I. Course Overview and Objectives

This advanced graduate elective course will address political advocacy strategies in public policy and government settings. The focus of the course is on the preparation of social workers and those seeking to impact public policy and social change to improve the social and economic well-being of individuals, families, communities, and systems. Students in this course will examine the knowledge and political skills, strategies, techniques, and actions that influence elected officials and policy makers and the policies, practices, programs, services, and resources they establish for people in need through local, state, and federal units of government.

Students will be exposed to current social and economic policy challenges, such as the well-being of children and those with disabilities, economic security for the underemployed and unemployed, and the safety of women, and the real-world strategies now being advanced to address these challenges in the political arena.

The course will involve a combination of the following:

- interactive presentations and discussion requiring active student preparation and participation;
- visits from prominent advocates, community, and state leaders, elected officials, and policy makers;
- individual written assignments;
- a visit to the state Capitol;
- group role plays giving students experience in the use of political advocacy and evidence-based data to impact policies and programs serving vulnerable populations.

Using the major state and local units of government surrounding the University as a rich learning environment, students will have the opportunity to see how an idea becomes a law or policy and is implemented and the related impacts of data, researchers, media, citizens, coalitions, elections, advocates and philanthropic organizations on policy implementation and social change. Students will follow public meetings, advocacy strategies and media coverage and will gain experience in action planning to impact change including the preparation of written communications such as an op-ed piece and a memo to a candidate for executive office.

II. Course Content (more information about course readings and assignments is addressed later in sections III and IV of this syllabus)

Week 1: Tuesday, September 3*

(*IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS ONE CLASS WILL NOT MEET AT THE REGULAR CLASS TIME, RATHER AT A DIFFERENT DAY AND TIME - ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2013, FROM 6:00PM TO 8:00PM, IN OUR REGULAR MEETING ROOM, ROOM 114, SOCIAL WORK BUILDING)

Topics: Introductions and Course Overview

How are political systems and public policy shaped? How do the political environment and public policy impact the economic status and well-being of children, families, vulnerable populations and communities? What are the values of social change? What strategies and techniques can impact public policy and social change? What are the roles of human services practitioners and policy makers in impacting public policy and advancing social change?

Please be prepared to briefly (1-2 minutes) introduce yourself to the class including your educational background, professional experience, why you are in this class and identify a current local, state or national public policy that impacts a vulnerable population, concerns you and why.

Required Readings:

- Section 6.04 Social and Political Action (d) and Preamble to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics as revised by the 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly:
  http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp


- Hoefer, pages 1-11, 204-211
- Amidei, pages, 3-16

"Blog" question: In what ways do you think that politics is important for the well-being of vulnerable populations and why?

**Week 2: Thursday, September 12**

**Topics: Impacting Political Systems and Policy for Social Change Overview**

What are the general processes of federal, state and local legislative change? How does an idea become a bill and how does a bill become a law? What are the different roles and responsibilities of the executive and legislative branches, the non-partisan legislative and executive agencies and appointed administrative officials? What impacts elected officials and their appointees and what are the roles of data, advocacy and media coverage? What gets addressed in elections and what happens next? What’s in the executive budget and State of the City, State of the State and State of the Union addresses?

**Required Readings:**

- Amidei, pages 17-23


  http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget

- *Isthmus*, January 20, 2013, news story about Madison Mayor Paul Soglin’s 2013 State of the City speech to Downtown Rotary:

  http://www.thedailypage.com/daily/article.php?article=38869
Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker’s 2013 State of the State Address (please skim):

President Barack Obama’s 2013 State of the Union Address (please skim):

Biography of State Representative Chris Taylor:
http://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/taylor/Pages/Biography.aspx

“Blog” question: For a policy issue that you care about, could you be most successful trying to impact it on the local, state or federal level/s? How and why?

Guest speaker: State Representative Chris Taylor on data and strategies that impact elected officials and policy makers.

Week 3: Thursday, September 19

Topics: The Role of Advocates in Impacting Policy and Social Change, Part I

How does information change attitudes and behavior? What influences people to organize and take action on behalf of change? How do citizens, advocates, interest groups, stakeholders and lobbyists impact elected officials and public policy?

