The Science and Practice of Effective Advocacy
Urban Studies 178/Public Policy 178/CSRE 178P
Spring 2017-18

MW 12:30 – 2:20 p.m. (regular class time)
T 3:00-4:00 p.m. (community-engaged learning discussion section)

Office hours:
MW 2:30-5:30 p.m., T 12:00-2:30 p.m.

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Units: 3 (basic curriculum) or 5 (including community-engaged learning option)

Overview—Course approach

How can purposeful, collective action change government policies, business practices and cultural norms? In this course, you will learn about the components of successful social change campaigns and develop several practical skills required in these efforts. The concepts taught will be relevant to both issue advocacy and electoral campaigns, and will draw on both research-based and practice-based sources, including social psychology, political science, communications, sociology, community organizing and social movements. The purpose of the course is to make you a more effective changemaker.

You will be able to take the course for 3 or 5 units. If you choose to take the course for 5 units, you will have a placement with a partner advocacy organization, and have an opportunity to observe and participate in its activities. You also will participate in a weekly discussion section, write reflections and complete a project for the partner organization.
The regular class session will be twice-a-week for 90 minutes, and class time will combine lectures and engaged learning exercises. There will be a midterm and final.

The focus on the course will be on advocacy in situations where societal groups may not possess sufficient traditional sources of power to achieve their goals. These traditional power sources include assets such as individual wealth, prestige, elite networks, and proprietary information. Given the significant economic inequality that exists in the U.S. and globally, combined with large discrepancies in baseline political participation, this power imbalance is a challenge facing many communities. It can be made up for through collective action based on effective strategy, organization, persuasion and group cohesion.

Course Content and Outcomes

Major components of the course include:

- **How to build collective power:** Understanding power. Working in diverse communities. Organizing and mobilizing supporters/volunteers. Structures for organization and collaboration. Funding advocacy.

- **How to make decisions about strategy:** Choosing issues and goals. Identifying and influencing targeted decision-makers, allies and opponents. Developing and adapting a change strategy. Evaluating advocacy results.

- **How to choose and execute tactics:** Lobbying. Electing candidates & winning ballot initiatives. Public protest and non-violent direct action. Influencing corporate behavior.

- **How to persuade:** Principles of persuasive communications. Creating an advocacy campaign’s story. Leadership through persuasion.

Based on the understanding of relevant empirical research, historical analysis and practitioner experience, you will be able to:

1. Evaluate critically the sources of information about effective advocacy practices, determine their applicability in specific contexts, and understand ways to improve this body of knowledge.
2. Design strategies to achieve changes in government or business policies/practices and cultural norms.
3. Choose and implement appropriate tactics to influence targeted decision-makers, allies and opponents.
4. Conceive and build viable organizations and networks to implement advocacy campaigns.
5. Apply key interpersonal skills to organize, motivate and guide people for collective action.
Additional, specific learning outcomes are listed below under each class session.

**Course Requirements**

1. Attendance is required. If you expect to be absent, email the course instructor.
2. You are expected to do all reading assignments and pre-class preparatory work, be prepared to respond to questions, and participate actively in discussions and in-class exercises. Reading for class discussions and exercises will be assigned at least the week prior to the class session for which it is required.
3. By the beginning of the second week of class, you need to choose an organization that you will use as an object of analysis for some of the class assignments and the take-home portion of the midterm and final. This analytical work usually can be based on information from the group’s web site and other publicly available sources, and does not necessarily involve any communication with the organization. The instructor will provide a list of suggested organizations by issue area, from which you can choose, or you can propose for approval an organization not on the list.
4. There will be a midterm (May 2) and a final (June 13), each of which will have a take-home portion and an in-class portion. The take-home questions will be given out a few days before the in-class exam dates, and due May 2 for the midterm and June 13 for the final.
5. There is one individual student project, a “Story of Self” using principles you will learn in the Leadership Through Example and Persuasion class session. You will construct a narrative about why you have chosen to work for social change, in the form of a 3-minute monologue on rough cut video.
6. On Tuesday, May 8, there will be a dinner with a guest speaker at a private home in Palo Alto. Attendance is optional but strongly encouraged.
7. Each student will have a twenty-minute one-to-one conference with the instructor during the first three weeks of the quarter, to be scheduled.

