

# **SOCIOLOGY 411: Social Movements**

## **Fall 2012**

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Classroom: New West 219  
Class Meeting: Tu/TH 3:30-4:45

### **OVERVIEW OF COURSE**

Why do people protest and organize to change the world around them? Most of the time people follow the rules, obey authorities, and put up with situations – even situations they consider unjust and immoral. Yet, in some cases, people join together to press for change. Why do people sometimes protest but more often not? How do movements work, and why do some succeed while others fail?

This course explores the origins, dynamics and consequences of social movements from a sociological perspective. Over the semester, we will examine a wide range of topics including: the emergence of movements, recruitment and leadership, interactions of movements with the media, political authorities and the broader public, tactics (e.g. nonviolent direct action, litigation), and the factors contributing to the success and failure of movements.

We will learn about several historically important social movements. For example, we will study recent social movements in Western democracies including the civil rights, women's, environmental, farm worker, pro-life, and pro-choice movements. In addition, we will look at several social movements from around the globe. Studying social movements allows us to examine much broader questions of social and political theory. These include questions about the nature of power, conflict, political authority and legitimacy, and the relation between human agency and historical change.

### **COURSE GOALS**

The major goals of this course are:

- Introduce major theoretical perspectives and debates in the study of social movements
- Learn about important historical and contemporary social movements especially in the United States
- Understand the diverse motivations and goals that activists bring to movements
- Consider the major social forces that shape the organization, tactics and success (or failure) of movements
- Learn to use sociological theories and empirical research to analyze social movements  
Develop analytic, writing, public speaking, and discussion skills

## **COURSE FORMAT**

Each week, I will post questions on sakai prior to class meetings to guide your reading and prepare for our meetings. The basic format of our meetings will combine characteristics of a seminar and a lecture course. We will use discussion, short lectures, films, and presentations throughout the semester. Discussion will be used to critically evaluate theoretical ideas, case studies, and your own experience and observations of protest and movements. Short lectures will be used to help place course readings in relation to the broader historical and sociological scholarship in the field. Your individual success and our collective success hinges on active participation which includes reading course material and reflecting on them prior to class meetings for which they are assigned. I will provide questions that ask you to reflect on important themes and questions as you do the reading. Upper-level courses are most successful when they build a sustained, cumulative conversation among the same participants.

## **READING**

This course has five books that are available at the campus bookstore and online booksellers:

- (1) David Snow and Sarah Soule. *A Primer on Social Movements*
- (2) Doug McAdam. 1988. *Freedom Summer*. NY: Oxford University Press.
- (3) Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson. *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*. NY: Oxford University Press.
- (4) Sarah Sobieraj. *Soundbitten*. NY: NYU Press.
- (5) Sharon Erickson Nepstad. *Nonviolent Revolutions* NY: Oxford University Press.

All additional articles and book chapters will be available on sakai as PDF files.

## **MEETINGS AND CONTACTING ME**

You can drop by to meet with me during office hours or by appointment other times of the week. Email is generally the best method to reach me with smaller questions. Immediately after class is another good time to have short discussions or set up meetings. You can arrange meetings with Sally by email or immediately before or after class.

## **REQUIREMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS**

Reading Notes	30%
First Short Paper	15%
Second Short Paper	20%
Mid-Term Exam	15%
Final Exam	20%

Reading Notes/Class Assignments (30%): You will turn in reading notes at the beginning of each class meeting. These will take the form of a short (approximately one page) commentary on the reading for the day. Your notes can be handwritten or typed, but you must bring a physical copy to class. I will post questions on sakai each Friday that pose questions for the class meetings in the upcoming week. I will only accept notes submitted in person at the very beginning of class and by students who participate in the class meeting. Your reading notes will help prepare you for participation in class discussion and activities, and they will help you keep relevant notes over the course of the semester. Notes will be graded on a simple scale of full (2 points), partial (1.5 points), or no credit (0 points). There are twenty-five class meetings on which notes will be due. You can miss reading notes for three class meetings without having a negative impact on your grade (for example, if you are sick for one class meeting). So, earning 44 points equals a

100 for this portion of the course. If you must miss a class for an approved university activity, you can make arrangements with me to turn in your notes before (but not after) the relevant class meeting.

First Short Paper (15%): Due October 6<sup>th</sup>. For this paper, you will read and review a biography of a movement activist or leader using theories of movement participation to explain the individual's experience of activism. I will provide a list of possible books on sakai. You may propose other books, but you must have alternative books approved by me at least one week before the deadline. Estimated length is 5-6 pages.

Second Short Paper (20%): Due November 10<sup>th</sup>. For this paper, you will collect and analyze media coverage of protest and social movements to address major debates about the media and movements. Estimated length is 10-12 pages. Further details will be provided in class including strategies to collect and analyze data.

Mid-term Exam (15%): On September 27<sup>th</sup>. Our mid-term and final exam will combine identification, short answer and essay questions, and we will discuss the details with example questions later in the semester.

Final Exam (20%): On December 13<sup>th</sup>. See above for format.

## **GRADES**

The grading scale for this course is: A=100-94; A-=93-91; B+=90-88; B=87-84; B-=83-81; C+=80-78; C=77-74; C-=73--71; D+=70-68; D=67--61; F=60 and below.

## **POLICIES**

If you have some extraordinary set of circumstances that make it impossible for you to meet a deadline, you must see me prior to the deadline. Extraordinary circumstances might include a serious illness or death in your family, but it would not include personal travel, extracurricular activities, or fulfilling the requirements of other courses.

Sakai will be used for announcements and to make copies of the syllabus, handouts, and assignments available to you. You should check sakai regularly (2-3 times a week) for announcements related to course assignments and schedule.

## **HONOR CODE**

Your participation in this course is covered by the UNC Honor Code (<http://honor.unc.edu/honor/code.html>). If you have questions about any forms of academic dishonesty please see me, and I will be happy to clarify. In this course, you should be especially attentive to plagiarism. The UNC Writing Center has a handout that describes what plagiarism is, why it should be avoided, and how to avoid it. Here's the link:

<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html>

**COURSE SCHEDULE** (\*\* note that we may modify the schedule as needed depending on the pace of the class; any changes will be announced in class and on the course website)

August 21 Introduction to Class

August 23 Social Movements: Definitions and Debates  
David Snow and Sarah Soule. "Conceptualizing Social Movements," (Ch. 1) in *A Primer on Social Movements*

### **When and Why do Movements Emerge?**

August 28 Origins of Mass Protest  
Marcellus Barksdale. 1986. "Civil Rights Organization and the Indigenous Movement in Chapel Hill, NC, 1960-1965" *Phylon* 47:29-42

August 30 From Grievances to Movements  
David Snow and Sarah Soule "Mobilizing Grievances," Ch. 2 in *A Primer on Social Movements*  
Lewis Killian. 1984. "Organization, Rationality and Spontaneity in the Civil Rights Movement." *American Sociological Review* 49:770-783

September 4 Organization and Leadership  
David Snow and Sarah Soule "Dynamics of Social Movements," Ch. 3 (pp. 87-108 only) in *A Primer on Social Movements*  
Aldon Morris. 1981. "Black Southern Student Sit-In Movement: An Analysis of Internal Organization." *American Sociological Review* 46:744-767.  
FILM: Ain't Scared of Your Jails

September 6 External Conditions and Movements  
David Snow and Sarah Soule "Contextual Conditions," Ch. 3 (pp. 64-87 only) in *A Primer on Social Movements*  
Rhoda Lois Blumberg. "The Shaping of Black Resistance," pp. 1-15 in *Civil Rights: The 1960s Freedom Struggle*