Required Readings:

- King, Coretta Scott, 1983, *The Words of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, Newmarket Press, New York, New York, pages 68-79 (on Learn@UW course site)


- Amidei, pages 62-68, 70-75, 78, 93-94
Bio for Tom Boldt, CEO, Boldt Construction:

http://www.theboldtcompany.com/leadership/

“Blog” question: In terms of promoting the economic well-being of parents and workers, how might business leaders be effective advocates with elected officials and policy makers and what kind of data would be particularly persuasive and why?

Guest speaker: Tom Boldt, CEO, Boldt Construction, supporter of CAP Services, Inc. and other non-profits, on strategies for impacting elected officials and policy makers.

Week 4: Thursday, September 26

Topics: The Role of Advocates in Impacting Policy and Social Change, Part 2

A deeper look at how advocates impact public policy with a focus on advancing the safety of women.

Required Readings:

- Hoefer, Chapter 3, pages 42-59
- Amidei, pages 70, 72-73, 78, 93-94
- Lane, Shannon, Altman, Julie, Goldberg, Gertrude, Kogocho, Njeri, Palley, Elizabeth, Paul, Marilyn, Inspiring and Training Students for Social Action: A Needed Tradition, Journal of Teaching in Social Work, October 23, 2012 (on Learn@UW course site)
- Rocha, Cynthia, Poe, Bethanie, Thomas, Veliska, Political Activities of Social Workers: Addressing Perceived Barriers to Political Participation, Social Work, Skills that Increase Political Competency section only, pages 319-320, October 2010 (on Learn@UW course site)
- The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities, How a Bill Becomes a Law In Wisconsin, Source - Wisconsin Council on Children and Families:

  http://www.dawninfo.org/co/tools/oldertools/Advocacy_Bill_Becomes_Law.cfm

- Bio for Patti Seger, Executive Director, Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence:
“Blog” question: In terms of promoting the well-being of women and decreasing incidents of domestic violence against women, how might victims of domestic abuse be persuasive advocates with elected officials and policy makers and why?

Guest speakers: Patti Seger, Executive Director, and Tony Gibart, Policy and Communications Coordinator, Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence, on strategies for impacting elected officials and policy makers.

Week 5: Thursday, October 3

Topics: The Role of Academics, Think Tanks and Philanthropic Organizations in Impacting Policy and Social Change

A look at the role of evidence-based data and strategies for using it to impact elected officials and policy makers with a focus on economic security for low wage, underemployed and unemployed workers.

Required Readings:

- COWS, Center on Wisconsin Strategy, June, 2013, Raise the Floor Milwaukee – Toward Better Wages and Labor Standards for Low-Wage Workers (on Learn@UW course site)

- Bandow, Doug, CATO Institute, April 9, 2013, Raising Minimum Wage Will Hurt More than Help:
  
  http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/raising-minimum-wage-will-hurt-more-help

- Urban Institute, 2008, Beyond Ideology, Politics and Guesswork: The Case for Evidence-Based Policy (on Learn@UW course site)

- Baron, Jon, New York Times, November 29, 2012, Applying Evidence to Social Programs:


- Orzag, Peter, Office of Management and Budget Director, June 8, 2009, Building Rigorous Evidence to Drive Policy (on Learn@UW course site)

Bio for Dr. Laura Dresser:
http://www.cows.org/staff-page/laura-dresser

Optional readings:

- Wikipedia, information about The Wisconsin Idea:

- FORD FOUNDATION, 2013, Working with Visionaries on the Frontlines of Social Change Worldwide, Promoting the Next-Generation Workforce Strategies Overview:


“Blog” question: What kind of data might assist national and state political leaders in considering the complex issue of raising the minimum wage and why?

Guest speaker: Laura Dresser, Ph.D., Associate Director, Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS), on the role of research and data in impacting policies and outcomes for low wage workers and their families.

