

# Acting Up for Social Change

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### Course Description

Theater and political protest. Media activists and anti-globalization. Online Flash movies for sustainable development. Hip Hop and voter registration. These are just a few of the ways art and social change are coming together. Artists and activists are blending their approaches, strategies and tactics in a creative stew for progressive social change. This class will examine how social change activists are using creative tools and methods to achieve their change agendas. The class will: (1) Give students a basic understanding of what creativity is and the role it plays in the life of the nation and its power to transform, (2) Give students a foundational understanding of the principles and practices of direct action organizing, (3) Expose students to innovative and non-traditional strategies and tactics for mobilizing for social change, (4) Investigate organizations who are engaged in creative social change, and (5) Give students experience in using online tools such as YouTube, wikis and uploading tools. Proficiency in PowerPoint and ability to learn Internet-based tools required.

### Course Learning Goals

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Describe the place of creativity in the life of the nation – its heritage, economy and politics
- Appreciate the role creativity can play in personal development and problem solving
- Describe how creativity has played a role in social change movements
- Understand the steps involved in organizing for effective social change
- Distinguish between various types of social change organizations using a framework that will help you judge how effective such groups are
- Understand the work of a variety of creative social change activists
- Understand how technology is being used for social change efforts
- Navigate Internet-based tools such as a wiki, social media and peer-to-peer applications

If you are seeking the A-3-X competence, you will be able to:

- Articulate multiple ways in which creativity impacts society
- Articulate ways in which creativity and the arts can impact social change.

If you are seeking the H-1-i competence, you will be able to:

- Articulate a critical framework for looking at how helping organizations approach social change
- Explain differences in various creative strategies and tactics used in social change

If you are seeking the H-2-X competence, you will be able to:

- Show how creativity and freedom of expression contributes to a robust democracy and can help advance social change.
- Articulate a range of methods and approaches used by creative activists and why they are used.

If you are seeking the FX competence, you will be able to:

- Apply creative methods to personal and organizational problem solving
- Apply creativity to social change initiatives

## Course Resources

To buy your books, go to <http://www.mbsdirect.net>.

Hint: type "DePaul" for name of the school.

### Required Reading:

- "The Creative Person," Michael C. Zilch, Buffalo State International Center for Studies in Creativity.
- Summary of Multiple Intelligence Theory by David Lazear.
- "Creative Industries" chapter from Creative Industries, John Hartley, ed., Blackwell Publishing.
- Chapter 4, "Employ Innovation Styles as Your Compass," from Flash of Brilliance – Inspiring Creativity Where You Work, by William Miller.
- "Creativity Killing Phrases" by Charles Thompson
- Chapters 2, 3, 4 - "The Fundamentals of Direct Action Organizing," "Choosing an Issue," and "Developing a Strategy" from Organizing for Social Change.
- "Community Organizing Basics" from The Marin Institute.
- Chapter 1, "Singing Civil Rights: The Freedom Song Tradition," from The Art of Protest, by T.V. Reed.
- "The Role of the Arts in a Time of Crisis" by Mary Schmidt Campbell, from Artistic Citizenship – A Public Voice for the Arts, ed by Campbell and Martin.
- "Artists in Time of War" from book of same title, by Howard Zinn.
- "Trespassing Relevance" by Nato Thompson, from The Interventionists, edited by Thompson & Sholette
- "Good Magazine Guide to Culture Jamming,"
- "Tactical Performance and the Interventionists"
- "Introduction to the Internet" at <http://www.unicom.com/pw/web-intro/#14>, and from Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet>
- "Classifying Forms of Online Activism," by Sandor Vegh, in Cyberactivism – Online Activism in Theory and Practice, ed. By McCaughey & Ayers.
- "Top 10 Ways Your Campaign/Organization Should Use Video" PDF from the New Politics Institute.
- "Using Video for Advocacy" by Gillian Caldwell from Video For Change – A Guide for Advocacy and Activism
- "Calling the World to Witness" from Chronicle of Philanthropy, Nov. 17, 2007.
- "The Community Cultural Development Field," by Dan Adams and Arlene Goldbard, from The Community Arts Network.
- "How Do the Arts Build Communities?" by Tom Tresser, from Journal of Cultural Policy.
- Profile of The Village of Arts and Humanities from Beginner's Guide to Community-Based Arts by Knight & Schwarzman.
- Profile from "Making Exact Change" report on arts and community development at <http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archive/mec/mec-village.php>