**Requirements for Additional 2 Units (Community Engaged Learning Option)**

1. You will be placed for the quarter with a Bay Area advocacy partner to support a campaign it is advancing. You will complete at least 25 hours of work with the partner organization and log these hours online. There will be multiple options for partner organizations, and the student will choose one. The instructor is currently in discussions with potential partner organizations working in the areas of civil liberties, climate change, racial justice, immigration and labor rights. Each community partner will integrate the students according to the needs and priorities of its organization. Your work could involve office or field tasks supporting the organization’s campaigns, research activities, attending meetings, events and trainings, or doing outreach.
2. You will attend a once a week section meeting of students participating in the community engaged learning option, and prepare for and participate in the
discussions.
3. There will be three short (500 words) reflection papers to complete during the quarter. You also will comment on your classmates’ reflections. One paper will be soon after you begin your placement, one mid-quarter, and one at quarter-end. There will be questions for each of these papers to guide your reflections.
4. As part of the work for the CEL option, you will complete a project that applies one or more of the skills and areas of knowledge taught in the course to a challenge or need facing your partner organization. For example, you might do an evaluation of the partner’s messaging, with recommendations for improvement, or develop a power map for a potential new campaign. The project will be approved in advance by, and done under the supervision of, the course instructor.

Grading – Basic 3 Unit Curriculum

25% Class participation: includes quality of contributions in class, performance of in-class exercises, completion of pre-class written preparation and consistency of attendance.
5% Story of Self project.
25% Midterm: take home and in-class portions.
45% Final: take home and in-class portions.
100%

Grading--2 Unit Community Engaged Learning Curriculum

35% Section Participation
30% Reflections
35% Project Applying Course Concepts to Community Partner
100%

Overall Grade: For students choosing the Community Engaged Learning Option, the overall course grade will be a weighted average of the Basic grade and the Community Engaged Learning grade, with the former weighted 60% and the latter 40%.

Prerequisite

There are no course prerequisites.

Course Materials

All readings are on the Canvas site. There will be a course materials fee to pay for copyright
permissions for certain readings.

Instructor

Larry Litvak, has been a Lecturer in Urban Studies since 2010, and in Public Policy since 2014. He was one of the principals in developing two highly successful, socially-oriented business ventures: Walden Asset Management, one of the pioneers of socially responsible investing, and Working Assets/CREDO Mobile, a telecommunications firm that has generated $78 million of support to progressive non-profits. Both these organizations have major advocacy programs, the former focusing on changing corporate behavior and the latter on changing on public policy (CREDO Action). Larry served for many years on the board of the Tides Foundation and Center, a leading funder and sponsor of social justice advocacy. He has also been a board member of domestic and international community loan funds, social service providers, a public oversight board, and an anti-viral drug development enterprise. Larry has been a decision-maker in awarding more than $100 million to various social sector initiatives, including many advocacy organizations. In addition, he has participated in several political campaigns around the country. He was a leading organizer in the Stanford and national South Africa divestment movement in the late 1970s. Larry has a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from Stanford University and a Master's Degree in Public Policy from the Kennedy School, Harvard University.

Students with Documented Disabilities

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae).

Honor Code

You must abide by Stanford's Honor Code in all assignments.
Class Topics and Reading Assignments

4/2  Introduction

What is advocacy, what forms can it take, and why does it matter so much in the present environment? How do we know what advocacy practices are most effective? What is the contribution of experimental and quasi-experimental studies vs. practice-based knowledge?

Desired Outcome: Understanding the different sources of knowledge about effective advocacy and the strengths and limitations of these sources.

Readings:

- Green, Donald and Alan Gerber. 2015. Chapter 2, “Evidence vs. Received Wisdom” in Get Out the Vote: How to Increase Voter Turnout, Brookings Institution Press.

4/4  Understanding Power – Its Forms, How to Grow It, How to Use it

What are the different forms of power and how they are used in societies? What accounts for power differences among groups? How can those with less power increase it? How do specific strategies and tactics of advocacy make use of different forms of power?

Desired Outcome: Understanding the different forms of power and how they can be used to impede or advance effective advocacy.

Readings:


Exercise: Case study analysis: The campaign for HIV treatment options--what forms of power did this campaign use to successfully achieve its goals?
4/9 Choosing Issues and Developing Goals—Power for What Purpose

What is the role of goals in guiding and motivating collective action? Who decides what issues and goals to pursue? What criteria are relevant to choosing issues and goals? How can one assess issue and goal preferences of the relevant constituency?

