I. COURSE PURPOSE

This course is an advanced theory and practice course in the Social Justice and Social Change concentration. It is designed for students interested in crafting plans of action for professional efforts in organizations that make determinations about human service programs and service delivery systems. The intent of the course is to enable students to better understand the roles that M.S.W. graduates can play in influencing internal and external plans and/or policy as it relates to organizing clients and relevant others in becoming an important part of the decision-making process. The social work profession’s primary mission to “help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty” guides this course’s examination of the field of social planning (National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, 1999). Attention will be given to the linkages of this course to the current and antecedent courses in diversity, ethics, policy, human behavior, research, generalist theory and practice, and evaluation as well as courses in advanced social policy, community organization, program evaluation, and social management.

The relevance and use of theory in the context of social planning is considered, as well as the social worker's skill in the design and implementation of social plans for Social Justice aims. Emphasis is on the use of multiple approaches and processes in social planning and policy management. A component of the course is the ability to differentiate the social work aims of social planning from the perspective of other disciplines, i.e. architecture, law or engineering. In addition to traditional methods of scholarship and research, exposure to data collection tools available via the Internet is a part of the course content. Consideration is also given to the political and practical opportunities and constraints involved in social planning efforts.
The course is organized around the following knowledge and skill development areas, the content of which is integrated throughout the readings, lectures, discussions, and assignments:

- Rational and Prescriptive Plans
- Interpretive and Emergent Plans
- Choosing an Approach
- Contrasting Planning in other Disciplines
- Proposal Writing

The most important aspect of the course is the design and defense of a plan that is prepared for a community or social service agency that has prior experience with the National Catholic School of Social Service, its students, interns or faculty. In the first and second class, each student registered for this course will be assigned to a task group for the creation of a plan for a community or social service agency that could include conducting a needs/assets assessment, identifying a problem and setting a goal, crafting a plan of action, reviewing the availability of resources and partners, or addressing funding issues. The assignment includes defending the plan in front of the instructor and/or a jury of outside experts. This activity will comprise a substantial portion of the student’s grade for the course.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the various approaches to and processes of decision-making across large and small human service systems.
2. To appreciate the inter-related roles of community organization, social policy, social planning and administration.
3. To discern the various types of planning efforts, including strategic planning, urban planning, and social planning.
4. To gain an awareness of how needs/assets and problems/challenges are defined.
5. To develop knowledge of all the steps in the rational planning process.
6. To recognize the need for a planning process that is both participatory and cognitive.
7. To perceive the appropriate application of participatory planning within the realm of social and human services.
8. To appreciate the nature of policy and planning in relation to program and service delivery choices within an area of service specialization.
9. To comprehend the impact of planning and policy choices on “all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty” (National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, 1999).
10. To respect opportunities and responsibilities of social workers to ensure that social work values and ethical behaviors are reflected in the systems with which we work.
11. To develop self-awareness about the roles of personal values in planning, policy management, administration and planned change.
12. To demonstrate skill in making an assessment of needs/assets and in defining a social problem/challenge.
III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Texts:

B. Course Assignments
Assignment #1: Task Group Preliminary Proposal: Due September 24, 2009.
Part A. Imagine your task group is the staff of a very small non-profit agency in the Washington Metropolitan area that grew out of a voluntary effort to assist graduate M.S.W. students. Develop a name, a vision, a mission statement and a service delivery mechanism compatible with your group’s skill set and time constraints.
Part B. Find an appropriate funding source either through a visit to the Foundation Center, a search of its web site or other mechanism. As a task group, complete the application for funding or RFP. Prepare a ten minute presentation for the class.

Assignment #2: Mid-Term Exam: October 15, 2009.
The mid-term examination will cover course material (lectures, readings and discussion). Though the exam is in-class, each individual is to work on his or her own.

Assignment #3: Final Plan: Due December 10, 2009.
Part A. Each task group will be assigned to a community or social service agency screened by the instructor. Each agency will have its own unique experience, expectations and/or limitations, but they will be solicited in the same manner and given the same instructions. As M.S.W. graduates often realize, a major part of social planning is helping small and community-based agencies understand what is possible. It is the responsibility of the task group to negotiate a specific task, however, the instructor is always available for consultation.
Part B. Each task group will submit a written document of 15-25 pages to the instructor and to the community or social service agency with whom they worked. A presentation to the instructor and/or a jury of outside experts will be scheduled at the convenience of the agency.

C. Grading Policy:
Grades for this course will be based on the University grading system as described in the catalog. Students will be evaluated through the use of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Per Cent of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task Group Proposal</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Assignment Final Plan</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackboard Assignments</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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</tbody>
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D. **Attendance and Participation**
Students are required to attend classes and are expected to participate meaningfully in class discussions. The grade for attendance and participation may be/will be lowered unless the student notifies the instructor and requests an excused absence before the class.

E. **Course and Instructor Evaluation**
NCSSS requires electronic evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, the evaluation form may be accessed at [http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations](http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations) using your CUA username and password. Additional, informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to requests.

**IV. CLASS EXPECTATIONS**

A. **Scholastic Expectations**
Please refer to the MSW Program Handbook for general Academic Requirements, including scholastic and behavioral requirements. All written work should reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources and adhere to APA format. Students should carefully proofread before submission to the instructor for grading.

B. **Academic Honesty**
Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy and the MSW Program Handbook. Students are expected to be familiar with the Academic Graduate and Undergraduate Student Academic Honesty policy available at [http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrityfull.cfm](http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrityfull.cfm) and adhere to it.

C. **Accommodations**
Students with physical, learning, psychological or other disabilities wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with the University’s Disability Support Services. Information about the process is available at [http://disabilitysupport.cua.edu/audiences/prospective_students](http://disabilitysupport.cua.edu/audiences/prospective_students). If you have documented such a disability to DSS that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.
Class Schedule

Class One: 09/03/2009

Rothman has written that community development, social action and social planning are the three components of community intervention (Rothman, 1995). Jane Addams, one of the profession’s early champions, used her knowledge about the clients she served to justify running for public office in Chicago. She realized the only way she could help reduce child illness so poor mothers could go to work was to become a garbage collection inspector.

Awareness and understanding of the multiple approaches to social planning enhances the practitioner’s ability to determine the “goodness of fit” between the client and the macro-level intervention and to make use of the person-in-environment perspective.

Required Readings:

Brown, S.C., Mason, C.A., Lombard, J.L., Martinez, F., Playter-Zyberk, E.


Review Foundation Year Material:

THE RATIONAL IDEAL

Class Two: 09/10/2009

One approach to social planning, the “rational ideal,” is a step by step linear process with many advantages and many challenges based on the classic scientific method. The “rational ideal” has similarities to the atheoretical problem-solving process. A tool for social workers interested in working through this process is called the logic model, a visual representation of the work, the outcomes, the process and the resources involved.

Required Readings:


INTERPRETIVE AND EMERGENT APPROACHES

Class Three: 09/17/2009

The challenges faced by the “rational ideal” may be answered by examining “other ways of knowing.” Social planning approaches informed by different perspectives on knowledge-building expand the social work skill set in social planning.

Required Readings:


Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
UNIT TWO: WHICH APPROACH WHEN?

Class Four: 09/24/2009
Presentations of Preliminary Proposal.
Deciding which approach to social planning to use often means deciding what WILL NOT work.

Required Readings:


Class Five: 10/01/2009
How is the social work approach to planning different from that of other disciplines? How does social planning intersect with social policy?

Required Readings:


Mid-term Examination: 10/08/2009
An examination based on the assigned readings and assignments will be given in class.

UNIT THREE DATA RESOURCES

Class Seven: 10/15/08
This session is designed as a computer lab where students will be directed towards individual research with web-based data sources including the U.S. Census Web Site, DataFerrett, The National Center for Health Statistics Research Data Center, GPOACCESS, The Community Toolbox, Google Earth and the State Census Data of the District of Columbia.
Class Eight: 10/22/2009
Is there a role for social workers in the emerging discipline of environmental justice? How is environmental justice related to social justice?

Required Reading:


Class Nine: 10/29/2009
What is the role of social work in today’s conversations about sustainability? How can social work’s unique person in environment perspective impact the traditional methods of the social planning process?

Required Reading:

UNIT FOUR: TASK GROUP PLAN PREPARATION

For the next three sessions, the task groups will be engaged in visits to the community or social service agency to which they were assigned, developing expectations for the final task and compiling the information for the final report. The instructor will be available for consultation during class hours and during regular office
hours. If more time for meetings is needed, changes can be made in the presentation schedule.
Class Eleven: 11/05/2009
Class Twelve: 11/12/2009
Class Thirteen: 11/19/2009

Class Fourteen: 12/03/2009 Final Presentations
Class Fifteen: 12/10/2009 Final Presentations