Welcome: In ESM 442, we will explore the tactics and communication strategies used by groups and social movements to affect change. Consider for example, any trending social movement hashtag – when does a hashtag become more than just a word, when does it actually spur a shift in public consciousness or policy – this is the type of puzzle our course will attempt to address. Groups, which may consist of social movements or formalized interest groups or non-governmental organizations, exist for the very purpose to instill change. In this course, change refers to any intent to move away from the status-quo. Without the perceived necessity for change, groups of any kind are unlikely to emerge.

This course will address civic engagement & grassroots organizing from four thematic areas: 1) traditional and contemporary theories of organizations; 2) the on the ground tactics employed by groups & social movements; 3) institutional barriers to organizational success and; 4) the role of communication in organizational efforts. Course lessons will rely on foundational group theory, contextualized by current events and the experiences of local activists. Importantly, we will draw from a diverse set of cases that address issues of environmental concern, at the same time considering how movements around gender & race equality may inform this issue area. YOU will be the gatekeepers of this information and expected to contribute this knowledge on a weekly basis.

Learning Objectives:
1. Chart and predict a path forward – what should the future of grassroots look like?
   a. Identify ‘repertoires of action’ or the tactics used by organizations to promote public engagement & affect change
   b. Explain how tactics change in response to political institutions and characteristics of the policy space
   c. Compare and contrast the communication strategies employed by groups and social movements in the traditional communication environment and now in the context of Web 2.0
   d. Apply your understanding of how institutions shape organizational efforts & processes in order to predict the potential for success on the part of current environmental movements

Course Flow: everything you need to do will be posted on GauchoSpace the Tuesday before class (I want to try to incorporate new news regularly). I will make it really clear how I want you to engage with the materials. The weekly flow will be something along the lines of this:
- Read/listen to/watch the following (1-3 sources, very manageable)
- Contribute a BRIEF (100 words or a visual) reflection to our forum
- Before class skim everyone’s reflections
- Complete your grassroots organizing activity for the week and come prepared to share in class
  - Wks 2 & 3 - Identify the organizations involved (network/stakeholder map);
  - Wks 4 – 6 - Observe their tactics and communication efforts (analysis of repertoires of action);
  - Wks 7 & 8 - Describe the intuitional / policy landscape (flow chart);
  - Wks 9 & 10 - Predict opportunities for success and sources of failure (mock consultant).

Pass/Fail: This course is P/F. As long as you come to class regularly and participate, you WILL pass. It's okay if you miss a couple reflections or didn’t prep as much as you would’ve liked one week! But, if you are regularly absent and are a non
participant in GS or class then you may Fail. I don’t want this to be any of you, this course should serve your needs, so I will let you know if I’m concerned and you should feel free to do the same.

Course Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Theme</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 – 1/4/2021</td>
<td>Introduction &amp; discuss syllabus &amp; topics</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 – 1/11</td>
<td>Organizational Theory 101</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 – 1/18</td>
<td>Repertoires of Action pre 2.0</td>
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<td>4 – 1/25</td>
<td>No Class MLK Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 – 2/1</td>
<td>Repertoires of Action post 2.0</td>
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<td>6 – 2/8</td>
<td>Traditional Communication</td>
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<td>7 – 2/15</td>
<td>Contemporary Communication</td>
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<td>8 – 2/22</td>
<td>Institutional Landscape</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 – 3/1</td>
<td>Predicting the Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 3/8</td>
<td>Recap</td>
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*Scheduling for our first guest speaker is still TBD*

Readings

1/4/2021 – Intros


**Traditional & Contemporary Theories of Organizations**

1/11 – Theory of Organizations

**Required - Pick 1**


**Additional**


1/18 – Repertoires of Action pre 2.0

**Required**


2/1 – Repertoires of Action post 2.0
Required


Communication as a Tactic

2/8 – Traditional Communication

Required


Additional


2/15 – Contemporary Communication

Required


Additional


Institutional Opportunities & Barriers

2/22 – Institutional Landscape


3/1 – Predicting the Future


3/8 – Success or Failure?