SWK-S 352 Social Welfare Policy and Practice (3 cr.)

Course Information

Semester Year: XXXX
Section Number: XXXX
Location: XXXX
Day: XXXX
Time: XXXX

Instructor: XXXX XXXXXXXXX
Office: XXXX
Email: XXXX
Phone: XXXX
Office Hours: XXXX

Course Description

This social welfare policy course builds on SWK S251 by exploring in depth the current social welfare delivery system through policy analysis using a variety of frameworks while developing policy practice skills. The course emphasis on critical thinking, policy analysis, and policy-practice skills helps students understand and influence global, national, state, local and agency policies that affect delivery of social services in local communities. The course develops policy analysis and policy-practice skills within the context of social work ethics and the profession’s commitment to social, economic, and environmental justice.

Course Competencies

Council on Social Work Education (CWSE) 2015 EPAS Competencies addressed by this course.

Primary
- 5: Engage in Policy Practice
  Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings (CSWE, 2015 EPAS, p. 8).

Secondary
- 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Course Objectives

S352-01 Analyze social welfare policies and delivery systems using different frameworks.
S352-02 Frame the social work role in basic policy making processes, including the use of advocacy and empowerment.
S352-03 Describe the roles and relationships of governments, businesses, and the not-for-profit sector in the provision of human services.
S352-04 Evaluate the influence of politics, economics, and cultural and social values, including the perspectives of all vulnerable populations, in the development and implementation of social policy decisions.
S352-05  Analyze the relationship between social work values and beliefs, current delivery systems, and current social policy issues.

S352-06  Evaluate the impact of social policies and programs on individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and professional practice.

S352-07  Use a broad array of beginning policy practice skills to initiate and attempt to influence the development of social policy within agencies and the broader community.

S352-08  Determine potential allies and opponents in initiating a policy change through analysis of the forces supporting and opposing different policy options.

S352-09  Write policy briefs, advocacy letters, and other documents to impact policy discussions and public perception.

S352-10  Communicate with elected officials, agency leaders, and other decision makers and effectively advocate for people who lack access to those in power.

S352-11  Analyze the use and impact of technology and globalization in social policy with a focus on Indiana.

Required Texts

Recommended Texts

Course Content
The course provides students the opportunity to develop and practice policy-practice skills needed to influence decision makers at the agency, community, state, and national levels. This course explores the social welfare delivery system through analysis of social welfare policy. The course explores the policy development steps from problem identification though implementation. The course examines policy as practice helping the student develop policy-practice skills.

The major evaluation of students’ progress in the course requires demonstration of competencies in policy analysis, policy advocacy process, and policy advocacy skills. Students work individually and in small groups to analyze policy, develop a semester long policy advocacy project focused on existing or proposed legislation at the state level, then design, implement, and report on efforts to influence the existing policy or proposed legislation.

Resources
- Canvas email will also be used a way to communicate between instructor and students. You are expected to check the course announcements on Canvas before each class.
- Additional readings will be assigned throughout the semester and be posted on Canvas (Resource tab).
Course Outline

Module 1: Course Introduction

Date

Overview
   A. Introduction to course
   B. Review syllabus
   C. Review history and success of social change movements
   D. Examine the model the Civil Rights movement provides
   E. Introduction of mindfulness

Assignments

Readings
   1. Dr. Martin Luther King’s Letter from Birmingham Jail and other relevant documents
   2. Canvas Module

Written Assignments
   1. Introduce Yourself
   2. Talents and Challenges Survey
   3. Course Topics Survey

Module 2: Generalist Practice Skills Application to Advocacy

Date

Overview
   A. Defining policy practice
   B. Policy practice at the core of social work
   C. Discuss how practice skills are useful in advocacy and how they are applied differently

Assignments

Readings
   1. Cummins, Byers, & Pedrick, Chapter 1
   2. Morgaine & Capous-Desyllas, Chapter 9, Anti-oppressive policy practice (provided in Canvas)
   3. Canvas Module

Written Assignments
   1. Module 2 Reading Reflection
   2. Group Advocacy Project (GAP): Group Selection (instructor will assign groups)
   3. GAP: Group Contract and Expectations Agreement

Module 3: Forces that Shape Policy and Political Agendas

Date

Overview
   A. Understand types of public policy
   B. Introduce concept of political forces
C. Examine economic forces and related theories

Assignments

Readings
1. Cummins, Byers, & Pedrick Ch. 4
2. Canvas Module
3. View documentary How to Survive a Plague

Written Assignments
1. Module 3 Reading Reflection
2. GAP: Checklist for Policy Research

Module 4: Legislative Process, Interest Groups, and Lobbying

Date

Overview
A. Introduce framing of an issue
B. Discuss the legislative process
C. Examine lobbying and how social work connects

Assignments

Readings
1. Cummins, Byers, & Pedrick, Chapter 10
2. Canvas Module

Written Assignments
1. Module 4 Reading Reflection
2. GAP: Checkpoint 1

Module 5: Social Problem and Policy Analysis: An Ethic of Care Approach

Date

Overview
A. Specific principles of the Ethic of Care
B. Identify the values foundation of the Ethic of Care
C. Overview of the Ethic of Care framework
D. Brainstorm how to apply the Ethic of Care to legislation

Assignments

Readings
1. Cummins, Byers, & Pedrick, Chapter 9
2. Canvas Module

Written Assignments
1. GAP: Group advocacy project proposal

Module 6: Media and public opinion in policy practice

Date
Overview
A. Introduce ecology of policy practice across policy settings
B. Social worker roles in policy practice (again)
C. Understand the news media
D. Identify communication strategies for policy campaigns

Assignments
Readings
1. Cummins, Byers, & Pedrick, Chapters 6 & 7
2. Canvas Module
3. 2 letters to the editor
4. Front page of a newspaper or other news source

Written Assignments
1. Module 6 Reading Reflection
2. GAP: Peer update 1
3. GAP: Agenda & minutes

Module 7: Building Coalitions to Create Change
Date
Overview
A. Assessing power structures
B. Construct community-based coalition
C. Identify characteristics of successful coalitions
D. Recognize 4 components of successful coalitions

Assignments
Readings
1. Cummins, Byers, & Pedrick, Chapter 11
2. Morgaine & Capous-Desyllas, Chapter 8, Anti-oppressive practice with communities
   (provided in Canvas)
3. Canvas Module

Written Assignments
1. Policy in the news
2. Coalition building exercise

Module 8: Stages of Policy Making: Integrating Knowledge and Action
Date
Overview
A. Compare models of policy making
B. Identify stages of policy making
C. Apply stages of policy making to GAP
Assignments

Readings
1. Cummins, Byers, & Pedrick, Chapter 8
2. Canvas Module

Written Assignments
1. Module 8 Reading Reflection
2. GAP: Checkpoint 2
3. Policy in the news

Module 9: Stages of Policy Making, con’t.

Overview
A. Review the policy making process
B. Apply stages of policy making to legislation

Assignments
Readings
1. Cummins, Byers, & Pedrick, Chapter 8
2. Canvas Module

Written Assignments
1. Analysis of legislation
2. Finish Module 8 Reading Reflection if not already submitted
3. GAP: Agenda & minutes

Module 10: Campaigns

Overview
A. Examine the campaign process
B. Analyze the laws and ethics of campaigning
C. Design an issue campaign

Readings
1. Cummins, Byers, & Pedrick, Chapter 12
2. Canvas Module

Written Assignments
1. Module 10 Reading Reflection
2. Policy in the news
3. GAP: Agenda & minutes

Module 11: Political Empowerment

Date
Overview
A. Use of political power
B. Opportunities at hand
C. Challenges faced
D. Thinking globally

Readings
1. Cummins, Byers, & Pedrick, Chapter 14
2. Revisit Morgaine & Capous-Desyllas chapters (provided in Canvas)
3. Canvas Module

