

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

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Scott Myers-Lipton
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Class Days/Time:	Tu. & Th., 1:30-2:45 am
Office Hours:	Zoom:
Classroom:	
Prerequisites:	SOCI 1 or equivalent (professor has discretion to admit students)

Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.
Frederick Douglas

Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember. Involve me and I understand.
Xun Kuang, 312-230 BCE
Confucian philosopher, Revised version

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 fourteen 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 13 hours or more 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

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.

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

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. All of the portfolios will be your own work, except for the last one, which will focus on the campaign notebook. This last portfolio will be done by your group, and you will receive a group grade. This campaign notebook will be used by the next incoming class of Social Action students during their selection process of campaigns.

In addition, you cannot receive 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, Soci. 164: Social Action / Spring, 2020

WEEK 1:

8/19 DISCUSS SYLLABUS AND CLASS

WEEK 2:

8/24 ISSUE DEVELOPMENT / STUDENT REFLECTIONS

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

Reader: St. Laurent, class of '13, p. 1
Myers-Lipton, 2021 Silicon Valley Pain Index

8/26 ISSUE DEVELOPMENT

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

Reader: Myers-Lipton, College Student Social Action

Video: Walk the Walk (part 1: first 15 minutes)

WEEK 3:

8/31 ISSUE DEVELOPMENT / SETTING THE TONE (How your team will work?)

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

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

Video: Walk the Walk (part 2: 2nd 15 minutes)

9/2 CHANGE THEORY / STUDENT REFLECTIONS

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

Reader: Jackson-Smarr, Class of '08, "Reflection: Student Homeless Alliance, p. 16-18

Video: Joanne Robinson

WEEK 4:

9/7 CHANGE THEORY / STUDENT REFLECTIONS

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

Reader: Myers-Lipton, “Students for DMH & Fight for Air Conditioning”, p. 19-20
Students for DMH, Flier

Video: Saul Alinsky and Faint in

9/9 BUILDING POWER / STUDENT REFLECTIONS

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

Reader: Jackson-Smarr, Class ‘08, “Reflection: Gulf Coast Civic Works Project”, p. 21-22

Zoom Speaker: Rochelle Jackson-Smarr

WEEK 5:

9/14 BUILDING POWER / STUDENT REFLECTIONS

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

Reader: Myers-Lipton, “Chicano Commencement”, p. 23-24
Rodriquez, “A Bold Statement that Still Resonates”, p. 25-26

9/16 SJSU SOCIAL ACTION HISTORY: Walking Tour

Reader: Myers-Lipton: Edwin Markham, The Man with the Hoe and Tower Hall, p. 27-28
Myers-Lipton: Japanese American Internment at Men’s Gym, p. 29-30
Notice: Headquarters Western Defense Command, p. 31
Beecher, “Internees”, p. 32-33
Thompson, email, p. 34
Baca, “The Cesar Chavez Monument Unveiled in SJSU”, p. 35-36
Myers-Lipton: “Gaylord Nelson’s Earth Day & Burying of a New Ford Maverick”, p. 37-38
Myers-Lipton, “Tommy Smith, John Carlos, and the Statues”, p. 39-40
Bonk, “San Jose Statement”, p. 41-42
Walker, “It is Finished”, p. 43-47

DUE: Portfolios 1-3 and Social Action Log

WEEK 6:

9/21 RESEARCH / STUDENT REFLECTIONS (*start Organizational Raps (one each class)*)

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

Reader: McCabe, class of '12, p. 48-50

2/26 Film: *Smith & Carlos, & the Olympic Project for Human Rights (at my house)*
6 pm: Potluck Dinner, 7-8 pm movie

Reader: Edwards, "What Happened to the Revolt of the Black Athlete", p 51-56

9/23 GROUP DYNAMICS: How is your team working? / STUDENT REFLECTIONS

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

Reader: Lucila Ortiz, class of '10, p. 57-59
Rodriguez, "A More Balanced Playing Field...", p. 60
AS, SJSU, Board of Directors' Resolution, p. 61-63

Zoom Speaker: Lucila Ortiz

WEEK 7:

9/28 STRATEGY AND TACTICS / STUDENT REFLECTIONS

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

Reader: Bradley, Class of '11, p. 64-65
Rey, "Campus Safety: A Reason to be Worried?", p. 66-68
Bradley, "Campus Safety and Statues Garden", p. 69
Clark, "UPD to Expand it's Escort Program", p. 70-71
CMS Info, "Students Auto-Enrolled in Alert-SJSU", p. 72

9/30 STRATEGY AND TACTICS / STUDENT REFLECTIONS

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

Reader: Myers-Lipton, "The Right to a Job", p. 73-77
Diroy, "Louisiana Winter Project Seeks National Awareness for Gulf Coast", p. 78-79
Goldston, "Forgotten in Louisiana", p. 80-81
Flier, "38 Colleges: National Post Katrina Summit", p. 82
Lieurance, "Students to March for Katrina Anniversary", p. 83
ACT letter to President-elect Obama, p. 84-85
Tilove, "Unlikely Allies Back House bill for Gulf Coast Jobs", p. 86-88

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

WEEK 8:

10/5 CAMPAIGN KICKOFF Part 1 / STUDENT REFLECTIONS

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

Reader: Ewing, “Anti-Sweatshop Groups Gain Steam”, p. 89-91
Spartan Daily, “Groups Rally for WRC Support, p. 92-93
Gieger, Class of ‘08, p. 94-98
Darcie Kiyan, Class of ‘07, p. 99-101
AS University Affairs Meeting, p. 102
Parker, “SJSU Signs with Labor Rights Group”, p. 103-104
Yap, “Labor Rights Violations Suspected”, p. 105-107

10/7 CAMPAIGN KICKOFF Part 2 / STUDENT REFLECTIONS

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

Reader: Myers-Lipton, “Donald Williams Jr. & Students for Racial Equality”, p. 108-110
Velasquez, class of ‘16, p. 111-113
Murphy, “San Jose State Donor’s Alleged...”, p. 114-116
O’Connor, “University’s Officials Step Down...”, p. 117
Burbank, “SJSU Officials Resign After Offensive Remarks,” p. 118-119

Video: Students for Racial Equality

WEEK 9:

10/12 CAMPAIGN PLAN / STUDENT REFLECTIONS

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

Reader: Myers-Lipton, “How to Get Press to Your Event”, p. 165
Myers-Lipton, “Raise the Wage in San Jose”, p. 166
Noguchi, “Measure Sets Sights on Wage Increase”, p. 167
SJ Mercury News, Readers’ Letters, p. 168
SJ Mercury News, Internal Affairs, p. 169
Seipel, “Minimum-wage Hike Measure Heads to Ballot”, p. 170
Guevera & Krenak, “Higher Min Wage in SJ Will Help”, p. 171
Mendoza, “Student Class Project Leads to Minimum Wage Jump”, p. 172

Speaker: Elisha St. Laurent

10/14 CAMPAIGN FRAMES: UN DECLARATION of HUMAN RIGHTS and 2ND BILL of RIGHTS

Reader: UN Declaration of Human Rights **HUMAN RIGHTS & 2nd BILL of RIGHTS**
Myers-Lipton, “An Economic Bill of Rights”, p. 81-84
Gilliam and Marx, “Complexity & Irony in Policing and Protesting”, p. 85-97

DUE: Portfolios 4-6 and Social Action Log

WEEK 10:

10/19 RIGHT TO A JOB -- SJSU CASE STUDY: Gulf Coast Civic Works Project (2007-2010)

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

10/21 U.S. CASE STUDY: BATTLE of SEATTLE and OCCUPY WALL STREET

Reader: Gilliam and Marx, "Complexity & Irony in Policing and Protesting", p. 85-97

Video: Battle of Seattle

Hammond, "Anarchism of Occupy Wall Street", p. 98-120

WEEK 11:

10/26 SJSU CASE STUDY: United Students Against Sweatshops (2000-07)

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

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

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

Speaker: Darcie Kiyan

10/28 U.S. CASE STUDY: ACT-UP

Reader: Deparle, "Rage, Rash, Effective, Act-Up Shifts Aids Policy", p. 177-181

Myers-Lipton, "Graduate Schools For Social Action", p. 182-185

Video: United in Anger (from the 21st to the 34th minute)

WEEK 12:

11/2 SJSU CASE STUDY: RIGHT TO A GOOD EDUCATION

Reader: Myers-Lipton, "The Right to a Good Education", p. 156-160

Myers-Lipton: Re-Establishment of Equal Opportunity Program (EOP)", p. 151

Temblador, class of '11, "Students for EOP", p. 152-160

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

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

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

11/4 No Class

WEEK 13:

11/9 U.S. CASE STUDY: BLACK LIVES MATTER

Reader: Lowery, “Black Lives Matter: Birth of a Movement”, 271-279
Belton, “Leaderless or Leader-ful?” 280-286

11/11 U.S. CASE STUDY: NRA

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

Reader: Higham & Horowitz, “NRA Tactics: Take No Prisoners”, p. 287-292
Han, “Want Gun Control? Learn From the NRA”, p. 293-295

WEEK 14:

11/16 U.S. CASE STUDY: PARKLAND STUDENTS

Reader: Grinberg & Muaddi, “How the Parkland Students Pulled Off a Massive...”, p. 296-299
Meyer, “The Parkland Teens Started Something”, 300-301A/28 **U.S. CASE STUDY:**

11/18 SUNRISE MOVEMENT

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

Reader: Witt, “The Optimistic Activists for a Green New Deal”, p. 302-307

Video: NBC Documentary and the Matrix

WEEK 15:

11/23 INTERNATIONAL CASE STUDY: IRAN & SAUDI ARABIA ACTIONS

Reader: Kenyon, “In Iran Protests, Women Stand Up, Lift Their Hijab, For Their Rights”, p. 234
Barker, “Saudi Arabia's Women Can Now Drive – But Activists Jailed”, p. 235-236

11/25 No Class: Day of Thanks

WEEK 16:

11/30 WHY ACT? PUBLIC NARRATIVES

Reader: Ganz, “What is Public Narrative?”, p. 120-130
Center for Public Leadership: “Introduction to Public Narrative”, p. 131-136

Video: James Croft, “Catch Them Before They Jump”

12/2 FINAL THOUGHTS: Prepare for Group Presentation and Campaign Notebook

Book: Myers-Lipton, *CHANGE!*, Ch. 11, p. 153-163

Reader: Myers-Lipton: “The Kingian Legacy For Today”, p. 237-238

DUE: Portfolios 7-9 and Social Action Log

FINAL: PRESENTATIONS AND CAMPAIGN NOTEBOOK (turn in)
