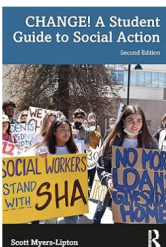




Department of Behavioral Sciences
SWRK 36100 Institutional Social Welfare
Fall 2026

Course Schedule: M/W 03:30 PM - 04:45 PM
Classroom: CLO 310
Credit Hours: 3
Instructor: Pamela Saylor, MSW, LCSW
Email: psaylor@purdue.edu
Office Location: CLO 389
Student Chat: Mondays 9:30-11:00 AM Zoom or in person); Wednesdays 9:30-11:30 AM (Zoom); Thursdays 9:00 AM-10:00 AM (Zoom or in person); or by appointment
Prerequisites: SWRK 20100 or SWRK 24000 (Minimum Grade of C)

Required Textbooks:



Myers-Lipton (2023).
Change! A Student Guide to Social Action.
Routledge

Additional readings for this course can be located on Brightspace and this reader:
www.bonner.org/socialaction-docs

PNW SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

The program's purpose is to provide an enriching environment in which life-long learning is established and the acquisition of competence in knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes of generalist practice social work will be developed to promote individual and community well-being as Purdue University Northwest BASW graduates advocate and enhance the quality of life for individuals in their communities.

Mission

To prepare competent, professional and ethical generalist social workers who are committed to anti-oppressive social work practice by advocating for social, economic, and environmental justice for all vulnerable populations.

Vision

Guided by a liberal arts-based education and cohesive curriculum, the Bachelor of Arts in Social Work Program at Purdue University Northwest operates within the land-grant tradition of democracy, inclusiveness, and accessibility. All members of the Social Work Program and those served are valued and respected as we celebrate diversity in background, culture and frame of reference.

- The program provides an environment in which the value of life-long learning is rooted and dedicated to the development and acquisition of competence with regard to knowledge, values, skills and cognitive and affective processes.
- The program values critical thinking and intellectual curiosity that is satisfied through scientific inquiry in the acquisition of evidence-based practices within the ecological framework.
- The program values ethical practice and insists students, faculty, and staff act with honesty and integrity as they adhere to the highest standards of professional conduct.
- The faculty and students enhance the quality of lives of citizens by applying professional knowledge and leadership through cooperative partnerships with schools, neighborhoods, social service agencies, other institutions, and communities. This quality of life enhancement is intended to be aimed locally, nationally, and globally.



SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM COMPETENCIES

Program Competencies, adopted from CSWE (Council on Social Work Education) foundational competencies, are covered in Social Work courses central to the foundation curriculum (CSWE, EPAS, 2022). These nine competencies guide faculty as they prepare students to engage in the necessary knowledge, values, and skill development for ethical, effective and culturally competent entry-level generalist practice.

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice
3. Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
5. Engage in Policy Practice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember. Involve me and I understand.

Xun Kuang, 312-230 BCE. Confucian philosopher, modern version

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

Frederick Douglass

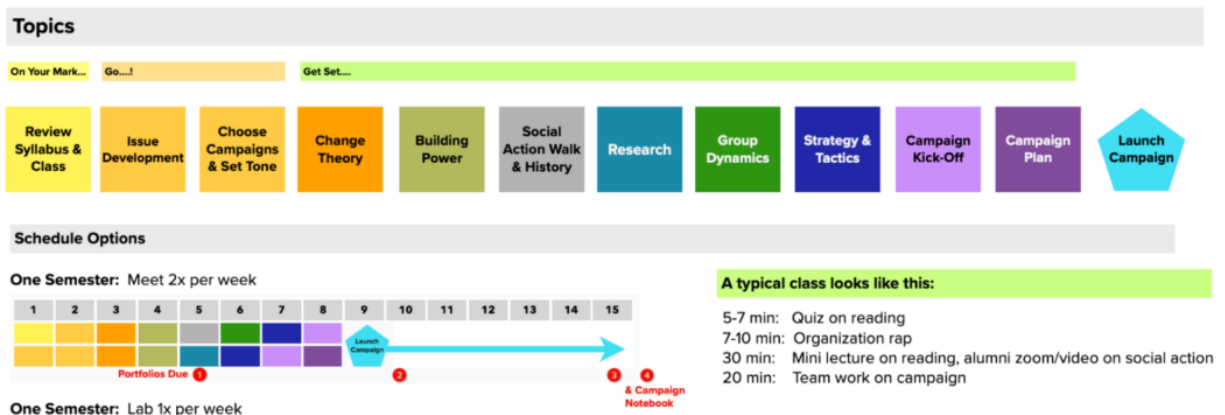
COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course you will learn about how to engage in social action to change organizational or government policies and will acquire several advanced advocacy skills that will help you become an effective advocate for social justice. 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.