### Watch videos:

- Tom Paine and the writing of the Declaration of Independence, from “The American Revolution” series from The History Channel.
- “Eyes Wide Open” from the American Friends Service Committee.
- Segment on “The Miracle of Mata Ortiz” from Frontline/World
- Segment on Lilly Yeh from “Edens Lost & Found” PBS series.
- Watch videocast presentations by instructor:
  - Introduction to the class
  - “Our Creative Heritage”
  - “Introduction to the Creative Economy”
  - “What is Creativity?”
  - “Introduction to Community Organizing”

### Online Resources for Creativity & Social Change:

The Community Arts Network - <http://www.communityarts.net/index.php>

The Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination - <http://www.labofii.net/home>

The Animating Democracy Project at Americans for the Arts - <http://www.artsusa.org/animatingdemocracy>

### Online Resources for Community Organizing:

Online community organizing manual - <http://www.nfg.org/cotb>

The Community Organizing site - <http://comm-org.wisc.edu>

The Industrial Areas Foundation - <http://www.industrialareasfoundation.org>

## Course Competences

In this course, you will develop the following competences:

| Competence | Competence Statement and Facets  |
|------------|--|
| A-3-X      | Can identify the social and historical context of a particular artist/social activist and explain his/her point of view  |
| H-1-I      | Can understand change methodology, plan change within a community, and assess its likely impact  |
| H-2-X      | Understands cultural activism and can identify and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of social change groups who use creative, non-traditional methods of organizing. |
| FX         | Can apply a creative process to accelerate the effectiveness of a social change organization.  |

### How the Competences will be Demonstrated in this Course

Students will prepare a paper and a presentation based on the competence(s) they seek:

**A-3-X:** Can identify the social and historical context of a particular artist/social activist and explain his/her point of view.

Students seeking this competence will prepare a profile of an artist who has been effective or powerful in social justice, political organizing or community change. Share a sample of this artist's work and explain it to the class. Students will prepare a biographical sketch of the artist and explain their work and political goals. What impact did this artist have on his/her society? The student should present examples of the work and present critiques and comments on the work. Finally, the student should express their own opinion of the artist and his/her work.

**H-1-I:** Can understand change methodology, plan change within a community, and assess its likely impact.

Students seeking this competence will research a creative organizing tool or tactic and discuss the pros and cons of this tool and tell us how it is being used to advance social change. Some of the tools and tactics we'll be covering include: culture jamming, YouTube, email advocacy, Facebook, video advocacy and street theater. Students will focus on one tool or tactic and explain what it is, how it works and what are the strengths and weaknesses of this tool in social change work.

**H-2-X:** Understands cultural activism and can identify and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of social change groups who use creative, non-traditional methods of organizing.

Students seeking this competence will analyze a group that is using non-traditional, creative or theatrical tactics for social change and prepare a short report describing their methods and philosophy and discuss their strengths and weaknesses. Students will prepare an overview of their selected group and give a summary of their history, organizational makeup and activities, including images of the group's work and Internet home page. Students will use the framework from class on assessing social change effectiveness to discuss the work of their selected group. Finally, students will offer their opinion of the group's methods and effectiveness.

**FX:** Can apply a creative process to accelerate the effectiveness of a social change organization.

Students seeking this competence will prepare a report as if they have just been appointed the new Director of a social change organization (assigned by the instructor). The student will explain how they will bring creativity to the organization and what creative methods to accomplish its mission.

The papers are due as follows:

- If you are seeking one competence – by end of Module 7
- If you are seeking two competences – first by end of Module 7
- If you are seeking two competences – second by end of Module 9

## Expectations for Final Papers

These papers must be at least ten pages in length, double spaced, 12 pt. type, excluding citations or addendum. They must contain images that illustrate your topic.

You will email the instructor a proposal for your paper(s) by the end of Module 4. Your topic must be approved by the instructor. The proposal is simply a short statement of the proposed topic or subject of your paper.

