Course Title: Social Policy Development and Enactment
Course Number: SW 671, Section 001 (30131)
Day & Time: Friday, 9am – 12pm
Course Room: 1804 SSWB
Term: Fall 2010
Professor: Robert J. Miller
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Use 671 on the subject line when corresponding with me so I can identify an e-mail for this course

Course Description

This course will review the overall design of human service systems, how to plan for and design such systems, how to develop the legislative mandates and regulations that operationalize these designs, and how to facilitate their formal enactment. Students will learn the analytic skills associated with the development of policies that give specification to human service systems, as well as the more interactional skills associated with facilitating the enactment of these policies.

Course Content

Human service systems include a variety of separate programs, differing legislative mandates, and extremely complicated implementation procedures and processes. This course will present skills associated with the design of complex human service systems in the nonprofit, public and for-profit sectors. System design involves networks of services, agencies, and clients. Therefore, this course will move beyond the individual agency and the single program and in the direction of complex multi-program and multi-system systems. Since the “stock in trade” of policy professionals engaged in most design and enactment tasks is the written policy document, this course will place a heavy emphasis on the skills associated with the preparation of documents, such as memos, briefing papers, policy specification papers, legislative drafts, and program regulations and guidelines.

A student seeking to understand how complex systems are designed and enacted needs to have a clear idea of the process needed to achieve desirable results. Accordingly, this course will focus on both the analytic skills associated with the development of policies which give specification to human service systems, as well as the interactional skills associated with facilitating the enactment of these policies. As a result, students will examine the transitioning of private matters into public policy.
Special emphasis will be placed on systems that serve special populations. Students will study one major system serving a special population (e.g., income maintenance, juvenile justice, services for the aging, mental health, and corrections), and perform a series of assignments that will enable them to understand, diagnose, and make suggestions for change of the system. Students will analyze global policy in consideration of independent nationalistic policies and their interdependence within global political systems.

Course topics may include: policy concepts and terms; cycles for developing policies; diagnosing policy environments (e.g., bureaucratic, fiscal, legislative, community) and advocacy roles (e.g., political, scientific, and ideological); professional standards and ethics that impact on the selection of advocacy roles; analyzing complex systems (e.g., issue identification and option generation); preparing and enhancing utilization of policy documents; use of quantitative and qualitative data in policy documents; developing policy (e.g., drafting legislation, writing guidelines and administrative regulations, and developing feedback mechanisms); selling policy (e.g., lobbying, testifying, and building coalitions of support).

**Course Objectives**
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Use the major analytic tools most commonly used to assess and evaluate complex systems of human and social services.
2. Use interactional tools and techniques for facilitating group process and decision making.
3. Design a procedure for reviewing and assessing a social service system that encompasses a wide variety of separately mandated programs.
4. Develop and evaluate a reasonable set of options (policy recommendations) for changing a particular service system.
5. Design and implement a preliminary political strategy for facilitating enactment of the preferred option.
6. Organize and prepare different types of policy documents and/or policy recommendations.
7. Discuss the effect of individual positionalities on policy development and their influence across system levels.
8. Discuss typical ethical concerns related to social policy development and enactment.

**Course Design**
This course will include lectures, tape recordings, student papers, special projects, and presentations. The course will be enhanced by extensive class discussion.

**Theme Relation to Multiculturalism and Diversity:**

Students will develop the capacity to identify ways in which diversity dimensions “ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation, as well community of residence” and other forms of social stratification and disenfranchisement influence and are impacted by the social policy development and enactment process.
Theme Relation to Social Justice:
Students will learn that the ability to develop and enact social policy is necessary if the social work profession is to play an important role in shaping the outcome of ongoing policy debates to reflect issues in social justice and change. This course will provide students with the capacity to participate in the social policy development and enactment process.

Theme Relation to Promotion, Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation:
Students will learn that policies in human services are too often implemented in reaction to an issue, not proactively, due to changing social, economic, and political circumstances and influences. Promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation activities are difficult to evaluate and therefore raise special challenges in social policy implementation. Students will be exposed to effective development and enactment techniques (e.g., responsive focus groups, Delphi method, and nominal group techniques) that can be used to develop and implement promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation activities.