### **Who Becomes an Activist and Why?**

September 11 Becoming an Activist  
David Snow and Sarah Soule "Participation in Social Movements," Ch. 4 in *A Primer on Social Movements*  
Dennis Chong. Selections from *Collective Action and the Civil Rights Movement*, pp 1-11 and 133-7

September 13 Availability, Beliefs, and Relationships  
Doug McAdam. *Freedom Summer*. Chs. 1-2.  
In Class: Freedom on My Mind (Part 1)

- September 18 The Activist Experience: Solidarity and Collective Identity  
 Doug McAdam. *Freedom Summer*. Chs. 3-4  
 Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison. Selections from *Music and Social Movements*, pp. 1-5, 168-173
- September 20 Radicalization and Activist Careers  
 Doug McAdam. *Freedom Summer*. Ch. 5  
 FILM: *Freedom on My Mind* (Part 2)
- September 25 Sustaining Participation: Ideology, Networks and Social Context  
 Doug McAdam. *Freedom Summer*. Ch. 6
- September 27 MID-TERM EXAM

### **How Do Movements Mobilize Mass Support?**

- October 2 Right Wing Activism and Activists  
 Skocpol and Williamson. *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*. Chapters 1 and 2
- October 4 Movements Organizations and Strategy  
 David Snow and Sarah Soule “Dynamics of Social Movements,” Ch. 5 (pp. 149-163 only) in *A Primer on Social Movements*
- October 9 Strategic Capacity and Tactics  
 Marshall Ganz. Selection from *Why David Sometimes Wins: Leadership, Organization, and Strategy in the California Farm Worker Movement*  
 Amy Stone. “Dominant Tactics in Social Movement Tactical Repertoires: Anti-Gay Ballot Measures, 1974-2008.”
- October 11 Tea Party Mobilization  
 Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*. Chapters 3 & 4
- October 16 Tea Party, the GOP, and American Politics  
 Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*. Chapters 5 & 6

### **How Do Movements Get Their Message Out? Strategy, Tactics, and Media**

- October 23 Visibility and the Mass Media  
 Sarah Sobieraj. *Soundbitten* Chs. 1-2

- October 25 How Activists Stage Protest  
Sarah Sobieraj. *Soundbitten* Chs. 3-4
- October 30 Workshop: Studying Media and Movements
- November 1 New Media, New Movements?  
Sarah Sobieraj. *Soundbitten* Chs. 5-6 and Epilogue  
Clay Shirky. "Collective Action and Institutional Challenges," pp. 143-160 in  
*Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations*,  
2008.

### **How Do Movements Create Change?**

- November 6 Success and the Consequences of Movements  
David Snow and Sarah Soule "Consequences of Social Movements," Ch. 6 in *A  
Primer on Social Movements*
- November 8 Movements Changing Politics  
Kenneth T. Andrews. "The Politics of Poverty," pp. 136-154 in *Freedom is a  
Constant Struggle*
- November 13 Movements Creating Markets and Challenging Corporations  
Hayagreeva Rao. "Evange-Ale-ists and the Renaissance of Micro-Brewing" in  
*Market Rebels*

### **Movements, Revolutions and Political Change**

- November 15 Politics, Repression, and Popular Movements  
Doug McAdam. "The Decline of the Civil Rights Movement" from *Waves of  
Protest*, edited by Jo Freeman and Victoria Johnson, pp. 325-348
- November 20 Nonviolent Strategy and Social Change  
Sharon Erickson Nepstad *Nonviolent Revolutions* Chs. 1
- November 27 Strategy and Repression at Tiananman Square  
Sharon Erickson Nepstad *Nonviolent Revolutions* Chs. 2-3  
FILM: A Force More Powerful
- November 29 Successful and Unsuccessful Revolutions  
Sharon Erickson Nepstad *Nonviolent Revolutions* Chs. 5, 6 and 8
- December 4 Future of Social Movements and Wrap-Up

FINAL EXAM – Thursday, December 13 @ 4:00 PM