CHAPTER 1: Social Action -- An Overview

A. Social Action’s Role in the American Experiment in Democracy
Social action occurs when everyday people band together to develop their power in order to change policy, and it has been a part of the American experiment in democracy throughout our history.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the enslaved banded together and participated in both non-violent (e.g., work slow-downs) and violent actions (e.g., revolts). In the 1800s, Native Americans, such as Tecumseh, rallied thousands of Native Americans from various tribes to join together to resist the U.S. policy of taking land, and Wovoka’s ghost dance inspired many Western Native American tribes to take public action by dancing so as to be reunited with the spirits of the dead, and together, they would repel the U.S. from their homelands.

In the late 1800s, the settlement house workers—which were composed mostly of young, white, well-off, college-educated graduates—moved into poor and working-class communities with the goal of developing policy solutions alongside the poor themselves. And in 1894, Jacob Coxey helped organize a “petition in boots” that marched 5,000 men across the country to Washington DC to request that the federal government create a public works program to deal with mass unemployment. The suffragettes also used social action, and over a 70-year period, successfully obtained the right to vote, while workers worked during this same period used social action to win basic labor protections such as the 40-hour work week, decent pay, and the right to organize. In the 1950s and 1960s, everyday African Americans used social action to end legal segregation and obtain the right to vote. Even the federal government got into the act, and for several years, sponsored social action programs as part its War on Poverty, before liberal and conservative mayors saw it as a threat to their power and worked to end these programs.

In the late 20th century, social action was used by everyday people who were fighting against AIDS (e.g., AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), nuclear weapons (e.g., at Rocky Flats Nuclear Processing Plant and Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant), income and wealth inequality (e.g., Occupy Wall Street), and for the environment (e.g., Redwood Summer) and fair trade (e.g., Battle of Seattle). More recently, both the NRA and the Parkland students have used social action, as well as Black Lives Matter. And while I am an advocate of non-violence, and I teach my students to hold that perspective as well, social action practitioners in the United States have used both non-violent and violent means, as can be seen from the above historical overview.

B. U.S. College Social Action
From the very founding of universities in the United States, social action has also been a part of American academia. By examining the historical record, what becomes clear is that the issues of college students are both inter-generational and trans-generational (i.e., across multiple generations). And while it is not possible to discuss and explore every social action that has taken place on college campuses in the past several hundred years, I do want to provide some of the highlights of these actions to demonstrate that they have occurred in every generation in the US, and to give an understanding of the issues that students have cared about since before the founding of this nation. And while this book is designed for teachers who will be using social action in their classrooms, this section might be shared with students, as it is inspirational to know that U.S. American students have been involved in social action to bring about a more just society for the past 400 years.

In the 17th and 18th century, college students—which were composed mostly of privileged White male youths—led “student rebellions” against the strict campus rules that were based in loco parentis (i.e., in the place of a parent). These rules, which restricted such activities as drinking, card playing, and dating “laxd” women, and required the attendance at prayer services, would be something that college students collectively resisted over the next 200 years. Right before the American revolution, students at Harvard College led the Butter Rebellion in 1766, when Asa Dunbar, the grandfather of Henry David Thoreau, an upperclassman jumped on to this chair in the dining hall and yelled, “Behold, our butter stinketh! Give us, therefore, butter that stinketh not.” Half of the student body jumped to their feet, and defiantly went out to the Yard in protest. The administration’s response was to suspend half of the student body. At the time of the American Revolution, college students were also involved in political activities, like boycotting British goods and the burning of the British flag.1

In the 19th century, campus demonstrations grew, as students continued to push back against the strict campus rules, but expanded their protests to include their lack of control over the curriculum and poor teaching. In 1800, Harvard, Brown, and William and Mary experienced student riots over these issues, and at Princeton, six student rebellions occurred between 1800 and 1830. These student rebellions included taking over administration buildings and smashing bricks against doors, windows, and walls. At the University of North Carolina, students protested against the outdated curriculum by horsewhipping the President, and stoning two professors, while at Yale, the students bombed a residence hall. While most of these social actions were unsuccessful at changing campus rules, administrators responded by making the rules even stricter and expelling the students involved, as well as forwarding their names to other colleges in order to blacklist them. Furthermore, college presidents and faculty began promoting Greek organizations in order to contain the students’ social action and redirect their energy which “captured and preserved the spirit of the revolts” but did so in a less threatening fashion. ii

Despite these efforts, students remained active, as can be seen in the work of the abolitionists, who had a visible presence on college campuses leading up to the civil war, as well as the College Equal Suffrage League, a student group formed in 1900 to promote the right to vote for women. In the early 20th century, Black students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and at colleges in the North began rebelling against campus rules and the college curricula. Enrollment at HBCU’s had
increased by 80% between 1914 and 1925, and more Blacks enrolled in college between 1926-1936 than in the previous 300 years. This was at the same time as the Harlem Renaissance, where a whole cadre of intellectuals, writers, and artists began to rethink and reassess Black American life, and their contributions to American society. Encouraged by WEB DuBois, a graduate of Fisk University, who had told the students to resist the HBCU’s White benefactors call to “train servants and docile cheap labor”, students began asking to change the curriculum to better reflect the principles and values of the Black community. In addition, HCBU students demanded that Black Presidents be installed at their colleges. In 1923, students met at Howard University and formed the American Federation of Negro Students, with the goal of changing Black higher education from the bottom up. These students had four basic demands: they wanted the right to have a student government; a student newspaper; decent food and housing; and the right for male and female students to talk to each other. In what has become known as the New Negro Campus Movement, the black students led a wave of student, rallies, strikes, and class walkouts.

Another wave of social action occurred during the Great Depression. In April, 1932, a major event took place at Columbia University, when thousands of students took part in a class strike in response to the expulsion of Reed Harris, the student editor of the college newspaper, The Columbia Spectator. Harris had a history of writing about provocative topics, such as anti-Semitism at Columbia and questioning whether the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) should be part of the university. When Harris wrote an editorial asking for an investigation into Columbia’s dining halls, which he felt were more interested in turning a profit than in serving the students decent food, the Administration stepped in, as Harris was seen as threatening the image of the college. A day after Harris’ expulsion, Dean Herbert Hawkes, wrote the following statement, which appeared on the front page of the New York Times: "Materials published in The Columbia Spectator during the past few days is a climax to a long series of discourtesies, innuendoes and misrepresentations which have appeared in this paper during the current academic year, and calls for disciplinary actions." In response, 60 students from Columbia’s chapter of the League for Industrial Democracy (LID)—a democratic socialist student group that had its roots in the Intercollegiate Socialist Society, a previous student organization that changed its name after the Red Scare that followed the 1919 Russian revolution—released this statement: “We believe that the expulsion of Reed Harris from Columbia because of items contained in The Spectator is a clear violation of the principles of academic freedom. We therefore protest against this misuse by the college authorities of their disciplinary powers." The following day, 4,000 students struck; instead of attending class, students held a rally outside the library in support of Harris, with professors lecturing to almost empty classrooms. With 75% of the student body participating in the strike, the Administration reversed course and reinstated Harris at Columbia. Not surprising, other college students took notice of the success of Columbia’s social action campaign, which led to students at other campuses in the early 1930s to use this tactic of a “class strike”. The students went on to create the American Youth Congress, a student-led organization that lobbied for congressional legislation against racial discrimination and war.

The Red Scare continued to impact higher education; in early 1934, UCLA Provost Ernest Moore declared that his campus was “one of the worst hotbeds of
communism in the U.S.” Provost Moore’s responded by suspending several UCLA students, including the student president, for alleged connections to communism. Provost Moore’s unilateral action, which was without approval from other university committees, enraged the students, and the next day more than 3,000 students jammed into the campus quad to protest the suspension. Things became heated, and a police officer was pushed into the bushes, but no arrests were made. The students continued to take social action to repeal the student suspensions, and two months later, UCLA President Robert Sproul overturned the suspensions.

During the 1960s, several waves of social action took place. On February 1, 1960, four freshman students—Ezell Blair Jr, Franklin McCain, Joseph McNeil, and David Richmond—from North Carolina Agricultural Technical State University (NC A&T) walked into the local Woolworth’s and sat down at the “whites-only” lunch counter asking to be served. The previous semester, the NC A&T students had been participating in NAACP student chapter meetings with students from Bennett College, a HBCU all-women’s school across the street, and it was there that these young men and women came up with a plan to challenge directly the segregation laws. Inspired to take action by the murder of Emmett Till—a 14 year-old who had been killed for allegedly whistling at a white woman while visiting his family in Mississippi—and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the students decided that the NC A&T students would go to the local Woolworth store in Greensboro and asked to be served, while the Bennett College students would serve as spotters. Dr. Linda Brown, one of the Bennett students said later, “We were not stupid about what we were doing. Young, yes, and probably not as scared as we should have been.” There had been lunch counter protests before in the 1940s and 1950s in the South, Midwest, and East Coast, but they had not gathered national attention. The students decided to change this by alerting the news media about their social action in order to get more publicity, and the TV cameras were there to capture the students’ sit-in. After the Black students were denied service by the White Woolworth staff, the students remained seated. The police were called, but since the students were quietly sitting there and not disturbing anyone, the police did not arrest them on this day, so the students just sat at the lunch counter until the store closed down. The following day, the Bennett students joined the sit-ins, and within a week, 1,400 students had participated in the lunch counter protests. With television beaming out the story, news spread quickly, with students in other North Carolina cities, such as Charlotte, Durham, and Winston-Salem, participating.

Over the next several months, Black college students were sitting-in at lunch counters in 55 cities and 13 states with 3,000 arrests. Back in Greensboro, over 250 Bennett students were arrested over several months. Dr. Willa Beatrice Player, the president of Bennett College, was under pressure from the white community leaders to stop the students from participating in the sit-ins; she refused, saying that she supported the students claim to equal rights under the Constitution. President Player even went to the jail and provided the Bennett students with their homework, and collected it when it was done. On July 25, six months since the students first took action, Woolworth’s agreed with the students’ demand, and desegregated their lunch counters nationally. The sit-ins inspired the students to create the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which would go on to help lead the 1961 Freedom Rides—which challenged the segregation laws by whites and blacks sitting together in the front of
buses and by entering the bus terminals “all-white sections”—and the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer, which brought together over 700 mostly White college students to go to Mississippi to support the effort to register Blacks; at that time, only 7% of the Mississippi’s African Americans were registered to vote in comparison to 70% of the Whites.\textsuperscript{vi}

In the 1960s, another student social action took place, but this time on the west coast at the University of California at Berkeley. In the early 1960s, students’ free speech was restricted on college campuses, with students not being able to speak openly about politics. Even though \textit{loco parentis} had been ruled unconstitutional in 1961 when the Supreme Court ruled that Alabama State College could not use \textit{loco parentis} to expel six Black students who had participated in the civil rights demonstrations, universities still tried to control the students. At the University of California at Berkeley, and many other colleges, this took the form of limiting the students’ political expression and free speech as students were not allowed to advocate for such things as the civil rights movement on campus. White students connected this suppression of free speech to the oppression they had seen and learned about from the civil rights work they were doing. Mario Savio, a UC Berkeley student leader, put it this way: “Last summer I went to Mississippi to join the struggle there for civil rights. This fall I am engaged in another phase of the same struggle, this time in Berkeley. In Mississippi, an autocratic and powerful minority rules, through organized violence, to suppress the vast majority. In California, the privileged minority manipulates the university bureaucracy to suppress the students’ political expression.”\textsuperscript{vii}

As the semester started in 1964, a group of UC Berkeley students, many of which had participated in the SNCC’s Freedom Rides and Freedom Summer, began setting up tables on campus and were passing out information about the civil rights movement and asking for donations to support the movement. On September 14, 1964, the Administration sent out an announcement reminding the students that these actions were illegal, and they were going to be strictly enforced. Two weeks later, Jack Weinberg, a graduate student, setup his Congress of Racial Equality Table (CORE) table on campus. The police responded by arresting him, and they put him in the police car; what the police didn’t expect was when students started jumping in front of the police car to stop it from driving away. Over the next 32 hours, various students took turns climbing onto the roof of the car to give their thoughts about the Weinberg’s arrest and the inability of the students to have free speech, all the time with Weinberg in the back seat of the car. With several thousand students blocking the car, the ordeal ended when the students brokered a deal with the campus administration for Weinberg’s release. However, this didn’t stop social action, as on December 1\textsuperscript{st}, several thousand students occupied Sproul Plaza, which led to the arrest of 800 students. Once again, the students’ social action led to their demands being met, as the administration announced in January 1965, that students from the entire political spectrum would be allowed to have open discussion and to setup tables on campus. The Free Speech Movement spread to other campuses, and set the stage for even larger student actions against the Viet Nam war. Years later, the Free Speech students reflected on the importance of not giving up hope, since the same people who had shown little interest in their cause just days and weeks before the beginning of their movement, all of a sudden jumped (literally) into action.\textsuperscript{viii}
C. Benefits of Social Action for Students, Campus, and Society

The benefits of college social action are many. First, there are positive outcomes for the student. Research shows that students who participate in social action increase their critical thinking skills. In addition, students that engage in social action develop a better understanding of how systems and structures work, and learn how to solve problems and overcome challenges. By raising their voices and advocating for the needs of the community, students learn about the importance of democratic participation and develop a greater sense of social responsibility. Research also shows that social action develops the students' leadership skills. In light of the challenge raised by anti-democratic forces in the United States and other democracies, these benefits have taken on even greater importance.

Second, there are positive outcomes for the campus. Students engaged in social action create, along with campus leaders, a discursive space for the ideas raised by the students to be discussed and analyzed, and where multiple campus stakeholders can be exposed to the grievances raised. Moreover, how the administration responds to the students' social action helps the campus leaders define what are the colleges values and commitments, which will affect how the students experience and understand of the college, and how effective are the institution’s approach to such things as equity, diversity, and freedom. As Drs. Cassie Barnhardt and Kimberly Reyes reflect on the scholarship of college social action, they argue that the legitimacy of the university stems in part by its commitment to foster “excellence, integrity and a sense of community among their students” and that social action creates “a space for institutions to be thoughtful about enacting those very commitments.” In addition, research shows that campuses that emphasize social action fosters the larger student body to be more civically engaged.

Third, there are positive outcomes for the larger society. By examining the above history of student social action, and we compare it to what was happening in the larger American society, it is clear that in most periods of societal change from colonial times to today had a complementary story play out on college campuses. Thus, college student social action provides the opportunity to work out in a positive fashion some of the political dynamics of the country, but in a local and focused setting.

D. The Vision: Bringing Social Action into the Classroom

The question is this: if social action has so many positive benefits for the students, campus, and community, why not bring it into the classroom, rather than have it as a co-curricular activity? I believe the time is right to provide students the opportunity to do social action as part of the academic experience. In the 1980s and 1990s, in order to strengthen civic engagement and develop critical thinking skills, colleges brought community service into the classroom, and created a plethora of service-learning courses. I am advocating for the same time of integration, but instead of the students action focusing on such things providing meals at a homeless shelter or tutoring a child, both of which are important, students will also have the opportunity to
enact policies that get at why people are hungry in the richest nation in the world or that the local kids attend underfunded schools.

The United States is at a crossroads. Its democratic institutions are under attack. Scholars and think tanks are calling for a massive investment in social studies and civics education to respond to the breakdown of trust in our democratic institutions. What will be higher education’s response? I argue that we need to develop academic curriculum to help create the next generation of democratic citizens and residents by mainstreaming social action. Social action can help revive and breathe new life into our democracy by giving students the opportunity “to do democracy”. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said that the “great wells of democracy” were dug deep by the founders of this nation. By mainstreaming social action in higher education, we can help our students learn the critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary to once again tap into these great wells. Democracy is like a muscle. It must be used or it withers. Social action allows students to utilized the muscle of democracy.

Overcoming the Challenges of Teaching Social Action

Before explaining how to teach social action in the classroom, I would like to discuss the challenges a professor or staff member might face teaching it. First, you might never have done social action, and therefore feel uncomfortable teaching it. And yes, there is some truth that while having a background in something can be helpful, it doesn’t exclude you from teaching it. I am reminded of the first Introductory to Sociology class I taught in graduate school. I was a Political Science minor, with a Masters degree in Humanities, and I had never even taken a Sociology class before, but there I was, teaching an Intro to Sociology. Of course, I was just one week ahead of the students in reading, but I taught the class pretty well. Did I get better with more experience? Of course I did, and you will get better at teaching social action in your classes after doing it for a while. The key point is that having limited knowledge of something before one teaches it does not disqualify you from teaching social action.

Some might fear that social action is “political”, and that their careers might be harmed by using it in the classroom. Yes, social action deals with power since by definition, since politics focuses on power relations between individuals. However, when using social action, the students select the campaigns, not the teacher, so it removes from the faculty’ political orientation from the equation. Thus, the students are motivated by their own political perspectives and leanings; thus, the students may select a campaign with liberal or conservative bent, or no bent at all. Social action teaches about democracy and power, and students’ campaigns are based on the students interests and value system; students are never encouraged or coerced into a particular campaign. In addition, students have choice not only of their campaigns, but can switch campaigns in the middle of the semester. Clearly, there is no “brainwashing” going on, nor are the students puppets of the teacher.

Some faculty might feel worry that their peers will not see social action as an academic endeavor. Research refutes this assertion, as in the classroom, social action has been shown to develop critical thinking skills. In addition, social action lends itself toward an engaged pedagogy, which has been shown to be a best practice for teaching. In addition, there are many opportunities to do research on the students’ experiences in the classroom. I have written numerous scholarly articles on my
students’ engagement in the classroom, as well as a previous book on social action. In addition, social action can help connect a professor’s advocacy work to their scholarship. As Dr. Bernadette Roche from the Biology Department at Loyola University Maryland states, “The social action course did help me see that students would benefit from this “outside” work that I do (I had not made the connection that my advocacy was actually part of my scholarship), so I now I have two student interns working on adding an environmental human rights amendment to the Maryland Constitution.” I think that is a direct consequence of reframing my advocacy work as scholarship and very relevant to what I do at Loyola (and not just “personal life” stuff). It may seem strange to someone from the social sciences that a professor would not be able to connect the dots on these things, but in the sciences, we are not really given much mentoring on how advocacy relates to scholarship.” These are just some of the ways that social action is a scholarly endeavor. Importantly, this scholarship can be used to bolster a faculty’s case in the rank and tenure process.

Finally, some might fear losing control of the class by using social action. There is some truth that with social action, teachers give up some control of how the class operates. In a class that uses social action, students become co-creators of knowledge, where they are bringing their expertise to the table, rather than just the professors. However, the rewards are great, since students become active participants in the classroom, and become more engaged with the classroom and their assignments. xiii

I believe that the above obstacles, challenges, and fears can be overcome, and that you can successfully use social action in your classroom. Let us now move on to a discussion of developing your social action class.

CHAPTER 2: Developing a Social Action Class – Things to Consider Before Class Begins

A. Academic Course vs Co-Curricular
B. Prerequisites
C. Creating a Social Action Syllabus
D. Teaching Style
E. Classroom Norms
F. The Students
G. Building Allies: On Campus and in the Community
H. The Role of Place
I. Each Semester vs. Every Year (or Other Year)

A. Academic Course vs Co-Curricular
As you begin to think about using social action, it is important to decide if the student experience will be an academic course for credit or a co-curricular experience (i.e., a collegiate learning experience but for no academic credit). The advantage of offering a class using social action for academic credit is that students who enroll in it will receive units that can be applied to their overall total and can be used to meet their graduation requirement. If you decide on the credit route, you will need to figure out what is the best course number to use for the class. The easiest way to do it is to use a course number that already exists, and just include social action into this class. For example, Dr. Amy D’Andrade, an SJSU colleague in the School of Social Work, is doing this for a spring, 2020 course, where she is teaching her normal class, ScWk. 204 “Social Policy Analysis” but is adding a social action component as a main component of the course.

