

**Community Organizing & Social Change**

Winter 2025

College of Urban and Public Affairs

|                         | Description   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Instructor</b>       | Colleen Carroll   |
| <b>Office</b>           | Urban Center 350E   |
| <b>Availability</b>     | Monday and Wednesday 4:00-5:00 pm or by appointment   |
| <b>Phone</b>            | NA  |
| <b>Email</b>            | <a href="mailto:cpc4@pdx.edu">cpc4@pdx.edu</a> aka <a href="mailto:colleen.carroll@pdx.edu">colleen.carroll@pdx.edu</a> |
| <b>CRN</b>              | 63564   |
| <b>Credits</b>          | 4 undergrad credits   |
| <b>Location</b>         | PSU Urban Center   Room 220   |
| <b>Meeting Schedule</b> | Monday and Wednesday 2:00 - 3:50 pm   |

**Course Outcomes/Learning Objectives**

- Students will differentiate organizing from other social movement work.
- Students will distinguish between organizing an organization, organizing an issue-based campaign, structure-based organizing, organizing for power....
- Students will differentiate measurable goals and concrete achievements from other valuable benefits of organizing.
- Students will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of organizing strategies, tactics, and skills.
- Students will match organizing strategies, tactics, and skills to measurable goals under specific conditions.
- Students will practice organizing skills and activities.

## Course Touchstones

- we learn by practicing (taking action) into new ways of thinking, not thinking our way into new ways of acting.
- “...practice makes different” — Ruth Wilson Gilmore
- “everything worthwhile is done with other people” — Mariame Kaba
- Don’t Guess, Assess!
- Might does not make right, and right does not make might - Ganz

## Required Materials

Materials will be **updated weekly in Canvas** - including articles, videos, podcasts, activities, book chapters and other materials.

## Class Activities

Each week, and often twice a week, we will do in-class activities. We will practice a skill, we will attempt a strategy, we will do power-mapping, structure testing, wall charting, group decision making, etc. **You will be expected to do things.** You will not be graded on how well you do them, but they will help you accumulate evidence and examples for the term-long Application Project (more below).

## Assignments

### Cornell Notes (150 pts available)

Reading the materials before class is a key component of this course. In class we will discuss and practice what we are reading about. Which is why reading the material before class will help you.

Each student will be graded on up to fifteen (15) Cornell Notes over the course of the term. You can submit more, and take the grade of the top 15. They must be uploaded into canvas. Each Notes submission can earn up to 10 pts. I will provide feedback. You can re-submit any previously submitted notes to be re-graded as many times as desired, up until **March 12th at 1:45pm.**

## ***Application Project: Practicing Organizing Skills a 4-part project (100pts available)***

This is the main project for the class and will be done over the course of term. You will be assigned a topic to work on in groups but each person will submit their writing/reflecting individually. More details to come.

### **Identifying the problem (1pg, 10 pts)**

***Due TBA***

### **Identify the structure, denominator, and organic leaders. (2 pgs 20 pts)**

***Due TBA***

### **Power map & Wall Charts (2 pgs 20 pts)**

***Due TBA***

### **Make a “structure test” plan (2 pgs 20 pts)**

***Due TBA***

### **Script of an Organizing Conversation & reflection on your practice session (2 pgs 20 pts)**

***Due TBA***

### **Assess the strategy thus far, what is working, what do you need to adjust? (1pg, 10 pts)**

## **Grading Criteria**

There are a total of 250 points available. Course grades will be assigned on the student's proportion of total points based on the standard Portland State University grading scheme: 90-100%(A), 87-89%(B+), 80-86%(B), 77-79%(C+), 70-76%(C), 67-69%(D+), 60-66%(D), and below 60%(F).

## **Flexibility Statement**

The instructor reserves the right to modify course content and/or substitute assignments and learning activities in response to institutional, weather, or class situations.

## Course Calendar/Schedule

| Date          | Topic   | Materials<br>(to be read/watched<br>before class)   | Assignment<br>(to be completed<br>before class, due<br>dates as listed) | Activity<br>(to do in class)  |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Week 1</b> |   |   |   |   |
| Jan 6         | Intros and level setting  | -   | none  | Worksheets and<br>AMA   |
| Jan 8         | Organizing is distinct<br>from other forms of<br>social movement<br>participation                 | <i>Against Activism</i> by<br>Astra Taylor<br><br><i>Spadework: On<br/>political organizing</i><br>by Alyssa Battistoni<br><br><i>We Can Only<br/>Survive Together</i> by<br>Mariame Kaba | none  | Cornell Notes<br>Practice<br>Session for<br><i>Racism and<br/>Fascism</i> by Toni<br>Morrison |
| <b>Week 2</b> |   |   |   |   |
| Jan 13        | Organizing for power:<br>Evidence-Based and<br>Structure-Based<br>Organizing                      | <i>Why Me, Why Us,<br/>Why Now<br/>(Introduction)</i> by<br>Marshall Ganz<br><br>PEOPLE, POWER<br>AND CHANGE<br>Framework by<br>Marshall Ganz (pgs<br>2-6)                                | Notes 1<br><br><i>Due by 1:45 pm<br/>on Jan 13</i>                      | Assign<br>Groups/Topics<br>for AP:POS<br><br>(Identify the<br>problem)                        |
| Jan 15        | Organizing for power:<br>Evidence-Based and<br>Structure-Based<br>Organizing ( <i>continued</i> ) | <i>Chapter One<br/>(Introduction) No<br/>Shortcuts</i> by Jane<br>McAlevey<br><br>PODCAST: <a href="#">In<br/>conversation: Jane<br/>McAlevey on<br/>organizing vs.<br/>mobilizing</a>    | Notes 2<br><br><i>Due by 1:45 pm<br/>on Jan 15</i>                      | Glossary  |
| <b>Week 3</b> |   |   |   |   |

| Date          | Topic  | Materials<br>(to be read/watched<br>before class)  | Assignment<br>(to be completed<br>before class, due<br>dates as listed) | Activity<br>(to do in class)  |
|---------------|--|--|---|---|
| Jan 20        | NO CLASS   |  |   |   |
| Jan 22        | Power for the purpose of<br>disruption and<br>concessions<br><br>(a brief dip into Direct<br>Action) | The Economics of<br>Movement Success:<br>Business<br>Responses to Civil<br>Rights Mobilization<br>by Joseph Luders<br>(PDF)  | Notes 3<br><br><i>Due by 1:45 pm<br/>on Jan 22</i>                      |   |
| <b>Week 4</b> |  |  |   |   |
| Jan 27        | Leadership<br><br>Small / leaders vs<br>Position Holders   | The Power to Win is<br>the Community Not<br>in the Boardroom<br>(pgs 27 - 50) (PDF_<br><br><a href="#">Ella Taught Me:<br/>Shattering the Myth<br/>of the Leaderless<br/>Movement</a> By<br>Barbara Ransby       | Notes 4<br><br><i>Due by 1:45 pm<br/>on Jan 27</i>                      | Group work on<br>context and<br>organizing<br>opportunities                       |
| Jan 29        | Roles, tasks,<br>positionality<br><br>Organizing ourselves   | The Power to Win is<br>the Community Not<br>in the Boardroom<br>(pgs 50 - 70) (PDF)<br><br>ABOLITION RENT<br>(PDF, pgs TBD)<br><br><i>Organizing isn't<br/>Matchmaking</i> by<br>Mariame Kaba and<br>Kelly Hayes | Notes 5<br><br><i>Due by 1:45 pm<br/>on Jan 29</i>                      | Identify the<br>structure,<br>denominator,<br>and organic<br>leaders.<br>(AP:POS) |
| <b>Week 5</b> |  |  |   |   |
| Feb 3         | Structured Power<br>Analysis   | Conducting a Power<br>Structure Analysis,<br><i>Rules to Win</i> By<br>Abby Lawlor and<br>Jane McAlevey PDF<br><br>Powerpoints by  | Notes 6<br><br><i>Due by 1:45 pm<br/>on Feb 3</i>                       | Powerpoints by<br>Rosten Woo<br><br>(AP:POS)                                      |