Week 6: Thursday, October 10 (Written Policy Advocacy Reflection Due Today)

Topics: The Role of the Media and Social Media in Influencing Opinion Leaders, Public Policy and Social Change

What is the impact of media coverage on the public, elected officials and policy makers and what strategies are important in working with the media?

Required Readings:

- Hoefer, pages 148-160
- Amidei, pages 53-57
Bobo, Kim, Kendall, Jackie, Max, Steve, *Organizing for Social Change*, 2001, from Chapter 14, pages 156-170, *Using the Media*, (on Learn@UW course site)

Wikipedia, information about Roger Ailes:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Ailes

Bio of Neil Heinen, Editorial Director, WISC-TV and Madison Magazine:


“Blog” question: Selecting a public policy issue that that you care about and that impacts a vulnerable population, how has that issue been framed in the media and how has this impacted your view of the issue?

Guest speaker: Neil Heinen, Editorial Director, WISC-TV and *Madison Magazine*, on strategies for working with the media to raise public awareness on issues related to vulnerable populations.

**Week 7: Thursday, October 17 (Topic and position that you will address in your op-ed piece, memo to a candidate and action plan due today)**

**Topics: The Role of the Judicial Branch in Impacting Public Policy and Social Change**

How do citizens and organizations work through the court system and administrative appeals processes to advance change on behalf of vulnerable populations?

**Required Readings:**

- The White House, The Judicial Branch:
  
  http://www.whitehouse.gov/our-government/judicial-branch

- Wisconsin Court System, The Wisconsin Court System Overview:
  
  http://www.wicourts.gov/courts/overview/overview.htm

- Amidei, pages 21-22

- *PLAINTIFFS’ FIRST AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF, MILWAUKEE INNER-CITY CONGREGATIONS ALLIED FOR HOPE (MICAH) AND BLACK HEALTH COALITION OF WISCONSIN*, September 20, 2012 (on Learn@UW course site)
Natural Resources Defense Council Staff Blog, Switchboard, Federal court says highway sponsors must first study transit, impacts on suburban sprawl, June 5, 2013 (on Learn@UW course site)

Optional readings:

- UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT WESTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN, MILWAUKEE INNER-CITY CONGREGATIONS ALLIED FOR HOPE (MICAH), et al, Plaintiffs, v. MARK GOTTLIB, et al., Defendants, DECISION AND ORDER, May 10, 2013 (on Learn@UW course site)

- Bio of Lester Pines:
  

“Blog” question: How might you participate in legal advocacy on behalf of an issue that impacts a vulnerable population that you care about?

Guest speaker: Attorney Lester Pines, Senior Partner, Cullen Weston Pines & Bach LLP, on how the courts can impact vulnerable populations.

Week 8: Thursday, October 24 – THE CLASS MEETS TODAY IN THE STATE CAPITOL

Topics: Government in Action: A Visit to the State Capitol

A 10:00am visit to a legislative public hearing or meeting in the state Capitol, once we know which committees might be meeting during our class time. If no legislative committee meeting or hearing is scheduled at this time, Laura Rose, Deputy Director of the Wisconsin Legislative Council, will speak to us about the role the Legislative Council plays in studying state needs and public policies and advancing new legislation.** To tentatively be held in room 300 SE of the state Capitol. More information on logistics will be given as we get closer to class time.

At 11:15am, also in room 300 SE of the state Capitol, Eloise Anderson, Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, will address our class on her department’s strategies for serving and improving the well-being of Wisconsin’s children and families and what citizen strategies are most successful in impacting elected officials and policy makers.

All students must be on time and must dress appropriately for these meetings in the Capitol – not fancy, but professional, i.e., no jeans.

Required Readings:

- Amidei, page 77
About the Wisconsin Legislative Council:

http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lc

About the Wisconsin Department of Children & Family Services:

http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/mission_and_goals.htm

Bio of Secretary Eloise Anderson:

http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/department_leadership.htm

“Blog” question: In terms of improving the economic status of Wisconsin children, what would be a position that you would like to advocate with Secretary Eloise Anderson and why?

