



Course title:	Social Policy Development and Enactment	
Course #/term:	[SW 671], [Spring/Summer, 2020]	
Time and place:	[Tuesday], [9:00 AM – 11:00 AM], [Zoom]	
Credit hours:	3	
Prerequisites:	[SW 560] or permission of instructor	
Instructor:	[Justin Hodge, LMSW]	
Pronouns:	[he, him, his]	
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	You may expect a response within 48 hours	
Office:	[Zoom]	
Office hours:	By appointment	

1. Course Statement

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.

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, 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).

Course Objectives

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)

Course Design

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

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.

Relationship to SW 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:

Bardach, E., & Patashnik, E. M. (2016). *A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem solving*.

I will place additional required readings in the “Files” section on Canvas, arranged in the “Modules” section. Students are expected to have completed all assigned readings prior to class.

Readings may be changed due to visits by guest lecturers, special circumstances, and student needs. I will aim to make any changes to readings two weeks in advance.

b. Class schedule

Refer to the “Modules” section on Canvas for the class schedule. Readings, assignments, and other activities are organized by class session in that section.

c. Assignments

Assignment instructions and rubrics will be posted on Canvas in the “Assignments” section. All assignments are due by 11:59 PM on the dates listed.

Assignment	Due date	Percent of overall grade
Policy Analysis	Eightfold Path: Steps 1 & 2 - (6/9/2020) Eightfold Path: Steps 3, 4, 5 - (6/22/2020) Eightfold Path: Steps 6, 7, 8 - (6/29/2020)	30% Total Part 1: 10% Part 2: 10% Part 3: 10%
Writing Workshop	We will spend class on 7/14/2020 doing a peer writing workshop. You are required to bring drafts of your policy products.	10%
Policy Products	Policy Brief (8/9/2020) Product of Your Choice (8/9/2020)	30% 30%

d. Attendance and class participation

Both class attendance and active purposeful participation in class discussion and activities are paramount for the successful completion of this course. This course covers a content domain that is extensive, and given the time framework of the course each class moves quickly in discussing information.

e. 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*