SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

COURSE TITLE: Policies and Services for Social Participation and Community Well-Being
COURSE NUMBER: SW 647 (Winter Term, 2015, Section 003, Class# 21855)
TIME & PLACE: Tuesday, 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., Room B684 - SSWB
CREDIT HOURS: 3
PREREQUISITES: None
INSTRUCTOR: Rabindar Subbian, MSW, MBA
CONTACT DETAILS: E-mail: Rabindar Subbian: rabindar@umich.edu, Phone: 314.322.6184
OFFICE HOURS: By appointment

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

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Sincere thanks to Maureen Okasinski from whose past SW 647 syllabus the contents of this one have been drawn from and to Larry Gant and Janet Ray from who she drew her inspiration from.

COURSE BACKGROUND

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.
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.

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.

Course Objectives

On completion of this course, students using a generalist social work practice framework 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.)

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.

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.

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.

Theme Relation to Social Work 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
Intensive Focus on 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 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.

Course Information Above - Faculty Approved Nov. 8, 2006.

Accommodations

If you have a condition or disability that may affect or interfere with your participation in this course, please contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your specific needs. It is the School of Social Work’s policy that instructors keep this information strictly confidential.

Information and resources for accommodations is also available with the office of Services for Students with Disability (SSD).

On August 18, 2014 their location and contact information was as follows:

- **Location**—G-664 Haven Hall, 505 South State St., Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1045
- **Phone**— (734) 763-3000, (734) 615-4461 (TDD), (734) 619-3947 (VP)
- **Email**— ssdoffice@umich.edu
- **Working Hours**— Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Please note that contact, location and working hours may change without notification. Most up to date contact, location and working hours information for the office is available via the search function of the University of Michigan website http://www.umich.edu and the University of Michigan Phone Directory service.

Creating a Positive Learning Environment

This section of the syllabus has been quoted from Janet Ray's syllabus for SW 560 offered in the Fall 2013 semester. The instructor acknowledges her generous help in explaining how to create a positive learning experience. Ms. Ray has in turn acknowledged the collaborative efforts of SW 560 instructors Luke Schaefer, Lorraine Gutierrez, Shane Brady, Tony Rothschild, Trina Shanks, Diane Vinokur and Michael Woodford in the creation of her syllabus.

"Critical analysis and discussion are integral components of graduate education, empowerment, and adult education. Thus, it is important to foster an environment in which all participants are willing to express their opinions and perspectives. At times, this engagement can involve some risk, but it is hoped that you will feel comfortable 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. 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.

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 respecting 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 (adapted by M. Woodford from MSW Handbook, Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto)."
Electronic Devices

In consideration of your fellow students in this class please set all mobile phones that you bring to class on vibrate. If you need to take a call, please step outside and then answer the phone to ensure that the class is not disrupted.

Religious Observances

Please let the instructor(s) know of your religious observances that may conflict with class attendance or assignment due dates or group work so that appropriate arrangements can be made. It would make the instructor(s) (and possibly of your fellow team members’) lives easier if you bring this up during the first week of the semester.

CLASS DETAILS

CLASS SESSIONS AND READINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session Topic(s)</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 13</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2       | Jan 20 | Social Work Policy & Service Exploration  
- Citizen Participation |  
| 3       | Jan 27 | Social Work Policy & Service Exploration  
- Concepts and Indicators of Community Wellbeing |  
| 4       | Feb 3 | Social Work Policy & Service Exploration  
- Overview of Policy Analysis  
- Systemic Inequality  
- Case for greater equality |  
Small Group Discussions  
Plus Short New York Times Articles / Blog Posts for the week posted on Canvas |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Social Work Policy &amp; Service Exploration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 5 Feb 10 | **Social Work Policy & Service Exploration**  
- Policy Analysis  
- Developing an Analysis  
- Decision Matrix in Policy Analysis  
- Oppression, Systems & Policy |
**ALL**: Video: How To Create a Decision Matrix, Velaction Videos, 10 minutes retrieved 12/28/2013 from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cCy4cX34U87Y |

**Small Group Discussions**  
**ALL**: Short New York Times Articles / Blog Posts for the week posted on Canvas |

| 6 Feb 17 | **Social Work Policy & Service Exploration**  
- Gathering Evidence for Policy Creation & Change  
- Poverty, Wages & Policy |
**ALL**: Short New York Times Articles / Blog Posts for the week posted on Canvas |

| 7 Feb 24 | **Social Work Policy & Service Exploration**  
- Policies for Youth and Well-being  
- Communicating with decision makers in policy development  
- Economics and well-being  
- Poverty, Wages & Policy (contd.) |
**Small Group Discussions**  
**ALL**: Short New York Times Articles / Blog Posts for the week posted on Canvas |
| 8 | Mar 10 | Social Work Policy & Service Exploration  
• Youth Policy and Wellbeing  
• Educational Policy  
|---|---|---|
| 9 | Mar 17 | Social Work Policy & Service Exploration  
• Community Benefit Agreements  
• Educational Policy (contd.)  
| 10 | Mar 24 | Social Work Policy & Service Exploration  
• Private Foundations & Citizens creating policy change  
• Discrimination – policies impacting gender & race  
| 11 | Mar 31 | Social Work Policy & Service Exploration  
• Policies of housing, shelter & food  
• Shaping of communities through citizen  

**Small Group Discussions**
- **TEAM D**: 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.

**Plus Short New York Times Articles / Blog Posts for the week posted on Canvas**

**TEAM C**

**TEAM C**

**Plus Short New York Times Articles / Blog Posts for the week posted on Canvas**

**TEAM C**
- **ALL TEAMS**: Williams, J.C. (2005) The Politics of Homelessness: Shelter Now and


Assignments

Individual assignments are assignments that you will complete by yourself and team assignments are those you will complete in collaboration with your assigned team. All work must be your personal work that you contribute (either to your individual assignment or to your team's) and the work of others needs to be properly attributed. (Please pay close attention to the "Academic Honesty and Integrity" section of this syllabus in terms of attribution expectations.) All assignments are due at the beginning of lecture time on the date they are due unless otherwise stated and should be submitted via the Canvas site for the course. If you think you will be late submitting an assignment please inform the instructor(s) before the due date. The instructor may at her/his discretion accept late assignments and may impose a penalty of up to 50% of points earned for the assignment on a case by case basis. This includes team assignments, if any, and the whole team will be penalized for late submissions.

Lecture attendance, participation and Q&A (Max.: 35 points)

You can earn a maximum of 45 points towards "Lecture attendance, participation and Q&A" during Sessions 2 through 13, typically a maximum of 3 points per session. The number of points you earn during a given lecture is based on the instructor’s evaluation of your attendance, preparation and participation as follows:

1. Attendance: Attend the entirety of the lecture (i.e., not be late and not leave early without the instructor’s prior permission).
2. **Preparation:** Successfully answer to the instructor’s satisfaction any course content or lecture related questions you are invited to answer during the lecture.

3. **Participation:** Participate in small group discussions and "Main Points" presentations to peers as evaluated by the instructor. Discuss ideas with peers in a respectful manner and engage in reflective learning. Share examples from your experiences, current events, field placement, prior work or from literature related to course topics.

You will both be a teacher and a student. To effectively execute the dual roles, reading and understanding the assigned readings and other course material before each lecture is essential. If you fail to read the assigned articles you damage the learning of your fellow students as well as your own.

**Instructor Evaluation of your Holistic Contribution to the class (Max.: 10 points)**

Each semester some students contribute exceptionally to their learning and that of their peers. This evaluation provides a mechanism to acknowledge their contributions and positively influence their grade. At the end of the term your holistic contribution to the class will be evaluated by the instructor and you can earn a maximum of 10 points toward your grade for the course.

**Policy Analysis Brief (Max.: 20 points)**

This is a team assignment. Each team is required 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. You 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 site resource that will be posted on Canvas, 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.

**Socially Just Policy Creation (Max.: 30 points)**

This is a team assignment. As a team you will generate a policy consistent with the notion of social justice as discussed in this course. You will present findings to the class on 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
- Review relevant literature
- Two quantitative, analytic strategies
- Incorporate community perspectives on the issues; describe how were stakeholders included
Reflection Paper (0 points) & Individual Evaluation of Team (Max.: 5 points)

The initial 'Reflection Paper' will carry no points assigned. It is a way to help you reflect on working in a team and get to know the people you will work with through the term. Specific details about the paper and the assignment will be provided during lecture. The 'Individual Evaluation of Team' is a required individual assignment. It is an opportunity at the end of the semester for you to provide input into your individual contributions in team assignments and provide feedback on your experiences working in your assigned team. It is expected that your responses will be confidential and that you as a student will not have access to the submissions of other students in the class. You can earn a maximum of 5 points towards your grade for the course in this assignment based on the feedback you provide and the feedback received from other members of your team.

Grading

As an instructor I want each student to attain their greatest learning potential for this course. I am not a gate keeper to your grade and view myself as a facilitator to your achieving the maximum grade you deserve based on the learning you achieve. Points will be applied toward deciding your grade for the course. A listing of points that can be earned is as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>MAXIMUM POINTS</th>
<th>MAXIMUM POINTS AS A % OF TOTAL COURSE POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecture attendance, participation and Q&amp;A</td>
<td>35 points</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor's evaluation of student's holistic contribution to the class during the semester</td>
<td>10 points</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Brief Assignment (Team Assignment)</td>
<td>20 points</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socially Just Policy (Team Assignment)</td>
<td>30 points</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Paper/Individual Evaluation of Team</td>
<td>5 points</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 POINTS</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Translation of points earned to grade assigned for course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades of "A+" are typically earned by students who turn in exceptional work in assignments and actively participate in class and in their assigned teams.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

The "Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct" of the School of Social Work, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, applies to all your work in this course. Cheating, plagiarism and academic dishonesty is prohibited and engaging in...
them can have serious consequences. Plagiarism is "representing someone else's ideas, words, statements or works as one's own without proper acknowledgment or citation."\(^1\) Section 1.12.02 of the 2013-14 MSW Student Guide states:

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:
1. Using or otherwise taking credit for someone else's work or ideas.
2. Using the language of another without full and proper quotation or source citation.
3. Implicitly presenting the appropriated words or ideas of another as one's own.
4. Using Internet source material, in whole or in part, without careful and specific reference to the source.
5. Borrowing facts, statistics, or other illustrative material without proper reference, unless the information is common knowledge or in common public use.
6. Self-plagiarism, that is, reusing one's own work without acknowledgment that the text appears elsewhere (e.g. in a paper for another current or previous class).

Plagiarism, like other forms of cheating and misconduct, is taken very seriously at the University of Michigan and is grounds for expulsion from the University.

Please familiarize yourself with "Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct" section of the MSW handbook of the school. Instructors are required to report all violations of the code by students to the school administration.

**COURSE MATERIALS & TEXTS**

**Required Texts:**


**Recommended Texts**


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

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