Theme Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research:
Policies in human services are in a constant state of flux owing to changing social, economic, and political circumstances. Thus, any review of existing policy may be quickly outdated and has limited use as part of the training social work students carry into their careers. Therefore, students will be provided with social science models and theories that can be used to develop and enact any policy issue encountered in the course of their professional activities. Examples of the use of social science in policy development will be presented.

Relationship to Social Work Ethics and Values:
Ethical standards of social work practice (NASW Code of Ethics) and evaluation practice (Program Evaluation Standards) will be used to review issues commonly confronted in social policy development and enactment. The ethical themes of autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, fidelity, and justice will be particularly emphasized and discussed.

PODS
This course will pay special attention to issues of Privilege, Oppression, Discrimination, and Social Justice. Because room at the policy development table is based on power and privilege and lack thereof and because the impact of policy can either mitigate or reinforce oppression and discrimination, I feel strongly that discussion around these issues should play a central role in this course. Discussions held during class as well as assignments prepared by students and comments made by the instructor will all be expected to keep these issues in mind and to give voice to them. While we may all have different understandings of what makes up differences in privilege, causal factors of oppression and discrimination and methods for achieving social justice, it is my belief that as social workers we must keep talking about the issues if we are to make progress. Although discussions must take place they will be conducted with respect for all opinions.
Grading
Letter grades “A” through “E” are given for class performance.

“A” is given for exceptional performance and mastering of material
“B” is given to students who demonstrate mastery of the material
“C” is awarded when mastery of the material is minimal
“D” indicates deficiency and carries no credit
“E” indicates failure and carries no credit
****LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL HAVE ONE LETTER GRADE DEDUCTED****

Submission Policy
Students are to use APA citation format for each of the assignments. Each assignment needs to include appropriate attribution of authorship for paraphrases or ideas acquired from another source or appropriate citations, including page numbers for direct quotes.

Learning Accommodation
If you need or desire an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Many aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities and the way that the course is taught can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress throughout the semester. If you decide to disclose your disability, I will (to the extent permitted by law) treat that information as private and confidential. I encourage you to explore the University of Michigan Disability Accommodations office at http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/students.html to learn more about the resources available to enhance your learning style.

Required Reading
There are three required books for the course:

Course Schedule
Class #1- 09/10/10
Introductions and Review of Course Content and Assignments
The Definition of Social Policy
Social Policy and Underlying Values
Conceptual Foundations of Social Policy
The Delivery of Social Services
Problems in the Systems that are Targets of Policy Reform
Different Forms of Policy
Difference between Policy Practice and Policy Advocacy
Challenges Encountered by Policy Advocates
Four Basic Skills Utilized by Policy Advocacy Professionals
Tasks Needed to Become an Effective Policy Advocate
Class #2- 09/17/10
Policy Advocacy (Task 1)-Deciding what is Right or Wrong
Child and Family Welfare Policies and Services (Midgley pages 315-335) __________
Children and Families (Segal pages 228-254) __________
Speaker-Osvaldo Rivera, Michigan Department of Human Services

Class #3- 09/24/10
Policy Advocacy (Task 2)-Navigating Policy and Advocacy Systems
Income Maintenance and Support (Midgley pages 336-346) __________
Poverty and Economic Inequality (Segal pages 172-194) __________
Speaker-Mira Sussman, Jewish Family Service

Class #4- 10/01/10 (Policy Briefing Assignment Due) (Form Teams)
Policy Advocacy (Task 3)-Agenda Setting Tasks
Social Security (Midgley pages 347-366) __________
Social Justice and Civil Rights (Segal pages 92-123) __________
Speaker-Michael Smith, Washtenaw County Veteran Affairs

Class #5- 10/08/10
Policy Advocacy (Task 4)-Problem Analyzing Tasks
Social Policy and the Elderly (Midgley pages 367-380) __________
Aging and Social Policy (Segal pages 277-296) __________
Speaker-Carole McCabe, Avalon Housing

Class #6- 10/15/10
Policy Advocacy (Task 5)-Develop Proposals
Social Policy and Healthcare (Midgley pages 381-400) __________
Health Care Policy (Segal pages 255-276) __________
Speaker-Gabriel Javier, Spectrum Center

