

DM 723: Models and Tools of Community Organizing

Description of the course: this course will (1) explore older and contemporary meanings and definitions of community organizing and their relationship to religious institutions and communities in a democratic state. (2) it will introduce/deepen the students understanding and practice of the tools and key competencies of community organizing. (3) students will engage in the practice of these skills and tools and their applications in real circumstances. (4) answer the question "What does community organizing have to do with Jesus?"

Goals of the Course:

Knowing: the understanding of various modes of community organizing, the skills tools and the competencies needed to conduct successful community organizing. The limitations of traditional community organizing/ mobilizing. The role of social media in community organizing.

Doing: The students will learn and apply the concepts, practices, tools and skills related to community organizing including:

- (1) How to construct a power analysis of a community, institution, business congregation etc.
- (2) Learn an interpretive framework, grounding and understanding of the philosophical and theological meanings of these terms (among others) "self-interest", power, politics, consent, public/private relationships, Relational(public) meetings.
- (3) Practicing (among others) how to construct a power analysis, doing individual relational meetings, how to turn problems into issues, how to construct an issue campaign and apply repertoires of action

Being:

Each student will:

1. Practice the art, the skills, the tools of community organizing through an analysis and lesson drawing from organizing case studies.
2. Develop an interpretive lexicon of community organizing.
3. Arrive at a greater understanding of the theological reasoning to support community organizing and maybe answer the question: What does community organizing have to do with Jesus?

COURSE POLICIES

See administrative handbook

Required Text:

Books

1. Yours the Power: Faith Based Organizing in the USA, edited by Katie Day, Esther McIntosh, and William Storrar (Brill,2013) ISBN: 978-90-04-24600-3

2.

3. The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It: The memoir of JoAnn Gibson Robinson, edited by David J. Garrow (University of Tennessee Press, 1987) ISBN 10:0-87049-527-5

ARTICLES/BOOK CHAPTERS

1. Poor Peoples Movements: How they succeed, how they fail: introduction and chapter 1
2. The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide To The Peloponnesian War, edited by Robert B. Strassler (Free Press 2008) Book # 5 The Melian Dialog (pages 350-357)

Case Studies: To be provided by Professor Taylor

Pre- Class Assignments To be completed before the first day of classes.

1. Pre-class paper: 1–2-page reflection on why you want to understand(learn) the concepts, skills, tools and competencies of community organizing. Please highlight any particular focus you are interested in.

2. Read The Landmark Thucydides, “The Melian Dialog”: pages 350-357. Please be prepared to discuss on the first day of class.

In-class: daily reading assignments (be prepared to discuss)

Class exam: Teams will develop an organizing strategy and campaign plan for a given problem set in a specific city, town or county that actually took place. Your solution set will be compared with the actual organizing strategy and campaign conducted. You may present majority/minority proposals from your team. You will have to defend your positions to a jury of pastor/organizers.

Post-class project: develop a possible strategy /organizing campaign for a problem in a specific community of your choosing. What is your organizing vehicle? What is your power analysis? what is the problem? how have you turned the problem into an issue? What is your proposed strategy and what will your campaign encompass?

Grading description:

Pre-course reflective paper: 10%

Class participation, reading analysis, work in class room exercises, attendance: 40%

Class exam: 25%

Post class assignment: 25%

COURSE CALENDER

Monday June 28

9am (cst) Introductions & Reflections

9:30 am: session 1 (The Melian Dialog)

10:15 am: break

10:30 am: session 2 (Modes of organizing)

11:45 am: Lunch break

1 pm: session 3 (What is and is not politics)

2:15 break

2:30 pm: session 4 (What is Power? Its meaning and our interpretations)

3:45 pm: daily wrap up

4:00 pm: class ends

READING ASSIGNMENTS FOR Tuesday's class

1. Poor Peoples Movements: Introduction & chapter 1. (morning discussion)
2. Yours the Power: chapter "pastors and flocks" pages 121-132. (morning discussion)
3. New Testament: Luke 24:13-33. (afternoon discussion)

Tuesday June 29

9 am: reflections

9:30 am: session 1 (Power analysis: a central practice of organizing)

10:15 am: break

10:30 am: session 2 (power analysis: part 2)

11:45 am: lunch break

1 pm: session 3(Constructing a meaning of self – interest)

2:15 pm: break

2:30 pm: session 4 (Public relationships and the art of the Individual relational meeting: how to elicit, understand and interpret another's self-interest)

3:45 pm: daily wrap up

4:00 class ends

READING ASSIGNMENTS for Wed. class

1. The Catechumenate as Experienced in a large urban Mexican-American parish: A reflection by Rev. Albert Benavides. (Morning discussion)

Wednesday June 30

9:00 am: reflections

9:30 am: session 1 (Individual meetings: part 2)

10:15 am: break

10:30 am: session 2 (Tools/skills of community organizing: (1) constituting the “vehicle”. (2) identifying leaders: who they are and who they aren’t. (3) power analysis. (4) identifying problems-translating them into issues. (5) understanding, creating and applying repertoires of action. (6) what are the elements of a good compromise?

11 :45 am: lunch break

1 pm: session 3 (tools/skills of organizing: part 2)

2:15 pm: break

2:30 pm: session 4 (social media & organizing: pros and cons)

3:45 pm: daily wrap up

4:00 class ends

READING ASSIGNMENTS for Thursday’s class (Case Studies)

1. “ As in a Civics Text Come to Life”: The East Brooklyn Congregations’ Nehemiah Housing Plan and “citizen Power” in the 1980’s. Dennis Deslippe (Journal of Urban History,2019. Volume 45 pages 1030-1049.)
2. The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It: Prologue & chapters 1-6.
3. Two other case studies will be presented and analyzed in class.

Thursday July 1

9:00 am: reflections

9:30 am: session 1 (case studies)

10:15 am: break

10:30 am: session 2 (case studies)

11:45 am: lunch break

1 pm: session 3 (Practicing the arts of community organizing: engaging a simulation of an actual event)

2:15 pm: break

2:30 pm: session 4 (practicing: part 2)

3:45 pm: daily wrap up

4pm: class ends

READING ASSIGNMENTS for Friday's class: NONE

Friday July 2

9 am: reflections

9:30 am: defense of team strategies (40 minutes/each team: 20 minutes lay out/20 minutes defend)

10:50 am: break

11:00 am: defense of team strategies cont.

12:15 pm: lunch break

1:00 pm: framing the post -class project (1) elements, timeline and evaluative framework. (2) working session begins.

2:15 pm: break

2:30 pm: working session/presentation of initial ideas.

3:30 pm: class wrap up

3:45 pm: class ends

