I. COURSE PURPOSE

This course is the second part of a two-semester continuum in which foundation knowledge and skills associated with social welfare policy practice are presented. In this course, students build on the previous policy content that focused on: analysis and critique of the values and principles that shape social welfare policy; the history of social welfare; the development of the social work profession; contemporary developments in child and family welfare policy; an overview of the legislative and budget processes; and building an awareness of international trends that affect social welfare globally.

The purpose of this course is twofold: 1) to teach students how to critically analyze social policies using a value-critical framework that promotes economic and social justice especially for diverse and historically underserved and vulnerable populations, and 2) to impart essential policy advocacy strategies and tactics to advance social policy change with particular emphasis on meaningfully engaging/including clients, consumers, and other vulnerable constituents in all aspects of the process.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the rationale and underlying values which support policy analysis and policy advocacy as core practice areas in generalist social work practice.

2. To appreciate the unique perspective social workers bring to policy analysis and policy advocacy, especially as it relates to reducing social stigma and
increasing access to and utilization of social welfare services to promote economic and social justice.

3. To learn key terminology used in policy analysis and how to apply this terminology when analyzing social policy.

4. To gain an understanding of one method used by policy practitioners to analyze a social welfare policy.

5. To learn about what organizational characteristics are needed for effective policy advocacy in a social service setting.

6. To understand the role of clients as partners in the public policy process.

7. To demonstrate the ability to create an advocacy strategy grounded in the values and experiences of the diversity of people affected by social policy decisions.

8. To understand ethical dilemmas associated with policy practice.

9. To demonstrate the ability to critically analyze the dimensions of social policy from a value-critical approach.

10. To demonstrate the ability to pull together key components for an advocacy briefing packet.

11. To develop and demonstrate skills in advocacy practice, including:

   • developing effective advocacy materials;
   • using media effectively;
   • working with elected and appointed government officials; and
   • giving an advocacy briefing.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Texts


B. Recommended Texts

C. Reference Texts:


D. Recommended Websites

**Advocacy**

Charity Lobbying for the Public Interest [http://www.clpi.org](http://www.clpi.org)

OMB Watch [http://www.ombwatch.org](http://www.ombwatch.org)

National Association of Social Workers [http://www.naswdc.org](http://www.naswdc.org)

**Government**


Thomas @ Library of congress [http://thomas.loc.gov](http://thomas.loc.gov)

United States Census Bureau [http://www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)


US Senate [http://senate.gov](http://senate.gov)

White House [http://www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)
Policy Research

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities http://www.cbpp.org
Moving Ideas: Electronic Polity Network http://moving ideas.org
Urban Institute http://www.urban.org
Brookings Institution http://www.brook.edu
Institute for Research on Poverty http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp
Economic Policy Institute http://www.epi.org

E. Course Assignments and Grade Distribution

1. **Class Participation (10% of grade).** Students are expected to attend class and actively participate in class discussions.

2. **Value Inventory and Reflection (15%)** Students will write a thoughtful 3-4 page (double-spaced) reflective paper analyzing the similarities and differences between their personal values and the policy positions taken by the social work profession. Specific guidelines will be handed out in class. **Due Class 2.**

3. **Policy Analysis (30% of grade):** Students will select and research a pending bill or recent policy that has been considered in the U.S. Congress or a State legislature (including the DC City Council). The policy analysis will include a problem analysis, a summary of the bill, a political analysis, and an application of an adapted version of the Chambers and Wedel framework for policy analysis to the selected policy. Due dates for the policy analysis (total of 100 points) include:

   a. **Statement of Policy Selection:** Students will submit a brief typed statement (1 paragraph maximum) describing the policy you will examine. **Due Class 3.** (5 points).

   b. **Policy Memorandum:** The Policy Memorandum will prepare you for the policy analysis. According to guidelines handed out in class, students will provide an analysis of the problem that the policy address, an analysis of political landscape relevant to the policy, and a summary of selected social policy. Papers should be 4-6, double-spaced pages. **Due Class 6.** (25 points)

   c. **Final Paper Due:** Following the guidelines handed out in class, students will analyze their selected policy according to an adapted version of the Chambers and Wedel framework for
analyzing a social policy. Papers should be 12-15 pages double-spaced. (70 points) **Due Class 8.**

4. **Advocacy Assignment (45% of grade):** Students will work in teams of 2 to 3 to complete the advocacy assignment. Students may design a campaign to address one of the policies they are doing for their policy analysis or they may select a different focus for the campaign altogether. The advocacy assignment will include three components to demonstrate competency in 1) preparing an advocacy briefing packet, 2) developing a concrete action plan that meaningfully engages consumers, and 3) giving a persuasive advocacy briefing to policy decision-makers. Specific information for each component is described below:

a. **Advocacy Briefing Packet (15% of grade):** In groups of 2-3 people, students will prepare an advocacy briefing packet targeted at persuading and informing policy-decision makers regarding their selected advocacy goal. Among the items to include in the packet are: a) a cover letter calling for action, describing the issue, and introducing the packet, b) a one-page fact sheet giving context for the issue and recommending action, c) background materials on the issue (including recent press-clippings or relevant research articles d) letters of support for issue, e) a sample letter to the editor, f) methods and instruments used to meaningfully engage constituency affected by the policy, and g) other persuasive materials. The advocacy packet will be due on the date of their briefing, i.e., either Class 12, 13, or Class 14.

b. **Advocacy Strategy Paper (20% of grade):** Students will design an advocacy campaign to advance the advocacy goals of the selected issue. To help complete this paper, students will be provided with:

- An *Advocacy Strategy Planning Guide*;
- A sample *Action Plan*; and
- Guidelines for the completing the paper.

