

Student Activism in Theory and Practice

Dr. Fredlund
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Office



Root Hall
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Office Hours



Tuesday 2:30-3:30
Thursday 11:20-12:20

Course Description

We will begin the course by introducing both feminism and activism and then by discussing a variety of student activist movements—considering how activists use rhetoric both effectively and ineffectively. We will then learn about gendered violence both locally (through our community partnership) and more globally (through a variety of readings and documentaries). During the first half of the semester, we will spend a lot of time learning about rhetoric, activism, feminism, and gendered violence through readings and class discussion. The second half of the semester will be devoted to our collaborative work with our community partner, CODA. Students will work with their instructor, community partner, and campus community in order to organize our University's annual Take Back the Night Rally and March. The written assignments in this course will ask you to analyze activist rhetoric, create activist rhetoric, and then reflect on your experiences writing for our community partner and organizing Take Back The Night. This course fulfills the writing-intensive 400-level requirement for foundational studies.

Locate, critically read, and evaluate information to solve problems

Critically evaluate the ideas of others

Apply knowledge and skills within and across the fundamental ways of knowing

Demonstrate the skills for effective citizenship and stewardship

Demonstrate an understanding of diverse cultures within and across societies

Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical implications of decisions and actions

Express yourself effectively, professionally, and persuasively both orally and in writing

Learning Outcomes

Required Texts

Adiche, Chimamanda Ngozi. (2015). We should all be feminists. New York, NY: Anchor Books.

Krakauer, Jon. (2015). Missoula: Rape and the justice system in a college town. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Zinn, Howard. (2002). You can't be neutral on a moving train: A personal history of our times. Boston, MA: Beacon.

Assignments



Activist Analysis

In class, we will discuss a variety of instances of student activism, read a professor's autobiography about his activism with his students, and watch documentaries about student activism. In order to understand how activism works (and doesn't work), this assignment will ask you to choose ONE student activist movement or specific event and analyze the rhetorical tactics that made this event or movement successful or unsuccessful. In order to complete this assignment successfully, you will need to first summarize the event or movement. Next you will explain the variety of rhetorical tactics the event used, and finally, you will analyze how these rhetorical tactics made the event or movement effective or ineffective. This paper will be 4-5 pages and will make up 20% of your final grade.



DIY Activist Rhetoric

In this course, we will work with a community partner and put on a large campus event. As a student in the course, you will be asked to respond to one or both of those rhetorical situations. Through consultation with your instructor, you will design your own assignment. You can create a printed document or a new media project. You can work alone, or you can work with others. You will be required to get your plan approved by your instructor. In the past, students have written and then performed slam poetry at the TBTN rally; created educational pamphlets about gendered violence to be distributed at the resource fair; developed an educational exercise to be presented at the Rally; met with CODA to learn about their needs and then created educational documents for them; and created a website for TBTN at our University. This assignment gives you the freedom to choose what you will create for this course. The only requirement is that you create a document or new media project that will be posted or distributed publicly and that you meet with your instructor to get this project approved. This project is worth 30% of your final grade.



Organization of TBTN

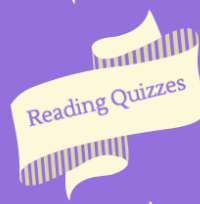
This class will put on TBTN for the University on November 18 at 7 pm. For TBTN, the class will be divided into eight student groups. Students will be placed in groups based on a discussion we have as a class and an individual survey that asks about your preferences when working with others. Each student group will have a different responsibility during the organization of the event. This assignment will make up 20% of your grade. 10% of that grade will be decided by the teacher. The other 10% will be decided by the members of your group. These will be anonymous and will judge your contribution to the group. The groups are as follows:

1. Hosts and Coordinators: This group will organize and host the Rally. You will make decisions about the content of the Rally and coordinate with speakers and other participants.
2. March Organizers: This group will design the March route, research and create chants for the March, and work with University Police to obtain the appropriate permits.
3. T-Shirts: This group will create multiple t-shirt designs, present those designs to the class for a vote, price options from a variety of local t-shirt makers, and work with the cheapest t-shirt maker to get the shirts made. After all of this is completed, you will sell the t-shirts the week of TBTN.
4. Materials: This group will create posters, pamphlets, programs, and other promotional materials at the request of other groups. You will need to create promotional documents that can be shared digitally and printed.
5. Video: This group will create two videos. One will be a promotional video to be shared with campus before the event. The other will be played either during the resource fair or the rally and will be educational.
6. Promotion: This group's main goal is to get people to our event. You should work with campus organizations and student groups (particularly sororities, fraternities, and student athletes) as well as teachers and administrators. You should develop a pitch that you can give when you go to speak with classes and student organizations.
7. Fundraising: This group will raise money to help us put on the event. We will need enough money to buy t-shirts and materials for the event, and we want to raise money that we can donate to CODA as well. This group should begin fundraising early in the semester.
8. Resource Fair and Drive: This group will coordinate with our community partner as well as other campus and community groups in order to develop a resource fair that takes place before the Rally and March. This fair should provide attendees with information about a variety of organizations that actively seek to either support survivors of gendered violence or stop gendered violence. You will also work closely with our community partner to learn about their needs, and hold a drive that collects donations



TBTN Reflection

While your participation in the planning of the event will be graded, you will also be asked to critically reflect on your experiences planning and attending Take Back The Night. This reflection should consider what you learned about activism and community engagement through your participation in Take Back The Night and your DIY Activist Rhetoric Project. This reflection can discuss both your successes and failures and should be at least 3 pages. This reflection is worth 10% of your final grade.



Reading Quizzes

In order to ensure students are doing the reading in the course, reading quizzes will be given randomly. These readings are essential to your ability to write the larger assignments for the course. These quizzes will be worth 10% of your final grade.



Class Participation

Class Participation (speaking in class, actively engaging in the material, etc.) will be worth 10% of your final grade as your participation in discussions on the reading and the preparation of TBTN will be essential to this course's success.

Grade Distribution

Activism Paper: 20%
DIY Activism: 30%
Organization of TBTN: 20%
TBTN Reflection: 10%
Reading Quizzes: 10%
Participation: 10%

Grading Scale

97-100: A+	74-76: C
94-96: A	70-73: C-
90-93: A-	67-69: D+
87-89: B+	64-66: D
84-86: B	60-63: D-
80-83: B-	59 and below: F
77-79: C+	



Course Schedule



The below course schedule is organized by weeks and includes readings, class activities, and due dates. All readings are expected to be completed before class on the day they are listed. After Week 5, students are expected to be working with their groups to plan TBTN both in and outside of class. After the first week, students are invited to send me news stories or other current events that connect to our course and they would like to discuss in class. We discuss these current events at the beginning of each class.



- Discussion of Syllabus and Take Back The Night
- Introduction to our Community Partner. A representative from the Organization will come to class to discuss what they do in our local community and what we can do as a class to help them. (7 pm)
- Read Audre Lorde's "The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action" in class. Students should spend 5-10 minutes responding to the following questions in writing after they complete their reading (we will then discuss them):
 1. What (not who) are you willing to die for?
 2. What are you afraid of?
 3. What have you been silent about?



- Read "Reclaiming Activism for Students" by Amy Pason
- Read We Should All Be Feminists by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- Class discussion of Readings
- Guest Speaker: Hearing from a survivor of Intimate- Partner Violence



- Read You Can't be Neutral on a Moving Train Introduction, Chapters 1-7 (Pages 1-102)
- Read about student activism and response at UC Davis (Silent Protest), Columbia (Carry That Weight and Emma Sulkowics), and the University of Michigan (the first openly Gay student President). Find the links to readings on our course website.
- Class discussion on readings.



- Finish reading You Can't be Neutral on a Moving Train
- Activism Analysis Assignment Discussion
- In groups, students will investigate and analyze an activist movement or event of their choosing.
- Class discussion about collaboration and organizing TBTN

- Students complete questionnaire about work preferences for TBTN groups

9/16 Gendered Violence on Campus

- Read Parts One, Two, and Three from Jon Krakauer's *Missoula: Rape and The Justice System in a College Town*
- Class discussion of reading and sexual assault on college campuses
- During this session, students will be placed into groups for TBTN, and each group will meet during class to begin to discuss their group's plans for their part of the organization. (From here on out, each class will devote at least 30 minutes to TBTN. Students should expect 30 minutes at the end of class to meet with their group, coordinate with other groups, and propose ideas to the entire class during this time.)

