THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

COURSE NUMBER: SOWO 834
COURSE TITLE: ADVANCED POLICY PRACTICE
SEMESTER AND YEAR: SPRING SEMESTER, 2010, TUESDAYS 9-10:30
CREDITS: 1.5
INSTRUCTOR: Marie Weil
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OFFICE HOURS:
MONDAYS: 1-2:00 PM & 5-5:45 PM
TUESDAYS: 12 NOON – 1:45 PM;
OTHER TIMES BY APPOINTMENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Advanced Policy Practice focuses on skills development in advanced policy analysis and change at administrative and legislative levels and on multiple levels of advocacy and lobbying strategies.

Course Objectives:
At the conclusion of this class students will be able to:
1. Demonstrate the analytic, theoretical and value assessment skills that enable social workers to evaluate selected state and national policies and apply change strategies.
2. Apply social work ethics and the concepts of human rights and social justice to policy analysis, development and change strategies.
3. Discuss and critique the role of political/social/economic theories, ideologies, and values that shape policy alternatives and outcomes, especially as they relate to marginalized populations.
4. Demonstrate policy practice strategies applying analytic, political, values clarification, advocacy, and communication/organizing skills.
5. Critically analyze selected social policies from local and national perspectives applying the course’s framework for analysis.
6. Demonstrate skill in lobbying (or in development of a lobbying plan), and in analysis and critique of administrative policies.
7. Engage in peer-learning, class exercises, debate and discussion of a range of policies and policy practice issues and strategies. Identify policy principles, provisions, and outcomes in self-selected area.
8. Demonstrate specialized knowledge and expertise in policy analysis, research and implementation in a policy environment of the student’s own choosing.
**Expanded Description:**
This course is based on the ethical responsibility of social workers to engage in policy and advocacy practice. Student selected areas of social policy, policy context, and comparative approaches to solving social problems will be emphasized. Diverse political/social/economic perspectives will be examined as well as contemporary perspectives on human rights and social justice. Students will examine relevant public education and coalition building strategies. In their selected area, students will engage in building a policy agenda, analyzing relevant problems and options, position-taking, writing a policy proposal or revision, developing a political strategy for advocacy and lobbying, and assessment of policy implementation issues.

**Perquisites:**
**MSW Students:** SOWO 501. **Graduate Students in other Departments:** Experience in policy analysis and at least one other graduate course in public social policy, and permission of the Instructor.

**Texts:**


**Supplemental Text** (Recommended, not required):

**Recommended Readings—Selections from:**
(Selected Chapters from the following texts will be available on the Blackboard Site for the Course)

**Teaching Methods:**
This course is constructed as a seminar with major emphasis on policy analysis and policy practice skills development employing peer- and adult-learning methods. Students are expected to take responsibility for being prepared to discuss readings and relate them to class discussions and field or work experiences and to prepare presentations and reports to share with class members and the instructor. Brief lectures are used to introduce policy and policy practice issues, tensions and contexts. Students are expected to use critical thinking and policy analysis skills in discussions, group exercises, papers and presentations. Guest presenters will be asked to speak with the class about major policy areas.

The course uses instructor and student-led cognitive learning approaches and engages students in discussion of issues related to: specific social policies at multiple levels, social work values, social justice, human rights, policy development, policy practice roles, skills development in policy analysis and presentations, advocacy and lobbying. Experiential learning methods are used by the instructor, by individual students, and by groups of students to assist in developing understanding and experience with major policy practice roles.

**CLASS ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION:**

Three major skills development assignments are required for this course. In addition, homework assignments and in-class group work will be required. For the First Assignment you will practice critiquing and developing administrative and program level policy. Brief homework and in-class assignments will be required to assist in skills acquisition. The Second Assignment focuses on Lobbying. In years in which the NC Legislature meets for a “long session,” students will participate in NCNASW Lobby Education Day – visiting and lobbying multiple legislators regarding proposed legislation of importance to social work and prepare a brief reflection paper for class discussion of the experience. In years when Lobby Day is not held, the second assignment is either (a) an individual or small group Lobbying Visit – to a local, state, or national legislator or governmental officer and written analysis of the experience or; (b) a Detailed Lobbying Plan for a nonprofit organization with an issue analysis based on the lobbying plan format in Avner (2002)). In the Final Assignment, you will conduct a policy analysis in an area of your own special interest (state or national) and an analysis of policy practice strategies to move that policy agenda forward. All papers should be prepared in accordance with APA format. The percentage of final grade for each assignment is indicated in the following list:

**Assignment List and Percentage of Grade:**

1. Administrative/Program Policy Change: Analysis, Design of Change and Implementation Memo 20%

2. Lobbying Assignment—select one of the following choices: (a) Conducting and preparing a brief paper about a lobbying meeting that you arrange with a legislator or a local, state, or national office holder; (b) Preparation of a Detailed Lobbying Plan using Avner’s model; or (c) in years when it is held--Participation in NCNASW LOBBY DAY 25%

3. Final Project: (a) Class Presentation of Final Project Policy Analysis, and 15%
Assignments for the Course are Presented at the Conclusion of the Syllabus.

Course Expectations:
Attendance: Students are expected to attend all classes, to be prepared for seminar discussion of assigned readings and current topics, and to be engaged in questions and discussion of other students’ topics as well as their own. Each class member will be responsible for discussion leadership of a particular class and for discussion of particular issues. Missing three classes will result in lowering of grade by ten points. Students may be excused from class if they are participating in a major learning experience related to their field agency’s work or attending a professional conference.

Students will be asked individually or in small groups to become thoroughly familiar with particular assigned readings for specific sessions and to lead discussion of questions related to those readings with the class.

Students are encouraged to review the web site of Influencing State Policy (www.statepolicy.org) (sponsored by Virginia Commonwealth University’s School of Social Work) and to follow relevant issues or participate in projects. You will be expected to review the websites for the NC Legislature and for the National House of Representative or Senate to track legislation.

Two additional Web sites that may be of use are:
(a) For lobbying considerations before beginning your assignment:
http://www.cirnow.org/content/en/action_lobbying.htm

(b) Regarding meetings with members of congress and/or the administration:
http://www.cirnow.org/content/en/action_meeting_congress.htm

Since this is an advanced level master’s course, it has high expectations for reading, analyzing, critiquing policy and related professional literature, and presenting your own work for discussion and evaluation. Each written assignment is expected to show evidence of critical thinking as well as thoughtful consideration of the policy literature, and other relevant resources. Papers are expected to include in-text citations and a summary list of references following the APA Style Manual. If you have experience with the reference and citation formats commonly used in legal and legislative documents, please employ that method. Assignments should be word-processed or typed (double spaced) employing correct English usage, grammar, punctuation and spelling. To be acceptable for advanced graduate work, assignments must be at a level of professionalism expected of professional policy practitioners.

Grading Policy:
The School of Social Work operates on an evaluation system of Honors (H), Pass (P), Low Pass (L), and Fail (F). The numerical values for these grades are as follows:
A grade of P is “entirely satisfactory” master’s level work. On a traditional grading scale, a P would range from an A- to a B-. The grade of H (Honors) signifies that the work is clearly excellent in all respects.

**Policy on Incompletes and Late Assignments:**
Students are expected to turn in written assignments to the instructor on the appointed date. If an illness or major professional commitment prevents timely submission, contact the instructor to discuss implications and to work out arrangements to get the assignment to the instructor as soon as possible. The University has strict policies that govern giving a grade of Incomplete. This grade is given only in serious extenuating circumstances.

**Policy on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**
Students who require accommodations in relation to class participation or assignment completion should notify the instructor on the first day of class and provide a brief written statement in relation to needed formats.

**Policy on use of Electronic Devices:**
Students are expected to cut off all cell phones and other communication devices during each class. (Please advise the Instructor in advance if you anticipate an urgent call.) Students are expected NOT to use laptop computers in class without a private discussion with and prior permission from the Instructor. It can be useful to have a class member look up relevant web-based materials during class, however, any use of a computer for personal communication, or work other than seeking relevant information that has been requested for class discussion in SOWO 834 will result in (1) being requested to leave the class and not return until the issue has been discussed jointly with the instructor and the Associate Dean, and (2) lowering of the final grade by 10 points.