Another way to get a course using social action on the books in a timely manner is to do a “minor curriculum change.” In the Spring of 2007, I started teaching social action in the Department of Sociology, and I used an existing course number that was already in the course catalog but was no longer being taught by the department. At that time, Soci. 164 was a class entitled “Small Group Dynamics” and it hadn’t been taught in years, so while it was on the books, it was essentially an untaught class. I decided to take this underutilized course and make a minor curriculum change to it. To make this minor change, I kept the same course number, but changed the language describing the course. I would still teach about small group dynamics but in a new way, where students would have the ability to use small group dynamics (i.e., facilitation, consensus decision-making, and group interaction) and apply it to changing a policy that the students wanted to enact. I made this alteration to a “minor curriculum change” form, and turned it into the Curriculum Committee, and the request was approved within the month. Importantly, since it was a minor curriculum change, my request did not need to go through a lengthy process with committee, which saved me valuable time as I could teach the course in the following semester. If I had decided to create a brand-new class, then the process might have taken 1-2 years. I didn’t want to wait that long, so this path greatly expedited the process.

Another way to get a course using social action on the books is to do what Dr. Robert Ovetz, a colleague of mine in the SJSU Political Science Department, did when he created a new social action course entitled “Action and Strategy of Politics Movements” for the spring of 2020 by using a “special topics” 199 course designation. Many departments have these types of courses where “special” or “contemporary” topics can be taught with only getting approval from the department chair, rather than a university committee, which obviously expedites the ability to offer the course. In my department, we have a similar course listed as a “Contemporary Social Issues” class, which uses the course number 120. There is also the ability to teach social action as an “experimental course”, which my department uses the course number 196. At some point, you will want to bring the course into the mainstream of the department’s course offerings, as
this gives it more legitimacy. In addition, there are sometimes requirements that a course can only be taught as a special topics course for three or so semesters.

If you are staff at a university, let’s say the Center for Service-Learning or the Equity and Inclusion Center, there are opportunities to teach social action using the above strategies, particularly if you have a Master’s degree. You can either approach a department to see if they would be interested in having a social action class be taught or your center may offer classes with its own course designation.

Another strategy is to teach social action as a co-curricular experience with no credit involved. The advantage of teaching social action as a co-curricular course is that students do not have to pay tuition to do social action. In addition, students might have a purer intent since they are not receiving anything in return for this civic engagement (i.e., a grade or units). This route is used by Kelly Benkert at Northwestern University, where as the Director of Leadership and Community Engagement, she created a co-curricular social action experience entitled “social justice advocacy fellowship”. Students make a two-quarter commitment to work on a campaign with a community-based organization, where they learn how to be social justice advocates and organizers. The students self-select both the issues and organizations they are involved with. In addition, the students meet weekly with Kelly.

Importantly, students have taught social action, as many universities have student-led classes. In the summer of 2018, I gave a talk about social action at the Bonner Foundation’s Summer Leader Institute, and Sophia Lombardo, a senior in Global Management and Creative Writing at Earlham College, was in attendance. After hearing the talk, Sophia decided to bring social action to Earlham College. In the fall of 2018, Sophia signed up to teach a student-led course. A friend of hers had taught a student-led course in the pre-med department, so she decided to do the same, but for social action. Sophia did some research, and found out she had to fill out a form and to get a letter of recommendation from her faculty advisor. To prepare for her class, she read CHANGE! A Student Guide to Social Action, and then created a syllabus, along with lesson plans and assignments. Sophia also used several resources from the Bonner Foundation, where she was an intern, to create an engaging class environment. The class was an undergraduate course entitled “Interdepartmental 101, Student Social Action”, and it followed Earlham guidelines for student-led courses, which made it a one credit, pass/fail course, while Sophia received two credits for teaching it. Sophia did report that a one-credit, pass/fail course creates its own challenges, as some of students did not put in the same effort and energy into the experience that they would have if the class was taught for three credits and a letter grade. Interestingly, the first civic-engaged course I took in 1987 was taught by undergraduates at Stanford University, when I was a master’s student at San Francisco State University. Thus, student-led courses can play a major role in mainstreaming social action into the college curriculum.

B. Prerequisite

Once the decision is made about whether social action is to be taught for academic credit or as a co-curricular experience, the next topic to consider is if there should be a prerequisite or not. Since it is helpful that someone has previous civic engagement experience, you might want to consider having an introductory service-learning course
be a pre-requisite. At the same time, while this is good in theory, in the beginning years of teaching social action, I struggled to meet the minimum number of students that were necessary as required by my department, which at the time was about 20 students. I never had a class cut, but in the first few years, I was recruiting students until the very beginning of the semester. This is not an issue now, as the class is well-known, and I generally have 30-plus students a semester who want to take the course. However, in the first years of teaching social action, you may need to balance the desire to have students with service-learning or other civic-engagement experience with the need to have students in the class since a service-learning pre-requisite limits who can take the course.

Technically, my social action course does have Introductory to Sociology as a pre-requisite. However, this is a leftover from when the course was taught as a Small Group Dynamics course. This can be easily overridden by my signature if I deem a student capable of handling the experience. Happily, the computer does not restrict access if students haven’t taken Introductory to Sociology, so recently I have not even had to sign a form to approve them. One thing to consider: if the course is specific to a department or an area of study, the students may need to have some basic knowledge of the subject matter. This can be taught during the course, or in my case, I teach it in the course entitled Soci. 165: Poverty, Wealth, and Privilege. After the students learn about extreme inequality and poverty, as well as sexism and racism, they have some of the basic background knowledge necessary to be successful in a social action course. About one-third of the Poverty, Wealth, and Privilege class generally signs up to take the social action class in the following semester, so in many ways it is a “feeder” course. For other departments, there might be other courses that provide some of the intellectual underpinnings behind social action and prepare the students to take the next step, that of action.

C. Creating a Social Action Syllabus

Whether you are doing social action for credit or as a co-curricular activity, it is good to provide students with a syllabus, as it serves as a guide for the students’ experience. After I provide my contact information, where we will be meeting and at what time, I include these quotations:

_Not having heard something is not as good as having heard it._

_Having heard it is not as good as having seen it._

_Having seen it is not as good as knowing it;_  

_Knowing it is not as good as putting it into practice._  

_Xun Kuang, Chinese Confucian philosopher, 312-230 BCE_

_Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember. Involve me and I understand._  

_Xun Kuang’s statement, modern version_

_Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will._  

_Frederick Douglass_
I like to start with Xun Kuang’s quote, as it communicates to the student that this experience will require engagement, and that knowledge will be put into practice. This is a big shift for students, as it decenters both the teacher and the text, and makes critical thinking an active process. Of course, book knowledge is still utilized in social action, but the hope is that this knowledge will be challenged by what students are learning in their social action campaigns, and they will develop a more critical and deeper understanding of public issues and community change through reflection on their text and actions.

I follow this by discussing Frederick Douglass’ quote, as it gets at what is unique about social action, in that it is designed to experience power and to do democracy. Instead of just reading about social change, students learn about power and democracy by doing it. Power and democracy are central to most General Education goals, the Social Sciences in general, and Sociology in particular. I end this section by stating that this will be an action-oriented, solutions-based, experience in community engagement, and that we will explore such topics as issue development, building power, campaign planning, creating a winning strategy, choosing the appropriate tactics, research, building an effective team, and campaign evaluation.

I then list the campaigns that students have won. Over the past 14 years, my students have won 15 campaigns, including the following victories:

- got Santa Clara County to clear and expunge 13,000 cannabis convictions;
- convinced the SJSU President to develop a 12-emergency bed program and a $2 million rental assistance program for houseless students;
- developed and led the Measure D campaign, raising San Jose’s minimum wage from $8 to $10 an hour, and then pushed it to $15;
- convinced the SJSU President to agree to become part of the Workers Rights Consortium, ensuring SJSU apparel is not made in sweatshops;
- developed and won the Measure G campaign, the Modernization of the Business Tax, which doubled the city’s business tax with a focus on Silicon Valley tech firms;
- and convinced the SJSU President to remove a Tower Foundation board member, after she made a racist comment about Latinas.

As you can see, the Social Action students have fundamentally changed the campus and our local community. This is important to highlight since right from the beginning, students know that their time spent in this class will be meaningful, and that change is possible. I realize that if you are teaching social action for the first time, you will not have any student victories to highlight. However, as time goes on, victories will come, and it is good to highlight them, and it focuses the students around the defining feature of this model, which is that students band together to build power to change policy.

In addition, 60-70% of the student campaigns are on the campus themselves. This makes it easier for students to participate in, as they don’t have to spend time going off campus too often. In addition, since students are the ones that are many times being affected by the campus issue, it avoids the situation where students go into a community and try to “save” the poor and marginalized. For the 30-40% of the
campaigns in the community, the students generally work with a local organization that meets with the students and helps them to find an appropriate role where they can support the grass-roots leadership, but in no way takes power away from the community, or even worse, be insensitive to their needs. In fact, many times, the community organization has sent a staff member to my social action class during the times that the students are meeting to discuss their campaign. Clearly, social action students do not go into low-income communities to organize them. They should never come in and lead this type of campaign, as this is totally inappropriate. However, on the campus, the students are the community, and they can generally speak about the experience from first-hand knowledge. 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 tactics and strategy, and to help students consider the variety of options available, and how best to move forward.

As part of social action, students to do a minimum of 1½ to 2 hours per week of campaign work (25 hours minimum over 15 weeks, with 13 hours or more of doing something, i.e., tabling, poster ing, giving organization raps, marches, rallies, etc). Since it is possible to do a social action campaign on campus, all students should be able to work it into their schedule. If students do less than 25 hours, it is difficult to have a meaningful experience in social action. In my social action class, if students do not do than 25 hours a week with 13 hours of doing something, they cannot receive higher than a C on the overall portfolio grade, since it is difficult to reflect on action if they are not doing it. Recently, I added this last part recently since it discourages students to get stuck in “meeting mode”, where they talk about doing social action, but they never quite get around to doing it. Of course, if the students want to do more work on their campaign, that is great, and I can arrange for them to receive an extra one to three units of course credit if they want do additional campaign work and get credit for it (e.g., Soci. 181B: Internship).