Class #7- 10/22/10 (Policy Analysis Assignment Due)
Policy Advocacy (Task 6)-Policy Enacting
Housing Policy (Segal pages 401-420) __________
U.S. Social Policies and International Comparisons (Segal pages 297-316) __________
Speaker-Carolyn Grawi, Center for Independent Living

Class #8- 10/29/10
Policy Advocacy (Task 7)-Policy Implementation
Social Policies and Mental Health (Midgley pages 421-444) __________
Speaker-Jason Schwartz, Dawn Farm

Class #9- 11/05/10
Policy Advocacy (Task 8)-Policy Assessing
Social Policies for People with Disabilities (Midgley pages 445-462) __________
Social Policy and the Correctional System (Midgley pages 463-484) __________
Speaker-Mary King, Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative
Class #10 - 11/12/10
Time to Plan Power Point Presentations
Speaker - Bill Long, State of Michigan

Class #11 - 11/19/10 (Power Point Presentations Due)
Employment Policy and Social Welfare (Midgley pages 485-506) __________
Speaker - Laura Martinez, Eastern Michigan University

Class #12 - 12/03/10 (Power Point Presentations Due)
Education and Social Policy (Midgley pages 507-523) __________
Speaker - Claudette Braxton, Eastern Michigan University

Class #13 - 12/10/10 (Power Point Presentations Due)
Urban Development Policy (Midgley pages 524-540) __________
Speaker - Frank Zinn, University of Michigan

Written Assignments
Each paper must have your name, student number, and your mailbox number on it. Students are to use APA citation format for each assignment. Assignment needs to include appropriate attribution of authorship for paraphrases or ideas acquired from another source or appropriate citations, including page numbers, for direct quotes. All students are expected to adhere to NASW code of ethics. Please refer to issues about scholarly integrity and academic misconduct (i.e. cheating, plagiarism…) in the Student’s Guide to the Master’s in Social Work Degree program. Papers that are completed for another course are not acceptable and will not receive any credit.

1. Policy Briefing Assignment (15%) Due 10/01/10
Write a maximum three page policy briefings focused on a policy that is a concern of the agency, organization or interest group represented by your practicum placement. This effort will outline what they are concerned about, how their issue affects other areas (such as likely costs and effects on other programs or laws), and the various available options identified with their corresponding implementation problems. This briefing should be in memo format and each student should keep in mind that these kinds of documents must be readable and appealing visually, as well as, intellectually effective.

Assignment 2, 3, and 4 will be completed as a group (no more than three to a group)

2. Policy Analysis Assignment (15%) Due 10/22/10
This assignment takes the policy briefing memo to another level. The first part of this maximum five page assignment follows the outline listed on #1. The last three pages of this assignment will be your critique of the various available options identified and your initial proposal for a different approach (not yet in the form of a legislative bill). The likely arguments of opponents should be addressed at this point. This assignment will be all about your ability to anticipate opponents’ dissent and promote an effective argument for your proposal.

3. Policy Enactment Plan (20%) Due 11/12/10
This assignment (maximum three pages) continues what you began in #1 and #2. Based on your initial proposal put forth in #2, you will outline the change process that needs to take place
in order for your policy to be enacted. Lay out your style, strategy, and tactics for the entire campaign to get this initial proposal into a legislative bill.

4. Power Point Presentation (15%) Due 11/19/10 or 12/03/10 or 12/10/10
This task brings together assignments #2 and #3. You will develop a Power Point (not to exceed thirty minutes) that presents the major pieces of your policy brief, policy analysis and enactment assignments.

Other Assignments
1. Presentation (10%)
Students will present the readings that were assigned to them on the first day of class and then present the material at the assigned class. This will be a maximum thirty minute presentation (do not use Power Point) where the key points of the article will be highlighted. A written report should be passed out after the presentation to all class members. One policy that is of interest to the presenter should be focused on as well. More details on this component of the assignment will be reviewed during the first class.

2. Class Discussion (10%)
Students are expected to take an active role in class discussions. In order for each student to participate in these discussions, they must be in class for the sessions.

3. Special Projects (15%)
There will be several assignments that will arise throughout the semester related to topics at hand. Further discussion on Special Projects will take place during the first class.

Bibliography