What is unique about this course is that students do social action rather than just learn about it. In a traditional course on social action, students read about theories of social change, analyze social problems, read about campaigns, develop an abstract understand of concepts, all with the professor being the “sage on the stage”. In the experiential social action model, students read about theories of social change and apply it to real world campaigns, as well as define a social problem and develop concrete, quantifiable solutions (i.e., demands). In this experiential social action model, students choose and lead campaigns and are transformed through a direct experience of democracy, all with the professor being a “guide on the side” where they are decentered and co-creators of knowledge.

A key part of the social action model is that students have the opportunity to enact a policy (i.e., a rule, regulation, norm, or practice of an institution) on campus or in the community, with the students choosing and developing the campaigns on their own rather than assigned by the instructor. Another exciting part of this course, your campaigns will be shared with future SWRK 36100 students in creating sustainable student-led social action campaigns.

An additional key feature of the social action model is the topic and flow of the course. The motto of this model is “On Your Mark, Go, Get Set.” In order to launch the campaigns by mid-semester, students go through the issue development process (identifying demands and targets) during the opening days of the class. By choosing the campaigns by the second (at latest third) week of class, students have enough time to learn about all of the necessary aspects of social change, and then to launch a campaign by the ninth week, and still have almost half a semester to do several actions.



With this model, a typical class includes the following: (a) a student doing a 1-2 minute organizational rap (i.e., who, what, why, where, and when of a campaign), (b) a class discussion of the assigned reading and videos, (and c) group work on their campaigns. These activities are designed to de-center the instructor, empower students to believe that social action is possible, and to give students the opportunity to be active participants in their education.

All students will be involved in social action. **This will require a minimum of 1½ to 2 hours per week of campaign work (25 hours minimum over 15 weeks, with about one-half of the time DOING something, that is, doing campaign activities (e.g., tabling, flyering, giving organization raps) or campaign actions (marches, rallies, street theater, etc.). If you do not do more than 25 hours a semester, you will most likely not receive a grade higher than a 2.0 on your overall portfolio grade, since it is difficult to do reflection if you are not doing campaign activities and actions.** Of course, if you want to do more campaign work, that is great. FYI: The course reading has been reduced to offset the 25 hours of campaign work.

It will be possible to do your social action on campus, so all students should be able to work it into your schedule. In addition, class time will be dedicated to your social action campaign, so you will be able to do some of your organizing in class. During the first and second classes, you will brainstorm various ideas for a social action campaign, and then you will choose one to work on. The requirements for the campaign are: (i) that you have a minimum of 3 students on your team, (ii) you have passion for the issue, and (iii) your campaign tries to change some type of policy. The campaign you choose to work on may come from a liberal, conservative, social democrat, or libertarian perspective... or it may have no ideology. Whatever campaign you choose to do, I will teach you about democracy, power, and how to bring about change.

Importantly, there is no political indoctrination, as students develop and choose what campaigns to work on, and students can change campaigns at any point in the semester. Furthermore, my role is to offer guidance about strategy and tactics, and to help students consider the variety of options available, with the students deciding on how to best move forward.

This course is based on a model developed the by Dr. Scott Myers-Lipton and the Institute for Teaching Social Action (ITSA), which has trained faculty across the nation to teach college students how to do social action. Courses taught by ITSA-trained faculty **have fundamentally changed campuses and communities**. Over the past fifteen years, Social Action students have won more than 15 campaigns, leading successful efforts to: (1) raise the minimum wage in San José, California from \$8 to \$10 and then to \$15, (2) develop a 12-emergency bed program and a centralized location to provide emergency housing and food to college students, (3) modernize the city's business tax, and (4) make a university a sweatshop-free campus, and (5) get a county to clear and expunge 13,000 cannabis convictions. Perhaps even more importantly, the students participating in social action have had their lives transformed as a result of a direct experience with democracy, with social action alumni taking on leadership positions in government and the non-profit sector, as well as obtaining community organizing jobs locally and pursuing advanced degrees. You will learn more about some of several of these campaigns as part of this class and can find additional examples at: [https:// teachingsocialaction.org/campaigns](https://teachingsocialaction.org/campaigns).

