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**Office Hours:**  
**Mondays/Wednesdays – 11:15-12:30**  
**Wednesdays – 3:45-4:30**  
**Mondays - 4:00-5:30**  
**Tuesdays/Thursdays - By Appointment**

**TOPICS IN SOCIETY & PEOPLE – MALA-6040-001 – SPRING 2017**  
**CIVIC ADVOCACY, PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY, AND GRASSROOTS POLITICS**

This course is designed to introduce students to democratic participation, grassroots activism, and civic advocacy. In this class, civic advocacy is broadly considered traditional (electoral and interest group lobbying) and nontraditional methods of participation that seek to expand the opportunity structure and advance equity agendas for under-resourced communities. As such, the course is concerned with the intersection of democratic theory, civic advocacy, grassroots activism, and political/civic engagement of under-resourced communities whose experiences are largely neglected or undervalued in mainstream political discourse. This course extends the analyses of democratic participation beyond conventional interpretations such as elite theory, pluralism, majoritarian competitive democracy, interest group theories, and direct democracy. Instead, it gives special attention to deliberative democracy, participatory orientations to governance, social movements, grassroots lobbying, and the broader field of community work. This discussion also includes an examination of locally-based, advocacy initiatives in Tennessee, as well as popular mobilization and nonviolent political struggles outside of the United States in what is commonly referred to as the Global South. Finally, the course has an experiential learning component (EXL) that engages students in on-the-ground civic activities outside the classroom.

**COURSE READINGS**

Stout, Jeffrey. *Blessed Are the Organized* (Princeton University Press, 2010).

*Select readings posted on D2L.*

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION**

**1. Two Take-Home Exams**

Students are required to complete two take-home examinations: a mid-term examination and a final examination. The examinations can be submitted in D2L's drop box.

## 2. Response Papers

Students will submit 10 response papers (no more than two double-spaced pages) that contain a brief summary of no more than three readings assigned for each class meeting. Provide the following information for each reading:

- a) overall description of the essay;
- b) main thesis of the essay;
- c) three main points of the essay;
- d) the conclusion(s) reached by the author; and e) explain if you have any disagreements or disputes with the essay
- e) I will identify students in the course to help facilitate the class discussions of the readings.

## 4. Experiential Learning Assignments:

- Participant Observation at the Tennessee General Assembly (Week of February 29<sup>th</sup>)
- Grassroots Canvassing and Lobbying Activity (April 10<sup>th</sup> and April 17<sup>th</sup>)

## 7. Class Performance

“Class Performance” will be evaluated by: (1) your attendance; (2) level of discussion and participation in class activities; and (3) your participation in the Social Problems Group Discussion Exercise.

<u>Grade Scale</u>	<u>Points</u>
First Exam:	100 Points (Due March 3 <sup>rd</sup> )
Second Exam:	100 Points (Due May 4 <sup>th</sup> )
Response Papers Responses	100 Points (10 x 10 Points)
EXL Assignments (Mandatory)	
a) Legislative Lobbying	50 Points (See Handout; Due Date – Week of April 17)
b) Grassroots Canvassing/Lobbying	50 Points (See Handout; Due Date – Week of April 24)
Class Performance/Attendance	50 Points

## TEACHING METHODOLOGY

The course uses a “problem-posing” approach to engage students in critical and participatory dialogue around key issues in U.S. politics. Students are expected to reflect and dialogue on a number of themes discussed in the course and figure out ways to act on problems discussed. Along these lines a variety of exercises will be utilized including: lectures, group work, writing exercises, the use of a documentary film and you tube to help illustrate advocacy efforts, and cooperative learning exercises that require maximum participation. The course also includes several in-class exercises called, “Social Problems,” in which theoretical examinations of democracy are paired with real and current problems that need to be addressed.

## CLASS PERFORMANCE AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

The format of this class depends upon your having read and reflected upon the assigned readings before the class. “Class Performance” consists of participating in class discussions,

completing all assignments on time, and attending class on a regular basis. “Participation” is not simply defined as “making comments or statements” during class discussions. Rather, “participation” is based upon the following criteria: (1) consistent, thoughtful, and active verbal contributions to the class discussion that indicate you have read and engaged the material; and (2) regular and prompt attendance. Please note that simply attending class does not constitute “participation.” In the case when students miss class due to an emergency, the instructor reserves the right to ask the student to provide evidence of this special circumstance.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY**

I expect all work that is completed in this course to be original work, initiated and completed by each individual student. The *Student Handbook* prohibits all forms of academic misconduct as described below:

- (1) **Plagiarism.** The deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas or words or statements of another person as one’s own without proper acknowledgment.
- (2) **Cheating.** Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours.
- (3) **Fabrication.** Intentional or unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- (4) **Facilitation.** Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic misconduct.

