



“ACTING UP – USING THEATER & TECHNOLOGY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE”
DePAUL SCHOOL FOR NEW LEARNING – HC 242
Mondays 6pm-9pm, Lewis Center, 25 E. Jackson
January 5 – March 9, 2009

Purpose:

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 foundational understanding of the principles and practices of direct action organizing, (2) Expose students to innovative and non-traditional strategies and tactics for mobilizing for social change, (3) Investigate organizations who are engaged in creative social change, and (4) Give students experience in using online tools such as YouTube, SlideShare, wikis and uploading tools. Proficiency in PowerPoint and ability to learn Internet-based tools required.

About the instructor:

Tom Tresser is a consultant, producer, educator and trainer works with individuals, companies and communities to leverage and amplify their creative assets in order to solve problems, create economic value and trigger civic engagement. He recently designed and produced training programs for the provincial government of Saskatchewan and Business Retention and Expansion International on how to use the arts, and creativity for local economic development. He was director of cultural development at Peoples Housing, in north Rogers Park, Chicago, where he created a community arts program that blended the arts, education and micro-enterprise. Tom has acted in some 40 shows and produced over 100 plays, special events, festivals and community programs. He was an arts activist, having organized support for pro-arts candidates and developed a cultural policy think tank at Roosevelt University in the early 1990's, where he taught "Arts & Public Policy." He is an alumni of the Leadership Greater Chicago program. In 2003 he was appointed Visiting Fellow in Arts and Culture at the DePaul University College of Commerce's Ryan Center for Creativity and Innovation. Tom was elected to the Abraham Lincoln Elementary School's Local School Council and served from 2004 to 2006. He is teaching a number of classes on art, creativity and civic engagement for DePaul University and the School of the Art Institute. Tom also consults with arts organizations on strategic planning, audience development and peer-to-peer marketing. He recently published a book making the case for artists to run for local office, "America Needs You! Why You Should Become a Creativity Champion."

The Learning Experience:



You should be familiar with the Blackboard environment. Log on at <http://oll.depaul.edu>. When you log on you should see links to all the classes you have registered for. This class will have a website inside this environment. An introduction to Blackboard can be found online at:

<http://www.itd.depaul.edu/website/faculty/TechnologyTools/Blackboard/Introduction.asp>

In addition, we will be using a unique class wiki at <http://creativeactivists.pbwiki.com> to look at material and upload original content.

Text: We will use “**Organizing for Social Change**” (3rd edition) by the Midwest Academy (Bobo, Max, Kendall) as the primary text, this will be required for purchase. There will be supplementary posted on the course’s Blackboard website. We will also be using an external blog at <http://creativeactivists.pbwiki.com>.

Competencies Offered

A3X	Can identify the social and historical context of a particular artist/social activist and explain his/her point of view.
H1I	Can understand change methodology, plan change within a community, and assess its likely impact.
H2X	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.

Assessment of Competence (Describe how each competence will be assessed)

A3X - 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.
H1I - Research an organizing tool or tactic and discuss the pros and cons of this tool and tell us how it is being used in a creative manner 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, how it’s been used and by who and what are the strengths and weaknesses of this tool in social change work.
H2X – Analyze a group that is using non-traditional, creative or theatrical tactics for social change (a group not covered in the mini-case histories) 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. Include 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 – You have just been appointed the new Director of a social change organization (assigned by the instructor). Explain how you will bring creativity to the organization – what steps will you take to use creative methods to accomplish its mission? Students will use concepts and examples from the class as well as their own imagination to suggest how their organization can achieve its goals more effectively and powerfully. You are encouraged to create illustrations, sketches, and other mock-ups to illustrate your ideas.

Course Outline:

C;ass/Date	Content	Assignment
#1, January 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of the class - Introduction from students - What is so important about creativity? - The role of creativity in the life of the nation - Introduction to concept of the Creative Economy - Examples of the work of non-traditional social change activists will be introduced each week, including The Guerilla Girls, The Yes Men, Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping and others. These examples will be available on the class wiki’s “Gallery of Creative Activists.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Creative Industries” chapter by John Hartley from <i>Creative Industries</i>. <p>*NOTE: All readings (except material from the required text) are posted on the class Blackboard site.</p>
#2, January 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Breaking down creativity - Understanding your personal creativity style and how you approach problem solving - Introduction to brainstorming and mindmapping - Team work as assigned by instructor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online creativity self assessment - Chapter from <i>Flash of Brilliance</i> - “Creativity Killing Phrases” - Hand in civic engagement autobiography (Reflection #1)

#3, January 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to theory and practice of direct action organizing - Watch video on Saul Alinsky, "The Democratic Promise" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Community Organizing Basics" from the Marin Institute, "Leadership Roles Within an Advocacy Movement." - Chapter 2, "The Fundamentals of Direct Action Organizing" from <i>Organizing for Social Change</i>.
#4, January 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community organizing and "winning" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 3, "Choosing An Issue," and Chapter 4, "Developing A Strategy" from <i>Organizing for Social Change</i>. - Proposals for research papers due - Reflection #2
#5, February 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creativity and social change - Introduction to creative activism and protest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Singing Civil Rights" from <i>The Art of Protest</i> - "The Role of the Arts in a Time of Crisis," from <i>Artistic Citizenship</i>
#6, February 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Varieties of Creative Activism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Artists in Times of War" - Video, "Eyes Wide Open" from American Friends Service Committee - "Trespassing Relevance" from <i>The Interventionists</i> - "Good Magazine Guide to Culture Jamming," and "Tactical Performance and the Interventionists" - Reflection #3
#7, February 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New technologies and social change - What is the Internet and how is being used for social change - Examples of Internet organizing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Introduction to the Internet" - Classifying Forms of Online Activism" in <i>Cyberactivism – Online Activism in Theory and Practice</i> - Students seeking two competencies, first paper and presentation due (your choice of which paper you hand in first). - Students seeking one competency, paper and presentation due.
#8, February 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New technologies and social change - Online video and Flash animation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Activist Movie Festival" – students will watch a series of short online videos and vote on their favorite using polling tool. - Reflection #4
#9, March 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Culture and community development - How do the arts and culture contribute to community and economic development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "The Community Cultural Development Field" - "How Do the Arts Build Communities?" - Profile, video of Village of Arts & Humanities - Video on Mata Ortiz, Mexico - Students seeking two competencies, second paper and presentation due.
#10, March 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students will be give their PowerPoint presentations. - Summary by instructor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each student does a PowerPoint presentation for each research paper they have done.

Evidence to be Submitted

There will be four or five written reflections based on class discussion and assigned readings. Each of these reflections will be at least two pages long. There will be flexibility in assigning these reflections to accommodate the flow of the class and the interest of the students in particular topics.

For each competence there will be one writing assignment as outlined above. More detailed guidelines will be distributed in class. The paper shall be at least ten pages (typed/word processed, double-spaced, 1" margins

on all sides) and reference at least five outside sources and include at least five images to give life to the topic (images and references are NOT part of the 10 pages).

The student's overall performance in this class will be determined by the following criteria:

Attendance	10 points
Class participation	15 points
Reflections on readings	25 points
Individual writing/research assignment(s)	50 points (40 for content, 10 for presentation)
Bonus for attending all 10 classes	05 points

Written Work Will be Evaluated As Follows:

A = designates work of high quality; reflects thorough and comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; reflects a clearly identifiable thesis and argument that demonstrates cogent and creative development and support of idea. Well-written with no errors (spelling, sentence fragments, unclear sentences, etc.). Excellent analysis and well-supported conclusions. Demonstrates complex understanding of topic and familiarity with supporting sources (readings, online resources and discussion). Fully and clearly responsive to question(s) asked.

B = designates work of good quality; reflects clearly organized and comprehensive understanding of issues at hand; presents substantive thesis and argument with evident development and support of ideas. Moderately well-written with few errors. Good analysis and well-supported conclusions. Demonstrates correct understanding of topic and familiarity with most supporting sources (readings, online resources and discussion).

C = designates work which minimally meets requirements set forward in assignment; reflects some organization and development of ideas but develops argument in superficial or simplistic manner; may only address part of the assignment or be otherwise incomplete. Content may show either less than correct familiarity with the topic or bulk of supporting sources, is not fully responsive to the question(s) asked, or is poorly written (major mistakes made).

D = designates work of poor quality which does not meet minimum requirements set forth in the assignment; demonstrates poor organization of ideas and/or inattention to development of ideas, grammar, and spelling; treatment of material is superficial and/or simplistic; may indicate that student has not done reading assignments thoroughly. Content is very poorly written.

Grading:

Grades are awarded based on the following point distribution.

100%-91%	A
90%-82%	B
81%-73%	C
72%-67%	D
66%- 0%	F

PLEASE NOTE

*You are allowed one absence, excused or unexcused. Missing more than one class will have a negative impact on your grade.

**I will not review class notes for the absent. If you miss class, you are responsible for getting the class notes from one of your classmates.

***Assignments turned in late will be graded one letter grade down.

DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy

You MUST abide by DePaul's Academic Integrity Policy. Please review this policy online at:

<http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/handbook/code16.html>. This means that you need to acknowledge the work of others. As scholars, you will be turning to primary documents to support your argument, or incorporating others' published research into your own analysis. It is perfectly acceptable to do so, but only if such work is cited. *If you fail to do so, you will receive a failing grade on your assignment and I reserve the right to notify the Dean of this transgression and, if especially egregious, fail you for the course.* If you have any questions about what should be cited or how to do so, please let me know.

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. The DePaul Student Handbook defines plagiarism as follows: "Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following: (a) 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 in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's. (b) Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax even with acknowledgement. (c) Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency. (d) The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement." Plagiarism will result in a failure of the assignment or possibly of the course. If you are unsure of how to cite a source, ask!

DePaul Registration/Withdrawal Policy

According to the policies of DePaul University:

All students must be registered and listed on the class roster by the beginning of the second week of the term. Students not on the roster by this time cannot stay in the class under any circumstances. Please contact the SNL Advising Center (snladvising@depaul.edu) or the Office of Financial Aid (finaid@depaul.edu) to work out your particular situation. Students who need to withdraw from the course must do so by the end of the second week of the quarter. After that point is reached, 100% tuition is charged. It is possible to withdraw from a course or competence through the end of the seventh week of the quarter, but there is no tuition refund after the end of the second week. In certain circumstances (such as illness, death of family members, natural disasters, etc.), a late withdrawal will be refunded tuition. These circumstances must be documented, and presented to the University through the SNL Exceptions Committee (snlexceptions@depaul.edu). In no case is such a refund allowed more than once during a student's career at DePaul.

Policy in the Issuing of Incomplete (IN) Grades:

The grade of Incomplete (IN) will be issued only in the case of exceptional circumstances that prevent the student from completing required work within the timeframe of the quarter. Students who want the grade of IN to be issued must make a formal request by no later than the final class period, using the SNL Request Form for IN Grades (supplied by the instructor). This request will specify the final deadline by which the student may submit outstanding course work for evaluation. Work submitted after the established deadline will not be evaluated, and the grade will be entered as an F. There will be no exceptions to this policy, and no justifiable basis for grade appeal.