

AEC 6300
Methodology of Planned Change
Spring 2021, section 0633; 3 Credits

Instructor:

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Office Hours: Monday 4:30-5:30, Tuesday 10:30-12:30
and by appointment

Course Time and Location: Monday, period 6-8, online

Course Description:

This course will offer students the chance to read a broad sample of planned change theories, methods and models while practicing planned change skills. Students will gain an understanding of the diversity of approaches and learn to think critically about the goals, assumptions and strategies by which we create and foster social change, innovation and the adoption of new behaviors. The readings are chosen to provide a basic understanding of the most important views on change, highlighting theories and skills that will be important in your field of scholarship. The readings, online materials and activities will stimulate discussion on the social change issues that affect us all. A case study approach is used in most of the readings. Through case studies you will learn examples of how to work in the real world and how to work out the various complications of promoting change. These case studies are utilized in the readings, lectures, in-class activities and in the final paper, which focuses on a case from your own research area. By applying the tools from social marketing and other methodologies in class exercises, you will gain skills you can use in your graduate careers and future endeavors as change agents.

Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the most common theories and approaches to planned change and will have begun to develop competencies in the methods of researching and designing change interventions. A core principle in this class is that we must understand what influences current behavior patterns before we can begin implementing change. As social scientists, we do this through research. In addition, you will be able to relate this knowledge and practice to your own research and in your future careers as change agents, whether it is in academia, community development, technology adoption, resiliency, sustainability, economic viability or regulatory compliance. This course will help prepare you as social scientists, stimulate your interest in social issues and teach you how to take part in social change in order to become better change agents. This could be in your neighborhood, classroom, institution, agency, church, or corporation. The course teaches you how to have a bigger impact. The specific objectives are:

1. Learn to think critically about social change; who benefits, who gets left behind, and why. This includes thinking about why some things don't change.
2. Understand the variety of social science perspectives that shape our understanding of change, using tools such as theory and culture to view the role of individual bias, group norms, conflict, inequality and social justice.
3. Learn about the methodologies of social science to understand how we know things through data collection and analysis and the limitations of our knowledge.
4. Using case studies, learn to become more effective change agents by employing social marketing tools, stepwise planning approaches and audience research.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

We will seek to build a classroom environment based on trust and mutual respect for diversity of all types. There will be multiple opportunities to participate and contribute and to hear from others through class discussion, online posting, group work and individual presentations. All students are expected to contribute in ways that are welcoming and inclusive of all of our differences. Because this is a social science course, we can expect to explore difficult social issues where change and the absence of change can be studied. While the guiding principle for this class is to explore the scholarship about change, issues such as racism, inequality and discrimination are emotionally charged and can be difficult to talk about. However, these are all features of our society that can be studied and used to expand our knowledge and capabilities. We will strive for open and scholarly discussion about these topics, while recognizing that they are experienced by each of us as individuals and we react to them personally. In the first weeks of the class, we will set group norms and ground rules to improve these discussions to ensure that our classroom is a place where everyone will be treated with respect. We will return to these group norms as needed during the semester.

Required Textbook and Readings:

Students are expected to purchase the texts which are available at the University of Florida Bookstores, online providers or the library. There are many used copies available.

- Barbara Lee and William Kotler. 2016. *Social Marketing: Changing Behaviors for Good*. 5th edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein. 2008. *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth and Happiness*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Everett Rogers. 2003. *The Diffusion of Innovations*, 5th edition. New York: Free Press.

Supplementary readings (journal articles) on behavior change theory will also be assigned. An electronic copy or web address will be provided on the AEC 6300 Canvas page.

- Azjen, Icek (2012) *The Theory of Planned Behavior*
- Christiano and Neimand (2017) *Stop Raising Awareness Already*. Stanford Social Innovation Review
- Dorfman et al. (2005) *More Than a Message: Framing Public Health Advocacy to Change Corporate Practices*
- Schultz (1998) *Changing Behavior with Normative Feedback Interventions: A Field Experiment on Curbside Recycling*
- Schultz et al. (2007) *The Constructive, Destructive, and Reconstructive Power of Social Norms*.
- Stephenson, G. *The Somewhat Flawed Theoretical Foundation of the Extension Service*. Journal of Extension.
- Tversky and Kahneman (1974) *Judgement Under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases*
- Tversky and Kahneman (1984) *Choices, Values and Frames*.

