HTS 3010: Organizing for Social Change
Spring 2026

Instructor: Kimya Loder, PhD

Course Description: Social change emerges when everyday people mobilize and use their collective power to enact social, cultural, and political transformations. In this course, we analyze how groups organize to amplify their voices, build power, and enact change. Collective action enables people to advance solutions to complex social challenges, but working with others to change systems and organizations is hard. It requires research and analysis, strategic planning, conflict resolution, adaptation, and careful consideration of the ethical implications of individual and group decisions. We will draw on social theory and practitioner frameworks, historical and contemporary case studies, and community perspectives to identify and apply strategies and skills essential to change-making. You will cultivate skills in storytelling, power and asset analysis, and "strategizing" and explore the ethical implications of alternative approaches. You will experience the joys and challenges of collective action as you apply your learning by advancing a desired change on campus that you and your peers identify as a priority.

Course Learning Objectives:
By the time you complete this course you should be able to:

1. Describe key elements of community development, community organizing, organizational change, and provide examples of each, and evaluate their implications for individuals, communities, and society.
2. Use historical examples, traditions, and contemporary evidence to explain how collective action influences the lives of participants and influences on community sustainability (social, economic, and environmental).
3. Design, evaluate, and implement collective action strategies and messages using data, knowledge, and transdisciplinary expertise.
4. Build and maintain collaborative relationships with peers and community members, respecting diverse perspectives, to work effectively toward common goals.
5. Recognize and articulate ethical and professional responsibilities in the context of collective action.
6. Assess collective actions or decisions based on established ethical principles and through deliberative process, considering their implications for society and individuals.

Course Materials Required to be Purchased:
**All course readings (see below) can be found via Canvas or the Georgia Tech Library Database.*

Grading Policy: Your final grade percentage for the course will be calculated as follows (grades will not be rounded up): A – Exceptional Performance (90-100), B – Above average performance (80-89), C – Average performance (70-79), D – Below Average Performance (60-69), F – Poor Performance (0-59).

Attendance Policy: Attendance will be documented through the submission of in-class assignments, quizzes, and discussions. The scores for these assignments will determine students' participation and attendance grade at the end of the semester. Excused and documented absences will not affect the participation grade.

Academic Honor/Integrity Statement: It is expected that you and I will follow Georgia Tech's Honor Code in all matters relating to this course. You are encouraged to meet and exchange ideas with your classmates while studying and working on homework assignments, but you are individually responsible for your own work and for understanding the material. You are not permitted to copy or otherwise reference another student's assignments. In this class, you will also be required to cite all sources that you use in your submitted work, including but not limited to writing papers, creative projects, presentations, performances, exams, and research. "Sources" include journals, papers, conversations, anything found on the internet, AI usage, etc. If the thought did not originate with you, you should properly cite it in your work. You, as students, are responsible for understanding the University's Honor Code policy. Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions regarding this

Student Conduct Statement: This course embraces a multiplicity of voices and perspectives. We respect people from all backgrounds and recognize the differences among ourselves, including racial and ethnic identities, religious practices, and gender expressions. It is my intent to present materials and resources that are respectful of diversity, ensure that students' learning needs are addressed both in and out of class, and welcome the diversity that students bring to class as a resource, strength, and benefit.

Accessibility Statement: Georgia Institute of Technology is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services to inquire about services or request a meeting with a Coordinator. Students can find more information about the Office of Disability Services, including contact information, at disabilityservices.gatech.edu, or call ODS at 404.894.2563 or in person at Smithgall Student Services Building, 353 Ferst Drive, Suite 221.Students who have already been approved for accommodations through the Office of Disability Services, please schedule an appointment with me at the beginning of the semester to discuss your academic accommodations. It is my goal to create a learning experience that is as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience any issues with the format, materials, or requirements of this course, please meet with me outside of

class so we can explore potential options. If accessing the classroom becomes (more) challenging due to interpersonal or systemic issues (e.g. racism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia, etc.), please know that I can and want to be a resource. Discussions about classroom accessibility, whether individual or interpersonal, will be kept in strict confidence.

Required Readings

All readings can be found via CANVAS or the Georgia Tech Library Database

Week	**Readings**
W1: Introduction	Syllabus Review Ganz (2013) What is Organizing? Ed Chambers, Roots for Radicals, "The World As It Is and the World As It Should Be" 21-43
W2: Organizing and Ethics	Hardina et al (2015), "Tactical Decision-Making," Freire (1970) "Pedagogy,"
W3: Framing Social Issues	Staples (2016) "Power to the people," p 1-13 Myers Lipton (2023) "Issue Development" ; Alicia Garza, *The Purpose of Power* (2020) "No Base, No Movement," 212-218
W4: Organizing and Change	Staples (2016) "Power to the People" p 13-34
W5: Keeping People Invested	Combahee River Collective Statement (1975); Engler, "Why Social Movements" (2022);
W6: Storytelling in Movements	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. "Letter from Birmingham;" Lorde (1977) "The Transformation of Silence"; Ganz (2001) "The Power of Story in Social Movements"
W7: Navigating Ethical Challenges	Banks (2019) "Ethics, Equity and Community."
W8: Organizing Targets, Tactics, and Goals	Russell TEDx (2016) "What's Wrong to What's Strong;" UCS "Power Mapping"; Boyd (2012) "Narrative Power Analysis, *Beautiful Trouble*" *p. 244-245*
W9: Community Organizing in Practice	Spade (2020) "What is Mutual Aid?" Daniel (2021) "The Social Movement"

W10: Student Activism and Institutional Change	Brower and Upchurch (2022) “Opportunity Structures”; Video: “United in Anger, - A History of ACT UP”
W11: Student Activism and Institutional Change (continued)	Bratman (2016) “Justice is the Goal,” Murakami (2021) “Student Leadership and Sustainability”
W12: Mobilizing in the Digital Age	Video “Online to Offline Mobilization”
W13: Campaign Development	-
W14: Fight to Win	Payne (1995) “Give Light and the People Will Find a Way: The Roots of an Organizing Tradition” 67-102 Yamhatta-Taylor (2017), *How We Get Free*, pp. 9-14,61-64

Syllabus adapted from course designed by Dr. Rebecca Watts Hull, Assistant Director, Faculty Development for Sustainability Initiatives, Center for Teaching and Leaning