COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Protest is a common feature of American political and social life. Social movements have become a common vehicle for individuals to press for, or resist, social change. In this course, we will examine the dynamics of social movements—analyzing the conditions that give rise to them, shape their development, and the ultimate impact that they have on politics and American society. In examining a variety of social movements, we will focus on answering a number of important questions, including: what conditions give rise to movements at various historical times? How do individuals become activists and get involved with protest movements? What types of tactics and strategies do activists use in pressing for change? Finally, how do social movements affect the political process?

This course also fulfills the junior year writing requirement. Hence, we will focus on developing effective writing. There will be a number of writing assignments throughout the semester. Students will be required to actively participate and provide feedback to their peers on their writing.

This course has three objectives: 1) to provide a theoretical foundation for the sociological study of social movements and collective action; 2) to provide historical examples of important social movements; and 3) to learn and develop effective writing skills.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

READINGS:
You are required to read all of the material by the date assigned on the syllabus. If you find yourself falling behind, try to catch up as soon as possible. There are two required books in this course in addition to other readings, which will be provided for you on the course website.


***Additional Readings can be downloaded from the course web site***

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

I. **CLASS PARTICIPATION:** Class participation is based on active participation in class discussions and your attendance in class. Attendance is required and will be taken. Each student is allowed to miss two courses with no questions asked. Each additional absence will go against your in-class participation grade. It is important that everyone attend regularly having done the readings beforehand in order to facilitate lively discussions.

   a. **Protest Song “Show and Tell.”** Every student is required to find a protest song to play and present to the whole class. You will introduce the song to us and tell us some background about the song/artist/historical era. The presentation should be no more than 3 minutes and the song should be no more than 5 minutes. Exceptions may be made with my approval.

II. **LOW STAKES WRITING:** I will hand out a writing prompt in class based on the assigned readings/discussion topics. These are meant to get your thoughts flowing in order to facilitate our discussions of the course material.

III. **RESPONSE PAPERS:** Every student is required to turn in response summaries throughout the semester based on the readings. Each reaction paper should be no more than 2 pages and should consist of two parts. First, you are to briefly summarize the reading in your own words. Second, you should “react” to the author’s findings in the article. These responses are to be typed, double-spaced, and are due at the beginning of class on the date stated below. Late papers will be penalized a letter grade for each 24-hour period it is late.

IV. **MIDTERM EXAMINATION:** There will be one midterm exam, which can consist of any, or all, of the following types of questions: short answers, multiple choice, and essays. The midterm will be on **March 29, 2011**.

V. **FINAL PAPER/STUDENT PRESENTATIONS:** Each student is required to write a final term paper (approx. 8-10 pages) on a movement of your own choosing. On
February 1, I need a short summary (one page or less) of what movement you are choosing and what type of information (“data”) you are going to collect. Please see the supplemental handout (at the end of this document) for more information about how to complete this project. The paper is due on May 3, 2011 and you will lose a letter grade for each day that it is late.

a. Paper Presentation. Each student is also required to give a presentation in front of the class during the final two weeks of the course. A sign up sheet will go around at least a week or two before the presentations. Each presentation should aim to be around 7-10 minutes long.

BREAKDOWN OF GRADES:

- **Class Participation and Attendance** 15%
- **Low Stakes Writing** 10%
- **Response Papers (5 x 5% each)** 25%
- **Midterm Exam** 25%
- **Final Paper** 20%
  - **Paper Presentation** 5%

OTHER INFORMATION

**DISABILITY SERVICES:**
Students with a documented disability that need accommodation to attend, participate, or complete the course requirements should inform me at the beginning of the course so that we can make arrangements with the office of disability services.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:**
I take academic honesty very seriously. If you are caught turning in work that is not your own, you will fail the assignment and will be dealt with according to university policy. If you are unsure what the policies regarding academic honesty are, please see: [http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/#policy](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/#policy). You have been warned!