## Expectations for Final Presentations

Each student will compose a PowerPoint presentation based on their final paper. The presentation is due when the paper is due. If you are seeking two competences, you will be submitting two papers and preparing two presentations. The instructor will load these presentations onto a dedicated page in the class wiki. We will find a time to be online together and we will use a teleconferencing service to listen to each student walk us through their presentation. If you are not available for the agreed upon time, please make arrangements with the instructor for an alternate date. Each presentation will be ten minutes in length and should communicate the key learnings of your research. Please do

include images. For guidelines on producing PowerPoint work, please go to <http://www.itd.depaul.edu/website/media/viewlets/ppmenu.html>. For tips on making clear and easy to read presentations, go to [http://net.educause.edu/content.asp?page\\_id=2501&bhcp=1](http://net.educause.edu/content.asp?page_id=2501&bhcp=1). Visit the class wiki for more tips on using PowerPoint.

## Course Grading Scale

|               |                 |               |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| A = 95 to 100 | A- = 91 to 94   | B+ = 88 to 90 |
| B = 85 to 87  | B- = 81 to 84   | C+ = 77 to 80 |
| C = 73 to 76  | C- = 69 to 72   | D+ = 65 to 68 |
| D = 61 to 64  | F = 60 or below | INC           |

For SNL courses taken for Pass/Fail, a “Pass” represents a grade of “A” for purposes of financial aid and employer reimbursement.

Students wishing to declare a Pass/Fail option must do so before the end of the 2nd week of the quarter.

## Course Structure

This course consists of 10 modules. The estimated time to complete each module is one week.

**To view the course schedule, click on the Schedule link on the left-hand navigation bar. This page contains the most recently updated listing of the topics and assignments due for each week of the course.**

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## Assessment

### Assessment of Learning

You will participate consistently and constructively by completing the activities listed below by their due dates. You will

- Watch the assigned videos and discuss them online
- Read the assignments and discuss them online
- Take the assigned online assessments
- Upload material as required
- Prepare and hand in your assigned paper, depending on which competence(s) you are seeking
- Prepare and present a PowerPoint presentation for each competence(s) you are seeking

### Percentage distribution of Assessments

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Participation</b>                      | 50 points maximum. Actively participate in online discussion, engage other students, show mastery of readings and uploading of assignments. Each discussion assignment is worth 2 points, with the exception of 8.2 and 9.3, which are worth 3 points. The online multiple choice test is worth 5 points. Assignment 4.4 is worth 3 points. |
| <b>Written assignments - Final Papers</b> | 40 points maximum.  |
| <b>Final presentation</b>                 | 10 points maximum   |

## General Assessment Criteria for All Writing Assignments

- All written assignments will be evaluated on the basis of their accuracy of representation of course concepts; accuracy of application of course concepts; depth of analysis and application; and breadth of analysis and application; and writing style (as below).
- All writing assignments are to be submitted according to APA standards. Citation guides are available at: [http://www.lib.depaul.edu/eresource/infotype\\_subject\\_search.asp?MaterialID=8](http://www.lib.depaul.edu/eresource/infotype_subject_search.asp?MaterialID=8)
- It is strongly suggested that if you are using word processing software that you use spell-and grammar-check tools before submitting any draft or final project. In any case, proofreading is essential.
- Be sure to avoid plagiarism. Read the information on this page: <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/Resources/Students/index.html>. Papers will regularly be submitted to "Turnitn.com" in order to ensure that the work is the student's own creation and not in violation of the University's Academic Integrity Policy. Submission of work in this course constitutes a pledge that the work is original and consent to have the work submitted to verify that fact.
- The previous cautions also applies to email and discussion postings. While daily postings on the discussion may be less formal than submitted assignments, under no circumstances should correct punctuation, correct spelling or the division of posted material into paragraphs be considered optional. If you use someone else's words, use quotation marks; if you use someone else's ideas, cite them.

