



<b>COURSE TITLE:</b>	<b>Introduction to Community Organization, Management and Policy/Evaluation Practice</b>
<b>COURSE NUMBER:</b>	<b>SW 560 (Sections 001 &amp; 005)</b>
<b>CREDIT HOURS:</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>PREREQUISITES:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>LOCATION:</b>	<b>Monday—SSWB-Rm. 3816 &amp; Tuesday—SSWB-Rm. B770</b>
<b>SEMESTER:</b>	<b>Fall 2017</b>
<b>FACULTY:</b>	<b>James A. Blackburn, Ph.D.</b>
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<b>OFFICE HOURS</b>	<b>By Appointment</b>

### **Course Description**

This course is a social work foundation offering in methods for macro practice, specifically community organization, management, and policy advocacy. It is partly survey in nature, touching on a range of methods, strategies, and skills. It provides an appreciation of the historical and contemporary importance of these social work methods. The relevance of these methods to diverse populations and identities is addressed. Aspects of culturally sensitive and socially just practice are emphasized.

### **Course Content**

Students learn beginning knowledge and skills in the areas of community organization, management, and policy advocacy. They learn to understand a variety of roles attached to them, e.g., community organizer, manager, and policy advocate. The course will also provide students with the opportunity to integrate learning from SW502, which is designed to be taken concurrently.

Students focus on: (1) understanding the context of macro practice; (2) identifying community and organizational interventions to address social needs and problems; (3) organizing and building relationships within communities and organizations; and (4) organization-based and community-based policy making, planning, and program development. Course content addresses concepts and practice skills involving assessment, problem solving, and intervention planning at the macro level, and strategies to work effectively with communities and organizations. Content also includes reflective practice and utilizing interpersonal skills in macro practice.

## Course Competencies and Practice Behaviors

This course addresses the following competencies and practice behaviors:

### **COMPETENCY 1**—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession's history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession's enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth. Social workers

- advocate for client access to the services of social work;
- attend to professional roles and boundaries

### **COMPETENCY 2**—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers

- recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice;
- make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work Statement of Principles;
- apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions

### **COMPETENCY 3**—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information. Social workers

- distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom;
- analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation;
- demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues.

### **COMPETENCY 4**—Engage diversity and difference in practice.

Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers

- recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power;

- gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups;
- recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences

**COMPETENCY 5**—Advance human rights and social and economic justice.

Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice. Social workers

- advocate for human rights and social and economic justice; and
- engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.

**COMPETENCY 6**—Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers

- use research evidence to inform practice.

**COMPETENCY 7**—Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development. Social workers

- utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation; and
- critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.

**COMPETENCY 8**—Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.

Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know the history and current structures of social policies and services; the role of policy in service delivery; and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers

- analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being
- collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.

**COMPETENCY 9**—Respond to contexts that shape practice.

Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively. Social workers

- continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services
- promote sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services.

**COMPETENCY 10**—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Professional practice involves the dynamic and interactive processes of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels. Social workers have the knowledge and skills to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Practice knowledge includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-based interventions designed to achieve client goals; using research and technological advances; evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

**COMPETENCY 10(b)—Assessment**

Social workers

- collect, organize, and interpret client data
- assess client strengths and limitations
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies.

**COMPETENCY 10(c)—Intervention**

Social workers

- initiate actions to achieve organizational goals
- implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities;
- help clients resolve problems;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients; and
- facilitate transitions and endings.

**COMPETENCY 10(d)—Evaluation**

Social workers

- critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.

