



<b>Course title:</b>	Community-Based Policy Advocacy
<b>Course #/term:</b>	SW 674 Section 1, Spring/Summer 2019
<b>Time and place:</b>	Mondays 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM, B770 SSWB
<b>Credit hours:</b>	3
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	None
<b>Instructor:</b>	Justin D. Hodge, LMSW
<b>Pronouns:</b>	He, his, him
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<b>Office:</b>	3743 SSWB
<b>Office hours:</b>	By appointment

## 1. COURSE STATEMENT

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### Course Description

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

### Course Content

The course will focus on the analytic and interpersonal skills required to mobilize groups and communities in order to effect policy changes through legislative, judicial, and regulatory channels. It will include both contemporary and historical examples of local, state, national, and international advocacy efforts, involving low-income and low power communities inclusive of diverse dimensions such as ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation.

## Course Objectives

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

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

## **Course Design**

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

## **Curricular Themes**

### Theme Relation to Multiculturalism & Diversity

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

### Theme Relation to Social Justice

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

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

Promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation activities are difficult to evaluate and, therefore, raise special challenges in social policy advocacy and implementation. These themes will be addressed by comparing and contrasting prevention theory and theories of advocacy and community participation, considering the promotion and prevention effects of empowerment strategies, and studying how community-based advocacy can be used to help develop treatment and rehabilitation options for underserved populations through policy change. Students will learn that policies in human services are too often implemented in reaction to an issue, not proactively, due to changing social, economic, and political circumstances and influences. The course will also review the particular issues communities face as they pursue policies that will affect their community change and direct service (treatment and rehabilitation) goals.

### Theme Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research

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

### Relationship to SW Ethics and Values

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

## **2. CLASS REQUIREMENTS**

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### **Text and class materials:**

#### *Required Reading*

- Canvas - Required and recommended readings are posted on Canvas.

### **Class schedule:**

Topics may be modified throughout the course, but ample notice will be provided. Refer to Canvas for the most updated class schedule.

#### **a. Assignments:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Percent of overall grade</b>
Your Political Social Work Past	6/2/19 by 11:59 PM	30%
Your Political Social Work Present	6/30/19 by 11:59 PM	40%
Your Political Social Work Future	7/28/19 by 11:59 PM	30%

**b. Grading:**

Please review the MSW Student Guide policies on [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#) as well as [Student Grievance procedures](#).

Final grades will be determined on the basis of performance. Letter grades will be allocated as follows:

100+	A+	77-79	C+
93-100	A	73-76	C
90-92	A-	70-72	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
83-86	B	63-66	D
80-82	B-	60-62	D-
		<60	E

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