**Honor Code Expectations**
Please refer to the APA Style Guide, the SSW Manual, and the SSW Writing Guide for information on attribution of quotes, plagiarism and appropriate use of assistance in preparing assignments. All written assignments should contain a signed pledge from you stating:

“I have not given or received unauthorized aid in preparing this written work; I have not plagiarized the work of anyone else from books, articles, web sites, or personal communication; and I have not submitted work for this class that was developed for a previous or concurrent course.”

Students are expected to use this version of the Honor Code for all assignments for this course. In keeping with the UNC Honor Code, if reason exists to believe that academic dishonesty has occurred, a referral will be made to the Office of the Student Attorney General for investigation and further action will be taken as required.
READINGS AND COURSE OUTLINE
ADVANCED POLICY PRACTICE SOWO 834

(Readings available on the Course’s Blackboard site are indicated with an *. Other Required readings and web-sites are not marked.)

January 12
1st Class  Introductions and Course Overview—Scope of Policy Practice
Introductions
Course Content
Your Interest Areas and Assignment Topic Options
Opportunities for Policy Practice in Field Placements or current work
Previous Policy Practice work

Required Readings:

Preparation for 1st Class:
Consider what topics and issues in social policy are most important to you for your work this semester and be prepared to discuss them.

One of the foci for this course is a shared teaching/learning process whereby we learn from each other and teach each other to expand everyone’s knowledge of a range of policy issues.

Come to the first class prepared to discuss the First Chapter of Bruce Jansson's Book:

Read this chapter carefully and be prepared to discuss the issues raised in the Chapter Summary p. 36.

To begin our shared endeavor with policy practice skills, work on the following "Policy Advocacy challenges":

1. Carefully consider the discussion and Table 1.1 (p. 17) covering Ideological Positions. Take on Policy Advocacy Challenge 1.4--take some notes and be prepared to discuss the relation of ideology to different courses of action in response to Hurricane Katrina.

2. Review PA Challenge 1.3 and be prepared to discuss issues of social work agencies abilities to respond to disasters.

3. Review the material in PA Challenge 1.9 and take up the Challenge in 1.10 and be prepared to discuss the questions in class.

January 19         Rationales and Arenas for Policy Practice
2nd Class
Complete the sign-up sheet identifying assignment topics: Administrative Memo; Lobbying Assignment preference and working ideas for Final Project.

Required Readings:

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Advanced Policy Practice

**Preparation & Materials:**

**Homework:** Draft two questions each that you would like to discuss related to the two Jansson chapters assigned for today.

**Exercise:** Completion of forms and discussion of special topic preferences.

**Discussion:** Administrative Memo Assignment Preparation

Jansson Chapters—Your Questions

**January 26th 3rd Class**

**Skills and Competencies for Policy Advocacy**

**Class Preparation & Materials:**

Determine Interest Area for Final Project

**Exercise:**

Decisions and final sign-up sheet for Final Project—Progress in locating relevant materials.

**Required Readings:**


*Schenider and Lester, Chapter 8. Administrative Advocacy.

**February 2nd 4th Class**

**Administrative Memo Sharing, Assessment Preparation and the Ecology of Policy**

**Required Reading:**

Jansson, Chapter 4. Understanding the Ecology of Policy in Governmental, Electoral, Community, and Agency Settings.

There will be no class meeting on the 2nd of February. Instead you will distribute your completed 1st Assignment—Administrative Policy Change and Implementation Guidance to three other class members and prepare a written assessment of the Memos you receive from the three class members in your small group.

Have your Administrative Memo assignment completed by February 2nd. The class will be divided into two groups of four (agreed in advance). Via Blackboard or normal email, distribute your Administrative Memo to the other three people in your group ON OR BEFORE FEBRUARY 2nd.

**Homework and Preparation for Class on Feb. 9th**

Write a brief assessment of each of the memo’s you review covering the following points:

1. Purpose of new or revised policy.
2. Clarity and cogency of the statement of the new or revised policy.
3. Do you have recommendations to improve the policy statement? List.
5. Do you have recommendations to strengthen or clarify the guidance?