COURSE OUTCOME OBJECTIVES



In this course, students will learn to design and implement a social action campaign that addresses a social issue.

Drawing on the [Grand Challenges for Social Work from the American Academy of Social Work and Welfare](https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/#the-challenges)¹, as well as the [United Nations 17](https://sdgs.un.org/goals)



[Sustainable Development Goals](https://sdgs.un.org/goals)², students will integrate these frameworks into their campaign strategy.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and analyze a social issue using interdisciplinary perspectives and evidence-based research (meets CSWE Competency 4)
2. Apply the Grand Challenges for Social Work and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to frame and inform a social action campaign (meets CSWE Competency 5).
3. Design a comprehensive social action campaign, utilizing the Experiential Social Action Model (meets CSWE Competencies 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8).
4. Demonstrate effective communication and advocacy skills through campaign (meets CSWE Competency 3).
5. Develop interdependence to create and implement a campaign that reflects ethical, cultural, and community considerations (meets CSWE Competencies 1 and 2).

PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

What I expect from you:

- Read all assigned material and come to class prepared to participate and discuss.
- Attend all classes and turn in all assignments by respective due dates.
- Since this course uses Brightspace for communication and to support your learning, it is important that you check the course in Brightspace regularly (at least 3 times per week). Whenever you login, check the course announcements for important updates and other information.
- Since I will also use your pnw.edu email address to communicate with you, please check your pnw.edu email account daily.
- In your communications with your peers and myself, always be polite, respectful, and civil. While it is okay (even good!) to disagree with one another, you must always do so respectfully and back up your opinions with supporting evidence.

What you can expect from me:

- I will check the course site daily during the week (typically multiple times per day) and at least once over the weekend.
- I will respond to questions and other communications within 48 hours (though typically much quicker).
- I will grade and return all assignments within a week of the assignment's due date.

¹ American Academy of Social Work and Welfare: <https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/#the-challenges>

² United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Complete readings and assignments *prior* to coming to class. Bring your full self, writing instrument, and paper to every class.

I make ample use of Brightspace. Revisit course content. Ask questions for clarification if needed. Assignments are detailed in this course syllabus with supplemental resources on Brightspace, so you are able to plan well in advance.

Brightspace will be utilized to make available the syllabus, course schedule, assignment guidelines, and slide decks relevant to current class content. Syllabus and Course Schedule are subject to change. Notice of changes will be given in class and/or on Brightspace.

Class Cancellation

Pay attention to emails and Brightspace to learn about class cancellations. I seldom cancel class, but in the rare occasion that this occurs, notifications of cancellations will be made via email and Brightspace with as much advance notice as possible. If you do not check your PNW email account regularly or have it set-up to be forwarded to your preferred email account, you may not receive the message. Please check Brightspace and your PNW email (or the email address it forwards to) before coming to class.

GRADING

You will be held accountable for adhering to academic and non-academic standards of conduct as described in student standards at PNW: Code of Student Conduct: <https://www.pnw.edu/dean-of-students/student-code-of-conduct/>.

I will make every effort to grade your assignments within one week of submission. Your final grade for this course will be based on an accumulation of points earned from the learning experiences listed in this syllabus. Assignments will be graded using rubrics (see Brightspace). ***Late assignments are eligible for partial credit of 60%.*** Your final grade for this course will be based on an accumulation of points earned from the learning experiences listed below along with feedback from your field instructor. You can access your scores on Brightspace.

The minimum final grade for this course is a “C”

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance: All class meetings are mandatory, and attendance will be recorded for each meeting. It is necessary to arrive on time for class and attend the entire class. Absences will only be considered excused in serious circumstances and when discussed with the professor prior to the class being missed. Vacations are not considered excused absences. *You are permitted 1 unexcused absence throughout the semester without penalty. After that, your Class Attendance and Participation grade will drop by 2 points for each missed class.*

Email Use: Students must use their PNW email accounts throughout the course. All correspondence with the professor of this course should be sent from your PNW account, and all messages/announcements sent from Brightspace by the professor will be sent to your PNW account.