Course Assignments

I. Weekly reading response and in-class discussion (20 points). Your participation is an important part of learning in this class, for you and the other students. This means students will have to come to class having done the readings (or followed the readings outlines I have provided for each week). You will also have to regularly submit a readings response (200-250 words) to the questions posted on Canvas. They readings responses are due on Mondays before class and we will use your readings response in our class discussions. The sharing of these ideas among your colleagues is important to getting a full understanding of them, modifying them and applying them to your own work. You are

also encouraged to post items on the Canvas discussion page such as news articles, weblinks, case studies or just interesting items for discussion about social change, human behaviors and the diffusion of innovations. Students are encouraged to explore the topics that interest them and research them more deeply or critically. There are now a number of very good podcast series (Hidden Brain, 99% Invisible and numerous TED talks) on behavior and how it can be influenced; students should become familiar with them. There will be 5 readings discussions posted during the semester (dates are in the outline), each worth 4 points. They are posted in the Canvas page for that week. For full credit (20 points), you must be engaged in class and be prepared to contribute.

II. Theory Matrix (10 points). This assignment will be turned in as a draft (one theory) and as a final team project. For the draft version you will focus on one theory used in your field of research. I will provide you feedback on the draft matrix. Then you will meet with your matrix group and add three additional theories that originate from class or your own research. This matrix is a graphic representation of the different theories discussed in this course. It is designed to be a reference guide and a study aide. The other foundational courses in AEC (education, communications and leadership) also have this assignment. I will post examples from other classes in a file called ASSIGNMENTS found on the Week One Canvas page along with grading rubric. For each of the theories covered, you will provide key authors, descriptions, applications and critiques. The grade will be based on how well you and your group summarize the theories in your own words and reflect on their relevance to your own work.

III. Practicum projects (10 points). This is a fun and creative project to be completed in the final month of the course and it allows you to experiment with the theories and methods you have learned. You will work in small groups to apply what you are learning in class to an actual case study, a local non-profit organization promoting home energy conservation. The Community Weatherization Coalition is a partner with AEC 6300 and will provide a real-life experience for students to apply their insights and expertise in planned change for the organization. Your group will be provided with an information packet (found on the PRACTICUM Canvas page) with background on the CWC, focus group transcripts, and journal articles on energy conservation, climate change and social inequality. Volunteers from the CWC will be available for consultation if you choose. While participation in CWC activities outside of class will not be required, it is a unique opportunity to meet with local communities, collect information and think about programming, theory and approaches to planned change. Your group will produce a final powerpoint presentation of approximately 15 minutes (10-12 slides). You will have to meet with your group outside of class to finalize your presentation. The final class period will be used to make presentations, justify your conclusions, and potentially impact behavior change in your community.

IV. Term paper (60 points). The final assignment is a paper (15-20 pages) that analyzes a behavior change or diffusion of innovation case study from your field of study or from a personal interest. It could be academic, corporate, community or non-profit. If you have already completed your academic fieldwork you may consider writing an article that is focused on change theory or practice as we have discussed in class. In the paper, you will argue for the use of a particular behavior change approach to solve the issue you have identified. The topic will have to be approved following the draft abstract submission. Every student needs to schedule an appointment with me to discuss the paper, preferably early in the semester.

The research paper is developed in steps, beginning with an abstract and outline, a draft and a three-minute lightning talk to the class about your topic. In addition, part of your grade on this assignment is to review of the draft of one other student in class and provide them with written comments using track changes. I will also provide feedback on your draft by March 30. The guidelines, grading rubric and other details for the abstract, draft, peer review, lightning talk and final paper can be found on the ASSIGNMENTS Canvas page. The final grade on the paper (20 points) will be scored by the

following evaluative measures:

- Is the research question clearly identified and significant? (5 points)
- Is the behavior change model or theory applied thoroughly and critically? (5 points)
- Does the paper generally address the four objectives for the course? (5 points)
- Is the paper well organized, clearly written and free of grammatical errors? (5 points)

Grades and assignments

Weekly reading response (200-300 words)	Submit 5	20 pts
Theory matrix	March 1	10 pts
Practicum presentation (with group)	April 19	10 pts
Paper abstract & outline	February 15	10 pts
Paper draft	March 15	10 pts
Peer review of paper draft	April 5	10 pts
Lightning talk about paper (3 minutes)	April 12	10 pts
Final paper grade	April 27	20 pts

Course Grading Scale

A 93-100	A- 90-92	B+ 88-89
B 83-87	B- 80-82	C+ 76-79
C 73-75	C- 70-72	D+ 66-69
D 63-65	D- 60-62	E 59 or less

A note about written reports:

Cite all references using APA style format. APA (American Psychological Association) has a reference manual available at the University of Florida Library and they have information about writing and references on their website, which is <http://www.apa.org/>. The format to be used for papers is double-spacing; one-inch margins, and typed in 12-point font, unless otherwise noted. A consistent style is used for grading written papers. Primarily, show that you have learned and are able to apply the course material through your writing, demonstrating an understanding and application of theories, principles, concepts, ideas, and approaches that have been covered in readings and the course.