**Course Objectives**

On completion of this course, students using a generalist social work practice framework will be able to:

1. Describe the historical, social, political and economic forces that have shaped and continue to shape macro practice in social work. (Practice Behaviors 4.1, 9.1)

2. Identify community organization, management, and policy-advocacy strategies for dealing with contemporary social work and social welfare problems. (Practice Behaviors 1.1, 3.1, 5.2, 5.3, 6.2, 8.1)

3. Demonstrate beginning level community organization, management, and policy advocacy skills in promoting social work values. (Practice Behaviors 3.1, 3.3, 4.3, 5.2, 5.3, 8.1, 8.2, 9.2, 10.c.1, 10.c.2, 10.c.3, 10.c.4, 10.c.5, 10.d.1)

4. Apply NASW's Code of Ethics and other professional codes to the selection of action strategies, and in particular applying them to those situations which affect disadvantaged/discriminated against populations. (Practice Behaviors 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 4.2, 5.3)

5. Demonstrate the ability to utilize selected macro assessment tools (e.g., community profiles, asset maps, community needs and strengths assessment, Census data analysis, windshield surveys, SWOT analysis, force field analysis, flow-charts, nominal group technique, task analysis, and ethical analysis) to develop client-centered interventions. (Practice Behaviors 3.1, 3.2, 7.1, 7.2; 10.b.1, 10.b.2, 10.b.3, 10.b.4, 10.c.1, 10.c.2, 10.c.3, 10.c.4, 10.c.5 )

6. Specify/identify those situations in which social workers are likely to be central to addressing major social welfare concerns. (Practice Behaviors 5.3, 7.2)

7. Identify salient connections between macro practice and interpersonal practice. (Practice Behaviors 3.2, 7.1, 7.2)

### **Course Design:**

While using the lecture/discussion mode as the primary pattern, class sessions will also include skill building activities and exercises, speakers, and videos.

**Theme Relation to Multiculturalism & Diversity:** are addressed through methods such as the use of readings, examples, cases, and role plays, and the development of intervention tools that explore multi-cultural and diversity issues from at least five perspectives: 1) the worker, (community organizer herself or himself); 2) the manager; 3) the policy analyst/advocate; 4) the organization or program; 5) the community or client system.

**Theme Relation to Social Justice:** 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.

**Theme Relation to Promotion, Prevention, Treatment & 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 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).

**Theme Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research:** 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, political science, and community theories will be important bases for class analyses.

**Relationship to SW Ethics and Values:** The course will address ethical and value issues related to working with, and in, organizations, communities, societies, and in conducting policy-focused research in these areas. For example, as employees of organizations, members of communities, and citizens of states, social workers must work to ensure equal treatment for all citizens, while at the same time expressing preferential programmatic attention to the most disadvantaged within those systems. The course will also focus on social workers' responsibility as professionals to promote the general welfare through 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.

**Faculty Approved:** October 17, 2012

### **Accommodations**

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 specific needs. This information will be kept strictly confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disability office at 734-763-3000 in room G-664 Haven Hall.

### **Student Mental Health and Wellbeing**

University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** at (734) 764-8312 and <https://caps.umich.edu/> during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also consult **University Health Service (UHS)** at (734) 764-8320 and <https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs>, or for alcohol or drug concerns, see [www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources](http://www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources).

### **Safety & Emergency Preparedness**

In the event of an emergency, dial 9-1-1 from any cell phone or campus phone.

All University of Michigan students, faculty and staff are required to familiarize themselves with emergency procedures and protocols for both inside and outside of the classroom. In the event of possible building closure (i.e. severe weather conditions, public health notices, etc.) you may contact (734)764-SSWB (7793) for up-to-date School closure information.

For more information view the annual Campus Safety Statement at <http://www.dpss.umich.edu/>.

Register for UM Emergency Alerts at <http://www.dpss.umich.edu/emergency-management/alert/>.

### **Course Materials**

Recommended Text:

Coley, SM & Scheinberg, CA (2014) 5<sup>th</sup> edition. *Proposal Writing: Effective Grantsmanship*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications (but any edition is okay)

In addition, our class will have a Canvas website where other required articles and reading materials as well as lecture notes/slides will be posted. Login to the Canvas portal at: <https://canvas.umich.edu> to find the course materials.

