

San José State University
Department of Sociology & Interdisciplinary Social Science
Soci. 164: Social Action, Section 1, Spring 2020

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Scott Myers-Lipton
Office Location:	DMH 210
Telephone:	408-924-5761
Email:	smlipton@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Tu. & Th., 10:25-11:25
Class Days/Time:	Tu. & Th., 12-1:15 am
Classroom:	DMH 231
Prerequisites:	SOCI 1 or equivalent (professor has discretion to admit students)

Course Description

Course catalog for Sociology 164 states the following: “The tactics and strategies of social action. Topics may include applying social action to the local community, studying current and past U.S. and international social action organizations, or examining theories of social movements. Repeatable once when content changes.” Thus, this course will examine such topics as issue development, building power, campaign planning, creating a winning strategy, choosing the appropriate tactic, and building an effective team.

Social Action is a course that explores power and democracy, both of which are central to the Social Sciences in general, and Sociology in particular. What is unique about Social Action is that it is designed to do democracy. Instead of just reading about social change, students learn about power and democracy by doing it. Of course, we will still use “book knowledge,” but my hope is that this knowledge will be challenged by what you’re learning in your social action projects, and that you will develop a more critical and deeper understanding of public issues and community change through action and reflection. Therefore, this course is an action-oriented, solutions-based, course on community activism. An exciting part of this course is that you will hear directly from previous Soci. 164 students about their social action projects

This class has fundamentally changed the campus and community. Over the past thirteen years, Social Action students have won 15 campaigns, which include:

- convincing President Papazian to agree to become part of the Worker’s Rights Consortium, ensuring SJSU apparel is not made in sweatshops;
- developing, leading, and winning the Measure D campaign in the 2012 election, raising San Jose’s minimum wage from \$8 to \$10 an hour, and then pushing it to \$15;
- convincing President Martin to agree to install air conditioning in Dudley Moorehead Hall;
- developing and winning the Measure G campaign, the Modernization of the Business Tax, in the 2016 election, which doubled the business tax;
- and convincing President Qayoumi to remove Wanda Ginner, a Tower Foundation board member, after making a racist comment about Latinas.

All students will be involved in social action. This will require a minimum of 1½ to 2 hours per week of community work (25 hours minimum over 15 week, with over 13 hours DOING something, that is, tabling, postering, giving organization raps, marches, rallies, etc). If you do not do more than 25 hours a week, you will not receive higher than a C on the overall portfolio grade, since it is difficult to do reflection if you are not doing social action. Of course, if you want to do more community work, that is great. In fact, I can arrange for you to get an extra one to three units of course credit (Soci. 181B) if you do additional community work. Please come see me if you are interested in this additional course credit.

It will be possible to do your social action on campus, so all students should be able to work it into your schedule. In addition, class time will be dedicated to your community projects, so you will be able to do some of your organizing in class. During the second class, you will brainstorm various social action projects, and then you will choose one to work on. The requirements for the project are: (i) that you have a minimum of 3 students on your team, (ii) you have passion for the issue, and (iii) your project tries to change some type of policy. The campaign you choose to work on may come from a liberal, conservative, social democrat, or libertarian perspective...or it may have no ideology. Whatever campaign you choose to do, I will teach you about democracy, power, and how to bring about change.

If for some reason a student wants to leave a group, please contact the professor. At that time, the student and professor will discuss what group you would like to join. After the student makes a choice, I will contact the other group. If the group believes there will be little disruption to the group, then the student is able to join. However, if the group feels that there would be a disruption to the group due to possible lack of trust and transparency issues, or negative behavior by the student, that group has the right to say no. If the student still wants to join the group even after the student group has said that it would cause a disruption, the professor will make the final decision, as I am ultimately in charge of the classroom environment. Personally, I am fine with any student joining another group if it would cause minimum disruption to the group. At the same time, I am not okay if by a student joining the group, it would cause disruption to the group. As professor, I am responsible for the classroom environment, and I will base my decision on the impact to the classroom environment. If the student has no group to join, then the student will be given an independent study with no negative repercussions to her/his/their grade.

