

Sociology 122
Activism and Social Change
Spring 2014

Instructor Nicholas Russ, M.A History, M.A African American Studies

Office Hours: Friday or by appointment 9:30-10:30 A tower room

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Course Description

Can one person make a difference? What does making a difference look like? Using literature, film, music, and news media to look at past and present social movements, examine what makes us engage in acts of political protest, and critically analyze why some resistance efforts are successful and others are not. We will also critically examine what activism and social change means. How do we make these concepts real to us? What does it mean to be socially active in the 21st century? Also, how does society play a role in our understanding of social activism and social change? How grievances are heard and seen as valid and who are considered troublemakers. It is imperative that we explore through a critical lens the impact that society has on our understanding of activism and social change. Are you ready to be challenged and are you willing to challenge? This is the foundation of the class.

Required Text

A Peoples' History of the United States, *Howard Zinn* (2003)

What is expected of you?

In this class I am looking for you to challenge yourself and display through assigned writings, opinion papers, quizzes and a group presentation that you're wrestling with the course material. You're ultimate success in this class is contingent on your ability to engage with the material and your classmates.

Assignments

Opinion Papers/ 60 points

There will be 3 opinion papers, worth 20 points each, on important sociological questions connected to social activism and change that will be assigned at the beginning of the week. This assignment will be two pages long, double-spaced and will be collected on the following Monday.

Weekly Write-Ups/ 30 points

The weekly write ups will be opportunities for you think critically and answer pertinent questions relating to social activism and change. The weekly write-ups will emerge from class discussions, lectures and film. These assignments will be assigned and completed in class.

Social Activism/ 30 Points

You will be required to attend three events on campus that have to deal with the Social Activism and Change. You will attend three events and then provide a one page write up on what you learned from the event.

Group Presentation 50 points

Your group presentation will consist of you choosing a social movement and giving a presentation to the class. Details for this assignment will be given throughout the quarter.

Participation

It is imperative that you recognize that you are required to do more than attend. I expect students to engage and be active in the creation of a strong intellectual community. Being a passive participant will not be tolerated.

Grading Breakdown

Your grade will be determined by how many points you earn divided how many points are possible. Bellevue College utilizes a consistent, published letter grading system to reflect the student's achievements.

Plagiarism

This class is guided by the principal of academic honesty. Be honest with yourself and do not cheat. Instructors have access to commercial software that detects plagiarism. There will be severe penalties for participating in academic dishonesty.

Attendance

Responsibility for class attendance rests with the student. Regular and punctual attendance at all scheduled classes is expected, and the university reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of nonattendance. Attendance is expected and continued absences will affect your grade.

Class Schedule

Week One: Activism and Social Change. What comes to mind?

Week Two: Let's start from the beginning.

A people's History of the United States 1-38

Week Three: The continued examination of the American experience

Quiz One

Opinion Paper 1 Assigned

A people's History of the United States 39-75

Week Four: The African American Experience

Citizen King DVD

A people's History of the United States 79-124

Week Five: The Sixties

A people History of the United States 125-169

Weather Underground DVD

Week Six: The Experience of Women

Opinion Paper 2

A people's History of the United States 170-210

Week Seven: Global Movements

A people History of the United States 210- 251

Week Eight: Global Movement Continued

Opinion Paper 3

A people's History of the United States 252-295

Week Nine: Social Activism in the current world landscape

A people's History of the United States 295-320

Week Ten: Group Presentations

Week Eleven: Students Decisions

Week Twelve: Student Decisions

Required Readings are Subject to Change

