SAGRADO
Universidad del Sagrado Corazón

Syllabus

Title: Community-Based Social Mobilization

Code: TSO 335

Prerrequisite: N/A

CREDITS: 3 credits | 45 contact hours | 1 semester

Description

This course examines the community as the basic unit of social organization and as a driving force behind social movements. It highlights the importance of Social Action as a model for intervention in community settings and explains how this model has served as a response to pressure exerted by powerful sectors, while also enabling vulnerable groups to gain visibility and become stronger. To this end, the course explores the theoretical foundations that explain the development of social movements, specifically those that emerge from communities. In this way, students are encouraged to develop critical analysis skills by examining the socio-historical context in which community-based social movements arise in Puerto Rico, Latin America, and other countries. Emphasis is also placed on the facilitation process involved in the development and implementation of social movements aimed at expanding and protecting human rights. The course draws on both the knowledge gained from lectures and in-class presentations and from active learning experiences.

Justification

In accordance with its mission, the student body at the Universidad del Sagrado Corazón must remain attuned to the historical, social, and economic changes that influence the promotion of human rights and social justice. To this end, it is essential to integrate knowledge and skills in facilitating community and social processes that promote changes to transform society into a more just and democratic one.

Likewise, students must assume a critical and responsible civic and professional role in which they contribute to civic participation and community empowerment.

COMPETENCIES

The course develops the following competencies in students:

- Critical Thinking
- Ethical Reflection

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Critically interpret how political, economic, social, and gender inequalities manifest themselves when approaching the community as a complex social system.
2. Critically analyze various theoretical perspectives and methodological foundations of community work that pave the way for the development of social movements.
3. Recognize the community as a space where social processes and changes take shape by assessing the counter-hegemonic power relations that challenge and construct the social order.
4. Distinguish the history of community work in Puerto Rico, Latin America, and the United States, as well as the social movements that have emerged from these community spaces.
5. To argue for the importance of community work from an interprofessional perspective in the development of community-based social movements that respect dignity, pluralism, human rights, and the primacy of social relations.
6. To innovate in the role of facilitation by creating exercises and techniques that empower vulnerable, historically excluded populations to address their felt needs and protect human rights within the community context.

Content

I. Course Introduction: Definitions and Basic Concepts
   A. The community as a system and social context
   B. Types of communities

C. Global social movements vs. movements originating at the community level
D. Social Action as a Method of Community Work

II. History of social movements
   A. Prominent global social movements: labor, LGBTQ+, feminist, environmental, etc.
   B. Community-based social movements worldwide
      1. Most Significant Achievements of These Movements—
         a) Impact on vulnerable communities
   C. Community-led social movements in Puerto Rico
      1. The 1970s and 1980s—movements for housing and access to basic services
         a) Land reclamation
      2. 1980s to 2000s—Environmental movements
         a) Casa Pueblo—the fight against mining
         b) Peace for Vieques—the fight against the Navy
         c) Mariana de Humacao Neighborhood Community Recreational and Educational Association, Inc. (ARECMA)—the fight against cell towers and for access to water
      3. 2000s–2020s—Comprehensive Development Projects
         a) Company for the Comprehensive Development of the Cantera Peninsula
         b) Caño Martín Peña ENLACE Project
         c) Río Piedras Center for Urban, Community, and Business Action (CAUCE)

III. Theoretical Perspectives on the Development of Social Movements from the Communities' Perspective
   A. Basic Concepts
   B. Theoretical Perspectives
      1. Empowerment Perspective
      2. Strengths Perspective
      3. Critical Theory
      4. Human Rights Perspectives
   C. Social Issues in Community Work
   D. Human Rights from a Community Perspective

IV. The Importance of Developing Social Movements from the Community Level
   A. Promoting Community Empowerment
   B. Raising Awareness of the Social Conditions Faced by Communities
   C. Expanding social networks and community alliances
   D. Implementation of citizen participation initiatives
      1. Emergence of new social actors
   E. Policies aligned with the social reality experienced by communities

V. Facilitation of processes
   A. The role of facilitation
   B. Stages of organizing community work in preparation for social action
   C. Process for developing a participatory action plan
   D. Exercises and techniques for facilitating and supporting community processes
   E. Documentation of the Work

METHODOLOGY

The following active learning strategies are recommended:

- Service-Based Learning (SBL)
- Collaborative Learning (CL)
- Community Entrepreneurship Project
- *Design Thinking (DT)*
- Immersion Experiences or *Place-Based Learning*
- Discussions, forums, debates, colloquia, or panels

EVALUATION

Participation	15%
Midterm assignments	30%
Compositions	25%
Final Project	30%
Total	100%

Student Learning Assessment

The institutional assessment rubric is applied to the core activity of the course.

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