COURSE TITLE: Policies and Services for Social Participation and Community Well-Being

COURSE NUMBER: 647 (Winter 2014, Section 004, Class #24242
TIME & PLACE Tuesday 2:00-5:00pm, Room 2752, SSWB
CREDIT HOURS: 3
PREREQUISITES: SW 530 or permission of instructor
INSTRUCTOR: Maureen Okasinski, MSW, LEO Intermittent Lecturer
CONTACT DETAILS: SSWB - Rm. 3760
E-mail: mokasins@umich.edu
Phone: 313 303.8911
OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday 12:30-1:30pm or by appointment

• This syllabus reflects the collaborative efforts of sw647 instructors Larry Gant, Janet Ray and Maureen Okasinski

COURSE STATEMENT

This course statement was approved by Governing Faculty on Nov. 8, 2006.

1. Course Description
This course will survey the policies and services that promote a civil society and enhance human rights in the framework of American democracy. Emphasis will be placed on those policies and services which serve to enhance social participation, economic security, respect for diversity, voluntary action, and community and corporate responsibility. Students will learn to describe and analyze how complex and emerging social problems arise within society, and how social problems impact individuals, groups, organizations, and communities. Programs within various units of government, nonprofit and social service organizations, and corporations will be reviewed. Various partnerships and collaborations among funders and service providers will be examined.

2. Course Content
SW 647 Students will learn that community well-being is enhanced when social problems are managed, human needs are met, and social opportunities and human rights are optimized. Students will learn to utilize social work values, methods, and skills to challenge individual, group, organizational, and community differences in power, privilege, and oppression; and to promote social justice. These interactions will be examined, with special attention given to those leading to policies and programs that enhance opportunities for social participation, economic security, respect for diversity, voluntary action, and community and corporate responsibility.

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Selected public laws, programs, and structures that enhance citizen participation, rights, and responsibilities will be described and compared within diverse populations (e.g., the diversity dimensions including 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). Emphasis will be placed on those that address participation of diverse and socially excluded populations and on the social worker’s responsibility for facilitating such social and political participation and engagement. Examples will include the use of mediating structures, such as citizen boards, advisory groups, commissions, and the involvement of citizens and other in promoting and guiding positive social change. In many of these structures, participation is intended to enhance citizen capacity to initiate and oversee action. However, participatory structures are also intended to assure the responsiveness of programs of a promotional, service, or preventive nature. These programs are designed to: 1) diminish poverty and economic insecurity; 2) address personal crises and community emergencies (such as those brought about by violence against persons and property, natural and environmental disasters, or economic dislocation); 3) resettle and integrate refugees and other immigrant and migrant populations; and 4) respond to the needs of social identity groups seeking social justice (e.g., feminist, faith-based, ethnic, gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender, and other discriminated against groups). Students will also gain and apply knowledge about social group memberships and identities, their histories and meanings, how they intersect with each other in people’s lives and the larger society, and how they are affected by particular social contexts. In addition, the participatory opportunities provided via self-help, grass roots associations and informal networks, and congregationally-based service providers will be considered.

3. Course Objectives

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

1. Develop the skills in critical consciousness and reflective professional practice.
2. Access and use traditional and non-traditional sectors that engage, strengthen, and build well-being and social justice at all levels of social systems
3. Demonstrate knowledge of social policies that social workers use to effectively interface with individuals, families, communities, and other social systems.
4. Recognize key aspects of the structures, legal standing, and roles of the nonprofit sector in providing human services, advocating for human rights, and promoting well-being.
5. Identify and apply commonly used indicators of social, economic, and other measures of community well-being.
6. Compare the levels and types of participation for members or representatives of groups experiencing discrimination in mediating structures that are intended to promote well-being.
7. Gain skills for engagement with relevant systems and communities needed to work together for desired goals in both traditional and nontraditional settings for social work.
8. Develop skills for interaction, collaboration, and communication between different types of social care systems, including government, voluntary and nonprofit organizations, and private-pay systems.
9. Identify the factors that lead to or detract from such participation (from the perspectives of socially excluded groups and the social work practitioners who bear some responsibility for promoting participation.)

