

CPSY 590: Advocacy and Activism – Spring 2016

Professor Tod Sloan

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Course Description

This seminar provides an introduction to advocacy competencies, the psychology of activism, process skills for activists, and social movement theory. The primary objective of the course is to help counselors and therapists be more effective both in support of change agents and in their own action for social and environmental justice.

Required Texts

Starhawk, *The Empowerment Manual*

Dixon, C. *Another Politics: Talking across Today's Transformative Movements*

Required articles

ACA Advocacy Competencies -

https://www.counseling.org/Resources/Competencies/Advocacy_Competencies.pdf

Marian A. Lee, Tammy Jorgensen Smith, and Ryan G. Henry (2013). Power politics: Advocacy to activism in social justice counseling. *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology*, 5(3). (pdf on line at jsacp.tumblr.com)

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/transformation/george-lakey/to-succeed-movements-must-overcome-tension-between-rationality-and-emoti>

Extensive materials about political action (esp. direct action) on the website: beautifultrouble.org

Suggested Readings

H. Rettig, *The Lifelong Activist*

P. Jones, *Aftershock: A Guide for Activists and Their Allies*

J. Macy, *Active Hope*

R. Solnit, *Hope in the Dark*

K. Wilber, *Integrated Life Practice*

D. Pollard, *Finding the Sweet Spot*

<http://organizingforpower.org/anti-oppression-resources-exercises/>

Various articles in issues of *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology* at jsacp.tumblr.com

Sloan, T. (2013). OccuPsy: Critical Psychology for Decolonization. *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society*. (pdf)

Requirements

- Regular preparation for and participation in discussion in each class session (notify professor of anticipated absence by email). More than one hour of absence will trigger a make-up requirement.
- For Day One: Read the two articles by Lee and Toporek on advocacy in counseling. Be familiar with the basic ACA Advocacy Competencies and be ready to discuss, raise questions, and think about applications.

- For Day Two: Attend at least a couple hours of any grassroots activist group meeting or event, and be ready to report briefly to the class about what you observed and learned about activism. You can find events and meetings here: <http://portland.activatehub.org/> or <http://portland.indymedia.org/>
- For Day Two: Find a person you know and admire for his/her/their motivation, stamina, courage, etc in relation to social change work and interview him/her/them for 10 minutes to try to understand how they came to be that way and stay in the struggle. Take notes and be ready to discuss briefly on the second day of class.
- For Day Two: Read/skim Dixon's *Another Politics* and Lakey article. Prepare notes that include 5 insights or concepts you will take away from the readings, and two broad questions you'd like to discuss in class.
- For Day Three: Study the (auto)biography of a person who is known for having had an impact on any society and prepare a brief narrative story to tell (3-4 minutes) about how that person managed to have such an impact. Include: What impact did the person have? By what strategies or tactics did s/he accomplish this? What do you notice about his/her integration (or lack thereof) of the personal, political, cultural, and the professional/work dimensions of life?
- For Day Three: Read/skim Starhawk's *Empowerment Manual* and, drawing on the whole book, prepare a list of ten key practices you will try to remember to employ as you work in groups, collectives, teams.

Grading

Final grades will be based on effective participation in seminar discussion and in-class dialogues (50%) and on:

- Report on admired person (10%)
- Narrative on impactful person (20%)
- List of ten key practices for effective group process (20%)

Course Schedule

Day 1

Overview of course objectives

Situating ourselves

Social Movements and Types of Activists

ACA Advocacy Competencies and other literature linking counseling and social action

Day 2

Debrief on grassroots groups

Reports on Interviews with Admired Persons

Movement process

Day 3

Stories of Impactful Persons

Group Process and the Individual: Key Practices

Supporting Activists

Conclusions and Evaluation