The Student Handbook further prohibits classroom misconduct. In the event that a student engages in classroom misconduct, the instructor “can direct the temporary removal or exclusion from the classroom of any student engaged in disruptive conduct” or “report such misconduct to the assistant dean for Judicial Affairs...” Students should consult the student handbook for more information about academic and classroom misconduct. If academic misconduct takes place, the instructor reserves the right to give the offending student(s) a failing grade.

### **ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE**

MiddleTennesseeStateUniversity has a number of support and tutorial services that can assist students with writing, reading, and other academic activities. Students who are experiencing difficulties in class are encouraged to use the following support services: First Year Experience Halls – Cummings Hall and Corlew Hall, the UniversityWritingCenter, Development Studies Writing Lab, and the Development Studies Reading Lab.

### **CLASSROOM AND EMAIL ETIQUETTE**

#### **Classroom**

The following are basic guidelines for the classroom setting design to provide the best possible environment for learning.

- Please do not enter the classroom late or leave early unless it is an emergency. I generally take attendance or pass around a sheet for students to sign and list their student id numbers as a method for checking attendance.
- Please refrain from talking to others or engaging in any other extraneous activity during class discussions.
- Please turnoff and disengage all beepers, cellular phones and other electronic devices that may distract others.
- Do not search the internet during class hours – students who do so will be asked to leave the class or may face severe penalty
- Students are expected to respect each other and each other's viewpoints.

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Qualified students with disabilities will be provided reasonable and necessary academic accommodations if determined eligible by the Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS) ([www.mtsu.edu/~dssemail/](http://www.mtsu.edu/~dssemail/)). Prior to granting disability accommodations in this course, the instructor must receive written verification of a student's eligibility from the Office of Disabled Student Services. It is the student's responsibility to initiate contact with the DSS staff and to follow the established procedures for having the accommodation notice sent to the instructor.

### **Email**

Please use my email sparingly and keep the following in mind:

- Do not email me your class work, unless directed to do so by the instructor. Assignments and papers must be submitted in person on the designated due date, unless otherwise specified.
- Please do not email me excuses, explanations, or other statements explaining your absence from class or to indicate that you will be late for class.
- I will try and provide prompt responses to all emails, usually within 48 hours.
- Throughout the course I will routinely send correspondences to the class and post assignments through the university pipeline/banner system.
- Students who miss more than three classes should be expected to be penalized a substantial portion of the class performance grade.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

- Students must remember that the instructor does not give out course grades. All grades are earned by the students.
- Students are advised to keep all papers. Do not throw them away. This is the last protection you have against any mishaps that may happen to your grade – i.e. break-ins, computer crashes, errors with the grading, etc.
- The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus at any time. All changes, if any, will be announced in class. It is the students' responsibility to keep informed of the changes.
- All handouts, assignment instructions, and guidelines distributed in class become part of the syllabus.

- The schedule for reading topics may be readily adjusted during the semester to account for course-related factors (i.e. class size, vacation days, emergencies, political events, etc.). *The instructor also reserves the right to give additional assignments.*
- No make-up examinations or papers are given for unexcused absences. If students have a legitimate excuse, they can take up a make-up examination, but only during the last week of the semester. (No excused, make-up examinations will be given during the semester.)
- You are not required to read “**supplemental readings**” unless specified to do so.
- Students who wish to withdraw from the class must do so by the designated date.
- If you have an emergency that requires you to miss class for an extended period of time, you should contact Becky Garrett from the University Withdrawal office.
- Be aware of the last day to drop classes without a grade and with a “W”.
- To retain Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship eligibility, you must satisfy the guidelines outlined by MTSU, the Tennessee Board of Regents, and the Lottery State of Understanding form.



## Stay Informed and Stay Connected



Students who are the most successful—in their courses, graduating on time, finding jobs and developing careers in the field, getting into law school and graduate school, and just getting the most out of their college years—are those that stay informed about all of the opportunities and events they can take advantage of, and stay connected to the Department and other students.

Please use these resources to both stay informed and stay connected—and succeed.

### MTSU Political Science Facebook Page

We use Facebook to notify our students of upcoming events and opportunities for PS and IR majors and minors.

Please “friend” the page so you are always in the loop.



(search for MTSU political science)

### Department of Political Science Web Page

This is a huge resource of information on majors, minors, program requirements, faculty contacts, the Student Handbook, Newsletters, and much more.

Please bookmark the site and check it often and whenever you have questions.

<http://www.mtsu.edu/politicalscience/>

### PS / IR Student Services Page

This site provides easy access to info on advising, law school, grad school, careers and job search, study abroad, internships, and much more to help you succeed.

Please bookmark the site and really use it to get the most out of your time in the Department.

<http://www.mtsu.edu/ps-ir-student-services>

### Low-Tech, Physical Communication

Much of this information—program requirements, Student Handbook, Newsletters, upcoming events, and so on—are available on the racks and bulletin board outside the Departmental Office in Peck 209.

## OVERVIEW OF THE CLASS

### January 23

Introduction and Overview of the Class

Strolovitch, Dara. "Do Interest Groups Represent the Disadvantaged? Advocacy at the Intersections of Race, Class, and Gender." *The Journal of Politics* vol. 68, no. 4 (November 2006): 894–910. **(D2L)**

Mettler, Suzanne. "Bringing the State Back in to Civic Engagement: Policy Feedbacks Effects of the G.I. Bill for World War II Veterans." *The American Political Science Review* vol. 96, no. 2 (June 2002), pp. 351-365. **(D2L)**

### January 30

#### DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY, PARTICIPATORY PLANNING, AND BUDGETING

Fung, Archon. "Deliberation Before Revolution: Toward an Ethics of Deliberative Democracy in an Unjust World," *Political Theory* vol. 33, no. 2 (June 2005): 397-419. **(D2L)**

Stewart, LaShonda M., et al. "Participatory Budgeting in the United States: A Preliminary Analysis of Chicago's 49th Ward Experiment," *New Political Science*, 2014, vol. 36, no. 2, 193–218. **(D2L)**

McGovern, Stephen. "Ambivalence over Participatory Planning within a Progressive Regime: Waterfront Planning in Philadelphia." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 33 (3): 310-324. **(D2L)**

Gillman, Hollie. "Innovation and Permutations: Boston's Youth PB," in *Democracy Reinvented: Participatory Budgeting and Civic Innovation in America*. Brookings Institution, 2016. **(D2L)**

#### EDUCATION AND GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM

### February 6

Mediratta, Kavitha, Sara McAlister, and Seema Shah. *Improving Schools through Youth Leadership and Community Action* (Case Study of New York City and the Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition & Sistas & Brothas United). Annenberg Institute for School Reform. September 2009. **(D2L)**

Bolivar, Jose' M. "Enhancing Parent Leadership Through Building Social and Intellectual Capital," *American Educational Research Journal* vol. 48, no. 1 (February 2011): 4-38. **(D2L)**

Russell, Kenneth and Mara C. Tieken. "Weaving a Tapestry that Won't Unravel: The Transformation of Education in the Mississippi Delta," in *A Match on Dry Grass: Community Organizing as a Catalyst for School Reform*, Mark Warren, et al., eds. Oxford University Press. **(D2L)**

Franklin, Sekou M. *Primer on Legislative Lobbying* (In-Class Lecture)

## GENDER AND ACTIVISM

### February 13

- Lawston, Jodie Michelle. "We're All Sisters": Bridging and Legitimacy in the Women's Antiprison Movement," *Gender & Society*, vol. 23, no. 5 (October 2009): 639-664. **(D2L)**
- Celine d'Cruz and Patience Mudimu. "Support Slum Upgrading Community Savings that Mobilize Federations, Build Women's Leadership and Support Slum Upgrading," *Environment and Urbanization* 25, (2013): 31-45. **(D2L)**
- Morton, Larry, Samuel R. Terrazas, and Matthew G. Herriman. "Women of the River: Grassroots Organizing and Natural Disaster," *Journal of Rural Social Sciences* vol. 28, no. 2 2015, 28-55.**(D2L)**
- Gretchen, Arnold. "The Impact of Social Ties on Coalition Strength and Effectiveness: The Case of the Battered Women's Movement in St. Louis," *Social Movement Studies* vol. 10, no. 2 (April 2011): 131-150.**(D2L)**