February 9th
5th Class

Review of Administrative Policies &
Human Rights and Social Justice: Issues of Equity and Equality
In Relation to Race, Gender, and Multicultural Societies

Presentation and Discussion of Administrative Memos and responses from group members.
By February 7th Distribute your Administrative Memo Assessments to the authors who are members of your small group.

Class Exercise: Meet with your small group for the first 15 minutes of class to discuss responses to the group’s Administrative Memos and Assessments. On provided easel paper note the focus of each policy and any shared recommendations. Note any questions that arise from your group regarding internal policy administration and advocacy (10 minutes).

Required Readings: Read one from each category

Racism Readings:

Sexism Readings:

Additional Readings of Interest:

February 16
6th Class

Global Perspectives: Thinking Globally and Acting Locally through Lobbying and Advocacy

Required Readings:
Jansson Chapter 5. Expanding Policy Advocacy Across National Boarders

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Jansson, Chapter 6. Committing to an Issue: Building Agendas

Discussion:
Globalism and Social Policy—Your Questions and Ideas
Building Agendas: Local to Global
Lobbying and Other Modes of Advocacy—Your Questions and Ideas

February 23               Comparative Perspectives, Political Economy—
7th Class               Values, Economics and Social Policy

Required Reading:
Select, read and be prepared to lead discussion on two of the following chapters from Midgley & Livermore: The Handbook of Social Policy, 2nd Edition, (2009):
Chapter 12. The Institutional Approach to Social Policy, Midgley
Chapter 13. Conservative Approaches to Social Policy, Ginsberg
Chapter 14. Critical Social Policy, Iatridis
Chapter 15. Welfare Pluralism and Social Policy, Gilbert
Chapter 18. The Social Development Perspective and Social Policy, Midgley & Sherraden
Chapter 19. Social Policy and the Physical Environment, Hoff & McNutt

March 2               Policy and Problem Analysis & Developing Policy Proposals
8th Class

Required Readings:

Spring Break:               No Class March 9

Assigned Readings:
Avner, Chapter 3. Go! Implement Your Lobbying Plan, and
Avner, Chapter 4. Nonprofit Lobbying and the Law

March 16
9th Class  Developing and Using Power, Defending Policy Proposals and Planning for Lobbying

Lobbying Plan Assignment Due

Discussion:
Jansson, Chapters 9 and 10
Avner—Introduction and Chapters 2, 3, 4 and Your Lobbying Plans

Required Readings:

March 23
10th Class  Developing and Using Power

Required Readings:
*Haynes & Mickelson, Chapter 9. Monitoring the Bureaucracy, pp.133-144.

March 30
11th Class  Developing Political Strategy &

11th Class  Putting Political Strategies into Action

Required Readings:
Jansson, Chapter 11. “Developing Political Strategy,” and
Chapter 12. “Putting Political Strategy into Action”
*Sections from Haynes & Mickelson, Chapter 8. Tools to Influence and Organize
Others, pp. 116-130.
*Schneider & Lester, Chapter 7. “Legislative Advocacy.”

March 30
12th Class  Engaging in Ballot-Based Advocacy

Required Readings:
Jansson, Chapter 13. Engaging in Ballot-Based Advocacy
*Sections from Haynes & Mickelson, Chapter 10. Political Action Committees,
pp.146-158.
Mondros (2005). Political, Social, and Legislative Action, Chapter 14 in

Handbook of Community Practice

April 13
13th Class  Troubleshooting and Assessing Implemented Policies
**Exercise:** In small groups identify and note strategies from the readings and other sources for voter registration, ballot-based advocacy, opportunities to influence policy positions in the political process and trouble-shooting tactics.

**Required Readings:**
*Schneider & Lester, Chapter 6. Cause Advocacy

April 20
14th Class Where Do We Go From Here? -- The Future of Social Policy
Penultimate Class

**First Set of Final Presentations**

**Readings:**

April 27 Final Class: Final Presentations
Class 15

Final Papers Due
Final Set of Presentations
Course Evaluation