

## Change Agent Manifesto Assignment by Sarah Ray

**Background:** This assignment can be used any time in the semester. Students will need some level of awareness of how they see themselves as change agents, so I prefer to use this as a final assignment in their senior year, when they've acquired a good sense of what it means to be a social change agent through our readings and discussions.

**Instructions:** Preferably, manifestos will be published online. (See [enst490.blogspot.com](http://enst490.blogspot.com) as an example). I have been uploading students' senior manifestos and other senior-level writing assignments for a few years on this site. If they are public, students tend to take them more seriously and they become commitments to themselves--- manifestos.

### Suggestions

Manifestos tend to proclaim commitments from the writer in "I will" statements. It may take some build-up time to get there, but at some point, the writer should make a commitment about what they will be doing to make change in the world.

### Questions

- What courses, assignments, readings, professors, experiences, or other influences have occurred in the past few years that have powerfully shaped your thinking?
- Where have you come from, and where are you going?
- What is the utmost priority you want to commit your time and energy toward?
- What is *not* a priority for you, even as it may be important for others? (e.g. I love art, and I'll leave policy-making for others. Or, I am a control-freak and love clear direction and stability, so I'll need to effect change from within established systems. Tree-sitting leaves me feeling anxious). Here's where you need to be honest with yourself, not just aspirational.
- Consider your strengths, weaknesses, passions, opportunities, and threats (e.g. "SWOT"). What do your parents want from you? What do you think society wants from you? What do your friends and cohort think you should do? Where do you feel pressures to be other than you are? What are you moved to do, regardless of these things? If you were writing anonymously, what would you say your superpower was?
- What is the most remarkable thing you have learned in college?
- Who do you admire the most in the world? Why?
- What qualities do you hope to manifest in your work? What is the nature of the work, not just the product of that work, that you most care about? Putting aside what you think are important "measurable impacts," how do you want to spend your time?
- Etc....