9/23 Student Survivors

- Finish reading *Missoula*
- Activist Analysis Assignment DUE
- Discussion of DIY Activism Assignment
- Work time for TBTN Groups

9/30 Feminism is for Everybody

- Read selections from bell hook's *Feminism is for Everybody* and Roxane Gay's *Bad Feminist*
- Read "Cosby: The Women. An Unwelcome Sisterhood."
- Visit from Community Partner: During this visit, students should plan to discuss ideas for their DIY Activism assignment with the partner if they think they want to work on one of CODA's projects. If you plan create something for CODA, please get the idea approved by your instructor by posting your proposal to the discussion board ("DIY Proposals") by noon on Monday.

10/7 Inventing Take Back The Night

- Read "What is Take Back the Night" (<http://www.nlsacpc.com/Take-Back-the-Night.htm>)
- During this class period, we will look at a variety of different ways TBTN has been put on both at our University and other Universities in the past. We will look at these as examples and begin to troubleshoot as a class about the elements we want to include in our own event.
- For the second half of class, students will be in their TBTN groups working on their part of TBTN. During this time, students will meet with the instructor individually in order to discuss plans for the DIY Activism Assignment.

10/14 Understanding Intimate Partner Violence

- Read PDF: "Understanding Gender-based Violence" By Christopher Kilmartin and Julie Allison
- Discussion of reading and "Cycle of Violence."
- While we have worked with our community partner throughout the semester, this class period will be devoted to helping us better understand the complexities of gendered based violence.
- Guest Speaker: ISU Student, Sean McCool, will speak to us about gendered violence and the LGBTQIAA community.

10/21 Organizing TBTN

- Each group should come to class prepared to present their plans for TBTN to the class. The class will provide feedback on how to improve or revise your plans. During this class period, groups that need to coordinate with one another should also do so.
- Students will also fill out a mid-project feedback form for the rest of their group. This form is intended to help you improve your collaborations anonymously.
- Our community partner will attend class and students working on DIY projects for them will meet with them individually to discuss drafts of projects.

10/28 Writing Workshop

- TBTN is 3 weeks away!
- All students should bring a rough draft of the DIY Activist Rhetoric project to class. We will workshop these projects in groups. The groups will be organized by the instructor and divided by project type.
- The Materials Group should bring posters, markers, etc. to class, and each member of the class will make a sign to carry at the march and decorate the Rally.

11/4 Planning TBTN

- Take Back The Night is only two weeks away!
- This class session will be devoted to group work, allowing students to work in their groups or on their DIY Activist Rhetoric project. Students should bring their rough drafts to class and be prepared to workshop their projects.

11/11

DIY Activism projects. Group work should be put first, but if there is nothing you can do in class, then you can use the time for your DIY Activism projects.

11/11

Dress
Rehearsal

- DIY ACTIVISM PROJECT DUE
- Take Back The Night is one week away!
- During this class period, we will finalize our arrangements for TBTN, do a practice event, and set a schedule for the following week of preparations.

11/18

TAKE BACK
THE NIGHT

- Meet in Event Room at 4 pm. All students must be present for set-up, the event, and clean-up.
- All students will work with their group and the class to put on a great event!

11/25

Thanksgiving
Break

- No classes held this week

12/2

Reflecting
on TBTN

- During this class we will discuss how TBTN went, consider how it could have gone better, and address ways to improve TBTN as a way to combat gendered violence.
- Each student will also evaluate their peers' contributions to their group's role in TBTN using the Peer Evaluation Form provided by the instructor.
- Introduction to and discussion of Reflection Assignment.

12/9

Celebration!

- Reflection Paper Due
- During this period, our Community Partner will join us, and we will give them the materials we collected for them as well announce the amount of money we raised. We will celebrate together with a pot luck!