Written Assignments
1. Module 11 Reading Reflection
2. GAP: Peer update 2
3. GAP: Agenda & minutes
4. Policy in the news

Module 12: RECOMMENDATION TO INSTRUCTORS: Student Work Week
Date

Overview
A. Focus should be on completing the Signature Assignment: Individual Practice Portfolio and planning for final presentations

Readings
1. No new reading

Written Assignments
1. GAP: Checkpoint 3

Module 13: Civil Rights Movement: Then & Now
Date

Overview
A. Discussion and reflection on lessons from civil rights movement and progress to be had today
B. Application of course's material to historical/current American context
A.

Readings (for this week and next)
1. No textbook reading
2. Canvas Module

Written Assignments
1. Signature Assignment: Individual Practice Portfolio

Module 14: Advocacy Efforts to Reform Policing
Date
Overview
A. Discussion and reflection on lessons from civil rights movement and progress to be had today
B. Application of course’s material to historical/current American context

Readings (same as last week)
1. No textbook reading
2. Canvas Module

Written Assignments
1. Module 13/14 Reading Reflection

Module 15: Impact and Lessons Learned thru Advocacy

Date

Overview
A. Course wrap-up and reflection

Readings
1. No new reading

Written Assignments
1. Signature Assignment: Group presentations on lessons learned thru advocacy
2. Course Evaluations

Assignments and Grading
More specific instructions for each assignment will be posted on Canvas. Instructor also will discuss details or answer any questions related to assignment via Canvas email, during class, and/or office hours.

All assignments should be produced on a word processor (or typed), double spaced, with one-inch margins on all sides, carefully edited and proofed, using no smaller than a 12 point font, and conforming to APA style (7th ed.)

Assignments
1. Talents and Challenges Survey
   a. DUE:
   b. Final Grade Percentage: ...................................................~.07%
2. Course Topics Survey
   a. DUE:
   b. Final Grade Percentage: ...................................................~.07%
3. Group Advocacy Project (GAP)
   a. Group selection
      i. DUE:
      ii. Final Grade Percentage: .............................................No grade
   b. Group Contract & Expectations
      i. DUE:
ii. Final Grade Percentage: ........................................~2.8%
c. Checklist for Policy Research
   i. DUE:
   ii. Final Grade Percentage: ........................................~2.8%
d. Checkpoint 1
   i. DUE:
   ii. Final Grade Percentage: ........................................~5.6%
e. GAP Proposal
   i. DUE:
   ii. Final Grade Percentage: ........................................~2.8%
f. Agenda & Minutes (4x)
   i. DUE: .................................................................varies
   ii. Final Grade Percentage: ........................................~7.8%
g. Peer Update (2x)
   i. DUE: .................................................................varies
   ii. Final Grade Percentage: ........................................~2.8%
h. Checkpoint 2
   i. DUE:
   ii. Final Grade Percentage: ........................................~5.6%
i. Checkpoint 3
   i. DUE:
   ii. Final Grade Percentage: ........................................~5.6%

4. Reading Reflection Questions (8x)
a. DUE: .................................................................varies
   b. Final Grade Percentage: ........................................~22.3%

5. Policy in the News
   a. Presentation (1x)
      i. DUE: .................................................................varies
      ii. Final Grade Percentage: ........................................~5.6%
   b. Discussion Responses (3x)
      i. DUE: .................................................................varies
      ii. Final Grade Percentage: ........................................~4.2%

6. Coalition Building Exercise
   a. DUE: .................................................................
   b. Final Grade Percentage: ........................................~1.4%

7. Analysis of Legislation
   a. DUE:
   b. Final Grade Percentage: ..................................................~8.4%
8. SIGNATURE ASSIGNMENT: Individual Policy Practice Portfolio
   a. DUE: .............................................................................................................
   b. Final Grade Percentage:........~18.2%

9. SIGNATURE ASSIGNMENT: Group Presentation on Lessons Learned thru Advocacy
   a. DUE: ..........................................
   b. Final Grade Percentage:........~2.8%......................................