## Online Discussion

### Assessment Criteria for Online Discussion Participation

- In online discussions, you will clearly and consistently link what you are learning in the course, including course readings, to your real life experiences. These discussions are a place for you to exchange reflections with others in the class.
- Specifically, in order to receive credit for participation in the online discussion parts of the course it is important that:
  - you actively contribute substantive work (as defined below) at least 3-4 times per week in all discussion forums and in a range of topics in each forum.
  - If you are the original poster in a discussion or thread, and someone comments on that post, you will always reply to that comment.
  - you accurately integrate information from multiple sources, particularly class readings. (Be sure to cite your sources appropriately).
  - you provide both depth and breadth of comments and analysis.
  - you actively contribute to the online discussions in a collegial fashion, maintaining a respectful tone toward other participants, greeting others by name and closing with a signature.
  - you contribute original ideas to the online discussion in ways that facilitates learning for other people, relating personal ideas to course ideas.
  - you demonstrate good "listening" skills and active inquiry skills in the online discussions. This means that you should pay attention, address the commentary of others with openness, and offer constructive and interested commentary, whether in the form of questions or statements

## Discussion Boards

**Discussion Boards** are a forum for discussion and sharing information among students. Your instructor may create one or more discussion boards related to the topics you are studying each week.

At the beginning of the quarter, your instructor will set up three discussion forums. These three forums will help you and your classmates get off to an immediate start on the course, by providing conversational spaces for necessary, ongoing social and administrative activities. These forums are:

- Introductions
- "Course Q&A"
- "Creative Activists" is a social meeting space for discussion that is not directly related to course content.

The Q&A forum is where the management and administrative tasks of the course are conducted, and where you can ask 'process' questions and receive answers. You will also find the schedule of specific dates for your course in this Conference, and the emails sent out to the whole class using the Listserver.

The Creative Activists space can be used freely for your own conversation (like setting up groups or teams, if these are used in the course)

## Use of Tools and Online Technology

During this course you will be expected to work with several computer-based tools and online tools:

### **PowerPoint (or similar presentation software)**

You will be expected to produce several presentations. We've supplied links to tutorials and reference resources. You will be expected to:

- Produce a presentation that is legible and which responds to the assignment
- Contains images
- Contain live links to web sites

Here's an online PowerPoint tutorial: <https://eee.uci.edu/help/ppt/basic/index.php?topic=start>.

Please let the instructor know if you're having difficulty with this.

### **Bubbl Online Brainstorming/Mind Mapping Tool (<http://www.bubbl.us>)**

This is an online tool that allows users to create mind maps to generate ideas, capture brainstorming sessions and graphically show how different sorts of ideas can be connected. It could be called a visual outliner that allows you to capture ideas and sort them and group them.

You will be expected to:

- Create a free account for yourself
- Use the tool to capture ideas and save your work
- Use the tool with others to work on a shared problem
- Generate an "embed code" and email that code to the instructor

## Wiki

We will be using a [class wiki](#) to post material. You will be emailed an access key to enter this site.

You will be expected to:

- Navigate the wiki to find posted material
- Post content and comments to the wiki as directed

## Techniques

- You are expected to know how to strategically surf the web using Google and other search engines
- You are expected to know how to capture images from the web and save them to your desktop for use in your presentations Here's one tip sheet on this:  
<http://uwec.edu/help/PPoint03/capturing.htm#cimages>. Here's a tutorial on capturing screenshots from your PC:  
<http://graphicssoft.about.com/cs/general/ht/winscreenshot.htm>.
- If you have a digital camera and opt to shoot a video of yourself for one of the assignments and images of graffiti for another assignment, then you must know how to transfer those files from your camera to your computer and name those files appropriately.

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## Policies

### Academic Integrity

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.
- Copying of any source in whole or part with only minor changes in wording or syntax, even with acknowledgement.
- Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.
- The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If an instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor's discretion.

### Disability Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis. The Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) determines appropriate accommodations through consultation with the student. For certain learning disabilities and/or attention deficit disorders, the Productive Learning Strategies Program (PLuS) determines the appropriate accommodations. See the instructor for more information or call OSD at 773-325-7290 (phone) or 773-325-7296 (TTY); or call PLuS at 773-325-1677.

## Incomplete Grades

The intent of the Incomplete grade is to allow students extra time to complete their final assignments. This need arises because, in the closing weeks of the course, they have an event of significant magnitude that adversely affects their ability to complete the course, e.g. serious illness, death in the family, overseas deployment, or natural disaster.