### **Assignments & Grading**

There are three (3) major graded assignments for this course as well as an expectation of regular attendance and class participation that contributes to a learning environment. These items are summarized below with their relative weight. Details follow the course outline.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Dates</b>	<b>Weight</b>
• Advocacy Assignment	10/11	25%
• Community Project	11/15	30%
• Concept/Pre- Proposal Paper	12/13*	30%
• Attendance & Participation	Ongoing	15%

### **Grading**

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

A+	98-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D	<69 (no credit)
A	94-97	B	84-86	C	74-76		
A-	90-93	B-	80-83	C-	70-73		

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

- Incompletes are not granted unless it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the normal limits of the course. The student must formally request in writing an incomplete with the instructor prior to the final week of class.
- All assignments are to be completed by the date due. Exceptions will be granted with the permission of the instructor *in advance of* the due date for the assignment. Assignments submitted late without such permission will be downgraded 5% points each day the assignment is turned in past the due date, including week-ends.
- Students are to use APA "citation format" for each of the assignments. Each assignment needs to include appropriate attribution of authorship for paraphrases or ideas acquired from another source or appropriate citations, including page numbers, for direct quotes. Please review the Student Guide section on "Ethical Conduct in the University Environment." This section specifically addresses plagiarism and the possible consequences for engaging in this behavior. The University of Michigan Library system has an on-line resource that can assist you in preparing proper citations for assignments using APA format. Go to: ([http://www.lib.mich.edu/ug/research/citation\\_guide/AP5thed/pdf](http://www.lib.mich.edu/ug/research/citation_guide/AP5thed/pdf))
- +No other aspects of the APA style guide will be used. Instead, students are expected to prepare all assignments as "professional reports," i.e., single-spaced, plenty of white space, generous use of headings & sub-headings, underlining, *italics*, **bold**, etc.

## Course Outline and Readings

<u>Session</u>	<u>Topic</u>
<b>Session 1.</b> (T) 9/5 & (M) 9/11	<b>Introduction: The History and Components of Macro Practice</b> <b>-- The values, history and components of macro practice</b> -- The challenges of macro practice in a multicultural society  <u>Readings</u> (Please read before class): Netting, Kettner, McMurtry, & Thomas (2012), <i>Social Work Macro Practice</i> , Chapter 1 "An Introduction to Macro Practice in Social Work," (pp. 1-31).  Uehara, E. et. al. (2013). Grand Challenges for Social Work, <i>Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research</i> 4(3), 165-170.
<b>Session 2.</b> <b>(M)</b> 9/12 & (T) 9/18	<b>Advocacy as a Form of Social Action</b> <b>-- Models of advocacy</b> -- Policy advocacy -- Conflict Resolution—Work Place  Video: Stand Up, Speak Out  The Case: THE UNDERGROUND ADVOCATES  <u>Readings:</u> Hardcastle (2012), <i>Community Practice Theories and Skills</i> , Chapter 12 "Using the Advocacy Spectrum," (pp.340-370).  Lens, V. (2004). Principled negotiation: A new tool for case advocacy, <i>Social Work</i> 49(3), 506-513.  McNutt, John (2012). The Lobbying Strategy Handbook, Chapter 11 "Fighting for Justice in Cyberspace" (pp. 251-268). <b>OR</b> Gladwell, M. (2010). <i>Small change: why the revolution will not be tweeted</i> . The New Yorker October 4, 42-49, <a href="http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell">http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell</a>
<b>Session 3.</b> (T) 9/19 & (M) 9/25	<b>Models of Community Organization Practice and Their Implications</b> <b>Understanding Communities: Their Problems &amp; Their Populations</b> -- Defining the community -- Different conceptualizations of community and their implications -- Typologies of community organization -- Empowerment theory and community organization practice  Monday 9/25 Guest Speaker: Professor Barry Checkoway—Youth Empowerment Project  The Case: RIVERTON  <u>Readings:</u> Hardcastle (2012), <i>Community Practice Theories and Skills</i> , Chapter 4 "The Concept of Community in Social Work Practice" (pp.94-129).



