SW 674       Tammie B. Glenn, M.S.W., A.C.S.W.
Community-Based Policy Advocacy
Spring/Summer 2013

SW674: Community-Based Policy Advocacy  
Subject: Community Organization  
Credits: 3  
PreReq: SOCWK 560 or permission of instructor  
Applies To & Method Type: Practice Method Concentration, Advanced CO/P&E Methods

Course Description:
Community-based policy advocacy will be presented as an empowering process that helps to strengthen intra-group and inter-group solidarity as it challenges and attempts to change oppressive structures, systems, and institutions. In contrast to viewing advocacy in the traditional sense -- as a means by which experts represent group interests in legislative, judicial, and executive settings -- this course will explore ways through which traditionally excluded groups advocate for themselves and, in so doing, help build organizations and develop communities.

Course Content:
The course will focus on the analytic and interpersonal skills required to mobilize groups and communities in order to effect policy changes through legislative, judicial, and regulatory channels. It will include both contemporary and historical examples of local, state, national, and international advocacy efforts, involving low-income and low power communities inclusive of diverse dimensions such as 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.

Course Objectives:
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Describe the relationship between contemporary social and political issues and advocacy strategies and tactics;
2. Describe the role of intra-group, inter-group, and political dynamics in the policy advocacy process and their relationship to issues of power, privilege, social justice, and resource distribution;
3. Analyze alternative models, strategies, tactics, and modes of advocacy in terms of their suitability to achieve specific policy goals;
4. Apply skills in planning and conducting advocacy campaigns, mobilizing communities in policy advocacy, and evaluating the results of advocacy efforts;
5. Identify and incorporate within advocacy campaigns attention to issues related to a range of diversity dimensions such as race, gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, and other characteristics associated with privilege, discrimination, domination, and oppression;
6. Identify and analyze value and ethical dilemmas that arise in the course of policy advocacy work;
7. Describe the process of policy development including the use of key terms;
8. Assess policy environments (e.g., bureaucratic, fiscal, legislative, community) and analyze complex systems (e.g., for issue identification and option generation);
9. Explain various advocacy roles (e.g., political, scientific, and ideological);
10. Prepare policy advocacy documents and demonstrate skill in developing written policies (e.g., drafting legislation, writing guidelines and administrative regulations);
11. Apply techniques of education and persuasion, such as media advocacy, lobbying, testifying, popular education and building advocacy coalitions;
12. Describe linkages between local, state, national and international advocacy;
13. Contribute to the development of a climate in the classroom in which everyone can (a) experiment with new skills; (b) explore their own multicultural competence and the implications of one's own background for developing and implementing social and political action strategies; (c) consult with each other on advocacy projects and assignments; & (d) generate plans and strategies for future learning and development.

Course Design:
The course will revolve around the development, implementation, and evaluation of students' group advocacy projects. The specific knowledge and skills required to engage in these projects will be presented through lectures, class discussion/analysis of assigned readings, class exercises and simulations, and group problem-solving activities. Speakers and videos will be used to augment other course materials where appropriate and feasible.

Theme Relation to Multiculturalism & Diversity: The course will focus on working for policy change in a multicultural society, including the problems and potential of engaging in successful advocacy campaigns with diverse populations. Case examples of successful advocacy efforts within multicultural communities will be used to illustrate strategic and tactical issues. Students will develop the capacity to identify ways in which diversity dimensions such as gender, race, ethnicity, social class, age, sexual orientation, disability, and other forms of social stratification and disenfranchisement influence and are affected by the policy advocacy process. Issues of privilege, oppression, and diversity will also be addressed through the discussion of the different client populations served by the systems discussed in the course; the means by which policies are designed in order that they will be responsive to the special circumstances of their clients; and the use of social policies that are targeted towards specific racial, ethnic, or cultural groups.

Theme Relation to Social Justice: Since the emergence of the social work profession in the U.S., the pursuit of social justice through a variety of social and political strategies has been one of its fundamental tenets. This course reflects that heritage and applies those values in the analysis of contemporary policy advocacy efforts. The course also includes
consideration of the social worker's responsibility to promote the general welfare of society commonly confronted in social policy development and enactment, e.g., through the prevention and elimination of discrimination; the promotion of equal access to resources, services, and opportunities; and through advocacy on behalf of specific social policy changes.

**Theme Relation to Promotion, Prevention, Treatment & Rehabilitation:** Promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation activities are difficult to evaluate and, therefore, raise special challenges in social policy advocacy and implementation. These themes will be addressed by comparing and contrasting prevention theory and theories of advocacy and community participation, considering the promotion and prevention effects of empowerment strategies, and studying how community-based advocacy can be used to help develop treatment and rehabilitation options for underserved populations through policy change. 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. The course will also review the particular issues communities face as they pursue policies that will affect their community change and direct service (treatment and rehabilitation) goals.

**Theme Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research:** This will be incorporated throughout the course in at least three ways: 1) through the study of past and contemporary efforts at community-based advocacy; 2) by studying research strategies for community assessment, action planning, and strategy implementation; and 3) by examining and critiquing relevant theories about policy change, social conflict, power, and social change, as well as research that supports these theories. Since policies in the human services are in a constant state of flux due to changing social, economic, and political circumstances, any review of existing policy advocacy strategies may be quickly outdated. Therefore, students will be provided with theoretical models theories to enable them to advocate on behalf of any policy issue encountered in the course of their professional activities.

**Relationship to SW Ethics and Values:** The NASW Code of Ethics establishes an ethical imperative for social workers to engage in social and political action on behalf of social justice and in support of the needs of diverse and disadvantaged populations. This course covers a complex array of ethical dilemmas that arise in the process of developing and enacting social policies. It will examine the ways in which the NASW Code of Ethics may be used to guide and resolve value and ethical issues. It also discusses some of the ethical issues involved in pursuing social justice through policy advocacy work. In particular, the course will review such ethical issues as confidentiality, self-determination, respect for cultural and religious differences, allocation of scarce resources, and the promotion of social justice.

**Intensive Focus on PODS:**  
**Faculty Approval:** 12/8/2006
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| Course Schedule |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1   | May 13\textsuperscript{rd} | Opening and Orientation |
| 2   | May 20\textsuperscript{th} | Core Concepts |
| 3   | May 27\textsuperscript{th} | Core Concepts |
| 4   | June 3\textsuperscript{rd} | Community Agencies |
|     |                         | Grassroots Groups |
| 5   | June 10\textsuperscript{th} | Steps in the Process |
|     |                         | Formulating Strategy |
|     |                         | Planning for Change |
| 6   | June 17\textsuperscript{th} | Engaging Communities |
| 7   | June 24\textsuperscript{th} | Building Organizational Capacity |
| 8   | July 1\textsuperscript{st} | Team Meetings |
|     |                         | Instructor Meetings |
| 9   | July 8\textsuperscript{th} | Forming Community Coalitions |
|     |                         | Intergroup Dialogue |
| 10  | July 15\textsuperscript{th} | Influencing Individuals |
|     |                         | Influencing Groups |
| 11  | July 22\textsuperscript{nd} | Project Reports |
| 12  | July 29\textsuperscript{th} | Project Reports |
Community-Based Policy Advocacy

Reading List

**Core Concepts**


**Community Agencies**


Websites of Hampton Coalition for Youth, Boston Mayor’s Youth Council.

**Grassroots Groups**


Websites of Southern Echo, SouthWest Organizing Project, Coleman Advocates.
Steps in the Process


Website of U.S. Chamber of Commerce Small Business Nation at http://www.uschambersmallbusinessnation.com/community/

Formulating Strategy


Engaging Communities


Participation and People. net http://www.peopleandparticipation.net/display/ProcessPlanner/Home

Driskell, Chapter 2.

Building Organizational Capacity

Mattesich & Monsey, skim.


Forming Community Coalitions


Coalition Building II: Maintaining a Coalition. Community Tool Box at /en/tablecontents/sub_section_tools_1058.aspx


**Intergroup Dialogue**


**Influencing Individuals: Building Relationships and Lobbying**


**Influencing Groups: Making Presentations and Testifying**


Bobo, Chapter 13.

**Using the Internet**


Assignment 1:

What is your definition of community-based policy advocacy? Based on the readings, what criteria would you use to assess its activities and outcomes?

By these criteria, write a paper in which you assess the activities and outcomes of the work described in one of the following books. Read the book, form a study group to discuss its contents, come to class on June 3rd prepared for class discussion about your findings, and then write the paper.

*(5-8 typewritten pages in which you discuss your findings as well as the results of the class discussion, 10 percent, June 10th due.)*


Assignment 2:

What is a policy issue that concerns you? Who is affected by the issue and how are they affected? What are the main causes of the issue? What are some possible solutions? What impact will the proposed solution have on social justice? Write a paper in which you discuss these questions. *(3-5 pages, 20 percent, due June 24th.)*

Please include a supplementary one-page policy fact sheet, prepared as if to share with an influential stakeholder and, in addition, a few talking points you’d want to make to him or her. You will present this fact sheet to your class.

Assignment 3:

Formulate a strategy for a grassroots group or community agency to increase the involvement of young people in public policy. Consult with the group, gather information, formulate a strategy, and prepare a written report for presentation and feedback in class and to a community leader or agency staff member if allowed. *(12-15 pages, 50 percent, due July 15th.)*
Assignment 4:

What is a socially-just community, and what is a socially-just community-based policy advocacy process for accomplishing it? Synthesize and refer to the readings. **(3-5 pages, 10 percent, due July 29th.)**

Class Participation

Class participation is good for everyone. It might include involvement in discussions, group leadership, volunteering, or other activities. (10 percent.)

Participation requires regular attendance, coming to class on time, preparation and engagement in class discussions, and submission of assignments on scheduled dates unless arranged in advance. “Showing up” is itself not participation in the course. Absence from class might result in lowering your grade.

Course Readings

Almost all course readings are available on CTools. Please check CTools to confirm their availability and contact the instructor if anything is awry.

The books for assignment #1 are available for purchase at Common Language Bookstore 317 Braun Court, Kerrytown, Ann Arbor.

On-Line Resources

There are various on-line resources which are relevant for your work in the course, including Comm-Org and Community Tool Box.

Metropolitan Detroit

Segregation and diversity in metropolitan Detroit will be one of our themes during the semester. Following are a few optional readings, for your information:


“The Way We Learn” Separate and Unequal in Metropolitan Detroit Schools, at www.bamn.com/slideshow/detroit/detroit-slideshow.pps

Excellent Schools Detroit, at www.excellentschoolsdetroit.org/
**Paper Revision Policy**

You may revise and resubmit any paper for reevaluation until the last session. Papers are due on assigned dates without extension, unless prearranged with the instructor.

All papers in the course should be submitted in hard copy.

**General Guidelines for Papers**

1. Make a specific point. Express what you think.
2. Quality and depth of analysis of information and ideas, and relevance to the topic.
3. Appropriate use of empirical evidence and references, as well as their variety and range.
4. Quality of presentation, e.g., introduction, logical sequencing, conclusion.
5. Use of proper grammar and professional presentation of material.
6. Level of effort expressed in written work.

**Class Climate**

We want to create a classroom climate in which everyone can experiment with new ideas or skills; explore their own cultural competencies and their implications for social and political action; consult with others on assignments and projects; and identify areas for future learning.

**Using Laptops**

Using laptops for taking notes is acceptable, but using them for other purposes is distracting to others.

**Academic Integrity**

We will follow the Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct in the School of Social Work Student Handbook. Web resources on academic integrity developed by the University’s Center for Research on Learning and Teaching can be found at their website.

**Disabilities Statement**

If you have a disability or condition that may interfere with your participation in this course, please schedule a private appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your needs. This information will be kept strictly confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, (734) 763-3000.

**Contacting the Instructor**

My e-mail is tglenn@umich.edu, my office is 2764 SSWB, and my cell telephone is 810-919-9009. I am available through e-mail, telephone, and by appointment. I want to get to know you, and hope that you will arrange a time when we can talk early in the semester.
Student Information Form

Name:

Address:

E-Mail: Telephone:

UM program:

Professional goal:

Community experience:

Interest in course topic:

Experience or skill which might be useful to the class:

Something that will help me get to know you better: