Course Description

This course is partly survey in nature, touching on a range of methods, strategies, and skills in macro practice, specifically community organization, management, and advocacy. It provides an appreciation of the historical and contemporary importance of these social work methods as well as opportunities for students to develop practical skills. With opportunities for hands-on experience and training using tangible tools that are critical for success in macro practice, the course places special emphasis on approaches that strengthen socially just and culturally sensitive practice.

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 policymaking, planning, and program development. Course content addresses concepts and practice skills involving assessment, engagement, and intervention planning at the macro level, and strategies to work effectively with communities, organizations and groups. Content also includes reflective practice and utilizing interpersonal skills in macro practice. The course will offer skill-building in some tasks that are important to beginning social work practice, such as understanding and developing spreadsheets, meeting facilitation, teamwork, collecting and presenting basic data, and communicating effectively.

Course title: Essentials of Community and Organizational Practice
Course #/term: 509 (Section 10) Fall 2021
Time and place: Mondays 9-12 pm, 3629 SSWB
Credit hours: 3
Prerequisites: None
Instructor: Mercedes Brown, JD, MSW
Pronouns: She, Her, Hers
Contact info: Email: cedesb@umich.edu Phone: 810-357-6096
You may expect a response within 48 business hours
Office: 3764 SSWB
Office hours: By appointment
Course Objectives

- Use anti-oppressive and anti-racist frameworks to describe examples of systemic and structural root causes of contemporary social welfare issues (Essential 22, 33, 39, 45; EPAS 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9).
- Apply inclusive engagement strategies based on an intersectional analysis of systems of power, privilege, and oppression both within and outside organizational and community contexts (Essential 1, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 45; EPAS 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8).
- Articulate social work values and ethics in all organizational and community strategies to address contemporary social work and social welfare problems (Essential 26, 44; EPAS 1, 5).
- Practice engaging with teams, partnerships, collaborations, coalitions, and other alliances to build intraorganizational and interorganizational power and influence (Essential 8, 10, 40; EPAS 1, 6).
- Assess community needs and issues and identify community assets, indigenous solutions, capacities, and allies in partnership with organizational and/or community stakeholders (Essential 3, 7, 15, 20, 24; EPAS 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9).
- Develop intervention plans (goals and objectives) toward addressing community and/or organizational needs and issues (Essential 18, 19, 21, 27; EPAS 4, 7, 8).
- Investigate how to engage with community partners to build community capacity to mobilize on issues and needs, develop services and strategies that enhance community well-being, and dismantle oppressive structures and systems (Essential 25, 29, 34, 45; EPAS 2, 3, 4, 5, 9).

Course Design

This course will use multiple methods including but not limited to: lectures, demonstrations, case studies, readings, guest speakers, discussions, written assignments, and individual and group exercises. The primary pedagogy will be experiential, involving problem-solving, project planning and implementation, in-person and online simulations and hands-on applications of real-world situations that arise in the field.

Intensive focus on 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.

Consistent with social work core values, the primary goals of Community and Organizational Practice are to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people. This course will devote resources and attention to the needs and empowerment of people and groups who traditionally have experienced oppression and marginalization. Course content and processes are designed to help students gain understanding of intersectional diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religious/spiritual practice, immigration
status, and cognitive, mental or physical disability. In addition, students will be exposed to strategies for increasing social and racial equity and inclusion across settings.

**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](https://caps.umich.edu/) during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselor physically located in the School of Social Work, [Jamie Boschee](mailto:jboschee@umich.edu) at (734) 763-7894 or by email at [jboschee@umich.edu](mailto:jboschee@umich.edu). You may also consult[**University Health Service (UHS)** at (734) 764-8320](https://www.uhs.umich.edu/) and [https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs](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/](http://www.dpss.umich.edu/).

**Course Materials**
This course utilizes[**Canvas**](https://canvas.umich.edu) as a resource for course readings, as well as for the submission of assignments. Assignment descriptions, lecture notes/slides and readings for each class can be found on those sites. Please review the sites carefully. Login to the Canvas portal at: [https://canvas.umich.edu](https://canvas.umich.edu) to find the course materials.

