. We also expect that you will do each assigned reading thoughtfully before class and help us discuss it in class. Obviously, the vibrancy and depth of our discussions and interactive exercises depends a great deal on how well prepared and engaged you are.

In small teams, you will engage in a project that asks you to develop a campaign plan around a particular issue that your team chooses. Past students in the course have overwhelmingly endorsed the team approach, which not only gives you a chance to apply the new knowledge and skills you are learning, but also to learn about group process. Indeed, most work in the non-profit sector occurs by working *with* other people. Your teammates will be counting on your consistent and collaborative participation (as will be the case when you work with any group).

Reflection Assignments: At four points during the semester, we will ask you to produce short reflection or mini-research papers. The first one will be due on February 14 (see schedule below for details). Additional assignments will be announced as we proceed.

Planning Project Assignment: Your teamwork will be guided by a series of five assignments that we will disseminate every week or two as we progress. These assignments will flow from the material covered in course readings, lectures, workshops, and discussions. All assignments must be turned in on time. By the end, your team will have:

1. Picked an "issue" that your team will focus on and produced a description of the "lay of the land."
2. Developed and used a team process for making decisions and for coordinating and allocating responsibilities among members.
3. Produced a complete campaign plan
4. Made a final oral presentation to the larger group, with a role for each team member.

5. Conducted an evaluation of the team's process. Each team member will also evaluate their own work and the work of their teammates.
6. Produced a final portfolio with all assignments and documentation of the campaign's activity.

Advising and Feedback: Tom and Neva encourage you to meet with us so that we can be of assistance. Please see information at top about how best to do so. You can anticipate that we will give your team detailed feedback on your assignments as we progress. We will try hard, however, not to steer the direction of your team too much so that you can effectively learn by engaging in the work.

Grading: Your final grade will be based on the following components.

- Participation 50%
- 4 Reflection papers 20%
- Planning project (team) 30%

Schedule

Please note: Our schedule is subject to change as needed. Additional materials will be assigned. Some ELS sessions will meet at a different location and time.

1. **Jan. 31 – Introduction to the Course and to Each Other.** In-class viewing of the documentary, "Fierce Green Fire: The Battle for a Livable Planet," and discussion of the history of the "environmental movement(s)"
2. **Feb. 7 – Thinking about Change**

Gottlieb, Robert. 1993. Reconstructing environmentalism: Complex movements, diverse roots. *Environmental History Review* 17(4): 1-19.

Brower, David, with Steve Chapple. 2000. For those who would save the earth. Pp. 177-196 in *Let the Mountains Talk, Let the Rivers Run*. Gabriola Island, BC, Canada: New Society Publishers.

Boggs, Grace Lee. 2012. These are the times that try our souls. Pp. 28-51 in *The Next American Revolution: Sustainable Activism for the Twenty-First Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Horton, Myles and Paulo Friere. 1990. Ideas. Pp. 115-128 required (Pp. 97-143 provided) in *We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

3. **Feb. 14 – McKibben’s *Oil and Honey*. Reflection Assignment #1 Due.**
Please complete the book and write a 2-3 page reflection paper on it. You can focus on any aspect you want, but be sure to show you have engaged with it deeply. You might consider questions like: What does McKibben learn about organizing and how power works in society? How did McKibben and his allies translate the “problem” of climate change into an “issue” that has to be addressed by decision makers? What are the most striking lessons you take away from the book? What are your thoughts about civil disobedience as a strategy?

4. **Feb. 21 – Organizing and Campaigning: Introduction.**
Picking an issue and researching the lay of the land. Setting group norms and introduction to group facilitation. Formation of teams. Team assignment #1 distributed.

The Activist’s Handbook, Introduction and Chapter 1 on strategizing, pp. 1-40.

Alinsky, Saul. 1971. A word about words. Pp. 48-62 in *Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals*. New York: Vintage Books.

Klein, Ezra. 2011. The four habits of highly successful social movements. *The Washington Post*. Oct. 5.

Western Organization of Resource Councils. 2006. How to develop a winning strategy. From a series of guides by the WORC, Billings, MT.

5. **Friday, February 28 – ELS: Traditional and New Media Training with Amy Frykman and Krista Meyer of Resource Media from 1:10 – 5:00, Univ. Center, Room 330.**

The Activist’s Handbook, Chapters 5 and 6 on media, pp. 139-184.

Check out the tremendous resources available on Resource Media’s website.

6. **March 7 – Building Effective Organizations.**

Assignment TBA.

7. **Friday, March 14 – ELS: Leadership Lessons from the Living Earth: Turning to Nature for Guidance in Leading Organizations and Movements with Toby Herzlich, 1:10 – 4:00, Educ. Bldg. 214.**

Benyus, Janine. N.d. A biomimicry primer. Resource Handbook. Biomimicry 3.8.

8. **Friday, March 21 – ELS: Diversity Matters: Leveraging Diversity and Inclusion as a Foundation for Success with Angela Park 12:00 – 5:00, Univ. Center, Room 330.**

Selections from:

Enderle, Emily, editor. 2007. *Diversity and the Future of the U.S. Environmental Movement*. New Haven: Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

The Activist's Handbook, Chapter 3: Coalition Activism: Rounding up the Unusual Suspects, Pp. 83-109.

9. **March 28 – To be announced.**

April 4 – Spring Break. No class.

10. **Friday and Saturday, April 11–12 – ELS: Building Authentic Power for Progressive Social Change with Pamela Chiang at Lubrecht Conference Center.**
Assignment TBA.

11. **Apr. 18 – To be announced**

12. **Apr. 25 – To be announced**

13. **May 2 – To be announced**

14. **May 9 – Presentations**

Final Session: Exam period is Wed. May 14, 3:20-5:20. Note, we will agree upon a different time to have a final gathering and potluck in order to celebrate and reflect on our experiences. Final reflection assignment due.