| Date          | Topic                             | Materials<br>(to be read/watched<br>before class)  | Assignment<br>(to be completed<br>before class, due<br>dates as listed) | Activity<br>(to do in class) |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------|
|               |                                   | Rosten Woo   |   |                              |
| Feb 5         | List making and Mapping           | <a href="#">It Takes a Community: Building Unions From the Outside In</a> by Jane McAlevey<br><br><a href="#">Mapping: the Basics</a> by the IWW<br><br>Comprehensive Charting and Community Campaign by Jane McAlevey PDF<br><br>Optional: <a href="#">The Origins and Urgency of Bargaining for the Common Good</a> by Joseph McCartin and Merrie Najimy | Notes 7<br><br><i>Due by 1:45 pm on Feb 5</i>                           | List making and Mapping      |
| <b>Week 6</b> |                                   |  |   |                              |
| Feb 10        | Structure Tests                   | TBD  | Notes 8<br><br><i>Due by 1:45 pm on Feb 10</i>                          |                              |
| Feb 12        | TBD                               | Closing the Loop - list building and wall charts<br><br>1199 Advice to Rookie Organizers   | Notes 9<br><br><i>Due by 1:45 pm on Feb 12</i>                          |                              |
| <b>Week 7</b> |                                   |  |   |                              |
| Feb 17        | Wed, May 8: Structured Organizing | Semantics Matter   | Notes 10  |                              |

| Date          | Topic  | Materials<br>(to be read/watched<br>before class)   | Assignment<br>(to be completed<br>before class, due<br>dates as listed) | Activity<br>(to do in class) |
|---------------|--|---|---|------------------------------|
|               | Conversations  | <a href="#">An Organizing Conversation</a> by Labor Notes<br><br><a href="#">“Organizing 4 power”, from workers to tenants</a><br>(focus on <i>The words we use</i> section)<br><br>Optional:<br><a href="#">Comprehensive Organizing Plan</a><br><br><a href="#">The Limits of the Organizing Model</a><br><br><a href="#">Lowering expectations: misrepresentations of McAlevey</a> | <i>Due by 1:45 pm on Feb 17</i>   |                              |
| Feb 19        | Wed, May 8: Structured Organizing Conversations (cont) | Closing the Loop - list building and wall charts  | Notes 11<br><br><i>Due by 1:45 pm on Feb 19</i>                         | <b>Discussion</b>            |
| <b>Week 8</b> |  |   |   |                              |
| Feb 24        | Logistics of organizing                                | <a href="#">Tyranny of Structurelessness</a><br>by Jo Freeman<br><br>No Masters, No Flakes Chapter from<br><a href="#">Mutual Aid Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)</a><br>by Dean Spade<br><b>STOP AT A</b>  | Notes 12<br><br><i>Due by 1:45 pm on Feb 24</i>                         |                              |

| Date   | Topic   | Materials<br>(to be read/watched<br>before class)  | Assignment<br>(to be completed<br>before class, due<br>dates as listed) | Activity<br>(to do in class) |
|--------|---|--|---|------------------------------|
|        |   | <p>Cautionary Note on Fame</p> <p>Optional Reading:<br/> <a href="#">Structurelessness 2.0</a><br/>           By Jillian Báez</p>  |   |                              |
| Feb 26 | Wed, May 15: Internal Structure and Structurelessness | <p>Anarchic Agreements (pages TBD)</p> <p>Optional:<br/> <a href="#">The mass protest decade: why did the street movements of the 2010s fail?</a> By Vincent Bevins</p> <p>Excerpt from <i>Elite Capture</i> by Olufemi O. Táiwò PDF</p> <p><b>Recommended Further Readings:</b><br/> <a href="#">The Nation on No Map</a><br/> <a href="#">Black Anarchism and Abolition</a> by William C. Anderson</p> <p><a href="#">Islam and Anarchism: Relationships and Resonances</a> by Mohamed Abdou</p> <p><a href="#">Becoming Kin: An Indigenous Call to Unforgetting the Past and Reimagining Our Future</a> by Patty Krawec</p> <p><a href="#">Queering Anarchism</a></p> | <p>Notes 13</p> <p>Due by 1:45 pm on Feb 26</p>                         | Join or Die (video)          |



