



Course title:	Practicing Policy with Current Events	
Course #/term:	SW 649 Spring/Summer 2022	
Course Website:	Canvas Address	
Live Class Meeting:	via Zoom in Canvas, Wednesday 6 p.m.-8 p.m.	
Credit hours:	1	
Prerequisites:	None	
Instructor:	Marlanna Landeros, MSW	
Pronouns:	She/her/hers	
Contact info:	Email: mlandero@umich.edu	Phone (cell): 313-506-5704
	You may expect a response within 24 hours	
Office:	2760 SSWB	
Office hours:	By appointment, I may often be available before or after class weekly. When communicating with me use the subject line SW 649	

1. Course Statement

a. Course description

This policy skills course will help students develop an understanding of how to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and/or environmental justice through the application of critical thinking skills. Content area will be drawn from current events (e.g., immigration, child welfare, health care debates), and students will learn how to critically analyze the policy implications, prerequisites for any informed, professional, and ethical policy advocacy. Students will develop strategies to engage in policy practice to effect change and advocate for clients.

b. Course objectives and competencies

- Articulate framings of policy related stories as social constructions. (Essential 14, Essential 30, Essential 39, EPAS 1, EPAS 5, EPAS 6, EPAS 7)

- Assemble policy resources (e.g. legislation, regulations, white papers) needed to understand a social welfare policy problem (Essential 6, Essential 28, Essential 39, EPAS 1, EPAS 2, EPAS 5, EPAS 7)
- Analyze a social welfare policy issue in terms of contextual features (e.g., historical, political, legislative, ideological) while taking into account structural privileges and inequities. (Essential 6, Essential 28, Essential 39, EPAS 1, EPAS 2, EPAS 5, EPAS 7)
- Create strategies for resolving a social welfare policy problem that advance human rights; social, economic, and/or environmental justice; and address power dynamics to ensure voices are included. (Essential 14, Essential 34, EPAS 2, EPAS 3, EPAS 6, EPAS 7)
- Advocate for a specific solution to a social welfare policy problem in a way that acknowledges contextual and social equity issues surrounding the problem. (Essential 29, Essential 30, Essential 34, Essential 35, EPAS 1, EPAS 2, EPAS 3, EPAS 5)

c. Course design

This course will be online with live synchronous sessions each week and will utilize a combination of lectures, discussion, in-class exercises, and a course project with weekly deliverables.

d. 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.

2. Class Requirements

a. Text and class materials

All required and supplemental materials will be provided to you within the Canvas website. Students must complete all pre-work to engage in the course and complete discussions and activities fully. Some materials may require electronic access to external links. Other materials are located within the University of Michigan Library materials. You will be required to log into your University account using your credentials (username and password) to access University of Michigan Library materials.

Throughout the course students will be expected to follow current events related to social welfare policy issues which impact social work practitioners and their clients. The course may focus on a topical content area as defined by the instructor before the start of the semester (e.g. immigration, child welfare, climate change, natural disaster relief, water rights). Assigned readings will be selected by the instructor accordingly. Additional pertinent short readings or podcasts might be added over the semester. The instructor will give advance notice to students or bring these additional materials to class as news events unfold. Closed captioned media sources, audio versions, and other formats will be used with an eye toward inclusivity and accessibility of all students. However, students with any unique challenges should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to ensure adequate access to materials.

b. Class schedule

Date/Time	Agenda	Required Readings & Assignments
<p>Week 1 May 18th</p>	<p>Lesson: Social Problem Construction: Competing Framings of Policy-Related Stories</p> <p>Live Zoom Session: See Canvas</p>	<p>Read: Syllabus</p> <p>Staller, K. (2010). Social problem construction and its impact on program and policy responses. In S.B. Kamerman, S. Phipps, & A. S. Ben-Arieh (Eds.), <i>From child welfare to child well-being</i> (pp. 155–173). Springer Science+Business Media. DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-3377-2_10</p> <p>Russonello, G. (2021, March 19). Democrats confront a surge at the border. <i>The New York Times</i>. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/19/us/politics/democrats-biden-border-immigration.html</p> <p>Watch: Seefeldt, K., (2021). <i>Social problem construction</i> [Video]. Canvas. University of Michigan.</p> <p>Complete: Day 7 - Project Deliverable</p>

<p>Week 2 May 25th</p>	<p>Lesson: Finding Policy: Locating, Identifying, and Reading Policy</p> <p>Live Zoom Session: See Canvas</p>	<p>Read: GovTrack.us. (2021). <i>H.R. 6: American Dream and Promise Act of 2021</i></p> <p>Center for Migration Studies. (n.d.). <i>President Biden's executive actions on immigration</i>. https://cmsny.org/biden-immigration-executive-actions/</p> <p>Watch: Seefeldt, K., (2021). <i>Finding policy</i> [Video]. Canvas. University of Michigan.</p> <p>Complete: Project Deliverable</p>
<p>Week 3 June 1st</p>	<p>Lesson: Consuming Policy Stories: Deconstructing Arguments and Contextualizing Information</p> <p>Live Zoom Session: See Canvas</p>	<p>Watch: Seefeldt, K., (2021). <i>Consuming policy</i> [Video]. Canvas. University of Michigan.</p> <p>Fox News. (2021, March 24). <i>Arizona mayor declares state of emergency over border crisis</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xcX0qizRuyg</p> <p>PBS NewsHour. (2021, March 26). <i>Immigrant families in limbo as Biden's immigration bill fails to get support in Congress</i> [Video]. Youtube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzLeiDcrZio</p> <p>Complete: Day 7 - Project Deliverable</p>
<p>Week 4 June 8th</p>	<p>Lesson: Identifying Advocacy Strategies: Making your Voices Heard</p>	<p>Read: Richwine, J. (2021, April 4). <i>Amnesty would impose large costs on social security and medicare</i>. Center for Immigration Studies.</p>

	<p>Live Zoom Session: See Canvas</p>	<p>https://cis.org/Report/Amnesty-Would-Impose-Large-Costs-Social-Security-and-Medicare</p> <p>Russonello, G. (2021, March 19). Democrats confront a surge at the border. <i>The New York Times</i>. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/19/us/politics/democrats-biden-border-immigration.html</p> <p>Brown, T. C., Megan, K., Mason, J., & Ramon, C. (2018). <i>Immigration's effect on the social security system</i>. Bipartisan Policy Center. https://bipartisanpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Immigrations-Effect-on-the-Social-Security-System.pdf</p> <p>Watch:</p> <p>Seefeldt, K., (2021). <i>Identifying advocacy strategies</i> [Video]. Canvas. University of Michigan.</p> <p>Complete:</p> <p>Day 7 - Project Deliverable</p>
<p>Week 5 June 15th</p>	<p>Synthesizing the Pieces: Policy Presentations</p> <p>Live Zoom Session: See Canvas</p>	<p>Read:</p> <p>Wilks, T. (2012). Cause advocacy. In <i>Advocacy and social work practice</i>. Open University Press.</p> <p>Russonello, G. (2021, March 19). Democrats confront a surge at the border. <i>The New York Times</i>. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/19/us/politics/democrats-biden-border-immigration.html</p>

		<p>Watch: Seefeldt, K., (2021). <i>Synthesizing the pieces</i> [Video]. Canvas. University of Michigan.</p> <p>Complete: Day 7 - Prepare and Present Final Projects Reflective Discussion</p>
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c. Assignments

There are basic requirements for this course. Each will be used in assessing the overall final grade. They are:

Attendance: Attending all five class sessions, including reading all assignments and coming to class prepared;

Discussions: Participating in reflective discussions and in a substantive and meaningful way;

Final Project: Participating in the final project including all required submissions.

This class is graded Pass/Fail. To pass the course you must pass the final assignment and participate in class sessions, discussions, and deliverables.

Assignment	Due date	Percent of overall grade
5 Live Zoom Sessions	Day 7 of each week	Pass/Fail (each)
5 Reflective Discussions-In Class	Live Zoom sessions	Pass/Fail (each)
Final Project	Final Class Session	Pass /Fail

Final Project Description:

Students will work in small groups to ‘produce’ a news story, podcast, YouTube video or other research-based educational segment. These will not be opinion pieces or propaganda. Rather the final product must reflect careful research, critical engagement and thoughtful analysis of a current events topic. Students will “perform” (or “present”) their projects in the final class (5-8 minutes a piece) and submit both the file containing the project and a statement outlining each participant’s contribution to the project. Students must demonstrate that they can:

- Contextualize the competing frames of a specific policy problem critical to social work practice;
- Critically assess the policy response using the skills developed in class;
- Synthesize material about this policy problem and response in an informative, factual, educational presentation;
- Identify a socially just policy response using critical analysis, ensuring all voices are heard;

d. Attendance and class participation

Students are responsible for all content of this course, including the content provided in the live, synchronous sessions. Absences are counted from the first scheduled live class meeting. The program has an 80% attendance requirement for live, synchronous sessions. Students who miss any (live, synchronous sessions) are at risk of a grade reduction, including receiving a non-passing grade. See the [Policy on Class Attendance](#) from the MSW Student Guide for further information.

If you are unable to attend a Live Zoom Session, please contact your instructor as soon as possible for an alternate method of completing this requirement.

e. Live class participation

Please mute your audio if you are not speaking. I strongly suggest keeping your camera on, but if that is not possible I understand.

Please use the raise hand function if you have a comment to make or question to ask. Feel free to use the chat to include supplementary information or to ask questions. I will try to keep tabs on what is being written in the chat but my first priority will be the verbal discussion. If you use the chat, please keep the conversation on topic.

Lectures will be recorded and posted to Canvas but I reserve the right to pause the recording if the discussion is veering into sensitive areas.

f. Grading

The course and all assignment grading is on a pass or fail basis. To pass the course you must pass the final assignment and participate in class sessions, discussions, and deliverables.

Because all grading is pass/fail, there is no way to accept late work for a reduced score. If you are unable to complete a item, please contact your instructor as soon as possible to see if an alternative is available for your circumstances.

For additional information, please reference the following resources

- a. [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#)
- b. [Student Grievance Procedures](#)
- c. [Policy for Grading in Special Circumstances](#)

g. 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.

h. COVID-19 Statement (not fully applicable)

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. By returning to campus, you have acknowledged your responsibility for protecting the collective health of our community. Your participation in this course on an in-person/hybrid basis is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including maintaining physical distancing of six feet from others, and properly wearing a face covering in class. Other applicable safety measures may be described in the [Wolverine Culture of Care](#) and the [University's Face Covering Policy for COVID-19](#). Your ability to participate in this course in-person/hybrid 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](#). If you are unable or unwilling to adhere to these safety measures while in a face-to-face class setting, you will be required to participate on a remote basis. 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.

i. 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>. 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*