### Supplemental Reading

Office of the (Nashville) Mayor. *Nashville-Davidson County Domestic Violence Safety and Accountability Assessment*, 2013

## THIS KIND OF ACTIVISM? *SQUARE PEGS DON'T ALWAYS FIT IN A CIRCLE*

### February 20

- Carter, Miguel. "The Landless Rural Workers Movement and Democracy in Brazil." *Latin American Research Review* vol. 45 (2010): 186-217. **(D2L)**
- Majic, Samantha. "Participation Despite the Odds: Examining Sex Workers' Political Engagement," *New Political Science* vol. 36, no. 1, 2014, 76-95. **(D2L)**
- Bell, Elizabeth. "Photovoice as a Strategy for Community Organizing in the Central Appalachian Coalfields," *Journal of Appalachian Studies* vol. 14, no. 1/2 (Spring/Fall 2008): 34-48. **(D2L)**
- Boris, Monica. "Fighting for Equal Treatment: How the UAW Won Domestic Partnership Benefits and Discrimination Protection for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Members," *Labor Studies Journal* vol. 35, no. 2 (June 2010): 157-180. **(D2L)**

## REFLECTIONS ON THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

### February 27

- Visser-Maessen, Laura. Excerpt from *Robert Parish Moses: A Life in Civil Rights and Leadership at the Grassroots*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016. **(D2L)**
- Colley, Zoe. Excerpt from *Ain't Scared of Your Jail: Arrest, Imprisonment, and the Civil Rights Movement*. University of Florida Press, 2014. **(D2L)**

- Gillespie, Deanna M. "First Class" Citizenship Education in the Mississippi Delta, 1961-1965," *The Journal of Southern History* vol. LXXX, No. 1 (February 2014): 109-142. **(D2L)**
- Lucander, David. "Beyond A. Philip: Grassroots Protest and the March on Washington Movement." *Reframing Randolph: Labor, Black Freedom, and the Legacies of A. Philip Randolph*, eds. Andrew E. Kersten and Clarence Lang. New York: NYU Press, 2015. **(D2L)**

**Spring Break: March 6-11**

**FARMWORKER ACTIVISM**

**March 13**

- Ganz, Marshall. Excerpts from *Why David Sometimes Wins*. Oxford University Press, 2009. **(D2L)**
- Asbed, Greg and Sean Sellers. "The Fair Food Program: Comprehensive Verifiable and Sustainable Change for Farmworkers." *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Law and Social Change* vol.16, no. 1 (2013). **(D2L)**

**CRIMINAL AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

**March 20**

- Owens, Michael Lee. Ex-Felons' Organization-Based Political Work for Carceral Reforms, *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 651, January 2014. **(D2L)**
- Kennedy, David. Excerpts from *Don't Shoot: One Man, A Street Fellowship, and the End of Violence in Inner-City America*. Bloomsbury, 2012. **(D2L)**
- Franklin, Sekou. "Reclaiming Our Youth: Policing and Protesting Juvenile Justice," in *After the Rebellion: Black Youth, Social Movement Activism, and the Post-Civil Rights Generation*, NYU Press, 2014. **(D2L)**
- Moore, Janet, Marlo Sandys, and Raj Jayadev. "Make Them Hear You: Participatory Defense and the Struggle for Criminal Justice Reform." *Albany Law Review* vol. 78, no. 3 (2014/2015): 1281-1316. **(D2L)**

**March 27**

- Stout, Jeffrey. *Blessed Are the Organized*, Chapters 1-12.

**April 3**

- Stout, Jeffrey. *Blessed Are the Organized*, Chapters 13-20.

## **GRASSROOTS CANVASSING**

**April 10 and April 17**

Carpenter, Daniel and Colin Moore. "When Canvassers Became Activists: Antislavery Petitioning and the Political Mobilization of American Women," *American Political Science Review* vol. 108, no. 3 (August 2014): 479-498. **(D2L)**

Bedolla, Lisa Garcia and Melissa Michelson. Excerpts from *Mobilizing Inclusion: Transforming the Electorate Through Get-Out-the-Vote Campaigns*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012.

**Training On Grassroots Canvassing (Out in the Field)**

## **THE LOGIC OF NONVIOLENC AND CIVIL RESISTANCE**

**April 24<sup>h</sup>**

Schock, Kurt. *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2005 (Select Readings). **(D2L)**