Desired outcome: The ability to develop a goal or set of goals that can serve as the basis of a viable campaign to advance the interests of a specific constituency.

Readings:


Exercise: Assessing constituency wants and needs

Exercise: Choosing a goal

4/11 Building Power: Methods of Engaging Supporters/Volunteers

How do organizers identify and develop the leadership needed to carry out advocacy initiatives? How do these initiatives mobilize large numbers of people to take action? What practices distinguish groups that are able to generate and sustain activism?

Desired outcome: Understanding the methods that are used to engage potential supporters, in terms of both organizing (involving individuals in the leadership and running of the organization) and mobilizing (getting individuals to take specific actions as part of a campaign).

Readings:


Case Example: The National Rifle Association

Exercise: One-to-one recruiting of a supporter
Exercise: The relational/transactional game

4/16 Identity, Organizing and Allyship: Doing Advocacy in Diverse Communities

How do our identities affect our function as advocates? What role does power, privilege, and oppression play in our advocacy work?

Desired outcome: Develop the self-knowledge and awareness, along with the understanding of differences in power and privilege, necessary to work in, and across, different communities.

Readings:


Exercise: Self-inventory

Case Example: U.S. Immigrant Rights Campaign

4/18 Identifying and Influencing Targets, Allies and Opponents in Issue Campaigns

How do you identify the target for an advocacy campaign--the individual or group of individuals who can authorize the change you seek? What groups or individuals have influence over these decision-makers? How can you affect the targeted decision-makers directly or indirectly?

Desired outcome: Understanding how to develop a basic advocacy strategy to achieve a specific goal, including identifying targets and allies/opponents, and choosing and sequencing appropriate tactics to influence different parties.

Readings:


Exercise: “Power-mapping” a change campaign.
4/23 Developing and Adapting a Change Strategy

How do you read the external environment to understand what strategic opportunities present themselves? How do you learn from, and adapt to, both the ongoing results of your choices and changes in the environment? How do the quality of leadership and other characteristics of organizations affect strategic decision-making?

Desired outcome: Understanding the importance of sensing and responding to opportunities and changing conditions, and the aspects of organizations and leadership that facilitate this capacity.

Readings:


Case Application: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement

Exercise: Understanding the environment and reading opportunities

Guest Speaker: Professor Doug McAdam (to be confirmed)


What capabilities and practices make for effective organizations? How do stand-alone groups combine into networks, coalitions, and social movements to maximize their impact? How can open, closed and distributed collective action models be applied, and what are the trade-offs among these structures? What are the key elements of successful collaborations?

Desired outcome: Understanding the different organizational and collaboration models for pursuing and scaling advocacy, and how different aspects of organizational structure, practice and policy contribute to success.

Readings:


Case Example: 350.org

Exercise: Assess your chosen organization using the Advocacy Capacity Tool

### 4/30 Funding Advocacy

Who are the suppliers of donations and grants, and how do they choose whom to support? How does an initiative determine the most appropriate types of donors to target? What are some tactics that make it more likely that an appeal to donors will be successful? What are the impacts on organizational behavior of relying on different sources of funds?

Desired outcome: Understanding the potential and limits of grants and donations as a source of financial support, what is required to raise such funds and how to tailor a fundraising approach.

Readings:


Exercise: Team competition—asking for money

### 5/2 Midterm

### 5/7 Evaluating Advocacy: Are We Having An Impact?

How do we measure outcomes of advocacy? What are the indicators of progress at various stages? How can we attribute causation to specific efforts or groups? What are the limitations of evaluation methods?

Desired outcome: Understanding the role and importance of measuring outputs, outcomes and impact respectively, and major techniques used. Understanding the limitations, both
practical and conceptual, of evaluation methods. Ability to determine the appropriateness of different evaluation approaches given the context, and to design a basic performance measurement framework.

Readings:


Exercise: How your organization evaluates its impact.

5/8  **Class Dinner**

Guest, Becky Bond, Senior Advisor to Bernie Sanders Presidential Campaign; Co-Author, *Rules for Revolutionaries, Big Organizing Can Change Everything*.

5/9  **Principles of Persuasive Communications**

How do you successfully use language and images to present your point of view to potential supporters, donors, volunteers, and decision-makers and convince them to act? How do you match the key elements of message, messenger and medium to purpose and audience? What are the barriers to persuasion rooted in the audience’s values, beliefs, emotions, identities and lived experiences?