During the second meeting of the class, students begin to brainstorm various social action campaign possibilities, and that over the next several class periods, they will choose a campaign to work on that they are interested in. The criteria to choose a campaign are: (i) they have a minimum of 3 students on a team, (ii) the students have passion for the issue, and (iii) the campaign tries to change some type of policy, at either the campus, community, state or federal level. The campaign they choose to work on may come from a liberal, conservative, social democrat, libertarian perspective, or it may have no ideology. Whatever campaign students choose to do, my goal is to teach them about democracy, power, and how to bring about change. However, it should be noted that after the students choose their campaigns and do the necessary preparation to launch their campaign, the students analyze the United Nation’s Declaration of Human Rights and President Franklin Roosevelt’s proposal for a 2nd Bill of Rights based on economic rights, focusing on how their campaigns connect to these two documents.

I have also recently added a statement about leaving a group. If they want to change groups, I ask them to contact me. At that time, the student and I will discuss what group they 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 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, I 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, as long as it causes minimum disruption to the group. At the same time, I am not okay if a student joining a group would cause disruption to the group. As professor, I am responsible for the classroom environment, and I base my decision on the impact to the classroom environment. If the student can find no group to join, then they will be given an independent study with no negative repercussions to their grade.

As part of the syllabus, it is important to discuss, course learning outcomes/goals. Upon successful completion of my social action class, students will be able to:

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

The utilization of social action can be used in many disciplines. For example, Dr. Miriam Shakow, from the College of New Jersey, uses social action in her undergraduate Anthropology course entitled “Climate Change and Society”. As with any undergraduate course on climate change, her course goals in the syllabus states that students upon successful completion of the course will understand the root causes and social impacts of climate change, understand ways that unequal access to resources creates unequal experiences of climate change, and will explore ways that powerful institutions and groups shape the public’s stance on climate change. However, because Anthro 246 is a course that uses social action, the course goals also state that upon successful completion of the course, students will gain skills for civic engagement and activism focused on climate change (e.g., campaign planning, research, recruitment, and running events), be able to take their knowledge on climate change and act upon it, and develop confidence in their collective power.

Similarly, Dr. Kent Glenzer from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey uses social action in his master’s course “DPPG 8553A: Changing Econ Policy: What Advocates Need to Know About Economics” in the Development Practice and Policy Department.” Again, with many courses on economics, his goals in the syllabus are that upon successful completion of the course, students will grasp key economic concepts, theories, and research tools, understand local economic development, and develop good practice in economic policy analysis. However, because DPPG 8553A is a social action course, the course goals also state that
students will understand good practice related to policy advocacy, as well as develop a policy advocacy strategy based on that good practice, and will have practiced engaging in policy change with local decision-makers.

Whether the course is offered for academic credit or as co-curricular, the students need to read about social action; however, because I have the students working 30 hours a semester on their campaigns, I have reduced the reading load by about one-half of what I normally assign in my course. In the first ten years that I taught social action, I used a variety of books, which included: *Stir It Up: Lessons In Community Organizing and Action* by Rinku Sen, *Tools for Radical Democracy: How to Organize for Power in Your Community* by Joan Minieri and Paul Gestos, *ORGANIZE! Organizing for Social Change* by Midwest Academy, *Organizing: A Guide For Grassroots Leaders* by Si Kahn, and *Going Public: An Organizer’s Guide to Citizen Action* by Michael Gecan. However, I came to the realization that all of these amazing books were not written for college students, and were not designed to fit into the flow of an academic term. Thus, I decided to write *CHANGE! A Student Guide to Social Action*, which was published in 2018. Several other faculty and students have used *CHANGE* in their course, including Dr. Shakow and Dr. Glenzer, as well as Sophia Lombardo.

While *CHANGE!* provides all of the basics of social action, I also use other course readings, which fall into two major areas: student reflections from previous social action campaigns and lessons learned from national and international campaigns that have used social action outside the classroom. I use the student reflections from previous social action campaigns as a way to get students to believe that they can bring about change. As I will discuss in more detail in the next chapter, most of my students enter the class questioning whether they can make change. They believe that maybe Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. can bring about change, or some other famous leader, but not them. By having current students read the reflections of previous students who have actually won their campaigns helps convince them that they can make a difference and motivates them to try. In my class, I have the students read a different student reflection almost every week of the 16-week semester. I have asked 10 students from previous social action classes to respond to the following questions:

1. What did you learn from working on your issue? What did you learn about social change? about power? leadership? yourself? community, etc.
2. How did your background research help prepare you?
3. How did you recruit people for your campaign? What worked?
4. How many leaders were in your group? Working members? General members? Paper members? Did you have enough of each to do "the work"?
5. How did your group make decisions? How did your group work together? What was your group dynamic? What did your group do to work together better?
6. Who was your target, and what strategies did you use to get him/her/them to meet your demands? Were you successful in meeting your substantive and/or procedural demands?
7. Did your group develop allies? What was your media strategy?
8. What was your favorite “action” that your group did?
9. Did your group use technology? If so, please explain.
10. What advice would you give current social action students?

Generally, I connect one of the themes from that week’s student reflections to the topic of the week. For example, I use Leila McCabe’s reflection, highlighted in Appendix 1, when we are talking about research, because in Leila’s reflection, she talks in-depth about how research was the backbone of their campaign, and how research allowed the students to be taken more seriously by the community and those in power.

I realize that the first-time social action is taught, there will be no student reflections since it has not been taught yet. Thus, I have made available on the Bonner website (www.Bonner.com) all of the SJSU student reflections for you to use. Over the coming years, you can invite students to respond to the above questions (or others that you like better), and then create your own student reflections for future class. Additionally, current students read newspaper articles about the previous student campaigns. Again, this makes the students start to believe that change is possible, as well as provides insight into strategies and tactics. These articles are also available at the Bonner Foundation’s website (www.Bonner.com). Lastly, I have the previous social action students who wrote these reflections speak directly to the class, either in person or by Zoom. By hearing directly from the alumni of social action, and who are many times working in the community as graduates, only reinforces to the current students that change is possible.

After students finish CHANGE, about 2/3rds through the course, they begin to read about several key national campaigns, as well as a few international campaigns, with a focus on the topics that we have discussed earlier in the semester (i.e., issue development, building power, strategies and tactics, group dynamics, media, etc.). During the last 1/3rd of the course, the students read articles about social action from ACT-UP, the Battle in Seattle at the World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting, Occupy Wall Street, Black Lives Matter, as well as social actions taken by the National Rifle Association, the Parkland students, and Sunrise Movement. The students also read about social actions for women’s rights in Iran and Saudi Arabia. Recently, I also included a section on Dr. Marshal Ganz’s Public Narratives, which provides the students with an opportunity to tell their story of self, us, and now.

Other professors have used these weeks to teach content specific lessons or skills. For example, Dr. Shakow uses the first two weeks of the class to discuss climate change impacts on the Trenton, New Jersey, so students have a foundation to build upon. If background knowledge isn’t necessary, some professors have used the time to dig deeper into the issues the campaigns are focused on. Some teachers have brought in guest speakers (e.g., community organizers, local politicians, or professors and students on campus) who have knowledge on the issues they are focusing on. Dr. Glenzer at Middlebury brings in guest speakers who may oppose his students’ campaigns, as he believes it is important to challenge his students so that they are prepared for disagreement, finding that this has helped his students develop their communication skills. Sophia at Earlham College used this time for students to prep for
a campus-wide research conference where the social action students present their campaigns at the end of the semester.

In my social action course, students’ grades are based on four areas: quizzes, a portfolio and log, participation, campaign notebook, and a final group presentation. I strongly believe that quizzes are important in a social action class since the students, at least initially, do not take this class as seriously as their other classes. This is not their fault. Students have been socialized to think that anything other than straight academic course work, where memorization and taking exams based on readings and lectures, is not as worthy. A social action model still values “book knowledge”, but it is seen as just the beginning, and not the end. I encourage or “incentivize” students to do the reading by giving them eight very short (3-5 minute) quizzes, which compose 20% of their overall grade. The quizzes are composed of two or three questions, and they are on the most basic points from the article. I make them easy so that if a student reads the article, they will be able to answer the question. I tell them that these quizzes are not on critical thinking, only memorization, but that in order to critically think, they have to complete the reading. This serves the dual purpose of getting the students to read and upends the “normal” higher education experience, as it suggests that text and memorization is not the end, but the beginning to critical thought.

The assignments that are fundamentally different from most academic classes are the portfolios and log, campaign notebook, and the final group presentation. Generally, an academic course gives exams to determine if the students understand the course ideas and concepts. Social action is different, as the portfolios take the place of exams. The portfolio is the place where students demonstrate the knowledge from the text in light of their social action experiences. Thus, students integrate the text with their community engagement work throughout each portfolio. Many times, students’ knowledge of the text is challenged by what they are learning in their social action campaigns, which leads to enhanced critical thinking, and a deeper understanding of the issues at play as they act, read, and reflect. Importantly, students must integrate the text; if they do not, students cannot receive higher than a C on their portfolio. In addition, students cannot receive higher than a C on their overall portfolio grade unless they complete at least 25 hours of social action work (1.5 to 2 hours a week) for the semester. This encourages them to do social action. Additionally, I provide students with a log where they keep track of their community work, and it is turned in with the portfolios every three to four weeks. I stress the importance of integrating text and action by making the portfolio and log worth 40% of the grade. This supports Paulo Freire’s point that critical reflection is needed to bring theory and practice together, “Otherwise theory becomes simply ‘blah, blah, blah,’ and practice, pure activism.”