| Date           | Topic  | Materials<br>(to be read/watched<br>before class)  | Assignment<br>(to be completed<br>before class, due<br>dates as listed) | Activity<br>(to do in class) |
|----------------|--|--|---|------------------------------|
|                |  | <a href="#">Addressing and Undressing Power and Desire</a><br><br><a href="#">The Atheist's Guide to Quaker Process: Spirit-Led Decisions for the Secular</a>                                  |   |                              |
| <b>Week 9</b>  |  |  |   |                              |
| March 3        | Conjunctural Analysis                                  | <a href="#">The Dig LIVE: What Now? Perspectives on the Conuncture</a> (video)<br><br><a href="#">Studying the Conuncture - STUART HALL: THROUGH THE PRISM OF AN INTELLECTUAL LIFE</a> (video) | Notes 14<br><br><i>Due by 1:45 pm on March 3</i>                        | -                            |
| March 5        | Membership-based associations                          | <a href="#">Associations without members</a><br><br><a href="#">Ella Baker and the Origins of "participatory democracy" by Carol Mueller</a>   | Notes 15<br><br><i>Due by 1:45 pm on March 5</i>                        |                              |
| <b>Week 10</b> |  |  |   |                              |
| March 10       | Professionalization and Getting Paid for Movement Work | <a href="#">Dean Spade: Should Social Movement Work be Paid?</a> (Video on YouTube)<br><br><i>Optional:</i><br><a href="#">How Organizing Professionalizes</a>                                 | Resubmit Notes #1   |                              |

| Date        | Topic | Materials<br>(to be read/watched<br>before class) | Assignment<br>(to be completed<br>before class, due<br>dates as listed) | Activity<br>(to do in class) |
|-------------|-------|---|---|------------------------------|
|             |       | By Clément<br>Petitjean                           |   |                              |
| March<br>12 | TBD   |   | Resubmit Notes<br>#2  |                              |

## Course Attendance and Make-up Policies

You will benefit from regularly attending class and participating in the activities. This material cannot just be “thought”, it must be practiced. This material also cannot be done alone. Class is your opportunity to practice and practice with others. Absences, especially frequent absences, will prevent you from practicing and make your job of evaluating harder.

If you are going to miss class - please email me. If it is just one class, just give me a heads up. If you are going to miss multiple classes, please set up an appointment (can be over zoom if needed) with me so that we can strategize your ability to keep up with the materials.

## PSU Policies and Resources

### Academics

#### *PSU Grading System*

- [Undergraduate](#)
- [Graduate](#)

#### *Drop/Withdraw Deadlines*

- [Academic calendar](#)

#### *Academic Integrity*

Academic integrity is a vital part of the educational experience at PSU. The [Student Code of Conduct](#) is the university’s policy on academic dishonesty. A confirmed violation of that code in this course may result in failure of the course.

#### *Incomplete Grades Policy*

Students do not have a right to receive or demand an Incomplete grade. The option of assigning an Incomplete grade is at the discretion of the instructor when these criteria are met:

- Required satisfactory course completion/participation

- Reasonable justification for the request
- Not sought as a substitute for a poor grade
- Presence of a written agreement (such as the [Incomplete Contract](#))
- A plan in place to resolve Incomplete status

The Office of the Registrar's website has [the full Incomplete Grades policy](#).

## Student Services

### *Disability Access Statement*

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the [Disability Resource Center](#) to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is at 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 1825 SW Broadway; 503-725-4150; [drc@pdx.edu](mailto:drc@pdx.edu).