Importantly, there is no political indoctrination, as students develop and choose what campaigns to work on, and can change campaigns at any point in the semester. Furthermore, my role is to offer guidance about strategy and tactics, and to help students consider the variety of options available, with the students deciding on how to best move forward.

One last thing: this is a Sociology course, so you should know something about one of the most famous American sociologists, C. Wright Mills. Mills once said that, "personal troubles cannot be solved merely as troubles, but must be understood in terms of public issues - and in terms of the problems of history making." For example, if in a nation, there is just a small minority of the population in poverty, then it is the individual's personal trouble, and for its relief we properly look to the character of the person and her or his skills. But if in that nation, there are 40 million people in poverty (like in the United States), then that is a social problem, and relief must come from a change in social structure (i.e., the arrangement of society). Mills called this approach to understanding reality the *sociological imagination*, which we will use throughout this course!¹

¹ C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), 226.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. conduct issue development
2. implement various strategies and tactics
3. build power
4. conduct research (historical analysis, power map, target analysis)
5. work with the media
6. perform campaign and evaluation plans

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

Scott Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE! A Student Guide to Social Action*, ISBN: 9781138297296, ISBN: 9781612057279. The book is available at the Spartan Bookstore or on-line.

Other Readings

There is a reader for this course. The reader is available at San Jose Copies (408-297-6698), which is located on 109 E. Santa Clara Street, two stores down from the Chevron gas station.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

There are four course requirements. They include quizzes, a portfolio and log, participation, and a final presentation.

8 Very Short Quizzes (20% of total grade)

The purpose of these very short quizzes (i.e., less than 5 minutes) is to encourage reading. In order to encourage the reading process, you will be given short quizzes throughout the semester. If you do the reading for each class, these short quizzes will be very easy to answer.

Portfolio and log (40%)

At the university, you generally demonstrate that you understand the ideas from the course in an exam. This class is different; in this class, portfolios take the place of exams. Importantly, the portfolio is where you demonstrate your knowledge of the text in light of your social action experiences. Therefore, you must integrate the text with your community work throughout each portfolio. With no integration of text, you cannot receive above a C on your portfolio.

In addition, you can not get higher than a C on your overall portfolio grade if you do not complete at least 25 hours of social action work (1.5 to 2 hours a week). I will email you a log to keep track of your community work, and it will be turned in with each portfolio. Please buy a very thin folder

for your portfolio and log. Your portfolio and log will be collected every three to four weeks. Late portfolios will be accepted, but 1/3 grade will be deducted for each school date it is late.

Participation (20%)

The purpose of evaluating your participation is to encourage and reward students who prepare for, and engage in, the habits of the mind. Thus, you will be evaluated on the extent and quality of your participation in the class. Your classroom participation grade will be based on the following criteria:

Excellence (A) requires that you play a leadership role in the large class discussion and your team, apply the text, discuss points articulately and respond intelligently to other's views; ask insightful questions, and take responsibility for the direction of the class discussion and your team.

Above average (B) requires that you participate regularly in the large class discussion and your team, demonstrate good knowledge of the text, discuss points articulately and respond intelligently to other's views; ask insightful questions, but you do not take a strong leadership role in the overall class discussion and the direction of your team.

Average (C) requires that you follow the discussion in the large class and your team, make occasional comments, have a basic knowledge of the text, and sometimes ask questions in the large group and your team.

Below average (D) requires that you occupy a seat and occasionally show signs of life.

Failure (F) requires that you occupy a seat but show no signs of life.

At the end of the course, you will be asked to evaluate your level of participation, as well as your teammates. This evaluation will be taken seriously when participation grades are determined.

Final Evaluation (20%)

For the final exam, students give a group presentation that evaluates your social action project.