Pyle (2014), *Progressive Community Organizing: Reflective Practice in a Globalizing World*, Chapter 5 “Critical Organizing Framework

Gutierrez, L., Lewis, E., Dessel, A., & Spencer, M. (2013). Principle skills, and practices strategies for promoting multicultural communication and collaboration. In M.O. Weill, M. Reisch, & M. Ohmer (Eds.), *The handbook of community practice* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (pp. 445-460). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

**Session 4. Organizing and Mobilizing Communities**

(T) 9/26 &

(M) 10/2

- Roles of the organizer
- Group skills in community work
- Selecting appropriate strategies and tactics
- Social capital and community mobilization

**Community Profile Planning Document----Due**

**Tuesday 9/26 Prof. Barry Checkoway—Youth Empowerment Project (Video)**

**The Case: THE GUATEMALAN STOVE PROJECT**

Video: Holding Ground or Gaining Ground

Readings:

Pyle (2014), *Progressive Community Organizing: Reflective Practice in a Globalizing World*, Chapter 9 “Tactics for Change” (pp. 1-20).

Staples, L.H. (2000). Insider/outsider upsides and downsides. *Social Work with Groups* 23(2), 19-35.

Hoefler, R. & Chigbu, K. (2015). The motivation and persuasion process (MAP) Proposing a practice model for community intervention, *Journal of Community Practice*, 23(1), 51-75

**Session 5. Understanding Community-Based Organizations**

(T)10/3 -The structure, mission & primary goal of nonprofit community-based Organization

(M) 10/9

- Effective Managers
- Concept of Total Rewards
- Forecasting
- Staff Evaluation

**LIBRARY SESSION**

Readings:

Austin, M & Vu, C. (2012). Assessment of organizations. In C.A. Gilsson, C.N. & K. M. Sowers (Eds). *Social work practice with groups, communities, and organizations: Evidence-based assessments and interventions* (pp. 131-157). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Bradach, J. (2003). Going to scale: The challenge of replicating social programs. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 19-25.

Sutton, R. (2003). Sparking nonprofit innovation: Weird management ideas that work, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 42-49.

### 10/16 Fall Break (Monday Class)

**Session 6. Human Resources Management: Managing Staff in Organizations**  
**(T) 10/10 Inter-Organizational Practice**  
 (M) 10/23 **Visioning and Strategic Planning in Community-Based Organizations**  
 -- Personnel Policies/Supervisory Roles and Functions  
 -- Staff Development  
 -- Fee Setting

Video: Running Good Meetings

Readings:

Hardcastle (2012), *Community Practice Theories and Skills*, Chapter 9 "Using Work Groups: Committees, Teams, and Boards" (pp.248-271).

Hopkins, K.M. (2009). Supervision, development, and training for staff and volunteers. In R.J. Patti (Ed.). *The handbook of human services management (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

ADVOCACY ASSIGNMENT DUE

### 10/17 Fall Break (Tuesday Class)

### Session 7

(T) 10/24 & (M) 10/30 **Community Observation Day**

Session 8 Human Resource Management (Cont.)  
 (T) 10/31 -- Financial Accounting  
 (M) 11/6 -- Leadership

Brody, R. *Effectively managing human service organizations* "Strategic Planning" (Chapter 2, pp. 20-38).

**Session 9 Ethical and Legal Issues in Macro Practice**  
 (T) 11/7 & -- Ethical issues in macro practice  
 (M) 11/13 -- Legal foundations of community-based nonprofit organizations  
 -- Fundraising  
 -- Board Development  
 -- Non-Profit Mergers

Readings:

Alinsky, S. (1972). Of means and ends, in *Rules for radicals* (pp. 24 – 47). New York: Vintage Books.

Hardina, D. (2004). Guidelines for ethical practice in community organization, *Social Work* 49 (4), 595-604.

Hoefer, R. (2006). Social justice and advocacy practice. In *Advocacy practice for social justice*. Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books.