You must request an incomplete grade in writing two weeks before the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades will be considered only after you have satisfactorily completed at least 75 percent of the coursework, and you have such an unexpected, uncontrollable event that prevents you from completing your course. Do not assume that you will qualify for an incomplete. Students who are failing the course at the point where they request an incomplete will not receive one, nor will they be granted after the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades are given at the discretion of the instructor.

If you do receive permission from the instructor to take an incomplete in the course, you will be required to complete a contract with the instructor, specifying how you will finish the missing work within the next two quarters (excluding summer). Incompletes not finished by the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) will automatically become an F grade on your transcript.

Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee.

NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

## Protection of Human Subjects

For more information see: <http://research.depaul.edu/>.

Demonstrating the acquisition of competences in this course can involve “interactions”—interviewing and or observing other people—discussing those interviews or observations with other class members and writing them up in one or more final report(s). As such, these activities qualify as “research” with “human subjects” and are subject to University and Federal guidelines. Because it takes place in the context of this course, your research is exempt from approval by the School for New Learning’s Local Review Board only under the following conditions:

1. The information you collect is EXCLUSIVELY for the purpose of classroom discussion and will NOT be used after the term is over. If there is any possibility that you will EVER use it in further research or for publication, you must obtain approval from the Local Review Board before you begin.
2. You assess and ensure that no “harm”—physical, mental, or social—does or could result from either your interviews and/or observations or your discussion and/or reports.
3. The privacy and confidentiality of those that you interview or observe must be protected. Unless you receive specific permission, in writing, from the person(s) you interview or observe, please change their names, and make sure that their identity cannot be readily ascertained from the information you provide.
  - a. If you want to use real names and relationships, they must sign an “informed consent” document. For information on creating an “informed consent document” see, for example, <http://www.research.umn.edu/consent>.

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## Course Expectations

### Time Management and Attendance

SNL's online courses are not self-paced and require a regular time commitment EACH week throughout the quarter.

You are required to log in to your course at least FOUR times a week so that you can participate in the ongoing course discussions.

Online courses are no less time consuming than "face to face" courses. You will have to dedicate some time every day or at least every second day to your studies. A typical four credit hour "face to face" course at SNL involves three hours of classroom meeting per week, plus at least three to six hours of study and homework per week.

This course will require at least the same time commitment, but your learning activities will be spread out through the week. If you have any problems with your technology, or if you need to improve your reading or writing skills, it may take even longer.

***The instructor should be notified if your life events do not allow you to participate in the course and the online discussions for more than one week. This is particularly important when there are group discussions or you are working as part of a team.***

If you find yourself getting behind, please contact your course instructor immediately.

### Your Instructor's Role

Your instructor's role in this course is that of a discussion instructor and learning advisor. It is not their responsibility to make sure you log in regularly and submit your assignments. As instructor, s/he will read all postings to the general discussion forums on a daily basis but may not choose to respond to each posting. You will receive feedback to assignments.

The instructor may choose to designate "office hours" when s/he will be online and available and will immediately respond to questions. Depending on the instructor, this response may be by e-mail, instant messenger or telephone. Otherwise, you will generally receive a response to emailed or posted queries within 48 hours.

### Your Role as a Student

As an online student, you will be taking a proactive approach to your learning. As the course instructor's role is that of a learning guide, your role is that of the leader in your own learning.

You will be managing your own time so that you can complete the readings, activities and assignments for the course, and you will also be expected to take a more active role in peer learning.

You will learn with and from your classmates in the online discussions and group assignments, sharing information and resources and posting your ideas and critiquing and expanding on the ideas of others in a collegial fashion. You are encouraged to bring your questions to the online discussions and respond to each other—do not always wait for the instructor to answer questions.

***If events arise in your life that will prevent your attendance in class for one week or more, it is your responsibility to make sure that your instructor is advised at the first possible opportunity. You, or a friend or family member can do that by email, postal mail or phone. Someone could also send a note to [snlonline@depaul.edu](mailto:snlonline@depaul.edu), or call either of the SNL Online contact numbers listed on page 1 of this guide. This will allow your instructor to assist you to make up missing work. If these events occur early in the quarter and you wait until the end of the quarter before informing your instructor, do not expect to receive an Incomplete.***

## **Credits**

This course was designed and produced by Thomas Tresser and staff of SNL Online at DePaul University.

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