COURSE TITLE: Introduction to Community Organization, Management, & Policy Practice
COURSE NUMBER: 560, Section 002
CLASSROOM: SSWB 3752
TERM/DAY/TIME: Fall 2010 – Monday, 1:00-4:00 PM
INSTRUCTOR: Alice Gates, MSW, Graduate Student Instructor
CONTACT INFO: abgates@umich.edu
OFFICE HOURS: SSWB 2798, Tuesdays 4-5:00 or by appointment

Syllabus – Table of Contents

1. Course description (1)
2. Course content (1)
3. Course objectives (1-2)
4. Course design (2)
5. Course relationship to four SSW curricular themes (2-3)
6. Relationship of the course to social work ethics and values (3)
7. Intensive focus on privilege, oppression, diversity, and social justice (3)
8. Learning philosophy and environment (3-5)
9. Course materials (5)
10. Summary of assignments and course overview (6)
11. Grading (7)
12. Expectations for all assignments (7-8)
13. Helpful resources (8-9)
14. Religious observances (9)
15. Class attendance (10)
16. Description of assignments (10-20)
17. Reading list and schedule (21-26)

1 This syllabus reflects the collaborative efforts of past SW560 instructors Michael Woodford, Katie Richards-Schuster, Laura Wernick, Diane Kaplan Vinokur, Lorraine Gutiérrez, Trina Shanks, as well as my own (AG) revisions.
1. Course description

This course is a generalist social work foundation offering in the Macro Practice Concentrations (Community Organization, Management, and Policy/Evaluation). It covers basic content in these areas of social work method and prepares students to take the more advanced courses in their concentration. It is partly survey in nature, touching on a range of methodologies and emphases, and providing an appreciation of the historical and contemporary importance of these methods in social work.

In addition, it deals with the process of professionalization and introduces students to a range of practice tools. Issues of diverse dimensions [e.g. 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] will be emphasized throughout, with special focus on culturally sensitive practice - i.e., multicultural community organizing, culturally sensitive management practices, culturally sensitive analyses of policy proposals and their impact, and culturally sensitive research practices. Students' field experience and future methods courses will build upon the knowledge and skills presented in this course.

2. Course content

Students learn beginning macro practice skills, including skills sets in the areas of community organization, management, and policy analysis. They learn to understand a variety of roles and skills attached to them - i.e., community organizer, manager, or policy analyst/advocate. The course will also provide students with the opportunity to integrate learning from relevant HBSE, policy, and research courses, designed to be taken concurrently.

During this course, students focus on:

(1) Understanding the context of macro practice;
(2) Identifying problems at the community and organizational level;
(3) Organizing and building relationships within communities and organizations; and
(4) Organization-based and community-based policy making, planning, and program development.

This course will provide a common framework for learning, which sets the stage for more detailed development of skills sets. Readings will be related to theories, concepts, and practice skills involving assessments and interventions at the mezzo-macro level and in working effectively with communities and organizations. Some class time will be devoted to a discussion of issues raised by students' experiences in the field, in the context of the theories, concepts, and skills covered by the readings, lectures, and exercises. These include various community assessment and problem solving models, reflective practice, interpersonal skills in macro policy research, and the analysis of organizational culture.

3. Course objectives

On completion of this course, students, using a generalist social work practice framework, will be able to demonstrate beginning level competencies in the following ways:

1. CONTEXT OF MACRO PRACTICE: Describe the historical, social, political and economic forces that have shaped and continue to shape macro practice in social work, with special attention to community organization, management, policy, and research;
2. **MACRO PRACTICE STRATEGIES**: Identify community organization, management, policy-planning strategies, and empirically supported practices for dealing with contemporary social work and social welfare problems;

3. **SELECTION OF MACRO PRACTICES**: Demonstrate beginning level community organization, management, and policy/evaluation skills in identifying the major internal and external environmental factors that affect the selection of those strategies;

4. **ETHICS FOR MACRO PRACTICE**: Apply NASW's Code of Ethics and other professional codes to the selection of action strategies, and in particular to those situations which affect women, people of color, and disadvantaged/discriminated against populations;

5. **MACRO PRACTICE TOOLS**: Demonstrate the ability to utilize selected assessment tools for designing practice relevant issues (e.g., human resource assessment, flow-charts, force field analysis, nominal group technique, task analysis, community profiling, asset mapping, community needs and strengths assessment, Census data analysis, and utilizing frameworks of ethical and policy analysis);

6. **SOCIAL WORKER MACRO PRACTICE ROLES**: Specify/identify those situations in which social workers are likely to be central to and have leverage over major social welfare concerns;

7. **PRACTICE INTEGRATION & BREADTH**: identify salient connections between Macro Practice/IP Practice and National/International practices.

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**What is Macro Practice?**

The literature offers many definitions of macro practice. We will be introduced to many of these throughout our course. For our initial purposes, we will define macro practice as the process of “helping people solve social problems and make social change at the community, organizational, societal, and global levels” (Brueggemann, 2002, p. 3).

In this course, we will explore macro practice in the context of community, organizations, and society. We will focus on community organizing, social policy advocacy, and management of human service organizations.

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4. **Course design**

Pedagogical strategies for class sessions include lectures, discussions, in-class presentations, skill-building activities and exercises, films, and possibly outside speakers.

5. **Relationship of the course to the SSW’s four curricular themes:**

i. *Multiculturalism and Social Diversity* are addressed through the use of readings, examples, cases, and role plays, and the development of intervention tools that explore multi-cultural and diversity issues from the client system, the worker (i.e., the community organizer, manager, and policy analyst/advocate), as well as the organizational, community, and policy contexts.
ii. *Social Justice and Social Change* are addressed through the use of readings, examples, cases, and role plays, and the development of intervention tools that enable workers to secure better representation of underrepresented community members and points of view in the community, agency, and polity, and to address, through the attainment of program goals, issues of historic exclusion and exploitation. Techniques of both transactional and transformational change are considered.

iii. *Behavioral and Social Sciences Research* is addressed through the use of readings, examples, cases, and role plays, and the development of intervention tools that explore the perspectives of social and behavioral science theory on the community, the organization, and the polity. Organizational theories, political science theories, and theories of community will be important bases for class analyses.

iv. *Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation* are addressed through the use of readings, examples, cases, and role plays, and the development of intervention tools that explore special attention to the benefits of prevention and early intervention (promotion and prevention), risks attendant to the use of various methods (treatment), and the need for longer term connection and follow-up (rehabilitation).

### 6. Relationship of the course to social work ethics and values

This course will address ethical and value issues related to working with and in organizations, communities, societies, as well as in conducting policy-focused research in these domains. For example, as employees of organizations, members of communities, and citizens of states, social workers must work to ensure equal treatment for all community members, while at the same time expressing preferential programmatic attention to the most disadvantaged within those systems. This course will also focus on social workers’ responsibility as professionals to promote general welfare by working toward the elimination of discrimination, expanding choices for all persons, encouraging respect for diversity, advocating for progressive changes in social policies, and encouraging informed participation by the public.

### 7. Intensive focus Privilege, Oppression, Diversity, and Social Justice (PODS)

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices, and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students in developing a vision of social justice, learning to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, working toward social justice processes, applying intersectionality and intercultural frameworks, as well as strengthening critical consciousness, self knowledge, and self awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

### 8. Learning philosophy and environment

Teaching and learning in this course will be guided by the principles of adult learning and empowerment. These frameworks approach all participants in an educational endeavor as active, self-directed learners. A core concept of these approaches is valuing your experiences and your potential for sharing these perspectives to deepen individual and group learning. So, you are encouraged to share your insights with the

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2 Adult learning approaches typically include an appreciation that (1) adults are autonomous, goal- and relevancy-oriented, practical, and self-directed, (2) adults have past life experience and knowledge that can connect to current learning; and (3) adults must be treated with respect.
class throughout the semester. At the same time, we should all try to maintain a reflexive stance, carefully considering your thoughts and those of others.

Each individual brings different strengths, knowledge, and various levels of understanding of macro practice to this class. Therefore, we can all benefit if we think of the class as a collaborative effort, and the classroom as a space in which our learning can be enhanced by the contributions of others.

_**In sum, we are all potential teachers and learners.**_ Therefore, it is hoped that collaborative learning will occur between students, as well as between students and instructor. Indeed, the third class assignment, the community profile, is designed to provide an additional opportunity to reflect on collaborative effort done by student teams.

"The practice of education is all of this: affectivity, enjoyment, academic ability and technical mastery in the service of change.”
(Paolo Freire)

**Creating a positive learning environment**

It is important for all those involved in this class to foster an environment in which all participants are comfortable enough to willingly express their opinions and perspectives during class discussion, including critical analyses. At times, this engagement can involve some risk, but it is hoped that you will feel comfortable enough to share your views and queries in order to promote your learning and that of your colleagues.

To encourage this environment, we are all reminded of our professional responsibility to treat one another with respect. If the classroom is to be a space for learning, it cannot reinforce systems of bias and domination, nor can it be restrained by political correctness. As course instructor, I will strive to develop a respectful course environment. You too can contribute to this ethos by extending to your colleagues the same respect and sensitivity you desire for yourself.

Questioning one another is a part of a positive and productive learning process. Such questioning should be done in a collegial, civil, and professional manner, which involves listening to, recognizing, and trying to respect others’ views, even if we do not agree with the perspectives being advanced. At times, it may be necessary to challenge the ideas someone presents, but it is important to do so in a manner that calls into question the _ideas_ outlined, not the _person_ who presents them.

**Class participation**

Class participation is a professional responsibility and a critical element of this course. It is important to be prepared to discuss assigned readings and share experiential knowledge. To maximize individual and group learning, participation is expected.
---READING TIPS---

To help you prepare for each class meeting, it is useful to consider each of these questions as you complete assigned readings:

- What are the central points of the reading? What is your assessment of these in terms of macro practice? Your evolving professional identity?
- What points, if any, do you like, agree with or find helpful in terms of understanding issues related to macro practice? Why?
- What points, if any, do you dislike, disagree with or find unhelpful in terms of understanding issues related to macro practice? Why?
- Based on your personal experiences and other readings (academic and non-academic), what other perspectives are there to the subject?
- What are the connections with and/or implications for diversity and socially just practice?

*Individual learning objectives*

Each person comes to this course with different ideas, experiences, and competencies related to macro practice. Additionally, each of you likely has your own interests regarding macro practice, which you could develop in this foundation course and in subsequent ones. Given this background, you are encouraged to create at least one individualized learning objective for our course. If you are currently in a field placement, you may wish to consider developing an objective related to your field-based learning goals.

For instance, if you are interested in identifying the needs of a particular population, you may want to develop a specific learning objective related to conducting community needs assessments with that population. The possibilities are endless—just be sure you select an objective that you can achieve.

*Working in small groups*

The Community Profile Assignment requires working together in a small task group. For this assignment, your group’s membership will be self-selected; however, you are strongly encouraged to work with others in the class whom you do not know yet. Depending on class size, the groups will range from three to five students per group. Groups will begin to be formed in Session 4.

Also, throughout the term, small groups will be created for various in-class learning activities to learn or practice course content. In these groups, you will work with colleagues to discuss assigned readings or to complete assigned exercises related to course content.