The campaign notebook and the final group presentation are also fundamentally different from the evaluation process of most academic classes. The campaign notebook is an evaluation of how well the group applied the lessons from the book to issue development, building power, research, group dynamics, strategy and tactics, and campaign implementation. In addition, students in my social action class don’t take a “final” but rather do a collective group presentation which summarizes and evaluates
their campaigns, and brings together action, text, and reflections. The campaign notebook and the group presentation are culminating experiences for the students, as they provide a benchmark to the students of what they achieved. Importantly, the campaign notebook gets passed on to the next semester’s social action students (whether they be in your class or another professor on campus who may be using social action in their class.)

I also give a grade for participation, which is 20% of the total. The purpose of evaluating participation is to encourage and reward students who prepare for, and engage in, the habits of the mind. Thus, students are evaluated on the extent and quality of their participation in the class. Their classroom participation grade is based on the following criteria:

Excellence (A) requires that you play a leadership role in the large group by applying the text, discussing points articulately responding intelligently to other’s views, and taking responsibility for the direction of the class discussion. In addition, you are continually thinking and acting to help your team (i.e., the campaign) move forward.

Excellence (B) requires that you participate regularly in the large group by applying the text, discussing points articulately responding intelligently to other’s views, and taking responsibility for the direction of the class discussion. In addition, you are regularly thinking and acting to help your team (i.e., the campaign) move forward.

Excellence (C) requires that you make occasional comments in the large group, have a basic knowledge of the text, and sometimes ask questions in the large group. In addition, you make an occasional comment to help your team (i.e., the campaign) move forward.

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 my course, the students are asked to evaluate themselves on their level of participation, as well as their teammates. This evaluation is closely reviewed when assigning their participation grades. Other professors use different evaluation tools. Dr. Shakow at The College of New Jersey, as well as several other faculty members in the field, create a peer evaluation form for their students to fill out about themselves at the end of the semester, and about their teammates throughout the semester. These forms include questions on group productivity, listening to others, contributing to group discussions, and attending meetings. The results of these forms become a part of the group and individual student’s participation grade at the end of the semester.
In my course that uses social action, the various parts add up to 100%, with each percent equal to one point. For example, the group presentation is 20% of their grade; thus, this assignment is worth 20 points. The scale that I use to measure your work is the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98-100</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-97</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-87</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-77</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-67</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 &amp; below</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Importantly, I tell them repeatedly that their grade is not based in whether they win their campaigns or not. Students are evaluated on their participation in the class and within their teams. I also tell them that their grade is not dependent on their choosing a campaign that is in line what they assume to be my political leanings.

Lastly, I provide extra credit opportunities throughout the semester to encourage students to develop a deeper knowledge of social action. To receive the extra credit, students need to attend a campus event having to do with social action, and then write 3-4 paragraphs reflection paper: (1) describing what they saw and heard (i.e., the major points and key lessons of the event), and (2) integrating their insights with the reading on social action.

(Chapter 2: Sections E-I have been removed to keep this document brief!)

CHAPTER 3: Launching Student Campaigns

A. On Your Mark: Preparing Students for the Road Rarely Traveled (Class 1)
B. Go! Students Choose Their Issue (Class 2-4, 1st part of class)
C. Get Set: Setting the Tone (Class 4, 2nd part of class)
D. Change Theory: Applying it to the Students’ Issues (Class 5-6)
E. Building Power: Student Recruitment and Allies (Class 7-8)
F. Walking Tour (Class 9)
G. Research: Historical Overview, Power Mapping, and Target Analysis (Class 10-11)
H. Group Dynamics (Class 12)
I. Strategy and Tactics (Class 13-14)
J. Campaign Kickoff (Class 15-16)

This chapter discusses the best practices for teaching social action. The social action class topics to launch student campaigns have been divided into 10 sections and covers 16 class sessions. For each, I will explain the goal of this section, provide an overview of the lesson plan, discuss how the material has evolved over time, explore the
challenges of teaching each section, discuss the portfolio question that is connected to that section, and finally, give you the chance to respond to some reflection questions on how you will apply the knowledge from each section to your social action class.

This first half of the class has all the information needed to launch student campaigns, while the second half of the class focuses on campaign implementation. However, as stated in the preface, these first section could be taught using the quarter system, with the next set of students doing the campaign implementation, if they decided to choose this campaign.

A. Your Mark: Preparing Students for the Road Rarely Traveled (Class 1)
The goal for the first class is to prepare the students for an experience they most likely have never had, which is to try and change a policy. This experience provides them a first-hand experience with the concepts of power and democracy, something that most have studied about in school, but have not had a chance to do. In other words, we are asking them to be “on your mark”.

On the first day, I arrive at the classroom at least 15 minutes early, and setup the chairs into a circle. When the students come into the class, they know right away that this class will be different, as they will not be in rows, so the expectation is set early that this will be a participatory class. Before starting, I ask them to put out name tags, and I make a conscious effort to memorize their names as fast as possible. This let’s the students know that they are uniquely important and that their voices matter. The first thing said is to welcome back the students who were here the previous semester, as well as to welcome students who are brand new to the campus. I ask them if “this is anyone’s first semester at the college”, and then ask them how their first days on the campus is going. Our university has a large number of junior transfer students, so many times, the juniors are on the campus for their first time as full-time students. I also ask the students who have been at the college for more than one semester to say one thing that the new students should know about attending this university.

Right from the beginning, student voices are central. My purpose is to subtly break down the barriers that silence students, and to get them to see themselves as people who have knowledge to share. In higher education, students are many times told that they do not have knowledge, that they are learners and not experts. The goal is to begin breaking down this perspective early on in the class, and to uplift them as knowledgeable, capable, and empowered. In this vein, I ask them why do they think we are sitting in a circle. This leads to a good discussion about the purpose of education, and I bring up Paulo Freire’s analysis of the banking system of education. I follow this with a question about why is this class like no other at the university (they have been sent the syllabus before class). Finally, I ask them to discuss why is social action so important in light of the state of our democracy. Again, all of these initial questions begin the process of empowerment and moving toward a participatory vision of democracy.

The lesson plan for the first day of class is the following: (1) go over the syllabus (available in Appendix 3 at back of the book or www.Bonner.com) (2) set the tone by providing an example of student talk vs. teacher talk, (3) introduce the active and non-active campaigns, (4) introduce yourself, and (5) discuss expectations. Generally, I read the entire syllabus with the students. Even though I sent it to the students a few days before the first class meets, and ask them to read it, as well as print it out and bring it to
the first day of class, many of them have only skimmed it. By going over it together ensures that we are all on the same page, and allows for the syllabus to be the blueprint for the class. It also gives time for the students to ask questions about what are the expectations from a class using social action.

As discussed above, I have already begun to set the democratic and empowering tone of the class in the opening 15 minutes by setting up the chairs in a circle, by asking the students to set out their name tags and begin the memorization process, and by asking them if “this is anyone’s first semester at the college”. I continue this tone setting by asking the students to turn to a neighbor, and discuss the following questions: (i) What interests them about social action?; (ii) How does social change take place?; and (iii) If you could change one policy, what would it be? If the students are interested in pursuing this policy change, I ask them to email it to me, and I will add to the list of possible campaigns to be discussed in the next class.

After about 10 minutes, I have them report out their responses to the above questions. I then ask them in the large group, “what do you know about social action or community organizing?”. Generally, the above questions provide for a dynamic and interesting exchange, and at the conclusion, I note that there is a large difference between “teacher talk” and “student talk”. I tell them that if we walk down the hall right now, we will most likely be the only class sitting in a circle, where the students and teacher have equal status, and are talking with each other rather the teacher talking at the students.

I then introduce the active and inactive campaigns. I put the list of the two types of campaigns on the computer screen, and tell them that students from the last semester’s group will be coming into our next class to pitch their campaign in the hopes some students will select it; in addition, I pass out the campaign notebooks from inactive campaigns from the previous semesters, as the students from these campaigns have either graduated or are no longer interested. I realize that if this is the first time teaching a social action course, there are not any active and inactive campaigns. However, after you teach social action, there will be active and inactive campaigns for the students to consider.

I then introduce myself, and tell them a bit about me, and how I came to believe that social action was a necessary experience in higher education. I also discuss my expectations of the students, as well as their expectations of me. I do this by putting the following expectations on the board:

- Get to class on time
- Put out your name tag
- Do the readings before every class
- Take an active role in class discussion
- Be willing to share
- Actively listen
- Take risk
- Outside of class, do a minimum of 1.5 hours a week of campaign work (either on campus or in the community)
I then ask them what expectations they have of me. I listen to them and try to respond honestly and thoughtfully. I tell them that I will do my very best to meet their expectations, as long as it is reasonable. I end this part by discussing my reflections of our student body. I state that our students are fantastic, but overworked, as they are juggling many responsibilities. One of these responsibilities is that about 70% are working 20 to 30 hours a week, which greatly reduces their time to do homework. In addition, because the schools that my students have attended were often under-resourced, many students need more work on their writing skills. Thus, I recommend to the students to give themselves enough time to do the reading and prepare for EVERY class, to read and write as much as possible during their college experience, and to come visit me, as well as their other professors, so we can help them develop their critical thinking and writing skills.

As the class comes to a close, I tell them that they will be receiving an email from me in the next 24 hours that will give them more information about the process of choosing a campaign, and that it will be composed of four options to choose from, which include: (i) Active Student Campaigns on campus or in the community; (ii) Inactive Student Campaigns (i.e., from campaign notebooks from previous semesters’ class); (iii) Students’ Ideas for a Campaign(s); and (iv) Community Campaigns (if there are any).

The material for this section has evolved over the 14 years I have taught the class. In the beginning, I was not as clear about using every opportunity, particularly in the beginning of the class, to move students toward empowerment and engagement. Notice how Class 1 is laid out; each topic discussed provides a way for students to move away from the “banking system of education” and towards a “democratic” model of education where students and faculty are co-creators or knowledge, and the student-teacher relationship is active and reciprocal, where the teacher is a student and every student is a teacher. Also, when I began, there were no active or inactive student campaigns for the students to join. The only opportunities for the students were to create their own campaigns and community campaigns, and this will most likely be your reality as well if you are teaching social action for the first time. However, over time, the students will have more options, which is dynamic part of this model.

The biggest challenge of teaching this section is that some students are surprised that they will need to choose a campaign and try to enact a policy as part of the class. After teaching the course every semester for over a decade, about one-half of the students entering the class come in understanding that they need to be engaged in social action, while the other-half is unaware. Surprisingly, hardly any students drop out of the class after learning about social action on the first day. Another challenge of teaching this section is that you may be accustomed to having “control” of the class. It is true that with social action, the teacher gives up some control of running the class, particularly if your style is to talk up front with the students listening in rows. However, the rewards are many to have the students be active participants and co-creators of
knowledge, as students’ critical thinking, sense of empowerment, moral development, and democratic understanding and skills will increase.

Please note that there are no portfolio questions for this section.

**Reflection Questions:** Before moving on to the next section, please answer the following reflection questions about “On Your Mark: Preparing Students for the Road Rarely Traveled”. Your responses will help you develop your social action class:

Q1: Which of the best practices discussed in “On Your Mark: Preparing Students for the Road Rarely Traveled” might you adopt in your class? What other best practices do you know of that you might use to prepare them for the road rarely traveled?

B. Go! Students Choose Their Issue (Class 2-4, 1st part of class)
The goal for this section is for the students to choose an issue to work in a campaign over the semester. By the end of this section, most all students will have chosen an issue to work on that is simple and clear, quantifiable, they are passionate about and are willing to put in the effort to move the campaign forward. Of course, the students care deeply about winning the campaign, but as the teacher, the goal is for them to have a first-hand experience with power and democracy. It is great if they win the campaign, but it is secondary to the educational mission of social action. Some campaigns are won, some are lost, and some die out, but if the students learn how to do social action, they will be engaged in democracy for the rest of their lives.

For me it is absolutely crucial that the students get into their campaigns in the first several weeks of the class. I start the process on the 2nd class, while Dr. Shakow starts on the third or fourth week, as she teaches a few weeks about the climate crisis and the various justice issues since she feels it is important for the students to have some basic understanding of the field before the students choose an issue. However, we are both united in the belief that you have to start early in the semester to make sure that the students have enough time to actually do action. Using the old adage “on your mark, get set, go”, this might be the “go” part; however, the order is now changed. The new adage is “on your mark, go, get set.” The students need to “go” in order to have the chance to do social action in one semester. It is true that the need to do research on the history of the issue, and do a power map and target analysis, all of which are things that many social action practitioners do before they complete their issue identification, but the time constraints of higher learning necessitate that students choose an issue early in the semester, and then do this necessary research while at the same time they are doing outreach (e.g., tabling) and alliance building. Interestingly, I have found that instead of being a drawback, the students are even more eager to do the research after they start talking to other students and the community about their campaign, as they realize they have to know more. Thus, the students are put into a situation where they want to do the research because they need to do it in order for them to be successful in their campaign.

To begin the process of issue identification, I send this email to the students a day before the second class:
Dear Social Action students,

At our next class, you will begin the process of choosing an issue that you will work on over the semester. As discussed in *CHANGE!*, an issue is a policy, rule, law, regulation, norm, or practice of an institution that you want to change. Below you will see the active student campaigns that are still going on (from last semester’s Social Action class), as well as inactive campaigns that were run in previous semesters but no longer have students active in the campaign.

On the second day of class, students from the active campaigns will come in and pitch their policy change and ask you to join them; however, only join them if you are interested and passionate about their issue! As for the inactive campaigns, I will present their campaign notebooks (which includes a history of their campaign, allies, tactics, posters, contacts, and campaign evaluation), and if you are interested, you can reactivate their campaign. In addition, staff members from various community organizations will be coming into class to pitch the issue they are working on with the hopes that at least three students join them.

Lastly, if you have an idea for a campaign, please come prepared to talk about it. Make sure the issue has a specific demand and target (i.e., the decision maker who has the power to agree to the demand). If you do have an idea for a policy change, please respond to this email, and tell me what it is, and I will put it up on the computer screen so the other students learn of it. I will also ask you to say a few words about your idea, so have a few sentences prepared.

**ACTIVE STUDENT CAMPAIGNS:**

- Student Homeless Alliance: Demand is to for the University to provide homeless students 12 emergency campus beds and $2,500 emergency grants for re-housing. Contact: Lana, info@StudentHomelessAlliance.org

**INACTIVE STUDENT CAMPAIGNS:**

- Spartans for Sustainability: Demand is to ban single-use plastics [e.g., straws, utensils] in San Jose. Contact: Quynh-Nhu, info@Spartans4Sustainability.org

**COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS:**

- People Acting in Community Together (PACT): A ballot measure to change the City charter to expand the role of the Office of the Independent Police Auditor. Contact: Derrick, Derrick@pact.org

**STUDENT CAMPAIGN IDEAS:**
• add your campaign idea here (and email it to me!)

Kindly, Dr. Scott ML

Please note that there are generally 2-3 campaigns for each of the first three categories. As for the student campaigns, you can see that I encourage them to email me their idea for a campaign; I then collect these and present them at the next class. If the students send in "a slogan" (e.g., end racism or improve public transit), I email them back and ask them to think about what one to three specific, quantifiable demands they can make, as well as ask them who are the decision-makers (i.e., the target) that can say yes or no to their demands. This helps the students come into class prepared to provide a well-thought-out idea for an issue.

The second day of class begins with an explanation that an issue is a set of principles and procedures that guide the decisions of a governing body, and more specifically, an issue is a policy, rule, law, regulation, norm, or practice of an institution that the students want to change. I discuss in detail that an issue is composed of a solution; a specific demand (i.e., a concrete, measurable request); a target (i.e., lowest ranking person who can meet demand); requires a yes or no answer; and is winnable. The last point is key, as I use the example that disarmament of all nuclear weapons by all nations may be a visionary demand, but it is not a good issue for this class, as it cannot be won in one semester or within 2 years, which is a timeframe that I think is appropriate. At the same time, I encourage the students to be visionary and bold. When the students put forward the bold vision of increasing the minimum wage by $2, some leaders in our community thought it could not happen. Thus, there is a balance between being visionary and being practical, and your goal as a teacher is to help students with these challenging conversations.

In addition, we discuss Chapter 1 of CHANGE! A Student Guide to Social Action, which explains how a good issue: resonates and is strongly felt; it moves people to action; it inspires them to put time and energy into campaign; it delivers concrete, positive change in people’s lives; it is simple (can be stated in single sentence); it builds power (i.e., more members, allies, funds, etc.); it involves people in decision making; and there is a right and wrong side. We then review the previous student victories, as well as a student reflection from one of the victorious campaigns that discusses issue development. In addition, I have them read a former student reflection on their experience in the Social Action class. For almost every class following, I have the students read a former student reflection, as well as a newspaper article regarding that campaign. Not only is there great information about the day in the student reflection, but it shows that students just like them have been involved in social action, which is extremely important at this early stage of the class. My students’ reflections and the newspaper articles are on the Bonner website at www.Bonner.com for your use, but as time goes on, and your teach this class over the years, you will want to replace these with your students’ reflections and the newspaper articles surrounding their campaigns. This initial discussions of the readings helps set the framework for the process of the students choosing an issue, and re-enforces the message that change is possible.
After this discussion, students begin the process of selecting an issue, with them choosing from four types of social action campaigns: (i) active student campaigns (either on campus or in community), (ii) inactive student campaigns (bring in the campaign notebooks and the teacher will present them), (iii) community campaigns, and iv) students’ ideas for campaigns. I explain that on this day (Class 2), the process to choose a campaign begins with some students beginning to choose a campaign, and that in the next class (Class 3), there will be more brainstorming about campaigns with even more students choosing campaigns, and that during the final class session of this campaign identification (Class 4), all students will have made some “final” decisions about what campaigns to select. I put “final” in quotes, as the students can change campaigns throughout the semester. I remind them that they need three students to “activate” a campaign since there is group work to do, and a group is needed to learn democratic skills.

To start the process, I have three of the groups (i.e., the active and inactive student campaigns, and community campaigns) present for 3-4 minutes about their issue (demands and target), as well as some history of their campaign. For the active student campaigns, I ask the students from the previous semester to come into this 2nd session, and pitch their campaigns. For the inactive campaigns, I represent them, and I bring in their campaign notebook and describe their issue and campaign history to see if there are three students interested in reactivating one or more of these campaigns. For the community campaigns, I have previously reached out to several non-profit and community organizations, and I have asked them to come and present any campaign they are currently working on that is trying to change a policy; of course the organizations have to be willing to work with students, but many of them see it as part of their mission to help educate the next generation of democratic participants. Generally, several groups accept the invitation, and they come to class ready to pitch their campaign.

To facilitate interaction, I break the three types of possible campaigns into the corners of the classroom and give the campaign representatives and the students 10-15 minutes to talk in-person to explore the various campaigns in more depth, to respond to the students’ questions, and to get the campaigns’ contact information if they are interested in joining them. I encourage the students to meet with several of the groups. At the conclusion of their 10-15 minutes, I thank the students from the active and community campaigns for coming into the class, and then tell them that the students, if they are interested in joining your campaign, will be in touch in the next couple of days. The active and community groups then leave the class, and I put away the campaign notebooks from the inactive groups.

We now move on to the ideas from the students about possible campaigns. Some of them have already sent them to me, and I have them up on the computer screen. I ask if there are other students who have ideas for a campaign that are not already listed, and then I write down the name of the possible campaign down, and I put the student’s name by it. As one might expect, students enter the class with ideas for a social action campaign. Many times, the students' ideas are "slogans" (e.g., lower tuition, affordable housing, better wages, etc.) and your role as teacher is to take a social problem and put them into "demands" that have specific requests of a target. For example, a student might say that we should demand better public transit, and then I
suggest “what routes would you want changed”, or how many buses and drives will
need to be obtained”. Another example is that a student might suggest that students
should demand more mental health counselors and more diverse staff, and then I
suggest “how many health counselors do you want, how much would that cost, and how
can your college ensure that the new counselors are more representative of the BIPOC
community. They will have done research and explore this in greater detail, but it crucial
to start them in this direction so that they will be successful. Sometimes it is not possible
to figure it all out during this class, but over the coming next classes it is the teacher’s
responsibility to help the students turn their ideas into an issue that has a specific,
quantifiable, demand and a target.

At the conclusion of brainstorming with the students about their campaign ideas, I
ask them if there are any students who have already decided on, or are leaning
towards, any of the campaigns that have been presented so far (i.e., active and inactive
student campaigns, community campaigns, and new student ideas for a campaign). If
yes, I write their name down by the campaign, and indicate that they have chosen it or
are leaning towards it. If there is time left in the class, and there are three or more
students signed up for a campaign, I ask them to go into the hallway (or the back of the
class if it is big enough), and exchange contact information and discuss what interests
them about the issue they have selected, and whether it connects to their personal life,
family, community, or just a general interest in the topic. For the students who are yet
unclear of what campaign they want to select (generally, the majority of the class), I
brainstorm with them about the possible campaigns they can join. At the end of class, if
are unsure of what campaign they will join, I ask them to do research on the campaign
ideas have proposed, as well as bring in additional ideas for a campaign for the next
class.

The biggest challenge of teaching this section is to get students into viable
campaigns in a short amount of time (three classes or one and one-half weeks). I am
always a bit surprised it happens, but if you follow the steps laid out in this section, it
has always worked for me.

Other teachers of social action have used different exercises to help their
students choose their issue. Sophia, from Earlham College, had students brainstorm
possible issues by having them do the “Raining Rocks” exercise that she learned from
Community Learning Partnerships. This exercise introduces students to various
approaches of social change, asking them to compare and contrast the advantages and
disadvantages of each approach. Sophia also used the Canadian Teachers’ Federation,
“Guiding Students Through a Project” in their publication “Social Action Projects: Making
A Difference.” In this publication, students learn how to clarify the problem, agree on a
sound solution, plan an effective course of action, and implement and evaluate the
action.

At least 24 hours before the beginning of the third class, I email the students the
names of the active and inactive campaigns, community campaigns, and ideas that the
new students have for campaigns, with the names of the students listed who have either
chosen them or are leaning towards them. I then tell them if they know what social
action campaign they want to join, or are leaning towards, they should email it to me. If
they don’t know, I ask them to continue to do research on the various campaign idea, as
well consider bringing new ideas for a campaign to the next class.
Surprisingly, 5-7 students out of a class of 30 email me back and tell me that they know what campaign they will be selecting, and another 5-7 students generally email me and say they leaning towards a campaign. For the students who have selected a campaign, I mark down their names by the campaigns; I also mark down the students who are leaning towards a campaign. In my email response to the students, I remind them that this not a final decision, and that they can change campaigns if they become more interested in another project (particularly in the first several weeks).

The third class begins with a review of the core components of an issue, as well as what makes for a good issue. The class then watches the first 15 minutes of a documentary that was done on three previous social action campaigns entitled “Walk the Walk” (available at https://ffh.films.com/ecTitleDetail.aspx?TitleID=216184&r=SR). After a discussion of the video, we discuss the student case studies from Chapter 1 from CHANGE!, as well as a reflection written by a former student. The discussion of the case studies and the film encourages students to get over any hesitations they might have about social action in general, and believing that social change is possible, specifically. With the case studies, we discuss the students’ initial response (i.e., scared, appalled, outraged, horrific reality), and how moral outrage is a motivator for people to get involved in change. We also discuss how the students made no more than three demands, that they had a clear target, and that their personal connection to the issue was also a motivator, and allowed them to speak to the issue personally.

After this discussion, I put on the screen the list of all the possible campaigns and the names of the students by the campaigns that emailed me. If there are three or more students who have selected a campaign, I ask the group to go into the hallway (or the back of the class), and exchange contact information and discuss what interests them about the issue they have selected and to begin exploring what are the specific, concrete, measurable demands (no more than three), and who is the decision-maker (i.e., target). If two students have chosen a campaign, and two other students are leaning that way, I say that it might be good for the ones leaning towards a campaign to stay and hear the other campaign possibilities, or it might be good to go out in the hallway and discuss; I leave it up to them. However, sometimes the students leaning towards a campaign, are ready to make a final decision. If that happens, and there are three or more folks who have made their decision, I send them outside to share their contact information and to start answering the questions laid out above.

For the students remaining, I then review all of the possible social action campaigns, and ask if there is anyone ready to put their name down by a campaign. Again, I tell them that this is not final, but they may be willing to be in a group to explore a campaign. If I can get folks to sign up, I send them outside to share contact information and answer the above questions. Generally, a group of students raise their hands, and say which campaigns they have decided to join. For the students who haven’t chosen projects, which is generally about one-half of the class, I brainstorm with them the other possible campaigns. At the end of class, I ask the students who have selected a campaign how it feels to choose one. I tell them it is okay to switch campaigns in the middle of the semester if they feel more passionate about another issue, if their initial idea does not seem like it would work, or if there is too much conflict in the group which cannot be resolved.
Class 4 starts by watching the 2nd part of the documentary on social action, "Walk the Walk". It is short (15 minutes) and once again, it reinforces the idea that other students have gone through this process, so they will be able to do it too. After the video, I show them all of the campaigns that have been proposed and ask them if there is anyone who has yet to make a decision about a campaign is now ready. If yes, I put their names down by the campaign on the computer screen. If there are groups of three or more, and generally, there are 3 to 4 groups by this time, I send them into the hallway or to the back of the class to discuss the following questions:

- How have been hurt (personally) by the social problem you are working on? A family member or friend hurt by it? Your community?
- What is the policy your group wants to change? Please provide one to three demands.
- Who is your target?
- Do you feel strongly about your issue? Are you willing to fight for it?
- From the reading, were there examples of people feeling strong about an issue and willing to fight for it?
- How will your group’s solution provide positive change in people’s lives?

As for the 5-10 students who have not chosen a campaign, I work with them to find a campaign. We go over all of the active, inactive, and community campaigns, as well as the student ideas for a campaign to see if there is any interest at all. If there are not three students interested in any one of these campaigns, we then brainstorm new ideas for a campaign. If by the end of the 4th class, there are still students who have not yet to select a campaign, I ask them to meet with me during office hours to continue exploring options. Using this process over 14 years, I have always been able to have all of the students select a campaign they are interested in. After the campaigns have been “finalized” (and I use this term loosely since as I said earlier, the students can change campaigns throughout the semester), we discuss the student reflection and the case studies from Chapter 2 of CHANGE! A Student Guide, as we explore their thoughts about the demands made and the targets chosen. I conclude this section by discussing the first portfolio (see below). The portfolio assignment compels the students to both explain the concepts and ideas of the text, and to connect them to what they are doing and experiencing in their campaigns, or in the words of Freire, the portfolio connects theory with praxis. Here is the language I use to encourage this behavior:

The portfolio is a “test” of your knowledge of the book and reader from the first 3 weeks, and how well you can apply it to your issue. There are NO exams in Social Action, so the portfolio is where you DEMONSTRATE the knowledge of the book and reader, and your ability to APPLY IT. For each question, you should address two areas: (1) your campaign and the things you are doing and learning; (2) ideas about social action from CHANGE! and the Reader. This integration of action and text provides an in-depth analysis (not just 1 or 2 sentence response). Lastly, you can discuss the portfolio question with your group members, but you must use your own words when writing up responses.
After discussing how the portfolio is a place to connect theory with praxis, I go over the below grading criteria, which also encourages this connection:

A: You have a **strong understanding** of the ideas and concepts from the text, you provide an **excellent analysis**, and you integrate the lessons you are learning in your social action and campaign with the READER and **CHANGE!**, and as well as the lectures, guest speakers, and videos.

B: You have a **good understanding** of the ideas and concepts from the text, you provide an **above average analysis**, and you integrate the lessons you are learning in your social action and campaign with the READER and **CHANGE!**, and as well as the lectures, guest speakers, and videos.

C: You have a **general idea** of the ideas and concepts from the text, you provide an **average analysis**, and you sometimes integrate the lessons you are learning in your social action and campaign with the READER and **CHANGE!**, and as well as the lectures, guest speakers, and videos.

D: You do not have a **good understanding** of the ideas and concepts from the text, you provide a **below average analysis**, and **never integrate** the READER and **CHANGE!**. You will not receive higher than “D” without text, and without a general understanding of the ideas and concepts.

F. You have **no understanding** of the ideas and concepts of the class, **never integrate** your social action with the READER and **CHANGE!**, and think “The Cave” is a tavern downtown.

When the students’ hand in their portfolio, they also hand in their log. A log is where they keep track of the time they spend on their campaign. They can count most campaign activities for the log. They can count meetings, as long as it doesn’t add up to over 50% of the 25-hour minimum. The one thing they can’t count is time working on the portfolio.

A challenge of this section is to make sure that the students’ demands are specific enough. I have found that the best way to do this is get the students to quantify their demands. For example, if it is going to cost money, then how much will it cost, and put that number in the demand. Another challenge is when most all the students are in a campaign group, but there are a few students who haven’t chosen. Generally, if I work with that group, and give them more time, I can help them to find a campaign to select.

**PORTFOLIO 1**

1.1 Explain the difference between an individual problem, a social problem, and an issue.

1.2 What are the various components of an issue in **CHANGE?**
1.3 What is the social problem that your group will work on? How are you hurt personally by this social problem? How has a family member or friend been hurt by it, and/or your community? How have previous social action students answered this question about how they are personally connected to their issue?

1.4 What is the policy your group wants to change? Please provide one to three demands. What were your favorite specific demands when looking at the previous SJSU campaigns, and explain in-depth what made these demands “good”?