National Association of Social Workers, (1996/2008). *Code of Ethics*, revised, Washington, D.C.: Author. <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>

**Session 10. Community Presentation**

**(T) 11/14 & (M) 11/20 Community Profile Due**

**Session 11. Program Development, Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation**

**(T) 11/21 & (M) 11/27**

- Linking programs to organizational mission and goals: Models & stages
- Translating goals into objectives: Promoting community participation
- Evaluating program outcomes
- Managing information

Readings:

Hasenfeld, Y. (2001). Program development, in J. Rothman, et al, eds., *Strategies of community intervention*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (pp. 456-477), Itasca, IL: F.E. Peacock.

Martin, L. (2009). Program planning and management. In R. J. Patti (Ed.). *The handbook of human services management (2<sup>nd</sup> ed)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kellogg Foundation (2004). Using Logic Models to Bring Together Planning, Evaluation, and Action: Logic Model Development Guide. Battle Creek, MI: Kellogg Foundation.

**Session 12. Resource Development & Management in Community-Based**

**(T) 11/28**

**(M) 12/4**

**Organizations**

**-- Proposal writing—Letter of Intent (LOI)**

-- Strategies for resource development

Coley, SM & Scheinberg, CA (2014). *Proposal Writing: Effective Grantsmanship-5<sup>th</sup> edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

McBrearty, S (2007). Social enterprise: A solution for the voluntary sector? *Social Enterprise Journal*, 3(1), 67-77.

**Session 13. Social Policy and Community Practice**

- (T) 12/5 & --Policy development & implementation at the community level  
 (M) 12/11 -- Analyzing the community impact of social policies

NOTE: MONDAY'S CLASS WILL ALSO COVER THE FUTURE OF MACRO PRACTICE & MACRO PRACTITIONER ON 12/11

Video: CFED SEED Video

Readings:

McCue, B. (2012). The Lobbying Strategy Handbook, Chapter 10 "The 10 Steps Strike Again! Breaking the Tire Cycle" (pp. 223-250).

Chambers, D. (2005). An overview of a style of policy analysis: A value-critical approach, in *Social policy and social programs*, 4th ed. (pp. 49-61), Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Mondros, J. (2013). Political, social, and legislative action. In M. O. Weil, M. Reisch, & M. Ohmer (Eds.), *the handbook of community practice* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). (pp.345-359) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

\*\*\*\*Concept/Pre-Proposal Assignment Due—Monday Class

**Session 14. The Future of Macro Practice & Macro Practitioners**

- (T) 12/12 --Course Summary and Issues for the Future

Burghardt (2011), *Macro Practice in Social Work for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Chapter 11 "Summing Up, Moving Forward" (pp. 303-321).

Williams Shanks, T.R. (2014). "The Evolution of Anti-Poverty Policies and Programs." In Reid Cramer and Trina R. Williams Shanks (Editors). *The Assets Perspective: The Rise of Asset Building and its Impact on Social Policy*. Chapter 2.

\*\*\*\***Concept/Pre-Proposal Assignment Due---Tuesday Class**

## Descriptions of Assignments for SW 560

### 1, Guidestar: Obtain Agency Form 1099

### 2. Advocacy Assignment (Individual Project)

There are two options for the *Advocacy Practice Assignment: Speak Out or Coalition Assignment*

#### **Option A: Advocacy Practice Assignment: Speak Out**

Hoefler (2009) defines advocacy practice as 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.” Using this assignment to operationalize our School’s emphasis on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS), you are expected to speak on behalf of a client or a cause in a public forum in order to influence decisions regarding your group or cause. The main purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to the process of policy advocacy; how actively you pursue it is up to you.

#### **Step 1: Select an issue**

Select an issue or cause of interest to you that is connected to a particular marginalized group or social justice issue. It can be an issue related to a policy you have studied in your social welfare policy course. Or, if you are currently in a field placement, you may want to focus on an issue affecting your agency or its service users. However, if you are planning to undertake an agency-related project, please discuss this with me in terms of agency support and approval. You may also want to consult with your field instructor.