9. Course materials

*Required text:*


*Required readings:*

All other required readings are available online on our C-Tools site (SW 560 002), in the Readings folder under the Resources tab.
## 10. Summary of assignments and course overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>COURSE AREA</th>
<th>DUE DATE</th>
<th>VALUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Skill Building Presentation</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Throughout the term; Starting 9/27</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Part 1: (Day of) Presentation and materials – objectives, plan, learning aids, and evaluation tool</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Part 2: Evaluation report By the Tuesday after your presentation session – Submit electronically via CTools</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Advocacy Project</td>
<td>Policy Advocacy</td>
<td>DUE OCT. 11 by beginning of class</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Part 1: Product Bring a hard copy to class</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Part 2: Reflection Paper Submit electronically via CTools</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mini-Proposal</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>DUE NOV. 8 Submit electronically via CTools</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Community Profile</td>
<td>Community Organizing</td>
<td>OCT. 25 (in class)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Part 1: Group Pre-profile Reflection Each group will complete and submit this reflection in class</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DUE DEC. 13 Part 2: Profile &amp; Presentation Bring hard copies Submit electronically via CTools</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DUE DEC. 13 Part 3: Group Minutes &amp; Evaluation Submit electronically via CTools</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Attendance and participation</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>On-time attendance and participation in class activities, including pop-quizzes (not graded)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. Grading

Grades are earned by successfully completing the work on the assignments and by attending and participating in each class. A 100 point system is used. At the end of the term, the numerical grades earned for each written assignment and class participation will be translated into letter grades according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>98-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>67-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Criteria**

"A" grades are given for exceptional individual performance and mastery of the material. The use of "A+", "A", and "A-" distinguish the degree of superiority and ["A" is typically the highest grade given, since A+ is given only for extraordinary work]. "B" grades are given to students who demonstrate mastery of the material. "B+" is used for students who perform just above the mastery level but not in an exceptional manner. "B-" is used for students just below the mastery level. "C" grades are given when mastery of the material is minimal (from: [http://ssw.umich.edu/studentGuide/2007/page.html?id=3.02](http://ssw.umich.edu/studentGuide/2007/page.html?id=3.02))

**Grading philosophy**

Working together, I want each of you to learn as much as possible and to be successful in the course. This goal requires that you accept responsibility for your learning and performance and that I support you in your development. As a student, you hold certain expectations for your performance and grades. If you wish to perform at the “A” level, you will have to work at that level. “A” level grades will not be given without merit.

If a student performs poorly on an assignment (i.e., B- or lower), she/he will be invited to meet with me to discuss the assignment, and the student may be offered the option to rewrite it or part thereof. This arrangement is to allow students who did not perform at the expected graduate level an opportunity to gain the required mastery. If the rewrite is acceptable, then the student can earn up to a grade of B, which is the expected passing grade for graduate work.

12. Expectations for all assignments

**Submission Instructions**

Refer to assignment list (page 8 of this syllabus) for instructions on how to submit particular assignments. When a hard copy is requested, I will collect the assignment at the beginning of class.

**Extensions**

Requests for extensions will be considered for a valid reason (e.g. funerals, illness). These are to be made at least 48 hours in advance of the assignment due date, if at all possible. A rationale for the request is to be provided.
Late Assignments
Work that is late (i.e., an extension was not negotiated in advance) will have 5% (from 100%) deducted for each day the assignment is past the due date, including weekends.

Incomplete Grades
Students should not request incomplete grades unless they face very serious circumstances, since an incomplete can imperil their academic standing at the School of Social Work. A grade of incomplete will not be granted unless it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold you accountable to the normal expectations of the course. If a grade of incomplete is to be requested, you must do so prior to the final week of classes.

General Evaluation Guidelines
Written assignments will be evaluated on both content and style. You should demonstrate your ability to apply and integrate course material and to communicate using a professional style. Professional communication is coherent, concise, and comprehensive, and includes correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence construction, paragraph construction and referencing. In particular, you are strongly urged to proofread your papers, and not just rely on spell-checking.

Assignments are to be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins, using an easy-to-read font (e.g., Times New Roman, Cambria) and in 12 pt font. The only exception is the community profile, which should be single-spaced and with ample white space, as described in the assignment.

References and Referencing Style
All assignments must include a list of the references at the end (not included in page limits). When using others’ work or ideas, it is mandatory to cite the original source (including websites) in the text itself. When directly quoting others’ work, the work must appear with quotation marks, along with citation information.

Social work publications generally follow the referencing format specified by the American Psychological Association (APA), therefore you are expected to follow this referencing style (see the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th Ed.)). The library also offers an online resource for your use (see http://www.lib.umich.edu/ug/research/citation guide/AP5thed/pdf).

Intellectual Honesty and Plagiarism

13. Helpful Resources

Writing Skills
If you are seeking assistance with any aspect of the writing process, I encourage you to contact the Gayle Morris Sweetland Writing Center (see http://www.lsa.umich.edu/swc/; 1310 North Quad, 105 S. State St., 764-0429, swcinfo@umich.edu). The center offers writing courses and individual support for graduate students. The Center’s website provides various helpful writing guides, including one focusing on APA referencing standards.

Students with Disabilities
If you have a visible or invisible disability that may interfere with your participation in this course, please
schedule a private appointment with me as soon as possible. Various aspects of this course can be modified. The sooner I am made aware of your need for accommodation, the earlier we can work together to make any necessary adjustments. This information will be kept strictly confidential.

For more information and resources, you may also contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, (734) 763-3000 or Nyshourn Price-Reed or Lauren Davis at the School of Social Work, 734-936-0961 (http://ssw.umich.edu/current/disabilities.html)

Other Resources
For a listing of various referral and support services available in the University community, please see http://ssw.umich.edu/current/additional.html.

14. Religious holidays

Please notify me in the first two weeks of the semester if your religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments. I am happy to make special arrangements with advance notice.

15. Attendance and participation

The SSW’s policy is that students attend all of their classes. Excessive absences may result in a reduction in grade or a failing grade, and will be brought to the attention of the student and the faculty advisor by the course instructor. While attendance is not always a part of the course grade, due to the nature of many course assignments, in-class skill building activities and group projects, multiple absences diminish a student’s ability to participate fully in the required course activities.

If you have a contagious disease easily spread in the classroom (e.g., flu), please let me know and do NOT come to class. Stay home and get well.

Reducing distractions
In order to not distract or disturb students and the instructor, please turn off cell phones, pagers, and other electronics during class. Also, students are expected to be in class and not leaving to answer phone calls. If you have an emergency call that you are expecting, please consult with the instructor.
16. Description of Assignments

**Assignment I: Skill Building Session** (Team Project – Groups of Two/Three)

To effectively promote change at the community, organizational, and policy levels, social workers must possess a vast set of skills. Our classroom is an ideal space where we can learn about and practice some of these skills. This assignment focuses on presenters and presentation participants developing a beginning mastery of select macro skills. Further, being able to effectively enhance others’ understanding and abilities through effective presentations is a core macro skill, especially when working with communities and organizations. This assignment will give you the opportunity to implement and practice this skill with colleagues, specifically the application of the principles of effective presentations.

In self-selected groups of three, you will develop and deliver a 30 minute (maximum) skill building presentation to your colleagues and systematically obtain their feedback and evaluate the session’s effectiveness. Specifically, you are expected to:

- In consultation with the instructor and other groups, select a macro skill from those listed below
- Develop presentation objectives
- Create and implement a presentation plan to achieve your objectives
- Draft and implement a feedback /evaluation tool, and
- Provide an evaluation report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>SKILL</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy advocacy</td>
<td>Writing an op-ed to get your message across and influence policy decisions</td>
<td>Sep 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing and presenting an advocacy brief before an elected body</td>
<td>Oct 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Preparing a proposal budget</td>
<td>Oct 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparing a logic model</td>
<td>Oct 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developing socially just workplace policies</td>
<td>Nov 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Organizing</td>
<td>Conducting community observation to better understand a community</td>
<td>Nov 8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conducting key informant interviews to better understand a community</td>
<td>Nov 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building trust and rapport in diverse groups in the community</td>
<td>Nov 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizing a direct action</td>
<td>Dec 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following steps should serve as a guiding framework for the assignment.

**Step 1: Develop Teams and Identify Topics of Interest**

Each team should identify two skills of interest, listing your first choice as option #1. Because we would like to cover 3 or 4 skills per practice area, I will review the various skills identified by the teams and select the ones to be covered in class. I will attempt to respect each
group’s #1 choice.

**Step 2: Research the Skill**
Consult various sources (academic, professional, community) to develop an understanding of the skill. Keep a list of the sources you use, as it is good practice and expected that you acknowledge them in the session. Discuss and appraise the various sources with your group members as you move to step 3.

**Step 3: Develop Presentation Objectives**
Based on what you have read and your evolving understanding of the skill, develop the objectives that you will work to achieve in a 30 minute presentation. A presentation objective should be outcome oriented (also results oriented); that is, what do you want presentation participants to be able to do or to understand following your presentation?

**Step 4: Develop the Presentation Plan**
⇒ How are you going to use the time available to achieve your objectives? What key messages do you need to deliver? What activity might be helpful to promote participants’ mastery of the objectives? How will you engage participants?
⇒ Answering these questions will help you to develop an effective plan for your presentation. Remember to keep your plan grounded in your objectives; that is, everything you do/say in the presentation should be related to achieving your objectives. It is very important to specify how you will use your time in the presentation (e.g., introductions – 2 minutes).
⇒ You are expected to articulate how the skill facilitates aspects of macro practice (hint: a good thing to mention in your introduction!).

**Step 5: Develop the Evaluation Plan/Tool**
How will you know if your presentation helped to enhance participants’ skills or knowledge? How will you know if your presentation could be improved and, if so, in what ways? Brainstorm answers to these questions and develop a short tool in order to evaluate your presentation and obtain participants’ feedback. It is very important to evaluate your presentation objectives (remember the objectives are to be results-oriented, so why not evaluate them?).

**Step 6: Implement**
Implement what you set out to do! Do not forget to distribute and collect your presentation evaluation form.
**It is not required to utilize handouts for your presentation. If you choose to do so, feel free to email the handouts by 10:00 AM the day of your presentation and I will make copies for the class.**

**Step 7: Evaluation Report**
The document summary should be written as though you were submitting to a client organization that hired you to create and lead the presentation. The report is to include a general summary of your presentation, a summary of the evaluation results, and your recommendations for future presentations on the topic (2 pages max., double-spaced).

*What to submit to the instructor – the day of the presentation*
⇒ Presentation objectives and plan/outline
⇒ Copy of your feedback/evaluation tool
⇒ Copy of your learning aids

*The Tuesday after Your Presentation – email to instructor*
⇒ Evaluation report
Assignment II: Advocacy

Advocacy practice occurs when a “social worker takes action in a systematic and purposeful way to defend, represent, or otherwise advance the cause of one or more clients at the individual, group, organizational, or community level, in order to promote social justice” (Hoefer, 2006, p. 8). Adopting this definition and as a way to operationalize our School’s emphasis on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS), working beyond the individual client level, you are expected to speak on behalf of a disenfranchised group or a cause in order to influence decisions regarding the group or cause. While there are many ways to do this, for this assignment you are asked to either develop an op-ed piece for a newspaper or a prepared testimony that you could potentially deliver in front of a public group (e.g., city council, school board, or county mental health board).

The purpose of the assignment is to introduce you to the process of policy advocacy. For the assignment, you are not required to implement your project, but if the opportunity arises, you are strongly encouraged to pursue it.

Step 1: Select an Issue

Select an issue or cause that is connected to a particular marginalized group or a social justice issue. For this assignment, think about a particular issue in which you are particularly interested. It is also appropriate to select an issue related to a policy you have studied in your social welfare policy course.

If you are currently in placement, you may want to focus on an issue affecting your agency’s service users, for example, a gap in a public service. However, if you are planning to undertake an agency related project, please discuss this with me in terms of agency support and approval. It will also be helpful to consult your field instructor.

Step 2: Research Issue

You are expected to research the issue in order to provide background information and to begin to develop a position on it (this does not mean write a research paper). This may include an analysis of relevant policies that are currently in effect, policy discussion papers, media reports, and other related sources. Depending on the issue, it might be necessary to interview someone knowledgeable about it, such as the director of a community agency advocating with/on behalf of the affected community. You will be asked to provide a bibliography of the sources reviewed and any interviews held during your research process.

Step 3: Write an Op-ed or Prepare a Testimony

Based upon your research either prepare an op-ed piece for a newspaper or testimony to give at a board meeting or a similar venue. We will be discussing each of these advocacy strategies during our class session on advocacy strategies. If you develop an op-ed piece, identify newspapers where you want to submit your piece, and don’t forget your author bio (2-3 lines). If you create a testimony, identify the body to which you would give your testimony.

In developing your op-ed or testimony, keep the outcome or result you want central. As we will discuss in class, you also need to identify the broad stakeholders and their general interest in the issue, particularly those who have power over the solution. Given the issue and the desired outcome, you need to consider how best to realize the change you want in terms of the target and how best to frame your message. The analysis you perform around this will help to shape your op-ed or testimony.
Step 4: Reflect on the Process

In the effort to be reflective practitioners, you are expected to write a two-page, double-spaced reflection paper that addresses the following:

- Summarize how you developed your project, specifically why you chose the particular issue you did and the rationale for how you framed it. Outline the objectives for your strategy.
- In terms of your project, what do you see as its strengths and the areas for improvement? While it is appropriate to focus on the product developed, emphasis should be given to the process you used to develop your op-ed or prepared testimony.
- Using your power and privilege as a social worker, how might you integrate advocacy into your future social work practice? Hint: examples are useful here.

Work to Submit to the Instructor – Submit as one document via C-Tools Assignment Box

⇒ Op-ed piece or testimony (also – bring a hard copy to class on 10/11)
⇒ Bibliography and list of interviews conducted
⇒ Reflection paper
Assignment III: Mini-grant Proposal (individual or pairs)

This assignment involves the development of a mini-grant proposal to support program innovation/development. This assignment’s central goal is to learn skills associated with proposal development. In achieving this goal, you will conceptualize and draft a mini-proposal, addressing all of the elements associated with such a professional document. The document is to be prepared as though you were submitting it to the (fictitious) Social Change Foundation. The assignment may not exceed 11 pages, consisting of the following:

• Cover letter (1 page, single spaced)
• Proposal (8 pages, double spaced), including the timeline,
• Budget (1 page; form to be provided) and budget narrative (1 page, single-spaced).

You should plan to write this grant as though you were a director or development officer of a community-based agency. You should plan to give your agency a name and provide a brief background on your agency. If you are in a field placement, you may consider writing a proposal for your agency. You may also consider using an agency that is connected to your community profile or to your advocacy issue, but it is not required. You may use a real agency or could create your own.

For this assignment, you can either work with a partner or individually.

Step 1: Choose Agency & Prepare Background Information
Decide on your agency and prepare a short background statement (i.e., issues addressed, population served, orientation of agency, scope of agency). This does not need to be extensive but will help you with the development of your proposal. If you are using an actual agency, you may find it helpful to examine the agency’s website for a mission statement and agency description.

Step 2: Brainstorm Project Ideas
Based on the agency, brainstorm a project that you could develop and for which you could write a mini-proposal. You might start by focusing on a particular population served at your agency, but you could also brainstorm a project that fills a current gap in services. For those in field placements, you may want to address a program needed within your agency. In brainstorming, you should consider the scope of the project. You may consider a project that would be one to two years in length and have a budget between $5,000-$50,000.

Step 3: Prepare Mini-Proposal
Prepare a mini-proposal that includes the following elements. Use points 2 to 9 as headings in your proposal. Follow the order as specified below.

1. **Cover Letter**: Include a cover letter (also called transmittal letter) with the proposal. This single-spaced letter should highlight the main points of the proposal and indicate to the potential funding source why this project is important for them to fund. Brief reference to the amount requested and what it will enable the agency to achieve should be included.

2. **Agency Description**: A brief description of the agency, namely its mission, target population(s), and primary services. You can also include any key collaborators related to the proposed services and a sense of the agency’s strengths in relation to the proposal.

3. **Background/Needs Statement**: A brief description of the problem you propose to address and why it is important (include relevant literature/statistics/research/policies, document need for the intervention/project proposed).
4. **Goals and Objectives:** State the project’s goals and objectives (link the goals and the objectives to your project narrative in the next section).

5. **Project Narrative:** This is your implementation plan. Discuss principal activities needed to achieve your objectives (include enough information for the potential funding agency to understand how its money will be used to address the identified need and intended objectives). It is appropriate to make reference to and briefly describe the role of key positions and/or committees that may be established under the program. This section can be organized around each objective, if that method seems most reasonable (e.g., To achieve objective 1, we will establish … For objective 2, we will …).

6. **Evaluation:** Describe how you will evaluate the program’s success (this is linked to the objectives). You should also refer to particular tools you might use in the evaluation.

7. **Timeline:** Provide a specific timeline giving the funding source an idea of the project steps and activities (use a Gantt chart). You can reference the timeline in your narrative and attach separately, if desired.

8. **Budget:** Estimate the project costs (how much money will be needed to implement the project). You should also include budget lines (i.e., the specific budget items for the project such as staffing, supplies). The budget form to be submitted is available for download on our C-tools site.

9. **Budget Narrative:** Provide a one page, single-spaced narrative of the budget. Explain each budget line, clearly articulating how the item relates to the project. For positions, give an overview of the key duties, required qualifications (if any), hourly wage, number of hours and weeks worked, and benefits rate. Provide a narrative for any in-kind contributions included in the budget. For the purposes of this assignment, you may assume that the Social Change Foundation does not pay indirect costs or provide a percentage overhead.

**Submit to the Instructor as one document via C-Tools Assignment Box – due Nov. 8**

⇒ Cover letter
⇒ Mini-proposal (includes timeline, budget, and budget narrative)
Assignment #4: Community Profile

Working collaboratively with other colleagues in self-selected groups (size to be determined in session one; estimated 4 members per group), you will develop a profile of a selected community within Michigan. Your profile will be created using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data. The profile will consist of a small booklet, which for the purposes of this assignment you are developing for distribution to a group of concerned citizens and elected officials. You will also develop a 15 minute presentation to be delivered in class. For the purpose of your presentation, assume that the class is the group of concerned citizens and elected officials.

The assignment has four main purposes:
1. To learn the skills necessary for understanding and analyzing a community;
2. To gain experience engaging in reflective practice at the community level;
3. To learn and practice skills important to working in a team; and,
4. To learn how to present your analysis in a professional manner.

The assignment is broken into three elements (listed according to due dates). Each is explained further below.

1. Pre-profile Reflection (prepared as a group) Due in class October 25
2. Community Profile, includes summary of qualitative data (observations and/or interviews and interview guides); team minutes; and process evaluation (prepared as a group) Due in class December 13

The following steps should serve as a guiding framework for the assignment.

Step 1: Develop Teams

You will form self-selected teams by October 11. It will be important to assign roles (i.e., facilitator, reporter, recorder, time keeper, and process evaluator; roles are to rotate so that each team member will experience each role), identify ground rules, and develop an evaluation process for your team in terms of strengths and areas for improvement. It is recommended to include an informal evaluation process in each meeting (e.g., at the end of the meeting, ask everyone to name one thing they liked about the meeting and one thing they thought could be improved). It is required to evaluate your group process at the end of the project. Sample evaluation tools for that purpose will be available on our course C-tools site.

All effective task groups keep minutes in order to promote accountability, the achievement of results, and transparency in decision making. Therefore you are expected to keep minutes of your meetings. Minutes should be at least one page in length for each meeting.

To ensure your project is a success, it may be helpful to develop a work plan to help guide your overall project and assign tasks. Tools to help create your work plan will be presented in class and will be available on our course C-tools site.

Throughout the term, class time will be allocated to enable your team to get established and carry out your work. A check-in process will occur periodically until the assignment is completed.

Step 2: Select Community and Complete Pre-profile Reflection

Each team will select a community to assess – this includes both needs and assets (also called strengths). The community you choose can be geographic or population based (also called target population). The selected
community should be one that is considered underserved or disenfranchised. If you select a population-based community, you should plan to observe and assess them within a geographic-based context. The same applies to the selection of a target population.

It is important to select a community that you are interested in learning more about. I encourage you to select a community that you can easily observe and assess. In making your selection you should consider elements such as geographic proximity and access to the community, as well as ease of access to information about the community.

Examples of communities that have been assessed in past 560 classes include homeless persons in Ann Arbor; older adults of Detroit; the African American aging community in Ypsilanti; Grove Park Homes, Ypsilanti; the neighborhood of Morningside; youth in Flint; Mexican Town in Detroit; Delray; the community of Willow Run; the Osborne neighborhood in Detroit; and ex-offenders in Washtenaw County. Notice that target populations are located in a particular geographic community.

Assessing A Community that is not Geographically Based or Visible

For this assignment it is important to develop a profile for a community that interests you. A community can be geographically, identity, or issue based. As described above, an expectation of this assignment is to complete an observation of the community by visiting the community and walking or driving through and recording your observations. This aspect of the assignment assumes that your community is located in a particular area. However, for some identity- or issue-based communities, community members do not necessarily live in one locale or are visible. For example, members of the LGBTQ community here in Ann Arbor live throughout the city. The same applies to single mothers, people who are differently abled, victims of violence, and so on.

For groups that select an identity- or issue-based community for which there may not be a geographical area to observe or where the population may not be overtly visible, the following assignment expectations apply.

You are still expected to locate, evaluate, and report relevant quantitative data for the community. This is to include comparison with other areas. For example, if interested in victims of violence, select a geographical context for the group, such as Washtenaw County. Look for statistics about victims of violence in Washtenaw County. Then look for national and Michigan statistics on victims of violence and compare with those of Washtenaw County. Also, you may wish to identify statistics from another county and compare with Washtenaw County statistics. Remember, be purposeful in reporting statistics – focus on those most meaningful and important.

For some communities of identity, it will be useful to consider broadly the extent by which the community is visible or invisible in the broader geographical community. For instance, while you may not see LGBTQ people (like you can tell!), you may see signs of their presence and welcoming, such as rainbow stickers on shop doors. For children with disabilities, do you see ads in the local paper for parental support groups? Look for indicators of visibility for your community.

The majority of the qualitative data will be gathered from key informant interviews, between four and six. Remember, these are not to be held with members of vulnerable communities, but with community leaders and service providers. Develop guiding questions and summarize each interview. It is highly advisable to review the questions outlined below concerning the observation and adapt relevant items for the key informant interviews.
In some cases, an organization(s) may exist that serves the community. Visit the agency and explore the agency’s operations in terms of the services provided (and not provided) and the involvement of clients in organizational decisions. Consider also issues related to the inclusion of diverse clients, for example is the space accessible to people who use wheelchairs, is the agency welcoming of diverse ethnic groups through the visual images located throughout the agency – what do you see and not see? Factors related to financial barriers to access are also important. You are not to observe the agency in terms of client-staff interactions. Agency reports and key informant interviews may be helpful in regard to this aspect of the project.

Work to Submit to the Instructor – Pre-profile reflection – Due in class, October 25
After you have selected your community, in the spirit of reflexivity or reflective practice, as a group write a two-page, double-spaced paper addressing the following points:
⇒ what community and why,
⇒ what are some of the things you might examine (both quantitatively and qualitatively),
⇒ what do you expect to find and why, and
⇒ what comparisons do you expect to make and why.

Also, feel free to list any questions or issues that you would like to consult me about.

Please ensure each team member’s name is listed on the top of the page in the header. Point form or short paragraphs are fine. The use of headings is encouraged. This is not a research paper, thus references to the literature are not necessary but you are expected to integrate ideas from the course.

Step 3: Developing the Community Profile
Once you determine your focus, you will research the selected community using both qualitative and quantitative data.

Qualitative Data:
Your small group will conduct an observational study of a neighborhood/community. If you select a particular target population, then the location you observe would be one where members of that group would be found (see the previous textbox for what to do and assignment expectations when that is not the case).

The observation can be supplemented with key informant interviews and possibly document analysis which should enable you to get important insights about the community. Interviews could be held with one or two community leaders and/or local service providers; interviews are not to be held with members of vulnerable populations. Please consult with me in selecting key informants. Newspaper stories, agency reports, community needs assessments and other related documents can also be valuable sources of information. In some cases, books about the history of the community may be available, which can provide rich information about the community’s roots.

As a team you will find a mutually convenient time to observe the community. We will not have class on November 22 and I encourage you to use that class time to conduct your observation and collect any other qualitative data.

Observation:
When your group begins to observe the neighborhood, you might walk through the area, stand on a corner, or drive by slowly using a windshield survey. Use all of your senses to begin to understand the neighborhood.
You could take photographs of the area, but any people captured in them are not to be identifiable. To avoid this risk, it is best to take photographs that do not capture people. Record your observations as soon as possible; a tape recorder is useful for this purpose. It might be helpful to consider the following dimensions of the neighborhood.

- What is the name of the community/neighborhood? Where is it located? What are the main geographic boundaries and natural barriers? If a neighborhood, is it geographically isolated or cut off from surrounding neighborhoods? If a population, where do the majority of the people live in the community?
- Is there evidence of what people in the community do for a living? What kinds of commercial enterprises do you see? Do you see evidence of unemployment? What type of transportation is available?
- What kinds of people do you observe (e.g., social class, race, ethnicity, age)? How do people react to you? Are there distinct sub-communities within the larger community? What do people do who live here?
- Are there many religious buildings? What types of parks, recreational areas or cultural resources are present? What are the housing conditions like? Where are the schools, the primary stores, bars, and community centers? Are they accessible?
- What is the condition of the roads, sidewalks, garbage collection, and other components of the community infrastructure?
- What kinds of schools are located in the community? What is their condition? Is there a local library?
- What kinds of voluntary agencies and public service agencies are located in/available to the community?

Other community dimensions you may consider will be discussed in class and through the readings.

**Key Informant Interviews:** Your group will likely find it helpful to talk with community leaders and/or service providers in the area. For example, you could do a brief telephone interview with an elected official, the head of a community agency, or a social worker practicing in the area. You might want to ask informants about what they see as the community’s strengths and needs. You should prepare an interview guide before contacting key informants. The guide should list the key questions you want to explore with informants. Remember it is a guide, thus if the need arises, it is appropriate to diverge from your pre-determined questions. The majority of the questions should be open-ended. The interviewer should develop a summary of what was learned from the interview to share with the team.

Please ensure you clearly state that you are completing the interview as part of a course assignment and that *no information will be released beyond the classroom.* In reporting information gleaned from key informants, ask them if they would like their identity to be kept confidential when you present your profile. If they do, de-identify (i.e., make anonymous) the data (e.g., “a long-term social worker with a community agency noted that ……” versus “Jean Zometa, a social worker in the local community center, reported….”).

**Documents:**
Depending on your selected community, you likely will find relevant documents, which might include agency or government reports, newspaper stories, or even historical documents. Try doing an internet search and see what you will find. Also, when you interview community leaders or service providers, ask them for copies of any relevant documents.

**Analysis:**
Your group should process your observations, key informant data, and information from documents and prepare a summary (point form or brief paragraphs) about what you learned regarding the
neighborhood/community from these sources. Here you are looking for common themes and other important points; an idea does not have to be repeatedly recorded in order for it to be important. As part of the summary, identify what your group considered strengths or assets in the neighborhood as well as its needs, problems, or shortcomings. This information is useful in preparing your profile.

**Quantitative Data:**
Your small group will use the *American Community Survey* produced by the U.S. Census Bureau to identify relevant quantitative indicators in relation to the neighborhood/community you observed. Your group will use quick tables, data profiles, multiyear profiles, and narrative profiles provided in the *American Community Survey* to describe the selected neighborhood/community. Your group will also develop your own custom tables. You will focus on general characteristics, social characteristics, and economic characteristics.

Additionally, to help the reader/audience understand your community you should include comparisons to other communities. For example, if you are examining the aging population in Ann Arbor, your team may also want to compare this population with the aging population in other cities, and on the state and national levels. You might also compare Ann Arbor’s aging community with other groups within the city and other areas, or to the broader population as a whole. Here you are comparing and contrasting each community along key characteristics (this involves deciding what indicators are most meaningful).

**Step 4: Prepare Community Profile**

You will prepare a small booklet (no more than 6 pages, including cover page) that analyzes and synthesizes the information you gathered qualitatively and quantitatively.

The booklet profile should resemble a professional publication that an agency or group of concerned citizens would produce to educate citizens and elected officials. Use charts, graphs, other visuals, and text effectively to convey your points. The key messages your charts, graphs, and other visuals should be explained in brief narrative form. Keep the lay-out visually appealing with ample white space and a reasonable font size and style. Try not to use too much text – you do not want to overwhelm the reader. Such documents are commonly single spaced and written with clarity and simplicity in mind.

In class, you will share your key findings with your colleagues as though they were a group of concerned citizens and elected officials. The presentation can be in Power Point or some other visual display. You have 15 minutes for this presentation, including a brief question and answer period. The presentation should not simply repeat what is in your booklet, but it should highlight the most important findings and the need to build on community strengths and address community needs.

**Please bring six copies of your profile to circulate among the class on December 13.**

**Work to Submit to the Instructor as a Team – Due in class December 13, 2010**

*Please give these things to me before your presentation*

⇒ Community profile booklet
⇒ Minutes from your group meetings
⇒ Copy of your team process evaluation tool and a one-page summary of the results (analysis at the group level and not at the individual member level)
⇒ Copy of your PowerPoint slides and other visual aids
17. Reading list and class schedule

**Session 1: Sep. 13**
Introduction to Macro Social Work
Syllabus and Course Objectives

*Learning Aims*
- To understand the overall nature of the course, including the course objectives, content, readings, and assignments.
- To become familiar with what is meant by macro practice, its history, and its importance to social work.
- To begin to establish a positive, productive learning-teaching environment.
- To begin to get to know one another!

*Required Readings*
- Course syllabus

**Session 2: Sep. 20**
The context of macro social work practice
Policy and Advocacy: Issue identification, planning and development

*Learning Aims*
- To demonstrate familiarity with the various areas of macro practice: community organizing, policy advocacy, and management of human service organizations.
- To demonstrate familiarity with the significance of these areas to social work’s mission and our work with individuals, families, and groups.
- To identify several major contemporary issues and trends that reinforce the need for macro interventions, including issues and trends seen in clinical practice.
- To be familiar with skills and qualities common to micro and macro practice.

*Required Readings*

*Begin reading the following:*
Session 3:  Sep. 27
Policy and advocacy: Strategies and action for social change

⇒ Skill-building session: Writing an op-ed to get your message across and influence policy decisions

Learning Aims
- To articulate the general process of policy advocacy, from issue identification to implementation/evaluation.
- To demonstrate knowledge of the levels at which policy and advocacy can occur.
- To develop understanding of framing and its importance in policy advocacy.

Required Readings

Session 4:  Oct. 4
Program management: program development, planning, and grant writing

⇒ Skill-building session: Writing and presenting an advocacy brief before an elected body

Learning Aims
- To be able to articulate the process of developing social programs.
- To examine and be conversant with the common elements of a grant application.
- To articulate the qualities of successful grants.

Required Readings
  - Ch. 1, pp. 1-12: An Orientation to Proposal Writing.
  - Ch. 2, pp. 13-18: Using Technology in Proposal Development
  - Ch. 3, pp. 19-24: Understanding the Agency, the Community, and the Funder
  - Ch. 4, pp. 25-38: Problem- or Needs-Based Program Development
  - Ch. 5, pp. 39-46: Writing the Needs or Problem Statement
  - Ch. 6, pp. 47-63: Writing Goals, Objectives, and the Implementation Plan
Session 5: Oct. 11
Community assessment (Part I)
Using the American Community Survey for Community Assessment

⇒ Policy advocacy assignment due at beginning of class ⇐

OCT. 11: LIBRARY SESSION
The first half of our class period (1:00-2:30) will be held in the computer classroom on the lower level of the School of Social Work.
Sue Wortman, Social Work Librarian, will lead the group through a workshop on using the American Community Survey for community assessment.
She is available for consultation throughout the semester swortman@umich.edu

Learning Aims
• To explore the use of publicly available quantitative data in macro practice.
• To demonstrate beginning competency in the use of Census, American Community Survey, and American FactFinder.
• To start to understand “community” and community assessment from a capacity-building perspective.

Required Readings

Monday, Oct. 18 – FALL BREAK, NO CLASS MEETING

Required readings
⇒ Readings (on CTools) on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis.

Session 6: Oct. 25
Program management practice: implementation, outcomes, evaluation

⇒ Pre-profile reflection due at the end of class ⇐

⇒ Skill-building presentations: preparing a proposal budget & preparing a logic model

Learning Aims
• To demonstrate knowledge of the process of enacting, monitoring, and evaluating social programs, and some relevant approaches, tools, and skills.
• To demonstrate knowledge of the program logic model and its application to social programs.
• To understand and apply approaches and tools for designing and monitoring programs (e.g., flowcharts, Gantt charts).
• To exhibit familiarity with budget development.

Required Readings

• Coley and Scheinberg, pp. 65-75, pp. 76-94, and Appendix A (pp. 103-106)
• W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Logic Model Development Guide.

Session 7: Nov. 1
Agency management practice: Managing Community-based human services organizations

Learning Aims

• To understand the complexity of human service organizations and the dynamic environments in which they exist.
• To be conversant with human service organizations from the perspectives of multiple stakeholders.

Required readings


Session 8: Nov. 8
Understanding models of community and CO practice

⇒ Mini-proposal due at the beginning of class ⇐

⇒ Skill-building presentation: Conducting community observation to better understand a community

Learning aims

• To start to understand “community” and community assessment from a capacity-building perspective.

Required Readings

Session 9: Nov. 15
Community assessment and community organization development

⇒ Skill-building presentation: Conducting key informant interviews to better understand a community

Learning Aims

• To understand various approaches to defining community and their implications for community organization practice.
• To articulate the general process or stages of community organization, from engagement to termination.
• To review and critique various models of community organization and the position of the “community organizer” in each.
• To be conversant in the dynamics of working with various types of communities, the adoption of insider or outsider roles, and implementing reflective practice.

Required Readings

• Gamble, D. N., & Weil, M. (2010). Communities and community practice in local to global contexts. In, Community practice skills: Local to global perspectives (pp. 5-23). New York: Columbia University Press.

Session 10: Nov. 22
Community Profile Assignment – group work

There will be no class meeting on November 22, 2010 as this session is dedicated to the community profile assignment. This is an opportunity for groups to complete their observations and to conduct key informant interviews (if applicable).

Session 11: Nov. 29
Mobilizing and organizing a community

⇒ Skill-building presentation: Building trust and rapport in diverse groups in the community

Learning aims:

• To explore how to engage community members in the change process.

Required Readings

• Rubin & Rubin, (2008), “Compelling change through power tactics”

*For Interest*


**Session 12: Dec. 6**

Human rights frameworks and global macro practice

⇒ **Skill-building presentation:** Organizing a direct action to influence decision-makers

*Learning Aims*

⇒ To develop familiarity with human rights principles as they apply to social work practice
⇒ To identify ways that global capitalism is shaping the context for macro practice.

*Required Readings:*

• International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (scanned copy in CTools)

**Session 13: Dec. 13**

Community profile reports and presentations
End of semester evaluation/celebration

⇒ **Community profile reports** due at the beginning of class

*Required Reading*