1.5 What is the definition of a target? Who is the decision-maker for your issue? If it is a committee, please list all names of the committee (or board). Who were the targets in the SJSU campaigns that you have read out about in the book and reader, and explain why the students chose them.

1.6 Do you feel strongly about your issue? Are you willing to fight for it? In the previous SJSU campaigns in the Reader and CHANGE, provide in-depth examples of students (or others) feeling strong about their issue and willing to fight?

1.7 How will your group’s solution provide positive change in people’s lives? In what ways did the other SJSU campaigns provide positive change? Provide an in-depth answer.

1.8 Explain what is a “frame”, and then describe what is the best “frame” for your issue? Compare your frame to the frames from several other student campaigns that you have read about in CHANGE and the Reader.

1.9 Testing your demands/issue: As part of your issue identification, individually go out and interview 2 students and ask them the following: How concerned are you about your issue? How does the issue impact you (or not)? Do you agree with the demands? Would you be willing to work on this issue, and fight for it? Please record their answers and include a description of the people you interviewed (e.g., age, year in school, lives on/off campus, gender, ethnicity/race). Importantly, analyze their responses, and explain what are the implications of their responses for your campaign. For example, if the interviewees are unconcerned about the issue or unwilling to fight for it, your group may need to change the message, the demand, or perhaps even the issue itself. In your responses, integrate course readings and ideas discussed in the reader and book with your answers. FYI: You can count the time conducting the interviews for your portfolio, but not the time writing up the portfolio.

1.10 Testing your demands/issue: As part of your issue identification, interview (in person is better, but on the phone if necessary) one stakeholder (e.g., non-profit staff member, a union leader, a campus staff leader, a rabbi/minister, etc.) that focuses on your social problem and issue. Ask her/him/they: How are you addressing this social problem? Then tell them how your group is conceptualizing the issue and ask them if they think this approach makes sense. Do they agree with your
group’s approach? If so, why, and if not, why not? Also, ask whether, if your group moves forward, would they support you or become involved as an ally. If so, what would they be willing to do? In addition, ask her/him/they who else should you talk to, and who else is working on solving this social problem. Even better, can they connect you to them? Lastly, ask if they have any questions for you. In your response, integrate the book and Reader with your answers. Importantly, analyze their responses, and explain what are the implications of their responses for your campaign.

Reflection Questions: Before moving on to the next section, please answer the following reflection questions on this section. Your responses will help you develop your social action class:

Q1. Which of the best practices discussed in “Go: Students Choose Their Issue” might you adopt in your class? What other best practices do you know and might use to help your students choose an issue?

Q2. Is there a social action campaign that you would not allow your students to choose in your class? (e.g., a constitutional amendment to overturn Brown v. Board of Education proposed and supported by an alt-right group.) If yes, what would be the generalized policy for your class, or would you handle it case by base? This type of campaign has never been proposed by any students, but I think it is a good thought experiment to carry out to figure out what lines, if any, should be drawn and where to draw them.

(CHAPTER 3 C-J were removed to keep this brief.)

CHAPTER 4: Campaign Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation

A. Timeline and Campaign Plan (Day 17)
B. Campaign Implementation: “Series of Actions” Begin (Day 18)
C. Campaign Execution and Case Studies (Day 19-28)
D. Campaign Evaluation (Day 29-30)
E. Day of the Final: Campaign Notebook and Group Presentation (Day 31)

Now that we have overviewed what is social action, explored what you need to consider before starting a social action class, and examined how students choose their campaigns and launch them, let us turn our attention to campaign planning, implementation, and evaluation.

This chapter discusses the best social action practices for students to develop a campaign plan, implement it, and then evaluate it. The social action class topics for campaign planning, implementation, and evaluation are divided into 6 sections, and
covers 14 class sessions and the final (i.e., a group presentation rather than an exam). As with the previous chapter, I explain the goal of this section, provide an overview of the lesson plan, discuss how the material has evolved over time, explore the challenges of teaching each section, discuss the portfolio question that is connected to that section, and finally, give you the chance to respond to some reflection questions on how you will apply the knowledge from each section to your social action class. Of course, in all of these classes, the first thing that one of the students does is an organizational rap.

A. Timeline and Campaign Plan (Day 17)
The goal of the lesson plan for Day 17 is for the students to develop a campaign plan. Up to this point, students have been working on the final part of launching their campaigns, which is the kickoff event. Most likely, the students will still be working on their kickoff events, and these events should occur over the next several days or weeks, so some class time is dedicated to this effort. In addition, as the kickoff events occur, I ask the students to evaluate these actions in the following class. If the students have received press coverage, particularly TV coverage, I show it to the whole class to examine what went well and what could be improved upon; I also show it to inspire the other students to take action.

I then ask students to construct a timeline, which is the key component of their campaign plan. The timeline is used to formalize the students’ campaign plans so as to ensure that everyone in the group knows where the campaign is headed, and what are the next steps to move it in that direction. The timeline for a student campaign includes a series of actions (tactics) that the students plan on taking over the coming months and year. The timeline provides the best estimation of how long the students think it will take to win the campaign, and it lays out the various actions that the group believes will lead them to victory. On one end of the timeline, the students should write the date of the kickoff event, and on the other end of the timeline, it should state a possible end date. Then, working backwards from the end date towards the present, the students should write in the various actions that they believe will be necessary to win the campaign, with the date of the event indicated. Remind the students that their actions at the beginning of the campaign should be at “low heat”, and as the campaign progresses, there is a “turning up of the heat” on the decision-maker.

To start the timeline, I tell the students that they can use their Portfolio 7.1 responses, which asked them to develop 2-3 tactics that their campaigns might use over the next several months. This process asks the students to think beyond the next several months, and to consider what actions they can take over the next one to two years, realizing that they might not be the ones to take the action, since they may or may not be involved at that time. However, it is still an important exercise to do since the hope is that the students can win their campaign, and even if they are not going to be the ones to do it, they are providing ideas for the next group of social action students to take action. If the students have “reactivated” a campaign and there is already a timeline created from a previous group of students, the current students will want to examine this timeline and make any editions they feel are necessary.

As part of this process, the students should consider how each action might move the decision-maker from “no” or “maybe” to “yes”. Of course, the goal of a campaign is to get the target to say yes, when they most likely want to say no. As
discussed in the last chapter, a campaign starts at “low heat” (i.e., firm and strong, but less confrontational), and then turns up the heat as the campaign proceeds. Sometimes the decision-maker has not put a great deal of thought into the demand, so it is just a matter of “making enough noise” to get their attention, and then to sit down with them in order to get them to agree to the 1-3 demands. However, if a decision-maker is opposed to the demand because of financial or ideological reasons, the increase in pressure that a series of actions provide will make the target more willing to say yes. Thus, it is necessary to develop a campaign plan that lays out this series of actions.

At this point, I provide the students 20-30 minutes in their groups to begin developing their timelines. At the conclusion of their discussion, I inform the students that they should complete their timeline in the next several weeks. Their timeline can be used to ensure that everyone is on the same page as they move forward with implementing their campaign plan in the coming weeks. In addition, I tell the students that they will be putting the completed timeline into the Campaign Notebook at the end of the class, along with their previous work (i.e., on recruitment, alliance-building, research, and media relations). The Campaign Notebook serves as the complete blueprint for the campaign, and will be turned-in at the end of the semester, and passed down to the next semester’s class. At the end of class, I have the students turn in Portfolios 4-7 and the log.

How to teach this section on campaign planning has come a long way in the 14 years since I started teaching social action. Along the way, I formalized the writing of the timeline as part of developing a campaign plan, rather than just have students take actions which they thought was best next to take. This way, the students could be both in the here and now, as well as have a long-term plan on how the action they are taking currently fits into the entire strategy. The challenge is to get the students to think a few months into the future, rather than just the here and now. This takes some creativity, but the students appreciate this process. To get them to begin thinking expanding their vision on time, I ask them to consider how our policies would be different if we used the Iroquois Confederacy’s belief that, “In every deliberation, we must consider the impact on the seventh generation”. Reflecting on this Iroquois perspective helps the students to begin thinking about their campaign over the next months and possibly years, rather than just what do they need to do tomorrow for their campaign.

The portfolio question that is connected to this section is Portfolio 8.7, which states:

- 10.7. The timeline needs to have an estimate of how long you think it will take to win the campaign, and designs of various actions you recommend taking for the next class (or classes) to win. The timeline also includes a possible end date on the far right of the paper, and the date of the kickoff event, as well as today’s date on the left side of the paper. Then, work backwards from the end date towards the present and put in the actions (e.g., tactics, recruitment, media relations) that your group believes will be needed to win the campaign, with the month (or week) stated. Remember, your actions at the beginning of the campaign should be at “low heat” (i.e., less confrontational), and as the campaign goes on, there is a “turning up of the heat” on your target in order to win the campaign. Please note that this timeline is a working document and should be updated as the campaign proceeds.
I will discuss the rest of Portfolio 8 later in the chapter.

(CHAPTER 4 B-E were removed for brevity.)
DRAFT:
CHANGE! A Guide to Teaching Social Action

i https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2009/12/16/students-breakfast-harvard-dining/
https://www.bestcolleges.com/blog/history-student-activism-in-college
downloaded Feb. 19, 2021


v https://dailybruin.com/1996/02/22/activism-through-the-years

accessed, September 11, 2020


https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236815331_Effects_of_Campus_Culture_on_Students' Critical_Thinking

https://www.higheredtoday.org/2016/03/02/embracing-student-activism/ accessed March 2, 2021;
https://drum.lib.umd.edu/bitstream/handle/1903/10863/Page_umd_0117E_11517.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y March 8, 2021

https://www.aascu.org/MAP/PublicPurpose/2016/Fall/EngagingLearning.pdf

https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED039852

xi https://www.higheredtoday.org/2016/03/02/embracing-student-activism/ accessed March 2, 2021

xii Written in email to SML, accessed March 3, 2021