#### **Step 2: Research the issues**

Research the topic from its historical perspective to the current situation to provide background information and develop a position. This may include a review of policy discussions, relevant reports, or social work literature. It may also be helpful to interview someone knowledgeable about the subject. You will be asked to provide a bibliography of all the sources reviewed. Based upon your review of the literature and the facts of the case, write an outline of the remarks you will use to guide your oral presentation or advocacy.

#### **Step 3: Write your statement**

Select the proper forum for your advocacy effort. This could include a letter to the editor, a Youtube video, or a speak out script from a forum that may consist of any public hearing, legislative committee, or special commission that is authorized to deal with your issue such as county board of commissioners, the regents of a university or community college, school board trustees, the planning commission of a unit of government, or the board of directors of a human service organization. Whether it is a written document submitted for review or a script that you read from in a video or at a forum, please turn in the statement.

**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 which 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.
- 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 or skills you used to develop your op-ed or prepared testimony.
- Reflect on the potential impact of your advocacy effort of behalf of your client group or cause. How might you integrate advocacy into your future social work practice?

**Option B: Coalition Assignment****Step 1: Identify a local organization**

Identify a local organization, coalition or collaboration (public or private) that is working for change on an issue that you have interest in.

**Step 2: Gather information on the organization**

Attend a meeting of this group, interview someone in a leadership role and review written materials that the organization, coalition or collaboration has available and use newspapers as resources to understand the current context.

**Step 3: Write a Statement**

Prepare a written 3 to 5 page (double-spaced) overview to analyze the group's effort and your opinion of its effectiveness. In this overview, define the issue, describe the organization, coalition or collaboration and who is involved in the effort, identify the goals and strategies that the group is using to advocate for change, and identify what would be considered a success or failure for this group. End with a short paragraph summarizing your opinion of the group's effectiveness. In an Appendix, include a summary of the meeting you attended and of the key informant interview.

**Step 4: Reflect on the process**

You are expected to write a two-page, double-spaced reflection paper which addresses the following:

- Summarize how you developed your project, specifically why you chose the particular organization you did and what you learned from the process.
- What knowledge or skills did you gain from the assignment?
- In terms of your organization, coalition, or collaboration, what do you see as its strengths and the areas it stands in need of improvement?
- Reflect on the potential impact of this organization's advocacy effort of behalf of your client group or cause. How might you integrate advocacy into your future social work practice?

**Work to submit to instructor-Submit as one document via Canvas on October 10<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday Class & October 23<sup>rd</sup> (Monday Class).**

- Op-Ed piece, written testimony (Option 1), 3-5 page Written Summary (Option 2)
- Bibliography and list of interviews conducted
- Reflection paper

### **3. Community Profile (Team Project)**

Working collaboratively in self-selected groups (4 to 5 students), you will develop a profile of a selected community within Michigan. Your profile will be created using a combination of observational and quantitative data. The profile will consist of a presentation, which for the purposes of this assignment you are developing for distribution to a group of concerned citizens and public officials. You will develop a 15 minute presentation to be delivered in class. You will assume that the class is a group of concerned citizens and officials interested in understanding your chosen community.

The assignment has several purposes:

- To learn the skills necessary for understanding and analyzing a community;
- To gain experience in reflective practice at the community level;
- To learn and practice skills important to working in a team; and
- To learn how to present your analysis in a professional manner.

There are two important dates regarding this assignment:

- Pre-profile reflection (prepared as a group) **Due by September 26<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday Class & October 2<sup>nd</sup> (Monday Class)**
- Community profile, including a summary of observational data, team minutes, and group evaluation (prepared individually). **Due in class November 14<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday Class) & November 20<sup>th</sup> (Monday Class).**

#### **Step 1: Develop Teams**

You will be given time to form self-selected teams in the second class session. It is important to assign roles (i.e. facilitator, note taker, reporter, time keeper, process evaluator, etc.—these roles can rotate so that everyone can experience multiple roles), identify ground rules, and develop an evaluation process for your team to identify strengths and areas for improvement. It is recommended to include an informal evaluation process at each meeting (e.g. at the end of the meeting ask people to share what 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.