Desired outcome: Understanding what is required to persuade someone to take a particular action, including how to assess audience mindset and craft messages that will appeal to their values and concerns.

Readings:

Exercise: Writing an Op-Ed

5/14 Creating An Advocacy Campaign’s Story

Why are stories so important in how we learn about, understand and interpret the world? What makes one story more likely to inspire action than another? How do you identify the weaknesses in our opponent’s story? How do you craft a story that will support your campaign?

Desired Outcome: Understanding the key elements of narrative and how to develop a story for your campaign that counters and overcomes the opposition’s story.

Readings:


Exercise: Narrative power analysis and story mapping

5/16 Leadership Through Example and Persuasion: Public Narrative

What’s the role of a leader in a social sector endeavor and what skills are required? What is a leader’s “public narrative” as a tool of leadership?

Desired outcome: Understanding the importance of influencing and motivating others in leading social change. Understanding how a Story of Self, Story of Us and Story of Now can be used to move people to action. Developing your own Story of Self.

Readings:

- Ganz, Marshall and Meredith Mira, Global Change Agents Public

- Videos of four examples of public narrative: access on Canvas site.

Case Example: Barack Obama Speech to the 2004 Democratic National Convention

Exercise: Creating Your Public Narrative

5/21 The Role of Public Protest and Non-Violent Direct Action

What is the purposes of public protest and what forms can it take? How does it fit into a campaign or movement? What makes protest effective? When is protest counter-productive?

Desired outcome: Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of protest as a tactic of influence and how to use it effectively.

Readings:


Case Example: Tahrir Square and the Arab Spring

5/23 Lobbying Decision-Makers

How does direct, personal communications with decision-makers or their staff fit into advocacy campaigns? How do you arrange and prepare for meetings, and what techniques are effective in these meetings? How do you incorporate decision-makers’ concerns for preserving their position, maximizing their power within their institution, and making “good” decisions, into your approach?

Desired Outcome: Understanding how to incorporate direct lobbying into an advocacy campaign and how to lobby effectively.

Readings:

- Center for Community Health and Development, Community Toolbox, Lobbying Decision Makers, University of Kansas, 2017.
Case Example: Lobbying for the Marriage Equality Movement

Exercise: Lobbying a real legislator. Guest, Professor Joe Nation, former California State Senator (to be confirmed)

5/28  Power through Electing Candidates & Winning Ballot Initiatives

What if you need to change the governmental decision-makers, or change local or state laws without relying on legislators? How does one analyze the “fundamentals” in any campaign, such as demographics and party ID, to determine prospects for success and potential winning strategies? What are the basic components of a campaign that you must execute, and how do they fit together?

Desired outcome: Understanding what it takes to successfully elect a candidate or pass a ballot initiative. Ability to analyze the fundamentals of a potential contest, and identify key segments that must be influenced or turned out.

Readings:


Case Example: California Proposition 47/Reduced Penalties for Some Crimes Initiative (2014)

Exercise: Segmenting a population for communications based on data

Exercise: Evaluating effectiveness of GOTV efforts (A/B testing)

Guest speaker: Professor David Broockman, Stanford Graduate School of Business (to be confirmed).
5/30 Influencing Corporate Behavior

When are business policies or practices an appropriate focus for advocacy campaigns? What do corporate decision-makers care about and how can they be influenced? How do you deal with business as opponents or allies in changing public policy or cultural norms?

Desired outcome: Understanding the types of corporate behavior that can be influenced through advocacy efforts, and what approaches are most effective in influencing corporations under various circumstances.

Readings:


Case Example: The Anti-Apartheid Movement and South Africa Divestment

Class Case Analysis: Humanity United’s Campaign Against Sea Food Industry Forced Labor

6/4 Practicum: Advising an Advocacy Organization

Students will have the opportunity to apply skills learned in the class in advising an innovative nonprofit. Prior to the class session, students will receive a briefing memo with background relevant to a specific challenge or decision facing the advocacy organization and be asked to provide a detailed recommendation in class, where representatives of the organization will be there to answer questions and provide feedback.

Desired outcome: Developing a deeper understanding of key course concepts by having to apply them to the complexities of a specific real-world case.

6/6 Principles for Effective Advocacy

What are the key principles from this course to be applied in your advocacy work? How can you use the concepts and skills learned in the course to make your initiatives and organizations more effective?

Desired Outcome: Reinforcing key learning outcomes of the course.

6/13 Final Exam 12:15-3:15 p.m.