Assignment Details

Talents and Challenges Survey (2.5 points)
This is a brief survey to be completed in Canvas. Students spend time reflecting and identifying talents and challenges they bring to a group experience. This survey will be one source of information used when developing the groups for the Group Advocacy Project. Additional information provided in Canvas.

Course Topics Survey (2.5 points)
Students complete this brief survey to identify primary policy interests, previous advocacy experience, knowledge, etc. This survey will be one source of information used when developing the groups for the Group Advocacy Project. Additional information provided in Canvas.

Reading Reflection Questions (8x) (8 @ 10 points = 80 points)
Reading reflection questions provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate their understanding of the reading and other materials in a given module. The specific parameters for each reading reflection varies based on the material covered in the module. Please see Canvas for additional details.

Coalition Building Exercise (5 points)
This assignment is a demonstration of students’ understanding of coalition building, recruitment strategy, and innovative thinking. This assignment is completed by each student and turned in individually. This assignment builds directly into the GAP, specifically Checkpoint 2. See Canvas for additional details. THIS IS FOR THE STUDENT’S INDIVIDUAL LIST GENERATED PRE-CHECKPOINT 2

Policy in the News (1 Presentation Post // 3 Discussion Responses) (35 points)

Presentation Post (20 points): Each student is required to post a news item in Canvas about current events that have policy implications related to social work either locally, nationally, or globally. A schedule for Policy in the News presentations will be posted so that students know the date they are responsible for posting their presentation. A policy may only be presented one time. Students are responsible for knowing what policies have been addressed and must not submit a presentation on a policy that has already been discussed.

To avoid repetition each student must post a news item and the policy issue to be addressed in the presentation in Canvas. It is possible that some news items will focus on the same policy area, but the policy issue must be unique. For example, there may be more than one news item on education, but each must focus on a different policy issue in education, e.g. free and reduced lunch, class sizes, suspension/expulsion, bullying prevention, etc. First come, first serve for the policy issue. It is the
student’s responsibility to check the Canvas assignment to ensure their policy issue has not already been posted. You should post your news item and the policy issue addressed as soon as you know what you want to present. If you find that another student has already posted a news item and policy issue similar to the one you picked, you will need to find a different news item for your presentation.

When you present your topic for discussion, provide the following information:

- A brief description of the issue including who is proposing the policy, the target population and the primary problem (the problem being addressed by the policy), and identify the environmental level or setting for the change being proposed (local, state, federal, executive, judicial, or legislative).
- Discuss how the issue may have oppressive impact on people. Incorporate the Ethic of Care in this part of your presentation.
- Conduct research to provide background and context on your topic or social issue to clarify or expand on the info found in the news item.
- Do fact checking on the info presented in the news item, including the source of the info (if any) and how reliable or accurate the info is. Do not simply present the info in the news item as fact.
- Post two policy related question for the class discussion.

**Discussion Responses (15 points = 3 posts / 5 pts):** Students must respond to 3 of the PIN discussion presentations – specifically responding to the questions posted by student presenters. Additional details available in Canvas.

**Analysis of Legislation: Applying the Ethic of Care Framework (30 points)**

Each student will choose one piece of legislation and provide a report on the following:

1. The number of your bill (legislation) and a one sentence summary of its intended purpose.
2. Using the Ethic of Care Framework, identify the target population, problem or issue to be addressed, services or intervention approach to be initiated, potential impact (both intended and unintended consequences) and how policy is to be evaluated based on outcomes expected.
3. Analyze the language of the bill and what it actually means.
4. Discuss what aspects of the bill you supported and what aspects you opposed. Provide a rationale for the reasons for your support and opposition (based on both research knowledge and value positions) in paragraph form.
5. What possible costs and benefits are not addressed in the fiscal impact statement? What did you learn from analyzing the fiscal impact statement? What fiscal issues are still unclear to you?
6. Identify the stakeholders who are likely to support or oppose your position and why.
7. Provide ideas on the best way to frame the issue to gather their support or lessen opposition.

**Group Advocacy Project (GAP) (128 points)**

The Group Advocacy Project (GAP) is designed to have students DO policy/advocacy work. Students work individually and as a small group to analyze policy, develop a semester long policy advocacy
project focused on existing or proposed legislation at the state level, then design, implement, and report on efforts to influence the existing policy or proposed legislation. Individuals will develop a portfolio with advocacy products relevant to the group project that includes among other items a policy analysis and an evaluation of the group’s policy advocacy efforts. Periodic updates on projects and the progress of the advocacy efforts will be provided to the rest of the class throughout the semester.

The GAP is broken down in pieces -- periodic updates on the project and the progress of the advocacy efforts will be due over the course of the semester to document groups’ progress and learning. Those elements are listed below. Additional details are available in Canvas.

a. Group Selection ................................................Instructor completes this
b. Group Contract & Expectations .........................................10 points
c. Checklist for Policy Research .............................................10 points
d. Checkpoint 1 ................................................20 points
e. GAP Proposal ................................................10 points
f. Agenda & Minutes (4x) ................................................7/A&M = 28 points
g. Peer Update (2x) ................................................5/update = 10 points
h. Checkpoint 2 ................................................20 points
i. Checkpoint 3 ................................................20 points

The SIGNATURE ASSIGNMENT for this class is designed as (1) the Individual Policy Practice Portfolio and (2) a Group Presentation on Lessons Learned thru Advocacy, i.e. in the DOING of the GAP. Details on those two additional elements of this project are detailed below.

**Signature Assignment: Individual Policy Practice Portfolio (65 points)**

Students work individually and in small groups to analyze policy, develop a semester long policy advocacy project focused on existing or proposed legislation at the state level, then design, implement, and report on efforts to influence the existing policy or proposed legislation. Individuals will develop a portfolio with advocacy products relevant to the group project that includes among other items a policy analysis and an evaluation of the group’s policy advocacy efforts. Periodic updates on projects and the progress of the advocacy efforts will be provided to the rest of the class throughout the semester.

It is recommended that all four of these written products focus on your group project; however, they do not all have to be on the same topic.

1. Advocacy letter to elected official  (See Tips in Chapter 10 of text) (15 points)
   - Short (1 page), grammatically correct, individualized, courteous
   - Remind official of any past contact (if applicable)
   - Identify the bill or issue in the first sentence
   - Relate any personal experience with the issue
   - Ask official to take specific action
   - Include your contact information

   *Send letter to the elected official and send confirmation of receipt to instructor*

2. Report of verbal conversation with elected official or staff member (15 points)
• Date and time of conversation, timing of conversation given legislative or other processes
• Context – in person or phone, location
• Summarize conversation – questions you asked and the decision maker’s response
• Indicate how you felt about this interaction – for example, were you empowered, did you feel dismissed?

*If you talk directly to an elected official, you receive 5 bonus points for this assignment.

3. Letter to the editor (15 points)
• Approximately 200-350 words
• Follow the guidelines of the publication for length
• Time letter to be in response to current event or recent article/letter to editor
• Use both research and personal experience to make your points
• Clarity and concise writing are essential for letters to the editor, make every word count.
• Begin letter with an engaging sentence and end with a call to action

*Submit your letter to a newspaper and send confirmation of receipt to instructor

4. Policy brief - two pages maximum. (20 points) The policy brief should contain the following elements.
• Key talking points – facts and statistics in support of your position.
• Key points are clearly identified and the policy brief is designed to highlight the key points.
• Creativity and design are essential components of this assignment.

You may use Microsoft Office Publisher or Microsoft Office Word to create this document.

Signature Assignment: Group Presentation on Lessons Learned thru Advocacy (10 points)
Students work individually and in small groups to analyze policy, develop a semester long policy advocacy project focused on existing or proposed legislation at the state level, then design, implement, and report on efforts to influence the existing policy or proposed legislation. Individuals will develop a portfolio with advocacy products relevant to the group project that includes among other items a policy analysis and an evaluation of the group’s policy advocacy efforts. Periodic updates on projects and the progress of the advocacy efforts will be provided to the rest of the class throughout the semester.

At the end of the semester, groups will present overviews of their GAP. Student discuss what they learned thru the completion of the GAP:
• What were the biggest successes of this project?
• Detail the challenges you faced in implementing your plan and how you addressed those challenges and modified your plans accordingly.
• Were your expectations for how long different parts of the project would take accurate?
• What technical issues did you encounter?
• What previous experiences benefited you in this project?
• Reflect on what you learned from the people, groups or organizations you interacted with.
• What skills were most useful in building support or interest in the issue?
• Has your understanding of this policy issue shifted over the semester? How so?

Additional details regarding length, technology, etc. are available in Canvas.

Grading Standards
Papers are graded on the quality of the final product not on the effort you extended completing them. The grade of A is reserved for truly outstanding work that goes beyond basic requirements.

Grades of A reflect Excellence. Excellent scholarly products and academic or professional performances are substantially superior to the “good,” “the high quality,” “the competent,” or the “satisfactory.” They are unusual, exceptional, and extraordinary. Criteria for assignments are not only met, they are exceeded by a significant margin. Excellence is a rare phenomenon. As a result, relatively few BSW students earn A grades.

Grades of B signify good or high quality scholarly products and academic or professional performance. Grades in the B range reflect work expected of a conscientious student in a professional program. Criteria for assignments are met in a competent, thoughtful, and professional manner. However, the criteria are not exceeded and the quality is not substantially superior to other good quality products or performances. There is a clear distinction between the good and the excellent. We expect that most BSW students will earn grades in the B range—reflecting the good or high quality work expected of competent future helping professionals.

Grades of C and C+ signify work that is marginal in nature. The scholarly products or professional performances meet many but not all of the expected criteria. The work approaches but does not quite meet the standards of quality expected of a student in a professional school. Satisfactory in many respects, its quality is not consistently so and cannot be considered of good or high quality. We anticipate that a minority of BSW students will earn C and C+ grades.

Grades of C- and lower reflect work that is unsatisfactory. The products or performances do not meet several, many, or most of the criteria. The work fails to approach the standards of quality expected of a student and a future BSW-level professional. We anticipate that a small percentage of BSW students will earn unsatisfactory grades of C-, D, and F.

Grading scale
Grade minimums are as follows [Note: grades below C are Unsatisfactory in the BSW Program]:

A  93%  Excellent, Exceptional Quality
A- 90%  Superior Quality
B+ 87%  Very Good, Slightly Higher Quality
B  83%  Good, High Quality (expected of most MSW students)
B- 80%  Satisfactory Quality
C+ 77%  Marginal, Modestly Acceptable Quality
C  73%  Marginal, Minimally Acceptable Quality
C- 70%  Unsatisfactory Quality
Course Policies

Assignment
Students are expected to submit all assignments on time. If you need to extend a deadline you MUST speak to me in advance of the due date to get an approval and an agreement will be reached. Late submission (except by prior agreement) will be marked down 5% per day late. IU has a subscription with the Turnitin plagiarism detection service, and faculty members have the right to submit student papers to the service to check for originality. Turnitin.com service will be used for all student papers in this course.

Attendance and participation
Students are expected to attend and participate in all class sessions. Students should complete readings and homework as assigned and come to class prepared for discussion and questions. Because of the nature of this course and group assignments, regular attendance is required and extremely important. Class attendance and active participation in class activities are considered essential for the satisfactory completion of the course objectives. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get notes from other students regarding materials covered during your absence. If you are absent on the day when an assignment is due, you need to submit your assignment before the beginning of the class. Missing more than 2 of the scheduled classes will result in a letter-grade deduction for the course. Late arrivals and early departures will also lead to course point deductions. It’s up to instructor’s discretion to decide the deduction points. If you miss five or more classes you will fail the course.