Digital Citizenship and Confidentiality: Technology is a tool. How we use it determines whether it is of value or misuse. It is expected that you exercise the utmost consideration and etiquette when it comes to the various forms of technology. Do not text, tweet, Instagram, Facebook etc. confidential or sensitive information. Always use ethics and professionalism regarding confidentiality, including case material used in coursework and class content. Be respectful and responsible with your use of technology in this course, and throughout your career. Expect and ask that others do the same.

Confidentiality is highly valued in social work and is reflected clearly in the NASW Code of Ethics. Client identifying information must not be shared to protect clients. It is important that students begin to practice this value now to ensure the student's ability to be compliant in their internships and future practice.

Use of AI/Chatbots/ChatGPT: You may use AI programs e.g., ChatGPT to help generate ideas and brainstorm. However, you should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Beware that use may also stifle your own independent thinking and creativity.

You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material (with due consideration for the quality of the reference, which may be poor).

Plagiarism: Be careful that you do not plagiarize. Cite all of your sources. Work carefully to paraphrase. Your major papers will be submitted through Turnitin which will determine the amount of your original work vs what is plagiarized. Any plagiarism or other form of cheating will be dealt with severely under relevant university policies.

Writing Format: It is important that you carefully edit your paper for grammar, sentence structure, verb tense, clarity, and typos. After you spell check your papers, be sure to proofread again to ensure that the words you used were the ones that you desired. Watch for homonyms such as there, their, and they're. Be sure to review the PNW'S policy on plagiarism. You will be graded on content as well as presentation and mechanics.

APA Format: The format of the American Psychological Association (APA) is required. The Purdue University, OWL website provides a clear and understandable discussion of the APA format and documentation. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>. You are encouraged to purchase the APA manual. Be sure to check your spelling, sentence structure, and APA to avoid errors. ONE grade level will be deducted for every 10 APA errors. I HIGHLY recommend that you utilize the Writing Center on campus.

Technology in the Classroom: PNW supports the use of technology for learning and advancing knowledge while at the same time respecting the classroom environment. Work on laptops, cell phones, and other devices that are outside class assignments can disrupt fellow students and negatively hinder

the shared learning of all participants. Please excuse yourself from the classroom if you need to use your technology for non-course-related purposes.

Discussion Guidelines: We have an opportunity in this class to hear from people with different viewpoints and open some lines of communication about difficult or emotional topics. All opinions are welcome, if they are grounded in the evidence and presented respectfully. I reserve the right to manage, intercede, side-line, or stop a conversation if it is leading us too far off track or if it is disrespectful to others.

Civility: Purdue University Northwest places a priority on your learning. We value the inherent worth and dignity of every person, thereby fostering a community of mutual respect. We believe that in order to achieve these ideals, you, and all Purdue University Northwest students, are expected, while in the role as student or representative of the university, to exhibit and practice civil behaviors, defined as behaviors that:

- Respect faculty, staff, fellow students, guests, and all university property, policies, rules and regulations
- Take responsibility for one's choices and actions
- Accept consequences of one's inappropriate choices and actions
- Communicate in a professional and courteous manner

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Let's create a learning environment for students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.) To help accomplish this:

- If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official PNW records, please let me know!
- If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you. Remember that you can also submit anonymous feedback (which will lead to me making a general announcement to the class, if necessary to address your concerns). If you prefer to speak with someone outside of the course, [Student Advocates in the Office of the Dean of Students](#) is an excellent resource.
- I (like many people) am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it. (Again, anonymous feedback is always an option).

BRIGHTSPACE AND STUDENT TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

Brightspace: Brightspace is the learning management system for PNW. Log into the [Purdue Brightspace website](#) and select Purdue Northwest to find your classes, instructor information, and course material. (Chrome or Firefox are recommended)

Need Brightspace Help? Connect with The Office of Instructional Technology for any Brightspace technical issues. Visit their [OIT website](#) and view the [PNW Brightspace resources](#).

Need collaborative tools like Office or Google? You have free access to these tools as a PNW student. Visit the Information Services website for more information about accessing your [Office 365](#) or [Google tools](#).

Having a Purdue Login, Email, or Tech issue? Connect with the Customer Service Center (CSC) by visiting [their website](#) for contact methods and hours of operation.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

An information sheet, with instructions for various types of possible emergencies, is posted in each room on campus. These emergencies include criminal activity, severe weather, fire, medical emergencies, and noises sounding like gunshots. You are strongly encouraged to review this instruction sheet carefully and acquaint yourselves with these important guidelines. Campus community members can register on the PNW website for the ALERT ME! communication system to receive texts and emails. PNW will hold annual drills to prepare for emergencies such as severe weather, active shooter and fire. It is strongly encouraged that all students participate in these drills in an effort to strengthen our emergency preparedness efforts. More information about emergency preparedness can be found at: <https://www.pnw.edu/police/emergency-procedures/>

REGISTRATION WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

You may need to withdraw from this course due to personal or academic reasons. Review the [Refund and Withdrawal Schedule](#) on the PNW website.

RESOURCES AND SUPPORT FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

University students encounter setbacks from time to time. If you encounter difficulties and need assistance, it's important to reach out. Consider discussing the situation with an instructor or academic advisor. Many PNW resources that assist with wellness and academic success are listed below. If you are in immediate crisis, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

- **Accessibility** - Purdue University Northwest is committed to making learning experiences accessible. If you anticipate or experience physical, academic/learning, mental health, pregnancy, or other medically related barriers to your PNW experience, you are encouraged to contact the PNW Accessibility Center at: pac@pnw.edu or by phone: (219) 989-2455. Visit the [PAC website](#)¹ for more information.
- **Mental Health/Wellness** - Purdue University Northwest is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support, confidential services are available. For help, contact the Counseling Center at (219) 989-2366 or visit at 2250 173rd Street on the Hammond Campus and TECH 101 in Westville. Visit the [Counseling Center website](#)² for more information.
- **Basic Needs Security** - Any student who faces challenges securing food, housing, or other basic needs is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support at dos@pnw.edu or (219) 989-4141 (Hammond) or (219) 785-5230 (Westville). Student Advocates are also available to assist

¹ <https://www.pnw.edu/pnw-accessibility-center/>

² <http://www.pnw.edu/counseling/>

students 8:00am-4:30pm in Hammond (SULB 313) or Westville (LSF 103). Visit the [Dean of Students website](#)¹ for more information.

- **Veterans** – Purdue University Northwest is committed to creating a community of support for veterans, active-duty service members and their families. Visit the [Veterans Services website](#)² for more information
- **Academic Support** - All PNW students have access to academic support services for free.
 - **Tutoring** - Tutoring is available by appointment or during walk-in hours for most major subjects. Visit the [Tutoring website](#)³ for more information.
 - **Writing Center** - Get help with any writing task from trained peer tutors; assistance available in-person or virtually. Visit the [Writing Center website](#)⁴ for more information.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

As a student, it is important for you to understand these [university policies](#)⁵, including nondiscrimination, academic integrity, and others relevant to your educational experience.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

NASW Code of Ethics

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) APA

Formatting and Style Guide

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Social Work Student Organization

<https://student-orgs.pnw.edu/organizations/social-work-student-organization/>

¹ <https://www.pnw.edu/dean-of-students/get-help/>

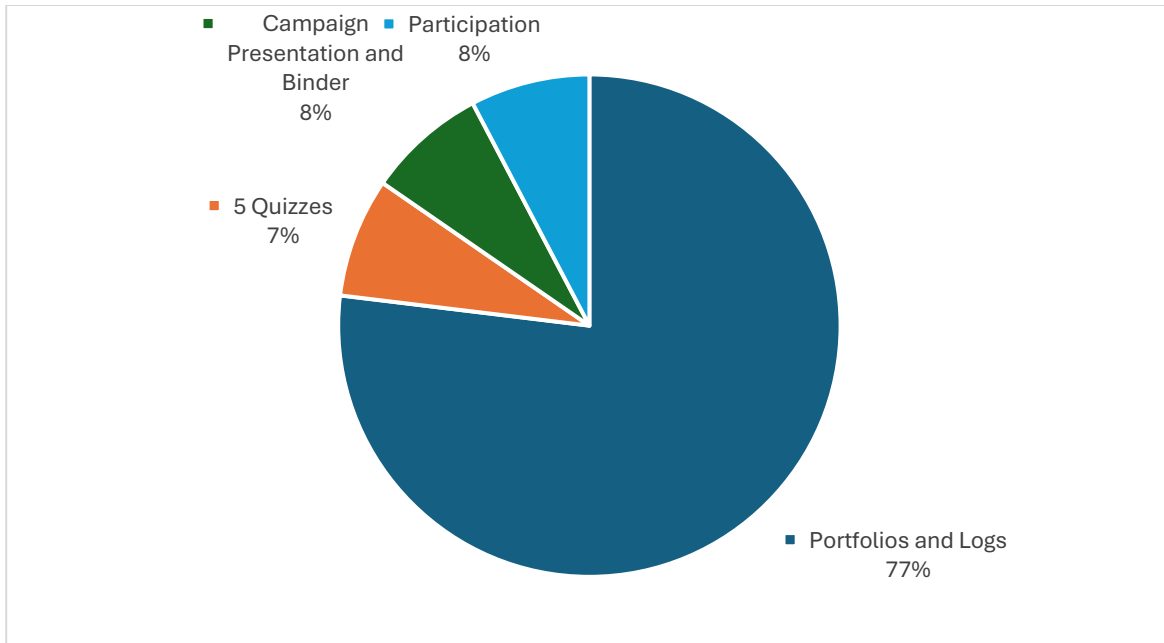
² <https://www.pnw.edu/dean-of-students/student-resources/veteran-services/>