GRADING SCALE

Since the various parts of the course add up to 100%, each percent equals a point. For example, your participation is 20% of your grade; thus, this assignment is worth 20 points. The scale that I use to measure your work is the following:

98-100=A+	88-89=B+	78-79=C+	68-69=D+	59 & below =F
93-97=A	83-87=B	73-77=C	63-67=D	
90-92=A-	80-82=B-	70-72=C-	60-62=D-	

EXTRA CREDIT

There will also be other extra credit opportunities throughout the semester. To receive the extra credit, you need to go to the campus event, and then write 3-4 paragraphs reflection paper: (1) describing what you saw and heard (i.e., the major points and key lessons of the event), and (2) integrating your insights with the reading in Social Action. To receive full credit, the extra credit must be turned in 1 week after the event.

Classroom Protocol

1. Cell Phones and Computers: Anytime we are in the large group, please do NOT use your cell phone. If you need to answer a text, please step outside and do so. In addition, any type of social networking on your computer is NOT allowed. If you use your computer to take notes or to do the reading, do not have it open to Facebook, Gmail, etc. This makes me very unhappy, as it is a block to your participation, as well as the group process. However, in the small groups, you will be able to use your cell phone and computer (e.g. to look up information or to access your campaign's social media account).
2. Office Hours: My office hours are on Tuesday and Thursday. Office hours are generally used to help clarify information from lectures, discussions, group activities, readings, or social action projects. However, at least once this semester, please come by my office hours.
3. Late Papers: The late policy for any work is a 1/3 drop in grade for each school day that it is late. Thus, if the paper is due on Tuesday, and you turn it in on Thursday, your grade will be dropped by 2/3s (i.e., a grade of B would be a C+).

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Course Schedule

WEEK 1:

1/23 DISCUSS SYLLABUS AND CLASS

Week 2:

1/28 HOW TO ACT: BEGIN WITH ISSUE DEVELOPMENT

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Student Victories (XI- XII), Preface (XIII-XVII), & Ch. 1, p 1-6

Reader:

St. Laurent, class '13, p. 1

1/30 ISSUE DEVELOPMENT

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, p. 7-19, Message to Teachers (XIX-XXIII)

Reader:

Plato, Allegory of the Cave, p. 2-4

Video: Walk the Walk

WEEK 2:

2/4 SETTING THE TONE

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 2, p. 21-28

Reader:

Jendian, "The Abundant Community", p.

Myers-Lipton: Re-Establishment of Equal Opportunity Program (EOP)", p. 9

Temblador, class of '11, "Students for EOP", p. 10-18

Ziemendorf, "Rights Leader's 80th Birthday", p. 161-162

Lanham, "Protest Yields Support for Student Equality", p. 163-164

2/6 CHANGE THEORY

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 3, p. 31-38

Reader

Jackson-Smarr, Class '08, "Reflection: Student Homeless Alliance, p. 33-35

Video: Joanne Robinson

WEEK 4:

2/11 CHANGE THEORY

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 3, p. 38-48

Reader:

Myers-Lipton, "Students for DMH & Fight for Air Conditioning", p. 19

FIND SPARTAN DAILY ARTICLE!!!

Video: Saul Alinsky and Faint in

2/13 BUILDING POWER

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 4, p. 51-59

Reader:

Jackson-Smarr, Class '08, "Reflection: Student Homeless Alliance, p. 33-35

Video speaker: Rochelle Jackson-Smarr

WEEK 5:

2/18 BUILDING POWER

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 4, p. 60-68

Reader:

Myers-Lipton, "Chicano Commencement", p. 5-6

Rodriguez, "A Bold Statement that Still Resonates", p. 26-27

2/20 SJSU SOCIAL ACTION HISTORY: Walking Tour

Reader:

Myers-Lipton: Edwin Markham, The Man with the Hoe and Tower Hall, p. 20-21

Myers-Lipton: Japanese American Internment at Men's Gym, p. 22-22-1

Notice: Headquarters Western Defense Command, p. 23

Beecher, "Internees", p. 24-25

Thompson, email, p. 28

Baca, "The Cesar Chavez Monument Unveiled in SJSU", p. 29-30

Myers-Lipton: "Gaylord Nelson's Earth Day & Burying of a New Ford Maverick", p. 7-8

Myers-Lipton, "Tommy Smith, John Carlos, and the Statues", p. 54-55

Bonk, "San Jose Statement", p. 31-32

Walker, "It is Finished", 56-60

DUE: Portfolios 1-3 and Social Action Log

WEEK 6:

2/25 RESEARCH

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 5, p. 71-82

Reader:

McCabe, class of '12, p. 72-74

Start Organizational Raps: will start each class from now on with an organizational rap

2/26 Film: Smith & Carlos, & the Olympic Project for Human Rights (at my house)

Reader:

Edwards, "What Happened to the Revolt of the Black Athlete", p. 61-66

2/27 GROUP DYNAMICS

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 8, p. 129-141

Reader:

Lucila Ortiz, class of '10, p. 38-40

Rodriguez, "A More Balanced Playing Field...", p. 41

AS, SJSU, Board of Directors' Resolution, p. 42-44

Speaker: Lucila Ortiz

WEEK 7:

3/3 STRATEGY AND TACTICS

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 6, 87-98

Reader:

Bradley, Class of '11, p. 45-46

Rey, "Campus Safety: A Reason to be Worried?", p. 47-49

Bradley, "Campus Safety and Statues Garden", p. 50

Clark, "UPD to Expand it's Escort Program", p. 51-52

CMS Info, "Students Auto-Enrolled in Alert-SJSU", p. 53

3/5 STRATEGY AND TACTICS

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 6, 98-108

Reader:

Myers-Lipton, "The Right to a Job", p. 121-125

Diroy, "Louisiana Winter Project Seeks National Awareness for Gulf Coast", p. 126-127

Goldston, "Forgotten in Louisiana", p. 128-129

Flier, "38 Colleges: National Post Katrina Summit", p. 130

Lieurance, "Students to March for Katrina Anniversary", p. 131

ACT letter to President-elect Obama, p. 132-133

Tilove, "Unlikely Allies Back House bill for Gulf Coast Jobs", p. 134-136

Video: GCCWP

Video: Spartan Daily: Student Homeless Alliance (Target meeting)

WEEK 8:

3/10 CAMPAIGN KICKOFF

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 7, p. 111-120

Reader:

Gieger, Class of '08, p. 137-141

Ewing, "Anti-Sweatshop Groups Gain Steam", p. 142-144

Spartan Daily, "Groups Rally for WRC Support, p. 145-146

AS University Affairs Meeting, p. 147

Parker, "SJSU Signs with Labor Rights Group", p. 148-149

Darcie Kiyon, Class of '07, p. 153-155

Yap, "Labor Rights Violations Suspected", p. 150-152

ADD: SPARTAN DAILY HEADLINE

3/12 CAMPAIGN KICKOFF

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 7, p. 120-126

Reader:

Myers-Lipton, "Donald Williams Jr. & Students for Racial Equality", p. 165-167

Velasquez, class of '16, p. 168-170

Murphy, "San Jose State Donor's Alleged...", p. 171-173

O'Connor, "University's Officials Step Down...", p. 174

Burbank, "SJSU Officials Resign After Offensive Remarks," p. 175-176

Video:

WEEK 9:

3/17 WHY ACT? PUBLIC NARRATIVES (first 10 minutes, discuss campaigns)

Reader:

Ganz, What is Public Narrative?

Popo, The Psychology of What Makes a Great Story, p.

Center for Public Leadership: Introduction to Public Narrative

Video: James Croft Catch Them Before They Jump

3/19 WHY ACT? INTRODUCTION TO STORY OF SELF

Reader:

Ganz, Story of Self

Center for Public Leadership: Story of Self

Video: Amel Beydoun: Catch Them Before They Jump

WEEK 10:

3/24 STORY OF SELF: TEAM BREAKOUT SESSION (first 10 minutes, discuss campaigns)

Reader:

Center for Public Leadership: Team Break Out Session, Worksheet & Coaching Tips

3/26 CAMPAIGN PLAN

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 9, p. 143-150

Reader:

Myers-Lipton, “How to Get Press to Your Event”, p. 80

Myers-Lipton, “Right to a Living Wage”, p. 67-71

Noguchi, “Measure Sets Sights on Wage Increase”, p. 75

SJ Mercury News, Readers’ Letters, p. 76

SJ Mercury News, Internal Affairs, p. 77

Seipel, “Minimum-wage Hike Measure Heads to Ballot”, p. 78

Guevera & Krenak, “Higher Min Wage in SJ Will Help”, p. 79

Speaker: Elisha St. Laurent

March 30-April 3: SPRING BREAK

WEEK 11:

4/7 WHY ACT? INTRODUCTION TO STORY OF US

Reader:

Ganz, Story of US

Center for Public Leadership: Story of US

Video: Susan Christopher’s Story of Us

4/9 STORY OF US: TEAMWORK / DEBRIEF

Reader:

Haslam, Reicher, and Platow, “Crafting a Sense of Us: Leaders as Entrepreneurs of Identity”

Video: King, The Fierce Urgency of Now

WEEK 12:

4/14 SOCIAL ACTION CASE STUDY: Seattle & the WTO and NY's Occupy Wall Street

Reader:

Gillahm and Marx, "Complexity and Irony in Policing and Protesting", p.
Hammond, "Anarchism of Occupy Wall Street", p. 98-120

Video: Occupy Wall Street

4/16 WHY ACT? INTRODUCTION TO STORY OF NOW

Reader:

Ganz, Story of NOW
Center for Public Leadership: Story of NOW
Milk, The Hope Speech

Video: "You Have to Give Them Hope", www.youtube.com/watch?v=X9vol-8HYEc
Gandhi

WEEK 13:

4/21 STORY OF NOW: TEAMWORK / DEBRIEF

Reader:

Center for Public Leadership: Team Break Out Session, Worksheet & Coaching Tips

Video: "Gandhi"

4/23 SOCIAL ACTION CASE STUDY: ACT UP

Reader:

Myers-Lipton, "Graduate Schools For Social Action", p. 182-185
Deparle, "Rage, Rash, Effective, Act-Up Shifts Aids Policy", p. 177-181

Video: United in Anger

DUE: *Portfolios 4-6 and Social Action Log*

WEEK 14:

4/28 WHY ACT? LINKING SELF, US, AND NOW

Reader:

Center for Public Leadership: Putting It All Together

4/30 SOCIAL ACTION CASE STUDY: BLACK LIVES MATTER

Reader:

Lowery, "Black Lives Matter: Birth of a Movement", 200-208
Belton, "Leaderless or Leader-ful?" 209-215

WEEK 15:

5/5 SOCIAL ACTION CASE STUDY: NRA AND PARKLAND STUDENTS

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 10, p. 153-155

Reader:

Higham & Horowitz, "NRA Tactics: Take No Prisoners", p. 216-221
Han, "Want Gun Control? Learn From the NRA", 222-22
Grinberg & Muaddi, "How the Parkland Students Pulled Off a Massive National...", p. 225-230
Meyer, "The Parkland Teens Started Something", 231-233

5/7 SOCIAL ACTION CASE STUDY: SUNRISE MOVEMENT

Book:

Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 10, p. 155-163

Reader:

Witt, "The Optimistic Activists for a Green New Deal", p. 336-341

Video: NBC Documentary and the Matrix

DUE: *Last Portfolios and Social Action Log*

5/13 FINAL: PRESENTATIONS AND CAMPAIGN BINDER

Wed, 9:45 am-12 noon