There is no required text for this course. Readings for each topic are listed on Canvas. Students are expected to have completed assigned readings prior to in person class sessions, as these will serve as the basis for class discussion, activities, and assignments.
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy Assignment</td>
<td>10/11/21</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Project &amp; Presentation</td>
<td>11/15/21</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget &amp; Fundraising Plan</td>
<td>12/17/21</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation (Including reflections, on-line forums, class activities &amp; Coaching Simmersion simulation)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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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
- A 94-97
- A- 90-93
- B+ 87-89
- B 84-86
- B- 80-83
- C+ 77-79
- C 74-76
- C- 70-73
- D <69 (no credit)

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 )
- +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 & Readings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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| 8/30 (1)     | **Introduction: Overview & History and Components of Macro Practice**  
-- The values, history and components of macro practice  
-- The challenges of macro practice in a multicultural society  
**Assignments Due**  
Readings (post class)  
- **Optional:** Progress and Plans for Grand Challenges for Social Work  
| 9/6          | Labor Day (No Class) | |
| 9/13 (2)     | **Advocacy as a Form of Social Action**  
-- Models of advocacy  
-- Policy advocacy  
**Assignments Due**  
Readings:  
| 9/20 (3)     | **Introduction to Communities: Understanding and Engaging with Communities and Their Populations**  
-- Defining the community  
-- Different conceptualizations of community and their implications  
-- Typologies of community organization  
-- Empowerment theory and community organization practice  
**Assignments Due**  
Readings:  
| 9/27 (4)     | **Researching and Gathering Information**  
-- Using American Factfinder and Census data  
-- Constructing a community profile  
-- Frameworks for analyzing geographic data  
**Assignments Due**  
Readings:  
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Power mapping exercise</td>
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<td>Library Presentation (videos by Darlene Nichols)</td>
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<td>Group Pre-presentation Reflection Due</td>
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<td>10/4</td>
<td>Assessing Community and Organizational Needs and Strengths</td>
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<td>-- Conducting a community needs assessment</td>
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<td>-- Asset mapping: Identifying community strengths</td>
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<td>-- Assessing organizations</td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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<td>10/11</td>
<td>Intervening in Communities and Organizations</td>
<td>KU toolbox for developing interventions <a href="https://ctb.ku.edu/en/developing-intervention">https://ctb.ku.edu/en/developing-intervention</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>-- Organizing and Mobilizing Communities</td>
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<td>-- Developing Interventions</td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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<td>10/18</td>
<td>Fall Study Break (No Class)</td>
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<td>10/25</td>
<td>Program Development, Implementation, Monitoring</td>
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<td>-- Linking programs to organizational mission and goals: Models &amp; stages</td>
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<td>-- Translating goals into objectives: Promoting community participation</td>
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<td>-- Evaluating program outcomes</td>
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<td>-- Managing information</td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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<td>11/1</td>
<td>Community Observation/Group Preparation Day</td>
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<td>11/8</td>
<td>Ethical and Legal Issues in Macro Practice</td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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### Descriptions of Assignments for SW 509

1. **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**

Hoefer (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
The 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 Facebook blog, 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 opinion piece 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**
Interview someone in a leadership role and review written and online 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 15th.

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

2. Community or Organizational Intervention (Team Project)
This course will have one connected master assignment with multiple products, designed to help you pull together what you have learned through the semester.

There are several important dates regarding this assignment:

- Pre-presentation reflection (prepared as a group) Due by September 27th
- Intervention Presentation, including a visual/leave behind item, summary of team minutes, and group evaluation (prepared individually). Due in class November 17th.
- Budget and fundraising plan. Due by last day of class, December 6th.
**Class Recording and Course Materials**
Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording being done. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. If the instructor chooses to record a class, they will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on the course management website. On days when classes are recorded, students will be notified a recording is occurring. Class recordings and course materials may not be reproduced, sold, published or distributed to others, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the instructor.

**COVID-19 Statement**
For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. Your participation in this course is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including properly wearing a face covering in class and compliance with the University COVID-19 Vaccination Policy. Other applicable and additional safety measures may be described in the Campus Maize & Blueprint. Your ability to participate in this course may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the Office for Institutional Equity and those seeking an exemption related to the vaccination requirement should submit an exemption request through WolverineAccess. I also encourage you to review the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities and the COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

**Health-Related Class Absences**
Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a doctor’s note) for medical excuses is not required.

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: [https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources](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