

Michael Karlberg

Honors course description

Nonviolent Social Change – Theory and Practice

Against a backdrop of widespread social injustice, growing economic inequality, accelerating ecological degradation, and potentially catastrophic climate change, growing numbers of people on every continent are seeking to address these issues through nonviolent forms of activism. What are the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of nonviolent collective action? What different forms does nonviolent action take? How effective are nonviolent actions in achieving their aims? What are the risks? What are the limitations?

In this honors seminar, students will explore these questions by engaging selected readings from the growing body of literature on nonviolent social change, viewing a series of documentaries on nonviolent campaigns, and exploring the practical implications for actual nonviolent action. The class will be conducted as a participatory seminar in which all students will contribute diverse insights and interpretations that contribute to one another's learning.