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

In the beginning of the term, some class time will be allocated to enable your team to get established. 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 commonly called strengths). The community you choose must include a geographic location, but can also focus on a specific 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 context. Please consider selecting a community that is easy to observe and assess. You should consider elements such as geographic proximity, access to the community and available information about the community.

Examples of communities that have been assessed in past 560 classes include homelessness in Washtenaw County, aging in Wayne County, Brightmoor community in Detroit, mentally ill adults in Detroit, City of Howell in Livingston County, children with learning disabilities in the Ann Arbor community, and education in Ypsilanti, MI.

### **Work to submit to instructor—Due in class September 26<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday Class & October 2<sup>nd</sup> (Monday Class).**

After you have selected your community, in the spirit of 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 through observation and quantitatively)
- What do you expect to find and why
- What comparisons do you expect to make and why

Also feel free to list any questions or concerns you would like to consult with me about.

Please ensure that each team member's name is listed on the top of the page. Bullet points or short paragraphs are fine. The use of headings is encouraged. References are not necessary, but you are expected to integrate ideas from the course.

### **Step 3: Develop the community profile**

Once you determine your focus, you will research the community using both observation and quantitative data.

Observation. Your small group will conduct an observational study of your selected community. If you chose a target population, visit a location where the population is likely to be found. Your group observation can be supplemented with key informant interviews or document analysis, which although not required, might provide important insights. Interviews can be held with community or organizational leaders, but not members of vulnerable populations. Please consult with me in selecting key informants. As a team, you will find a mutually convenient time to observe the community. However, we are not having class on November 1<sup>st</sup>, so I encourage you to use that day to conduct your observation and schedule any other conversations.



Your group will also learn about the community by looking up official statistical data collected about that community. In contrast, the observational data will provide a different perspective on your particular neighborhood. When your group begins to observe the neighborhood, you might walk; stand on a corner or drive by slowly through the neighborhood using a windshield survey. Use all your senses to begin to understand the neighborhood. You are permitted to take photographs, but make sure any people captured are not identifiable. It is best to take photographs that do not contain people. Record your observations as soon as possible—perhaps even using a tape recorder. In your observations, note the following dimensions:

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

Be mindful of strengths and assets in the neighborhood as well as its needs, problems, or shortcomings.

Quantitative data. Your small group will use the **American Community Survey** produced by the U.S. Census Bureau to identify relevant quantitative indicators of your selected community. Your group will use quick tables, data profiles, multiyear profiles and narrative profiles provided in the American Community Survey to describe the geographic area. Your group will also develop your own custom tables. The community brief should include general characteristics, social characteristics, and economic characteristics. In addition, to help the reader/audience understand your community, you should include comparisons to other communities. For example, if you are examining home ownership in Ann Arbor, you may also want to compare this indicator in various sections of the city or compare to other cities, the state of Michigan or the country as a whole.

**We will have a hands-on tutorial by a University librarian on how to use census data and find relevant public data as part of the community assessment process.**

You will prepare a Power Point presentation or prezi that summarizes, analyzes and synthesizes the information you gathered during your observation.

The profile should be considered a professional presentation 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 of your visuals should be explained in brief narrative form. A handout can be helpful to summarize key information or you can simply share the Power point slides or prezi if this contains all the pertinent information. In class, you will share your key findings with your colleagues. You will have 15 minutes for the presentation, including a brief question and answer period. Be prepared to highlight important findings that build on community strengths and address community needs.

**Step 4: Individual Reflection:** After the presentation, each team member is to reflect on the group process and what has been learned from this project, submitting a summary tinstructor via Canvas. This can be sent along with the evaluation sheet that will be provided in class.

**Work to submit to instructor as a team—Due in class November 14<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday Class) & November 20<sup>th</sup> (Monday Class).**

*Please give these things to me before your presentation.*

- Minutes from your group meetings
- Copy of your Power Point slides and other visual aids

**4. Concept Paper/Mini-grant Proposal (Groups of Two or Individually)**

This assignment involves the development of a concept or pre-proposal paper for a small grant to support some program innovation/development to be submitted to a foundation or funding organization. The assignment's central goal is to learn skills associated with proposal development. Thus, you will conceptualize and draft a mini-proposal (also known as a concept paper), addressing all of the essential elements of a formal proposal. You can choose a real foundation that provides grants in your area of interest or submit it to the Trina R. Shanks Foundation.

You should write this grant as though you were a director or development officer of a community-based agency. You should give your organization a name and provide a brief description of the 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 your advocacy issue, but this is not required. You may use a real agency or create your own.

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

### **Step 1: Choose Agency and 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, accomplishments 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 want to examine the agency's website for a mission statement and agency description.

### **Step 2: Brainstorm project idea**

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 want to consider a project that would be 1-2 years in length and have a budget of \$100,000 or less.

### **Step 3: Prepare Concept paper/Mini-proposal**

The paper may not exceed 5 pages. The concept/mini-proposal paper needs to contain the following elements. Use points 2 to 8 as headings in your proposal. Follow the order as specified below.

1. **COVER LETTER:** Include a cover letter (also called a transmittal letter) with the proposal. This letter should highlight the main points of the concept paper and indicate to the potential funding source why this project is important for them to fund (does NOT count against the five page limit). You may want to explain why the proposal may be of interest to the Foundation.
2. **AGENCY DESCRIPTION:** A brief description of the agency, including mission, target population(s), and primary services. You can also include any key collaborators or partners related to the proposed services as well as agency personnel and strengths in relation to the project.
3. **BACKGROUND/NEEDS STATEMENT:** A brief description of the problem you propose to address and why it is important (include relevant literature/research/policies, document need for the intervention/project proposed)
4. **GOALS & OBJECTIVES:** State the project's goals and major objective (link the goals and the objectives to your description of the project)
5. **PROJECT NARRATIVE:** This is your implementation plan. Discuss principal components of the project and its anticipated measurable outcomes (include enough information for the potential funder to understand how their money will be used to address the identified need and intended goals). This section can be organized around key objectives (e.g. to achieve objective 1, we will establish... For objective 2, we will...). Include a final, persuasive, summary paragraph to sell the project.
6. **BUDGET:** Estimate project cost (how much money will you need to carry out the project based upon its objectives).

7. **BUDGET NARRATIVE:** Provide a one-page single-spaced narrative of the budget. Explain each budget line and how the item relates to the project. For positions, give an overview of duties, required qualifications, hourly wage, number of hours and weeks worked, and benefits rate. Provide a narrative for any in-kind contributions included in the budget.
8. **TIMELINE:** Provide a specific timeline to give the funding source an idea of the project steps and activities (use a Gantt chart). You can reference timeline in your narrative and attach separately.

**Submit to instructor-as one document via Canvas December 11<sup>th</sup> (Monday Class) & December 12<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday Class).**

- Cover letter
- Mini-proposal (includes timeline, budget, and budget narrative)

(Note: Late submissions will be accepted only in extraordinary circumstances.)

**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 to share experiential knowledge. To maximize individual and group learning, participation is expected. Feel free to share examples from our experiences (field and others) as well as to draw on current events and literature related to course topics in order to promote all of our learning.

**Class Attendance**

School of Social Work policy is that students attend all of their classes. Excessive absences may result in a reduction in grade and will be brought to the attention of the student and the faculty advisor by the course instructor. If a student has more than 2 unexcused absences, it will result in an automatic reduction in the participation grade. Given the nature of course assignments, in-class skill building activities, and group projects, if a student fails to attend most class sessions, the student may not be able to successfully complete assignments and may be asked by the instructor to withdraw from the course. *However, if you have a contagious disease that can easily spread in the classroom (e.g. flu), please let me know and do **NOT** come to class.*

**Religious Observances**

Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments so we can make appropriate arrangements.