I. COURSE DOMAIN AND BOUNDARY
This course builds on and advances the knowledge and skills gained in SW 7720, Introduction to Social Welfare in the United States with a specific emphasis on policy evaluation and advocacy. The course emphasizes the role of policy advocacy for social workers in interpersonal practice. Course content covers the rationale for social workers to engage in policy advocacy and tools for carrying out advocacy activities. Advanced evaluation of social policies with regard to their intended and unintended impacts on social and economic justice is a major part of the course content. Methods of changing and developing social policy to address gaps in services, especially for vulnerable populations are covered.

II. COMPETENCIES
1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly
2. Apply social work principles to guide professional practice
3. Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments
4. Engage diversity and difference in practice
5. Advance human rights and social and economic justice
6. Engage in research-informed research and practice –informed research
7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment
8. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services
9. Respond to contexts that shape practice
10. Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
11. Analyze the impact of the urban context on a range of client systems, including practice implications

III. LEARNING OUTCOMES:
BENCHMARK: POLICY ADVOCACY PROJECT
• Analyze the impact of policy implementation on their own social work practice and professional development (Competency 1-A)
• Discuss how political ideologies and social values impact policy implementation and advocacy. (Competency 2-A)
• Evaluate their own ideological positions and value systems with regard to policy practice and ways their positions are in accord with or contradict professional social work values (Competency 2-A)
• Articulate the rationale for policy advocacy by social workers in all areas of practice (Competency 3-C)
• Analyze the impact of policy implementation on the promotion of social and economic justice with special emphasis on vulnerable groups (Competency 5-A)
• Identify how social problems and social policy interact, using an ecological systemic framework (Competency 7-B)
• Analyze how policies impact service delivery (Competency 8-A)
• Describe how policy advocacy facilitates the delivery of effective social services (Competency 8-B)
• Analyze the impact of policy implementation on the lives of their clients in the Metro Detroit area (Competency 11-A)

III. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
Student achievement of knowledge and skills objectives will be assessed through exams, written assignments and/or in-class exercises.

The final course grade will be determined based on scores of three assignments, participation and preparedness that are designed to measure how well each student meets the course competencies. The additional information for completing each assignment is included later in the syllabus.

1. Participation & Preparedness 15%
2. Annotated Bibliography 25%
3. Policy Advocacy Project (Power Point Presentation) 40%
4. Sound Bites/Debates 20%

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<tr>
<th>95-100 A</th>
<th>90-94 A-</th>
<th>87-89 B+</th>
<th>83-86 B</th>
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<td>70-72 C-</td>
<td>69-66 D+</td>
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The criteria for letter grades are as follows:
A 95.0-100 Mastery of subject content, demonstration of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in completion of assignment.
### IV. TEXTS/REQUIRED MATERIALS

The primary text book for this course is:


An important tool and recommended text is:

Three secondary texts are recommended. They are especially valuable for faculty course preparation.


Readings from peer reviewed journals, newspapers, selected internet sites and some secondary resources are required. For example, students may be required to read the national section of at least one newspaper of record such as *The New York Times*, the local section of a local newspaper such as *The Detroit Press*, and certain government websites. Students may also be required to view a national news program of television or listen to a national radio news program.
V. ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE

This course establishes a connection between social welfare policy and social work practice. To this end the course extends the scope and depth of understanding of the role of social policy and advocacy in interpersonal practice through application to a substantive field of social work practice. A generalist approach to advocacy and evaluating social welfare policies will be introduced. The responsibilities of social workers in political advocacy and policy practice will be explored and highlighted.

The course has 3 units: 1) Introduction to policy advocacy, including understanding advocacy as social work practice and the rationales for social policy advocacy; 2) Policy implementation and evaluation; and, 3) Developing and using policy advocacy skills.

VI. COURSE OUTLINE

Below is the suggested course outline based on the required course text. Instructors may make minor changes to the weekly readings as well as add additional readings as they feel appropriate for their class.

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<td>Jansson Chapters 1-3</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Building Agendas &amp; Policy Analysis</td>
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VII. **SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS**—Instructors may select one of the two assignments.

1. **Policy Debates** – An in-class assignment.
   Students will work in groups of 4 or 5. Groups will be given 10 minutes of planning time in each of the first 7 class sessions for this assignment. Each group will select one of the policy debates in Karger, Midgley & Brown’s text, *Controversial issues in social policy* as the subject of their presentation. Students are required to expand on the debates found in the text.

   **The Presentations:** Each group member will have 8 minutes (timed) to present.
   a. *What is the issue at hand?* The issue will be presented using an ideologically neutral position. It should include a clear statement of the issue with appropriate evidence. An historical background may be included in this part of the presentation.
      
      *Example:*  
      *Question:* Should the federal government insure universal health insurance?  
      *Background:* The United States does not have a universal system of health care payment. It relies on employment based health insurance. There are currently over 45 million Americans without health insurance. (… provide history.)
   b. *Present the positive and negative positions.* There will be two alternating presentations of the positive and negative positions. The first presents the argument that supports or opposed the position taken. The second presentations will provide a brief advocacy plan to achieve the position taken. Address the ethics, values and political ideologies that underlie each of the positions.
   c. *Question and answer session.* After the presentations, the class will have 10 minutes to ask questions of the presenters.

   **Additional Requirements:** Each student will be required to turn in a five page (not including title page, tables, figures and references) paper about his or her part of the debate. This brief is more extensive than the class presentation, but may have information that is used in response to class questions. It is due at the beginning of the class during which the presentation is made. Each student must provide a meaningful evaluation of other members of the group. A form will be provided for the evaluation.

   **Grading:** Students will receive individual grades for this assignment. Factors to be considered are: Content of presentation; content of brief paper; and, group evaluations.

2. **Sound Bite Presentation**
   The purpose of this assignment is twofold: 1) to add to our common understanding of a variety of policy issues that affect social work practice, and 2) to give you practice in condensing your thoughts into short “sound bites” that might be useful in staff meetings, board presentations, city council meetings, legislators’ offices, etc.

   In a nutshell, this assignment asks you to review the development of a particular policy and
give a four minute report ("sound bite") on its development. It must be a different bill than identified in the group assignment. You may envision the report as a quick summary given by a TV reporter to an intelligent, but possibly uninformed audience, or a summary given by a concerned citizen providing his/her opinion at a city council meeting.

The sound bite can take no more than four minutes. YOU WILL BE ASKED TO STOP AFTER FOUR MINUTES. Additional time will be allotted for questions from the class.

Some tips:
--Your sound bite will summarize the policy issue and provide a brief history of it. The sound bite should cover the opposing views of the policy or public reactions to the issue, and economic aspects/feasibility of the bill/legislation. In addition, it should briefly discuss the bill’s movement through Congress or the Texas legislature and/or be a summary/evaluation of the policy or process.
--Use a variety of sources to gather information for your sound bite (and mention them by name in your presentation, like a TV reporter would). Useful sources include newspapers, weekly news magazines such as Time, Newsweek, or The Economist, National Public Radio’s “All Things Considered,” local TV news shows, “reputable” web sites hosted by independent think tanks or policy institutes, such as Austin's own Center for Public Policy Priorities, etc.
--DO practice your four-minute presentation several times before coming to class. Condensing complex information can be quite challenging and may take some practice.
--DON'T try to force your issue into the textbook’s policy outline (each policy issue will raise different issues—you will discover the key elements as you go along).
--DON'T read your sound bite, but prepare brief “cue words” on a note card to help you remember the order of ideas you want to present.

VIII. REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS

Annotated Bibliography
In preparation for the policy advocacy assignment you are required to complete an annotated bibliography. This assignment will help you gain a good perspective on what is being said about your social problem area. By reading and responding to a variety of sources on a topic, you will start to see what the issues are, what people are arguing about, and you will then be able to develop your own point of view and social problem area of advocacy. The annotated bibliography should include 20-22 entries and follow the APA format.

i. At least 10-11 of the entries should be selected from peer reviewed journal articles.
ii. Include a minimum of 2 government (e.g.: census, population studies) documents to establish the prevalence of the issue/problem/characteristic,
the demographics of those that experience it, and specific policies that affect this population.

iii. Select and review one (1) current mainstream newspaper article and

iv. Choose one (1) article by an advocacy group that relates to your policy/populations/issue/problem.

v. The remainder of the entries can be selected from books, magazines, periodicals, etc.

**Content:**

1. Describe the social problem area that will be the focus of your advocacy plan (e.g. child welfare, mental health, criminal justice, etc.).

2. Identify the main arguments for each reading. (What is the point of this book or article? What topics are covered? If someone asked what this article/book is about, what would you say?)

3. Address whether or not the reading is a useful source. (How does it compare with other sources in your bibliography? Is the information reliable? Is the source biased or objective?)

4. Discuss how the article/reading fits into your advocacy project. (Was this source helpful to you? How does it help you shape your argument? How can you use this source in your research project? Has it changed how you think about your topic?)

**Policy Advocacy Project**

A group assignment and 30 minute presentation is required in this class. The class will be divided into groups of interest to prepare a power point presentation. In this Power Point Presentation each group will develop a policy advocacy plan to change a policy, its implementation or to develop a new policy to address a social problem. Your project must take into account social work’s position on the policy issue, social work values and ethics. This project follows the outline of policy tasks as given in the required text. Your goal is to have a project that can be used to advocate to policy makers and other stockholders in order to bring about change. You may use tables and figures to support your oral presentation.

a. Identify the key social problem that is the focus of your field agency’s mission. If you are not in field, then you should select a social problem in the area of interest you selected above. Then, you will need to identify a community agency that addresses this problem. (Approximately 2 paragraphs)

b. Identify the specific policy advocacy concern. In this presentation, you need to document the issue clearly and provide reliable and current evidence. You may choose to use tables or figures to enhance your presentation.

c. Discuss your advocacy goal and the objectives towards reaching that goal.

d. Explain how your recommendations correspond with social work values, policy positions and ethics. You may want to refer to *Social Work Speaks* for information on the policy positions taken by the National Association of Social Work to assist in completing this section of your presentation.

e. Clearly identify stakeholders and why each is included.

f. Explain your strategies that you will use for advocacy with each stakeholder.
g. Provide a timeline for your advocacy project.

h. Develop a tool to analyze your progress.

i. Provide examples of tools that you will use to advocate for change with at least two sets of stakeholder. For example, you may prepare testimony to present to legislators. You might prepare a set of amended regulations to present to administrators. You may bring client stories to the stakeholders.

j. Write a maximum 500 word Op-Ed piece to send to a local newspaper. (If you send it in and it is published, be sure to share that information with the instructor.)

k. Assess how your recommended change will impact: your practice; your clients’ lives; and social and economic justice.

You may compile your project in whatever order makes most sense to you. As with all of your assignments, you should use reliable professional sources for references. In this presentation, you may need to use secondary sources, such as newspaper articles or popular press, to further support your plan. The power point presentations will be turned in via email by the due date.

**Grading**

The primary criterion for grading is the quality of your analysis and the conclusions that you draw. The other criteria include clarity of presentation, use of references and citations, and the format of your presentation. Please refer to the grading section on the syllabus for more information about grading and preparation of your presentation.
IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY


