1. Course Statement

a. Course description

This course will review the overall design of human service systems, how to plan for and design such systems, how to develop the legislative mandates and regulations that operationalize these designs, and how to facilitate their formal enactment. Students will learn the analytic skills associated with the development of policies that give specification to human service systems, as well as the more interactional skills associated with facilitating the enactment of these policies.

b. Course content

Human service systems include a variety of separate programs, differing legislative mandates, and extremely complicated implementation procedures and processes. This course will present skills associated with the design of complex human service systems in the nonprofit, public, and for-profit sectors. System design involves networks of services, agencies, and clients. Therefore, this course will move beyond the individual agency and the single program and in the direction of complex multi-program and multi-service systems.

Since the “stock in trade” of policy professionals engaged in most design and enactment tasks is the written policy document, this course will place a heavy emphasis on the skills associated with the preparation of documents, such as memos, briefing papers, policy specification papers, legislative drafts, and program regulations and guidelines. A student seeking to understand how complex systems are designed and enacted needs to have a clear idea of the process needed to achieve
desirable results. Accordingly, this course will focus on both the analytic skills associated with the development of policies which give specification to human service systems, as well as the interactional skills associated with facilitating the enactment of these policies. As a result, students will examine the transitioning of private matters into public policy.

Special emphasis will be placed on systems that serve special populations. Students will study one major system serving a special population (e.g., income maintenance, child welfare, juvenile justice, services for the aging, mental health, and corrections), and perform a series of assignments that will enable them to understand, diagnose, and make suggestions for change of the system. Students will analyze global policy in consideration of independent nationalistic policies and their interdependence within global political systems. Course topics may include: policy concepts and terms; cycles for developing policies; diagnosing policy environments (e.g., bureaucratic, fiscal, legislative, community) and advocacy roles (e.g., political, scientific, and ideological); professional standards and ethics that impact on the selection of advocacy roles; analyzing complex systems (e.g., issue identification and option generation); preparing and enhancing utilization of policy documents; use of quantitative and qualitative data in policy documents; developing policy (e.g., drafting legislation, writing guidelines and administrative regulations, and developing feedback mechanisms); selling policy (e.g., lobbying, testifying, and building coalitions of support).

c. Course objectives and competencies

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:
1. Use the major analytic tools most commonly used to assess and evaluate complex systems of human and social services. (Practice Behaviors 3.SPE, 6.SPE, 10.b.SPE, 10.d.SPE)
2. Use interactional tools and techniques for facilitating group process and decision making. (Practice Behaviors 5.SPE, 10.a.SPE)
3. Design a procedure for reviewing and assessing a social service system that encompasses a wide variety of separately mandated programs. (Practice Behaviors 4.SPE, 10.b.SPE)
4. Develop and evaluate a reasonable set of options (policy recommendations) for changing a particular service system. (Practice Behaviors 9.SPE, 10.d.SPE)
5. Design and implement a preliminary political strategy for facilitating enactment of the preferred option. (Practice Behavior 10.c.SPE)
6. Organize and prepare different types of policy documents and/or policy recommendations. (Practice Behaviors 3.SPE, 10.c.SPE)
7. Discuss the effect of individual positionalities on policy development and their influence across system levels. (Practice Behavior 4.SPE)
8. Discuss typical ethical concerns related to social policy development and enactment. (Practice Behaviors 1.SPE, 2.SPE)

d. Course design

This course will include lecture and discussion with papers, student projects, and videotaped student presentations.
e. Curricular themes

**Theme Relation to Multiculturalism & Diversity**

Students will develop the capacity to identify ways in which diversity dimensions “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, as well community of residence” and other forms of social stratification and disenfranchisement influence and are impacted by the social policy development and enactment process.

**Theme Relation to Social Justice**

Students will learn that the ability to develop and enact social policy is necessary if the social work profession is to play an important role in shaping the outcome of ongoing policy debates to reflect issues in social justice and change. This course will provide students with the capacity to participate in the social policy development and enactment process.

**Theme Relation to Promotion, Prevention, Treatment & Rehabilitation**

Students will learn that policies in human services are too often implemented in reaction to an issue, not proactively, due to changing social, economic, and political circumstances and influences. Promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation activities are difficult to evaluate and therefore raise special challenges in social policy implementation. Students will be exposed to effective development and enactment techniques (e.g., responsive focus groups, Delphi method, and nominal group techniques) that can be used to develop and implement promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation activities.

**Theme Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research**

Policies in human services are in a constant state of flux owing to changing social, economic, and political circumstances. Thus, any review of existing policy may be quickly outdated and has limited use as part of the training social work students carry into their careers. Therefore, students will be provided with social science models and theories that can be used to develop and enact any policy issue encountered in the course of their professional activities. Examples of the use of social science in policy development will be presented.

f. Relationship to social work ethics and values

Ethical standards of social work practice (NASW Code of Ethics) and evaluation practice (Program Evaluation Standards) will be used to review issues commonly confronted in social policy development and enactment. The ethical themes of autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, fidelity, and justice will be particularly emphasized and discussed.
2. Class Requirements

a. Text and class materials

The following book is required for this course:

ISBN 978-1483359465

Additional readings will be posted on canvas in the readings section in folders by the class date to which the reading pertains. Reading may be changed due to guest lecturers or emerging current events that warrant our attention and class discussion. I will make every attempt to post readings one week in advance. All assigned readings will be discussed in class.

To fully engage in the course topic and to become a competent and skilled social work practitioner, it is expected that students will complete all required reading assignments.

b. Class schedule

[Provide an overview of each week or class session. You may wish to include any required readings, assignments, and goals for each session. Consider noting how changes to the course schedule will be handled (e.g. whenever possible, alerts will come over email at least a week in advance; changes will be posted to canvas; etc). Here is an example of what this could look like:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Agenda</th>
<th>Required Readings &amp; Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Lesson 1: [Topic Title]</td>
<td>Syllabus Text, Chapter 1 Article 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Date/Time]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Lesson 1: [Topic title]</td>
<td>Text, Chapter 2 Article 2 Article 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Date/Time]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c. Assignments

[Provide explanation of assignments and expectations. You may want to include a description and evaluation criteria or rubrics for each assignment as well its point or percentage value for the overall course grade (or direct students to review detailed assignment instructions on Canvas). Consider linking assignments to course objectives and/or social work competencies. Here is an example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Percent of overall grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper #1</td>
<td>[Date/Time]</td>
<td>XX%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[How to submit assignment - Canvas, hard copy, etc.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>[Date/Time]</td>
<td>XX%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[How to submit assignment - Canvas, hard copy, etc.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

]

d. Attendance and class participation [Required if part of grade calculation]

[Include information about your expectations here. This includes expectations around attendance, courses missed, punctuality and class participation. This should include what will happen if students do not meet these expectations. If you use a rubric for participation, reference it here. Include a reference link to the Policy on Class Attendance found in the MSW Student Guide. Include information about make-up assignments if that is applicable.]

e. Grading

[Review and include a reference link to the MSW Student Guide policies on Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction as well as Student Grievance procedures and the policy for grading in special circumstances. Here are some resources around testing and grading from CRLT. Consider including something here about:
  ● How you will grade students
  ● How number grades convert to letters
  ● Your Policy for late assignments and specific grade deductions if any]
Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources. They include:

- Safety and emergency preparedness
- Mental health and well-being
- Teaching evaluations
- Proper use of names and pronouns
- Accommodations for students with disabilities
- Religious/spiritual observances
- Military deployment
- Writing skills and expectations
- Academic integrity and plagiarism