

Syllabus Creation Worksheet

A guided worksheet to develop your social action course

*Complete this form using the CHANGE books and Companion Guide.
Bring your completed form and printed syllabi to the Institute.*

Instructor Information

Name: _____	Institution: _____
Department: _____	Course Title: _____
Email: _____	Semester / Year: _____

This Syllabus Creation Worksheet will guide you through the key decisions needed to design your Social Action course. The model has a core principle: students choose a campaign, work as a team, attempt to change a policy, and make demands of a decision-maker.

Students complete work across three “active” phases:

Phase 1	Issue Development	Students identify a campaign issue that they are passionate about care, and choose demands and target
Phase 2	Building Power	Students recruit students, find allies, and create recruitment material.
Phase 3	Campaign Action	Students do a campaign action and make demands of a decision-maker.

While the model provides a shared core, professors have maximum flexibility to design their own course. This form is organized into three parts:

Part A	Course Parameters	Four foundational decisions about how your course will be structured.
Part B	Syllabus Design	Six curriculum questions drawing on the CHANGE books and Companion Guide.
Part C	Syllabi Reflection	Four reflection questions after reviewing syllabi at www.teachingsocialaction.org

PART A

Course Parameters

Answer these four questions to establish the foundational structure of your course. These decisions will shape everything else in your syllabus design.

Q1 Campaign Topic Focus

Will campaigns focus on a certain topic (e.g., climate justice, housing, poverty, racial justice) or will you leave it entirely open for students to decide?

Q2 Minimum and Maximum Campaign Group Size

What will be the minimum size of student campaign groups? Will there be a maximum size?

Minimum group size: _____ Maximum group size: _____ Rationale:

Q3 Campaign Scope: On campus, Off campus, or Both?

Will student campaigns be on campus, off campus, or in both? What is your rationale?

Q4 In-Class Group Meeting Time

How often will you give students the opportunity to meet in their groups during class? How long will each session be? What will you do during that time?

Frequency: _____ Duration per session:

Part A – At-a-Glance Summary

Parameter	Your Decision
Topic focus (open / themed / curated list)	
Minimum group size	
Maximum group size	
Campaign scope (on / off / both campus)	
In-class meeting frequency	
In-class meeting duration	

PART B

Syllabus Design Questions

Use your two CHANGE books and the Companion Guide as you develop your answers below. Chapter references are noted where relevant. These responses will be used at the Institute.

Q1 How will students choose their campaigns? (Issue Development)

Describe the process, activities, or exercises you are consider using to help students identify and commit to a campaign issue.

Q2 Group Dynamics (Part 1 and 2): Setting the Tone and Group Dynamic Skills

What might you initially do to set the tone with your students' campaigns? (See Ch. 2, CHANGE Student Guide.) What group dynamic skill (Ch. 6) might you use to help student groups function better?

Syllabus Design Questions

Q3 Theories and frameworks

What theories — from both the CHANGE books and your own academic discipline — might you have students use to understand and explain their campaigns? Consider frameworks around power, organizing, change, or social movements.

PART B (continued)

Q4 Student research

What research will students conduct as part of their campaigns? (interviews, literature review, power map, target analysis, policy analysis, surveys, observations).

Syllabus Design Questions

Q5 Social Action Tour sites

What sites on campus and/or in the community might you visit as part of a Social Action Tour?

Q6 Evaluation of student campaigns

How will you evaluate student campaigns throughout the course and at the end of class?

PART C

Exploring Existing Syllabi

Before answering these questions, visit teachingsocialaction.org/courses and explore the syllabi posted there. Select one syllabus that most closely aligns with your vision for your course. Print the syllabus and bring it with you to the Institute.

Course Title: _____

Q1 Why did you choose this syllabus?

What drew you to it? How does it align with your vision for your course?

Q2 What do you like about it? What are its strengths?

Consider structure, readings, assignments, values, and approach to social action.

Q3 Readings and materials to adopt

What articles, books, or other materials from the chosen syllabus might you incorporate? Are there additional readings from your discipline you would add?