³ <https://www.pnw.edu/student-academic-support/>

⁴ <https://www.pnw.edu/writing-center/>

⁵ <https://www.pnw.edu/dean-of-students/policies/>

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING SCALE



ASSIGNMENTS		Points
Portfolio and Log		200
5 Quizzes		20
Campaign Presentation and Binder		20
Participation		20
Total Points		260

Grade	Points	Percentage
A	239 and above	92% and above
A-	234 - 238	90% and above
B+	229 - 233	88% and above
B	213 - 228	82% and above
B-	208 - 212	80% and above
C+	203 - 207	78% and above
C	187 - 202	72% and above
C-	182 - 186	70% and above
D+	177 - 181	68% and above
D	161 - 176	62% and above
D-	156 - 160	60% and above
qF	155 and below	59.9% and below

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

5 Quizzes (20 points)

The purpose of these very short quizzes (i.e., less than 5 minutes) is to encourage reading. If you do the reading for each class, these short quizzes will be very easy to answer.

Portfolio and Log (160 points)

At PNW, you generally demonstrate that you understand the ideas from the course in an exam or via academic papers. This class is different. In this class, portfolios take the place of exams. Importantly, the portfolio is where you demonstrate your knowledge of the text in light of your social action experiences. Therefore, **you must integrate the textbook readings with your community work throughout each portfolio**. You can talk with your teammates, but all of the portfolios will be your own work. Please use the log at this website (www.bonner.org/socialaction-docs) to keep track of your community work.

Participation (20 points)

The purpose of evaluating your participation is to encourage and reward students who prepare for, and engage in, the habits of the mind. Thus, you will be evaluated on the extent and quality of your participation in the class. Your classroom participation grade will be based on the following criteria:

- **Excellence (A)** requires that you play a leadership role in the large class discussion and your team, apply the text, discuss points articulately and respond intelligently to other's views; ask insightful questions, and take responsibility for the direction of the class discussion and your team.
- **Above average (B)** requires that you participate regularly in the large class discussion and your team, demonstrate good knowledge of the text, discuss points articulately and respond intelligently to other's views; ask insightful questions, but you do not take a strong leadership role in the overall class discussion and the direction of your team.
- **Average (C)** requires that you follow the discussion in the large class and your team, make occasional comments, have a basic knowledge of the text, and sometimes ask questions in the large group and team.
- **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 the course, you will be asked to evaluate your level of participation, as well as your teammates. This evaluation will be taken seriously when participation grades are determined.

Campaign Presentation and Binder (20 points)

For the final exam, students give a group presentation on their social action campaign. In addition, your group will turn in a campaign binder, which will be evaluated. The binder will be used by future students when they choose their campaigns.

RESOURCE GUIDES

Grand Challenges for Social Work: <https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/#the-challenges>

Grand Challenges for Social Work

Click on one of the challenges below for additional information

 Individual and family well-being › Ensure healthy development for youth › Close the health gap › Build healthy relationships to end violence › Advance long and productive lives	 Stronger social fabric › Eradicate social isolation › End homelessness › Create social responses to a changing environment › Harness technology for social good › Prevent gun violence	 Just society › Eliminate racism › Promote smart decarceration › Build financial capability and assets for all › Reduce extreme economic inequality › Achieve equal opportunity and justice
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United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