Grades and Grade Points

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Absences and Make-Up Work

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Online Course Evaluation Process

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Academic Honesty

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: *“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”* You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: *"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."*

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see:

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>

Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Services for Students with Disabilities

The Disability Resource Center (0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>) coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation

Campus Helping Resources

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general wellbeing are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

- University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575,

<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>

- Counseling Services
- Groups and Workshops
- Outreach and Consultation
- Self-Help Library
- Wellness Coaching

- U Matter We Care, www.umatter.ufl.edu/

Student Complaints:

- Residential Course: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-studentconduct-code/>.

- Online Course: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learningsupport@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>.

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>.

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>.

Disclaimer about syllabus:

Serious effort and consideration were used in formulating the syllabus presented by the instructor.

While viewed as an educational contract between the instructor and student, unforeseen events may cause changes to the scheduling of assignments, readings, etc. The instructor reserves the right to make any changes deemed necessary to best fulfill the course objectives. Students registered for this course will be made aware of any changes in a timely fashion using reasonable means. This disclaimer does not abrogate any student rights as described by University rules and regulations.

Class schedule 2021 Week/date	Topics	Readings: complete the following prior to class	Assignment due before class (also see Canvas)
1. January 11	Introductions, group norms What is planned change?		
January 18 NO CLASS	MLK Holiday	Gladwell (Social Networks) Lehman (The first earth day)	
2. January 25	Introduction: behavior change theory & Social Marketing	L&K CH 1 (What is SM?) L&K CH 2 (10 Steps in SM) L&K CH 8 (Behavior change theories)	Reading response (1) due for MLK readings
3. February 1	Social marketing principles, continued.	L&K CH 5 (segmenting audiences) L&K CH 6 (Setting Behavioral Objectives)	
4. February 8	Why are some changes easier than others? The importance of listening for understanding audiences	L&K CH 7 (Barriers) L&K CH 10 (Product)	Watch Dr. John Francis TED talk
5. February 15	Summarizing social marketing	L&K CH 11 (Price) L&K CH 12 (Place; making change easier)	Readings response (2) Paper abstract & outline due
6. February 22	Why are we often bad at making decisions?	Nudge Introduction Nudge CH 1 (Biases & Blunders) Nudge CH 2 (Resisting Temptation) Tversky& Kahneman (2 articles)	Watch Dan Ariely on TED
7. March 1	Observation exercise discussion How social norms change	Nudge CH 3 (Following the Herd) Schultz (2 articles on norms)	Theory matrix due (1 theory) Conduct observation exercise
8. March 8	Choice Architecture The role of Attitudes	Nudge CH 5 (Choice Architecture) Nudge CH 17 (Objections) Ajzen (Theory of Planned Behavior)	Readings response (3)
9. March 15	Are there “steps” in the change process? Using focus groups to understand target audience behaviors (CWC)	Rogers CH 1 (Introduction to DOI) Rogers CH 5 (adoption process) Rogers CH 6 (attributes of innovations)	Paper draft due Peer review assigned
10. March 22	Who is the first to change? Who is the last to change? The role of social networks	Rogers CH 7 (adopter types) Rogers CH 8 (networks)	Readings response online (4)
11. March 29	Mid-term review Ethics How change is prevented	Stephenson (Critique of DOI) Rogers CH 3 (Criticisms of DOI)	Readings response online (5)
12. April 5	Our role as change agents Analyzing focus groups from the CWC Feedback on draft papers Framing issues to promote change (framing exercise)	Dorfman et al. (Framing) Christiano & Neiman (Stop raising awareness already)	Read practicum background Peer review due Watch Lake O. videos
13. April 12	Practicum work Lightning talks (3 minutes) Climate change communication	No Reading assigned. Time devoted in class to work on practicum project	Meet with your matrix group Prep lightning talk
14. April 19 LAST CLASS	Practicum presentations Course feedback		Final theory matrix due