4. Course Design

In-class activities, readings, and course assignments will be coordinated so as to enhance course objectives. For example, simulations of real-work processes, films, and videos presented in the classroom will provide the contextual background for student observation and interview assignments in the community. Lectures by the instructor will be complemented by student presentations and by panels of guests representing consumers, providers, professionals, and volunteers involved in advocacy and community education as well as in service delivery.

5. Theme Relation to Social Justice

Social Justice underlies the creation of mediating structures, programs, and policies expressly designed to enhance community well-being. Students will examine these issues, as well as Social Work's historic commitment to social justice and engagement in planned change.

6. Theme Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research

This course will be based on the twin assumptions that the programs and policies to be studied can be understood through social scientific methods and that scientific concepts can also be used in the design of effective programs and policies. Students will learn to apply advanced analytical techniques to assess the strengths, needs, and capacities of individuals, groups, organizations and communities. However, even this assumption needs analysis. Scientific perspectives can lead to very different understandings and policies. For example, much of sociology can be divided into two perspectives: 1) structuralist/functionalist perspectives advocate for eliminating the cultural and behavioral skill differences between groups and the legal, economic, and other barriers to full participation, whereas 2) conflict perspectives assume that societies tend towards conflict because power and resources are inequitably distributed, and that conflict is, in the long run, positive because it increases the likelihood of expanding access to social goods. These perspectives infuse many of the readings and analyses presented in this course. Applying one or the other can lead to different interpretations of events and social processes and to very different social agendas and programs for social change. For this reason, even the social science knowledge base of this course will itself be subject to examination.

7. Relationship to SW Ethics and Values

This course will address ethical and value issues related to policies and services for social participation and community well-being. The NASW Code of Ethics and other professional and organizational codes (e.g. IFSW) will be used to inform practice in this area. Special emphasis will be placed on the social worker's responsibility to promote the general welfare of society by preventing and eliminating discrimination, ensuring equal access to resources, expanding choices and opportunities for all persons, encouraging respect for diversity, advocating for changes in social policies, and encouraging informed participation by the public. In addition, ethical issues related to working with various client systems will
be reviewed, such as confidentiality, privacy, rights and prerogatives of clients, the client's best interest, proper and improper relationships with clients, interruption of services, and termination.

8. Intensive Focus on 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 developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self knowledge and self awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

9. RELEVANT POLICIES

A. Religious Holidays

Students who observe a religious holiday on the same day as class will have access to the class materials covered that day. Students are expected to notify the instructor if they plan to miss class. The official University of Michigan policy on religious holidays, and a list of possible conflicts with classes, can be found at:

http://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious_holidays.html

B. Learning Needs and Disabilities

If you have a disability or condition that may interfere with your participation in this course, please schedule a private appointment with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your specific 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.

C. Attendance

The School of Social Work attendance policy can be found in the Student Guide. Attendance is recorded in this course and is reflected as part of the scoring for class participation.

D. Electronic Devices

In consideration of your classmates and your own learning, please mute all devices during class. If you must be on call for personal or work reasons, let them know this is only for emergencies that no one else can handle. Personal communications such as texting or surfing are fine during breaks and are not during class time. Interruptions, no matter how brief, affect your ability to focus and research has found that it takes 20-40 minutes to get back to your level of productivity prior to the interruption. Computer
use during class time that supports the mission of the course (e.g. taking notes) is encourage. There will be times that I ask for screens down during some parts of the class and I expect ready compliance with that request.

E. Please review the Student Guide section on Ethical Conduct in the University Environment. This section addresses plagiarism, harassment and discrimination policies.

10. Assignments

I grade assignments using the grading rubric found in the rubrics folder in c-tools/resources. **Follow this rubric** to complete the assignment. A hard copy of the assignment is due at the beginning of class (APA style/formatting is required) and a digital copy is submitted in ctools in your dropbox folder and due at the beginning of class. If you are unsure of the requirements for APA style, use the APA checklist provided in ctools/resources/assignment aides.

You are strongly encouraged to **submit a draft** for review prior to submitting the final paper. I will review the draft and provide feedback based on the rubric. Most students have found this helpful in producing a quality paper that earns the grade they desire.

**Late papers** will have their letter grade reduced by ½ a letter grade for each day they are late. The day count begins once class starts on the day the paper is due. I will first score the paper as if it was submitted on time, so the student knows how I rated the quality of their work and then I will subtract the equivalent of ½ of a letter grade from those points for each day the paper is late. The point subtraction will be the amount that is equivalent of the middle range for each letter grade. For example, if a student earned 35/35 (100%) on the policy brief assignment and submitted the paper 2 days late, the grade would go from an A+ to a A- (31.5 points/92%)

**Group projects** are not a requirement of this class. If you would like to work with a partner on either assignment 1 or 3, you may do so with approval of the instructor. You must ask for approval by week three of the course, no group projects will be approved after that class.

**Assignment 1: Policy Brief – Community Well-Being**

This assignment requires each student to analyze a large institution, municipal, county, state, tribal, federal or international policy and reflect on how successful it is in achieving its goal of community well-being within the specific area of concern. Students will incorporate one of more areas of special focus (PODS) in this brief. It will work best if you analyze a policy relevant to your field placement agency and the population served/issue of community well-being the agency seeks to address. This particular policy can be incorporated into all three assignments if you so desire.

The brief should include the nine components of a policy brief which are executive summary, statement of the issue, background, statement of organization interest, pre-existing policies, policy options, policy option comparison (including a criterion comparison matrix), recommendation and bibliography. For more information, see the course Ctool site, A Guideline for Writing a Policy Brief. Include in the comparison matrix social and economic well-being indicators on the community and individual level,
cost and benefit. Other criteria that are appropriate to the specific area of concern should be added to the criterion comparison matrix. Use the assignment grading rubric for a checklist of required components. The final product will be a 10 page written paper.

Assignment 2: Policy Advocacy Analysis – systematic change by visiting a policy /decision maker

This assignment will develop your skill set to advocate for social change on the system level by scheduling a visit with a politician or decision maker. You will have the opportunity to include community stakeholders that are impacted by the policy/issue. Students will share their progress on preparation, scheduling and holding their visit during class time. You are required to submit a post-visit paper that covers the stages of the advocacy visit. Divide your (10 page maximum) paper into the following section headers and address the questions below. Using research and your policy brief (assignment #1) is encouraged during your visit.

A. Preparing for Your Visit
   1) What is your issue that inhibits social well-being?
   2) Who from the community is impacted by this issue?
   3) How are you going to invite these community stakeholders to give input and participate in the policy maker visit? (this is about community participation, not solely your individual concerns)
   4) What are the policies that have been created (or recently revised) to address this issue?
   5) What is the change in policy or policies that need to be created that you and the community stakeholder are promoting?
   6) What commonly used indicators of social and economic well-being, or other measures can you use to gauge the effectiveness of policy change. Describe this in economic terms especially since budgets and deficits are a head liner issue of today.
   7) What did you do to practice your roles and statements prior to the visit?
   8) Create written material to give to your policy maker, attach as appendix (Assignment 1 policy brief is a wonderful aid)

B. Scheduling Your Visit: (classroom sharing only, not included in the paper)
   9) Who did you contact to ask and confirm your visit?
   10) What time of day and location was selected?
   11) Why these?
   12) How to did you select this particular decision/policy maker?
   13) How can you incorporate traditional and non-traditional settings and members into your visit?

C. Hold a Visit
   14) Was the visit a formal or an informal format?
   15) How long did you visit last?
   16) What documents (policy brief, petition, draft law) was given to the policy maker?
   17) Where did you see PODS operating during the visit?
   18) Describe each person role, their PODS social location and their respective influence on the policy maker.
   19) What commitments were made during the visit?
D. Visit Follow-Up

20) What follow up is required & with whom in order to create the change your desire?
21) Who and by what time will the follow up be completed?
22) Did you send a thank you card to key people? (the policy maker & stakeholder)
23) What were the key lessons learned from this visit?

Assignment 3: Creating a Socially Just Policy and conducting a ‘socially just’ policy analysis re: creation, enhancement, or stability of Community Participation.

Students will generate a policy consistent with the notion of social justice as discussed in SW 647. Students will present findings to class regarding a policy (and process) that will support, facilitate, enable, or prevent community participation in a component of the community’s subsystems (e.g., housing, economics, health, education, arts, faith based). Remember to incorporate the focus on privilege, oppression, diversity and social justice. Students may use any policy approach or model discussed in the class. Students must use any two quantitative analytic strategies demonstrated in class, e.g. criteria alternatives matrices, benefit cost analyses, risk analysis, social discounting, etc.

Papers will be 10 to 12 pages long and will include:

• Identification of the existing policy
• Two quantitative, analytic strategies
• Review relevant literature
• Incorporate community perspectives on the issues; describe how were stakeholders included
• A Force Field Analysis (this is NOT a quantitative strategy unless weights are computed and applied)
• A proposed revised policy or service goal to increase the quality or quantity of community participation.
• Operationalization “social justice” in your proposed policy
• A formal recommendation of policy (with justification and prospective analysis)
• A strategy to evaluate the success of the policy revision
• Discussion of the nature, type, quality and effectiveness of community participation engendered

Assignment 4: Class Participation

Students are expected to attend every class session, come on time, have read the required readings, and participate in class discussions and exercises. Participation and class attendance are professional responsibilities. They are critical elements of this class. Students should be prepared to discuss assigned readings and to share experiential knowledge. If you are unable to attend a session, prior notice is expected as demonstration of professionalism.

In addition, each student is expected to “take the lead” in a small group discussion linking a specific case study (or other reading) to course themes and specific learning objectives. Macro practice includes the
skills of group facilitation. In small teams that are randomly assigned, you will be expected to help open and assist with facilitating a discussion of the readings assigned for a particular week. This may include a very brief summary of the readings (e.g., one or two sentences), developing opening questions, and/or creating a brief activity to help us discuss the readings/competency skills. You have 30 minutes. The goal of this exercise is to facilitate learning that encourages critical and engaging dialogue among your colleagues.

Your participation grade will be based on:

1. Attendance
2. Active participation in class and small group discussions, even if that means getting out of the comfort zone.
3. “Taking the Lead” on class discussion on your assigned day
4. Ability to discuss ideas with colleagues in a respectful manner
5. Ability to engage in reflective learning
6. Sharing of examples from your experiences (field placement and others), current events, or literature related to course topics.
7. Demonstration that required readings have been completed by sharing examples or asking relevant questions in class.

NOTE: If students have prior experience with the assignments listed above, they can propose an alternative learning assignment to substitute for one or more of the assignments described in this syllabus. Assignment substitutions request must be done in advance by week three.

11. Grading System
A 100-point system is used. At the end of the semester, the assignment points earned will be translated into letter grades according to the following formula:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81-83</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-80</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>&lt;69</td>
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Incompletes
Incompletes are not granted unless it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the normal expectations of the course. The student must formally request an incomplete with the instructor prior to the final weeks of class.

12. ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Draft date</th>
<th>Final date</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Policy Decision</td>
<td>3/25</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maker Visit</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3. Creation of Socially Just Policy
   4/8        4/22        35
4. Participation     ongoing      10

13. TEXTS
REQUIdED

14. SESSIONS, LEARNING TOPICS, & READINGS

All readings are available in the course c-tools site in the RESOURCE -Readings folder.

Note: Readings for this course have been selected carefully to reflect policies at the community and social systems level. Students should come to class having read the assigned readings and prepared to discuss and integrate them with classroom and field content. Some in-class exercises have been developed to synthesize and apply readings to practice situations.

• 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 social participation, policy?
  • What points, if any, do you like, agree with or find helpful in terms of understanding issues related to policy? Why?
  • What points, if any, do you dislike, disagree with or find unhelpful in terms of understanding issues related to community well-being? 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 justice practice?

1. 1/14 Introductions, Review of Course, Explore course themes
   a. Reading required prior to class: none
   b. Due: 0
2. **1/21 Overview of Social Policy and Citizen Participation**

   a. **Required readings:**


   vi. **Case Studies** for small group discussion (What aspect of social justice & well-being? How did citizens participate? Who initiated this participation & why? What effect?)

      1. Boston South End

      2. Oak Park

      3. Chicagoland

   b. **Due: 0**

3. **1/28 Concepts and Indicators of Community Well-Being**

   a. **Required Readings**


v. Case studies for small group discussion (What Entity? What is their perspective/purpose? How does this promote social justice? What indicators do they use? Which of these indicators interest you and what do these indicators say about the issue you care about?)


2. Kids Count Kids Count Data Center


b. due: request to work with partner on assignment

4. 2/4 Policy Analysis: Overview

a. Required Readings

i. Bardach: A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis the eightfold path to more Effective Problem Solving Appendix B: Things Governments Do


iv. Small groups

4. Bardach policy example (Drugs), Appendix A, pp 111-126

5. Student sample-c-tools

6. Other sample-c-tools

5. 2/11: Policy Analysis: Gathering the Evidence

a. Required readings

i. Bardach: A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis the eightfold path to more Effective Problem Solving: Part II Assembling Evidence


iii. Small groups (Citizen Participation in Environmental Issues)


6. 2/18 Policy Analysis, Developing an Analysis, Decision Matrix

a. Readings


ii. How To Create a Decision Matrix, Velaction Videos, 10 minutes retrieved 12/28/2013 from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cy4cX34U87Y


iv. Small groups: cost benefit and cost effectiveness, analysis in action


7. 2/25 Youth Policy and Well Being + Communicating with Decision Makers

a. Readings
i. Bardach: A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis the eightfold path to more Effective Problem Solving: Appendix D

ii. National Association of Social Workers: Lobby Day Tool Kits (March 2009)

v. small groups:
   3. Playing the news 43919-D 20 min 2009 In 2004, television, radio and print media covered the U.S.-led attack on Fallujah. So did one video game. But can video games do journalism? This documentary examines the role played by New York based reality games company Kuma Reality Games in connecting young people to current events.

b. due: Policy Analysis draft

March 4 - Spring Recess - no class

8. 3/11 Community Benefit Agreements

a. readings

ii. small groups: community benefit agreement
b. due: Policy Analysis final paper

9. 3/18 Economic Well-Being

a. readings


iv. Small groups:


10. 3/25 Private Foundations & Citizens Creating Policy Change

a. Readings


b. Due: Visit to Decision maker paper

10. 4/1 Work & Home

a. Readings


iv. Small groups:

b. Due: 0

12. 4/8 Citizen Participation in Shaping Communities

a. Reading/film

ii. View choices:

1. **Across the River: Saving America's Inner Cities** Films for the Humanities & Sciences, producer. 1995. 58 minutes.

2. **Holding Ground: The Rebirth of Dudley Street** Mark Lipman and Leah Mahan, producers. 1996. 58 minutes.

3. **Becoming Good Neighbors: Enriching America’s Communities by Design** GVI, producer. 1998. 56:42 minutes.

4. **Divided Highways** Larry Hott and Tom Lewis, in association with WETA-TV, Washington, DC, producers. 1999. 85 minutes.

b. due: 0

13. **4/15** Class Presentations of Just Social Policy creation + what else

14. **4/22** Class Presentations Course Wrap Up

15. **4/29** Exam Week – No class

**LEO Lecturers’ Employee Organization, Local 6244, AFL-CIO**