

Syllabus and Course Guide

How to Change the World

The Strategies and Tactics of Nonviolent Action

Overview

This course will help students understand how to participate more effectively in campaigns and movements for social change.

Topics to be addressed include the principles and practices of nonviolent action, strategy and tactics of social change, methods of civil resistance, models for organizing public policy campaigns, and lessons learned from present and past social justice movements. The course will examine the techniques and methods of nonviolent action: strategic analysis, organizational development, effective communications, digital organizing, fundraising, coalition building, and leadership.

Relevant historical and contemporary examples will be reviewed to illustrate how movements for social change work in practice. These include Gandhian movements in South Africa and India; the U.S. civil rights movement; the Vietnam antiwar movement; the overthrow of Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia in 2000; the Iraq antiwar movement; the global climate change movement; Black Lives Matter and other contemporary campaigns for racial justice in the U.S. We will also consider successful examples of student organizing here on campus.

Course work will consist of readings, lectures, videos, and class discussion on the identified topics. Videos will include segments from *Gandhi*, the Academy Award-winning film by Richard Attenborough; the PBS documentary series *A Force More Powerful*; the Academy Award-winning documentary on the U.S. civil rights movement, *A Time for Justice*; and the documentary on the Serbian revolution, *Bringing Down a Dictator*. Guest speakers during the semester will include representatives of Win Without War, Re-Think Media and other social justice and peace advocacy groups nationally and in the local community.

Required reading materials for the course include all or parts of the following:

Alinsky, Saul. *Rules for Radicals: A Practical Primer for Realistic Radicals*. New York: Vintage Books, 1971.

Chenoweth, Erica. *Civil Resistance: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford University Press, 2021.

Cortright, David. *Gandhi and Beyond: Nonviolence for an Age of Terrorism*. Second

Edition. Boulder, Colo.: Paradigm Publishers, 2009.

Moyer, Bill, with JoAnn McAllister, Mary Lou Finley, Steven Soifer. *Doing Democracy: The MAP Model for Organizing Social Change*. New Society Publishers, 2001.

Mark Engler and Paul Engler, *This is an Uprising: How Nonviolent Revolt is Shaping the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Nation Books, 2016.

Truth Seekers: Voices of Peace and Nonviolence, edited with commentary by David Cortright. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2019.

Class	Topic	Reading Assignments, Videos, Guests
Jan 10	Gandhi and the theory and practice of nonviolent resistance	<i>Gandhi and Beyond</i> , Chapter 1; <i>Civil Resistance</i> , Introduction, 1-27; video excerpt of <i>Gandhi</i> film by Attenborough
Jan 12	Gandhi's methods	Video from "Force More Powerful" by the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict
Jan 19	Martin Luther King, Jr.	<i>Gandhi and Beyond</i> , Chapter 3; <i>Truth Seekers</i> , 24-53; audio excerpt from Dr. King's "Drum Major Instinct" sermon
Jan 24	Martin Luther King, Jr.	Audio excerpt from <i>Beyond Vietnam</i> speech,
Jan 26	Barbara Deming and the principles of nonviolent civil resistance	<i>Gandhi and Beyond</i> , Chapter 6; <i>Truth Seekers</i> , 93-107; <i>Civil Resistance</i> , Chapter 1, "The Basics," 28-80.
Jan 31	Black Lives Matter and the movement for racial justice	Recent articles
Feb 7	How Civil Resistance Works	<i>Civil Resistance</i> , Chapter 2, 81-141
Feb 9	Principle of strategy	Bill Moyer et. al. <i>Doing Democracy</i> , Chapters 3&4; Ackerman and Kruegler, Chapters 1&2

Feb 14	Strategies of social change	Gene Sharp, Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan, <i>Truth Seekers</i> , 120-145
Feb 16	Movements and structures for change	Engler and Engler, <i>This is an Uprising</i> , Introduction and Chapters 1-4; <i>Gandhi and Beyond</i> , Chapter 7
Feb 21	Movements and structures for change	Engler and Engler, <i>This is an Uprising</i> , Introduction and Chapters 1-4; <i>Gandhi and Beyond</i> , Chapter 7
Feb 23	Effective campus campaigning	Guest speaker, TBA
Feb 28	Strategy of social change	Student team presentations
Mar 2	Strategy of social change	Student team presentations
Mar 5 - 13	Spring Break (No class)	
Mar 14	Media communications for social change	Bonk et al, <i>Strategic Communications for Nonprofits: A Step-by-Step Guide to Working with the Media</i> , Chapters 2 and 4,
Mar 16	Principles of media communications for social change	<i>Values, Vision, and Voice: A Communications Toolkit</i>
Mar 21	Climate change and the environment	Andrew Marantz, "The Youth Movement Trying to Revolutionize Climate Politics," <i>The New Yorker</i> ; Guest speakers
Mar 23	Media communications and the principles of social action	Prof Cortright presents his work on Iraq Anti-War Movement
Mar 28	Principles of media communications for social change	Guest speakers
Mar 30	Secrets of success	Engler and Engler, <i>This is an Uprising</i> , Chapters 5-9

Apr 4	Media communications	Student Team presentations
Apr 6	Media communications	Student team presentations
Apr 11	Creating a peaceful U.S. foreign policy	Guest speakers
Apr 13	Coalitions and leadership	Principles of effective decision making; “Notes on servant leadership”
Apr 20	Black Lives Matter and the movement for racial justice	Guest speaker
Apr 25	Final wrap up	