

# SOCIAL CHANGE (SOCH)

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**SOCH 501 | EXPRESSIONS OF ACTIVISM: ART AS SOCIAL CHANGE  
AGENT | 4 quarter hours  
(Graduate)**

This course explores the intersection of art and social movements by examining how the arts have been employed to influence social change throughout history. In the preface to his 1890 novel, *A Picture of Dorian Gray*, Oscar Wilde claimed that "All art is quite useless." This course challenges Wilde's assertion. Art is created and experienced by human beings who imbue it with a meaning that reflects their own social and political circumstances and values. In this course, students will investigate the uses and methods of art as a powerful medium for effecting change. They will meet virtually with local activists who will discuss how art has impacted their social activism efforts. Drawing on theory, history, and contemporary issues, this course will provide students with an understanding of art as an agent of social change. Whether they are new to the study of social change art or are seasoned activists, students will expand their communities of practice by bringing their own interests into classroom workshops and project presentations with a view to fostering a deeper understanding of their role in driving social change.