**WRITING CENTER:**
If you need help writing your paper please feel free to meet with me during my office hours. UMASS also has a writing center that provides writing assistance to students. Their site is: [http://www.umass.edu/writingcenter/](http://www.umass.edu/writingcenter/).
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 18</td>
<td>Introduction to Course</td>
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<td>(For Thursday) Find information on a social movement in America or any other country (use the web, newspapers, or other popular sources). Be prepared to discuss what you find in the next class discussion on Jan 25.</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Documentary – <em>This is What Democracy Looks Like</em></td>
<td><em>Graff and Birkenstein (G&amp;B)</em>, Ch. 11-12 and 14 (pp. 141-155, 175-192)</td>
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| 25    | What is a Social Movement? What is Activism? A Quick (!) Intro. to American Politics (yes, really!) | *Meyer*, Introduction and Ch. 1  
*Tilly*, “Social Movements as Political Struggle”  
*G&B*, Ch. 2, Ch. 4 (pp. 30-40, 55-67) |                                                                                   |
| 27    | Movement Emergence I: Classical Approaches, Deprivation, and Breakdown | *Useem*, “Disorganization and the New Mexico Prison Riots”  
*G&B*, Ch. 3 (pp. 42-50) | Response Paper #1 Due                                                                 |
| February 1 | Movement Emergence II: Resources | *McAdam*, the Resource Mobilization Model  
*Meyer*, Ch. 2 | Summary of Movement Due Response Paper #1 Due |
| 3     | Movement Emergence III: Politics         | *McAdam*, “The Political Process Model”  
*G&B*, Ch. 4, (pp. 55-67) |                                                                                   |
| 8     | Documentary – Berkeley in the 1960s      | --------                                           |                                                                                   |
| 10    | Finish Documentary                        | --------                                           |                                                                                   |
|   | Explaining Activism | Meyer, Ch. 3  
G&B, Ch. 5  
(pp. 68-74) | Draft of  
Movement  
History Due |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 17 | Social Networks | Snow et al., “Social Networks and Social Movements”  
G&B, Ch. 7  
(pp. 92-100) | Response #2  
Due |
| 22 | Documentary - Freedom on My Mind | -------- | |
| 24 | Counter-movements | Meyer, Ch. 8  
G&B, 8-10  
(pp. 105-137) | |
| March 1 | Music and Activism | Rosignio and Danaher,  
“Media and Mobilization” | Draft of Theory  
Section Due |
| 3  | Social Movements 2.0: Online Activism | Brecher et al., “Social Movements 2.0”  
Gladwell, “Small Change” | Response #3  
Due |
| 8  | Violence and Policing | Gamson, “The Success of the Unruly”  
McPhail et al., “Policing Protest in the United States” | |
| 10 | Documentary - Chicago 1968 | | |
| 15 | | | Spring Break!! (Have Fun and Be Safe) |
| 17 | Tactics | Taylor et al., “Performing Protest”  
Meyer, Ch. 5, Ch. 6 | (For Thursday) Find three organizations related to your social movement of choice and answer the following questions: 1) what is the mission of the organization?; 2) what kind of tactics do they use? |
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Organizations</td>
<td>Meyer, Ch. 4</td>
<td>Response #4 Due</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td>MIDTERM</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Documentary – <em>Before Stonewall</em></td>
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<td>April 5</td>
<td>Political Outcomes</td>
<td>Meyer, Ch. 9 Gamson, “Defining Success”</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Meyer, Ch. 8</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Biographical and Cultural Outcomes</td>
<td>McAdam, “The Biographical Consequences of Activism” <em>Armstrong and Crage,</em> “Movements and Memory: The Making of the Stonewall Myth”</td>
<td>Response #5 Due</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>The Legacy of Movements</td>
<td>Staggenborg and Taylor, Whatever Happened to the Women's Movement? Meyer, Ch. 10</td>
<td>Draft of Findings Due</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Documentary - <em>The Take</em></td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>May 3</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>Final Papers Due</td>
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Final Paper Assignment

Each student is required to write a term paper on a particular social movement focused on one or more issues that we have learned about throughout the course (e.g., political opportunity, cooptation, collective identity). The purpose of this paper is to not just describe the history of your movement but to explore something particular to the social movement in relation to theoretical concepts learned in class. Think about your particular social movement as a “case” for evaluating a theoretical concept. How does the theories learned in class help you make sense of what you have learned about your movement, or alternatively, how does your case not fit into what theory would have led you to expect?

A short blurb on the movement you want to do research on is due the end of the third week. So, start researching ideas early so that you can start the paper with plenty of time to complete the assignment. If you are struggling with finding a movement that interests you, please come see me and we can brainstorm together.

An excellent paper will have good command of both the actual historical facts of the movement case and making it connect to theory. In addition, I expect that the paper will be well-organized, grammatically correct, and written in clear prose. I expect you do outside research on your social movement and to properly cite all material used in the paper. If I find that any sections of the text was lifted from other sources, you will automatically receive a 0 on the paper and will not pass this course. I take academic honesty very seriously. If you have concerns about whether or not you are properly citing your sources, please see me before you hand in the paper.

Throughout the course we will go over examples from your peers and discuss the mechanics of effective writing. Your paper should be approximately 8-10 pages, double-spaced, and 12 point font. In the interest of going as green as possible, please feel free to print double-sided. Your paper is due no later than May 3, 2011, in class. Late papers will be penalized and I will not accept any papers over email.

TIPS TO DO WELL:

1. Start Early!
2. Work consistently.
3. **See me about issues.** We will set aside time throughout the semester to talk about the paper and writing, so don’t be shy about bringing up any concerns or questions that you have in class. If you are not comfortable about raising the issue in class, please see me during office hours.

4. **Use proper citation.** I expect students to use APA or ASA citation. Pick one and be consistent about using it throughout the paper. Also include a bibliography at the end of the paper.

5. **Work on your writing!** If the writing is any good, it will be hard. Plan on revising and rewriting your paper regularly so that your arguments are sharp and well-constructed. To achieve a well-written paper, it is best to follow tips 1 and 2 above.

6. **Make backup copies.** Computers will crash and papers will be lost. It’s best to prevent this by regularly making backup copies and storing them in safe places.

7. **Pick a topic that interests you.** Pick a movement and topic that you are interested in. The paper will be easier to complete and more fun if you actually like what you are working on.