### *Basic Needs at Portland State*

It can be challenging to do your best in class if you have trouble meeting basic needs like safe shelter, sleep, and nutrition. Resource centers across campus are here to provide assistance, referrals, and support. Please contact anyone on this list for assistance:

- **Basic Needs Hub:** [basicneedshub@pdx.edu](mailto:basicneedshub@pdx.edu)
- **Portland State Food Pantry:** [psufp.com](http://psufp.com) or [pantry@pdx.edu](mailto:pantry@pdx.edu)
- **C.A.R.E. Program:** [askdos@pdx.edu](mailto:askdos@pdx.edu), (503) 725-4422
- **Student Health & Counseling:** [askshac@pdx.edu](mailto:askshac@pdx.edu), (503) 725-2800

### *Understanding Sexual Misconduct*

PSU desires to create a safe campus. As part of that mission, PSU requires all students to take the [Understanding Sexual Misconduct and Resources learning module](#). If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources on PSU's [Sexual Misconduct Response website](#).

### *Title IX Reporting*

Students frequently come to me for assistance in matters not related to the course material. Please be aware that PSU's policies require instructors to report any instance of sexual harassment, sexual and relationship violence and/or other forms of prohibited discrimination to university officials, who will keep the information private. If you would rather share information about these matters with a PSU staff member who does not have these reporting responsibilities and can keep the information confidential, please use these campus resources:

- Confidential Advocates: 503-894-7982 or [schedule online](#) (for matters regarding sexual harassment and sexual and relationship violence)
- Center for Student Health and Counseling: 1880 SW 6th Avenue #200; 503-725-2800

### *Discrimination and Bias Incidents*

[The Office of Equity and Compliance](#) (OEC) addresses complaints of discrimination, discriminatory Harassment, and sexual harassment against employees (faculty and staff). If you or someone you know believes they have been discriminated against, you may file a complaint. Someone from the OEC will contact you to discuss how to best address your complaint.

[The Bias Review Team](#) (BRT) gathers information on bias incidents that happen on and around campus, and gives resources and support to individuals who experience them. You can report a bias incident you experienced or learned about. A member of the BRT will contact you if you indicate you would like to be contacted.

### *Religious Accommodations*

If you would like to obtain religious accommodations, such as flexibility in attending evening courses or extension on assignments, please contact your instructors. If you need additional assistance, please contact the Office of the Dean of Student Life (DOSL) by emailing [askdos@pdx.edu](mailto:askdos@pdx.edu).

### *Cultural Resource Centers*

Cultural Resource Centers (CRCs) create a student-centered inclusive environment that enriches the university experience. They honor diversity, explore social justice issues, celebrate cultural traditions, and foster student identities, success, and leadership. They provide opportunities for student leadership, employment, and volunteering; student resources such as computer labs, event, lounge, and study spaces; and extensive programming. All are welcome!

- Multicultural Student Center
- La Casa Latina Student Center
- Native American Student and Community Center
- Pan African Commons
- Pacific Islander, Asian, and Asian American Student Center
- Middle East, North Africa, South Asia Initiative

### **COVID-19 Response**

The University has established rules and policies to make the return to the classroom as safe as possible. To learn about Portland State's activities to reduce the spread of COVID-19, visit [PSU's COVID-19 Response page](#).

If you need advice on testing and/or quarantine, visit [The Center for Student Health and Counseling \(SHAC\)'s COVID-19 FAQ page](#) or call 503-725-2800.

Also, please notify me (i.e. your instructor), should you need to miss a class period for any of these reasons so that we can discuss strategies to support your learning during this time. If I become ill or need to quarantine during the term, either I or the department chair will notify you via PSU email about my absence and how course instruction will continue.

### *Failure to Comply with Any of these Rules*

As the instructor of this course, the University has given me the authority to require your compliance with these policies. If you do not comply with these requirements, I may ask you to leave the classroom, or I may need to cancel the class session entirely.

In addition, failure to comply with these requirements may result in a referral to the Office of the Dean of Student Life to consider charges under PSU's Code of Conduct. A student found to have violated a university rule (or rules) through the due process of student conduct might face disciplinary and educational sanctions (or consequences). For a complete list of sanctions, see Section 14 of the [Student Code of Conduct & Responsibility](#).

### *Guidance May Change*

Please note that the University rules, policies, and guidance may change at any time at the direction of the CDC, State, or County requirements. Please review the University's main [COVID-19 Response](#) webpage and look for emails from the University on these topics.