Students should submit a brief description of the issue they plan to address in the advocacy strategy to the instructor by **Class 9**. An *Action Plan*, completed in the recommended format, should be included as an attachment to the paper. Each paper should be 8-10 pages (not including the *Action Plan*).
Most important: Students should give great emphasis to the role of the consumer/client/constituent in defining, planning, designing, and carrying out aspects of the strategy. The social worker should act in a facilitative role. The advocacy strategy paper will be due on Class 14.

c. Advocacy Briefing (10%): In their group, students will be asked to give a 10-15 minute briefing to advocate for their selected policy or policy change. They will select and identify the “target” policy decision-maker(s), and as a team, craft an advocacy argument to accompany their briefing packet. Briefings can be no longer than 15 minutes per group. There will be a question and answer period after each briefing. The advocacy briefings will occur during classes 12, 13 and 14.

Advocacy groups should feel free to make up roles or positions on the advocacy team and to assign roles and talking points for selected team members.

IV. CLASS SCHEDULE

Class 1

Introduction to the Course. The role of social workers in social policy development and advocacy. The unique contribution social workers bring to social policy development. Trends in social service provision that underscore the need for social work policy practice (e.g., devolution, privatization, faith-based initiatives).

Optional video, "Making a Difference: Influencing State Policy."

Required Readings


Recommended Readings


Class 2

**The Policy Cycle, Problem Analysis, and the Policy Environment**: Students will be introduced to the policy cycle and how to engage in problem analysis as a precursor to policy development. The key actors engaged in the policy cycle will also be discussed.

**Required Reading**

Chambers & Wedel, Ch. 1, Analyzing Social Problem Background of Social Policies and Social Programs, p. 7-29.


**Recommended Reading**


Class 3

**An Introduction to Policy Analysis, Key Terminology Used, Setting Goals and Objectives in Social Policies and Programs.** Key terminology will be defined and discussed in the context of the policy frameworks of Chambers.

**Required Reading**

Class handout on terminology


Recommended Reading


Class 4

Policy Analysis: Types of Benefits and Services and Establishing Eligibility Rules The issues around who should receive benefits, how much should they receive, and how should they receive it will be discussed.

Policy Analysis Topics Due

Required Reading


Recommended Readings


Class 5

Policy Analysis: Service-Delivery Systems and Program Design. Mechanisms for implementing social policy on the state and local issues will be discussed.

Required Reading


Recommended Reading


Class 6

**Methods of Financing Social Policy** Alternative vehicles for financing social policy will be discussed. The discussion will briefly discuss interactions among policy elements.

**Policy Memorandum Due**

**Required Reading**

Chambers & Wedel, Chapter 7, p.160-204.

**Recommended Reading**


Chambers & Wedel, Chapter 8, p.205-211.


**Spring Break March 2nd through March 6th**

**Class 7 (Comps are March 13th)**

**Policy Advocacy: Defining Advocacy, Types of Advocacy, Developing an Advocacy Strategy** Students will understand the definition and various types of advocacy practice and learn a framework for planning an advocacy strategy with an emphasis on meaningfully engaging the “affected population” in planning, developing, and implementing the advocacy strategy.

(Show legislative advocacy video if time allows)
Required Reading


Class handouts.

Recommended Reading:


Class 8

Tactics Associated with Advocacy/Organizing Strategies (Part I). Students will learn about the basic tactics used in carrying out an advocacy strategy, including letter writing, petitioning, visiting policy-decision-makers, holding rallies, and so on. Continued emphasis will be placed on meaningfully including clients or the “affected population” in all aspects of the advocacy tactics. The core competences for coalition work will also be presented.

Policy Analysis Papers are Due

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:


Class 9 Tactics Associated with Advocacy/Organizing Strategies (Part II). Students will work in teams to create an advocacy strategy with tactics and present their group work at the end of class.

Required Reading

Review Bobo, Kendall and Max, and notes from classes 7 & 8.

Advocacy Strategy Topics Due Class 9

Class 10 Advocacy and the Internet Students will learn about methods for electronic advocacy. Discussion of the Obama Campaign’s methods of online organizing will be included.

Required Reading

How the Internet put Barack Obama in the White House, Available at: http://www.epolitics.com/2008/11/05/how-the-internet-put-barack-obama-in-the-white-house/

**Recommended Reading**


**Class 11**

**Implications for Organizational Practice** Students will learn about the characteristics of organizations that support advocacy practice; building blocks for agency-based advocacy practice; and the IRS restrictions associated with lobbying activities.

**Required Reading**


**Recommended Reading**


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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 12</th>
<th>Advocacy briefings with policy decision-makers, advocacy briefing packets due for presenting groups</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 13</td>
<td>Advocacy briefings with policy decision-makers, advocacy briefing packets due for presenting groups.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class 14</td>
<td>Last set of advocacy briefings with policy decision-makers and advocacy briefing packets due for presenting groups.</td>
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Course Evaluation

**Advocacy Strategy Paper Due**