Speaker/s: Eloise Anderson, Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, on strategies for serving and improving the well-being of Wisconsin’s children and families; and, depending upon scheduling in the Capitol**, Laura Rose, Deputy Director, Wisconsin Legislative Council, on the role the Wisconsin Legislative Council in advancing new legislation.

Week 9: Thursday, October 31 (Op-ed piece due today)

Topics: Understanding the Issue

A look at how to analyze public policies that impact vulnerable populations and steps for developing solutions to advance social change with a focus on the well-being of children and child care policy.

Required Readings:

- Hoefer, pages 60-83


- Mission of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families:

  http://www.wccf.org/about_mission.php

Biography of Ken Taylor, Director, Wisconsin Council on Children & Families (on Learn@UW course site)

Optional readings:

  

  
  [http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2013/02/13-preschool-task-force-haskins](http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2013/02/13-preschool-task-force-haskins)

- Haskins, Ron, January 23, 2008, *Testimony before House Committee on Education and Labor on Preschool Programs*, Brookings Institution (on Learn@UW course site)

- Huston, Aletha, January/February 2008, *Child Development, From Research to Policy and Back*, pages 1-12:


“Blog” question: Reflecting on last week’s visit to the Capitol and this week’s readings, what surprises you the most about how issues related to the well-being of children and quality child care are framed and why?

Guest speakers: Ken Taylor, Director, and Sabrina Gentile, Government Relations Manager, Wisconsin Council on Children & Families, on understanding issues related to children and families and impacting elected officials and policy makers on their behalf.

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**Week 10: Thursday, November 7**

**Topics: Advocacy Planning**

A look at how to develop an agenda for impacting public policy and social change with a focus on promoting the well-being of people with disabilities.

**IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT**: Using your response to today’s blog question as a starting point, work briefly in small groups to come up with your group’s three top-priority and most powerful strategies for impacting elected officials and policy makers to expand opportunities for people
with disabilities.

**Required Readings:**

- Hoefer, pages 84-101
- Amidei, pages 38-49
- Katz, Barbara, *Testimony to Joint Finance Committee*, April 10, 2013 (on Learn@UW course site)
- Bio of Barbara Katz: [http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/~rowley/wfv/Fv/staff.html](http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/~rowley/wfv/Fv/staff.html)

**“Blog” question:** What might be one strategy for impacting elected officials and policy makers to promote the well-being of people with disabilities and why?

**Guest speaker:** Barbara Katz, Co-Director of Family Voices of Wisconsin, past Chair, Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities, member of the Survival Coalition and the Wisconsin Council for Children with Long Term Support Needs and parent of a child with developmental disabilities, on strategies of parents and advocates in influencing social change on behalf of people with disabilities.

**Week 11: Thursday, November 14 (Memo to candidate due today)**

**Topics: Presenting Information Effectively**

A look at strategies for presenting information effectively in advocacy settings.

**Required Readings:**

- Hoefer, pages 130-148
- Amidei, pages 72-73

National Association of Social Workers-Wisconsin Chapter, 2013, Legislative/Political Action Issues:  
http://www.naswwi.org/legislative-advocacy-political-action-issues/

Bio of Marc Herstand (on Learn@UW course site)

“Blog” question: What types of facts, stories and allies might be helpful in advocating on behalf of one of the issues noted under the Legislative/Political Action Issues section of the NASW-Wisconsin Chapter web site?

Speaker: Marc Herstand, Executive Director, National Association of Social Workers-Wisconsin Chapter, on how NASW works to communicate effectively with elected officials and policy makers on behalf of vulnerable populations and those who serve them.

Week 12: Thursday, November 21

Topics: Coalitions and Community Building

The power of coalitions and public/private partnerships for community building and advancing strong communities and social change.

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT: Briefly meet in the small groups that will be presenting the fifteen minute Group Policy Advocacy Role Plays during the last two weeks of class to: identify the topic your role play will address (from policy topics covered in this class); identify who will be your 1-2 concerned citizen presenters; identify the state or local official you will be trying to impact in a fifteen minute role play meeting; identify who will be the official and, depending upon the size of your group, who will be that official’s chief of staff. I will bring small group assignments and a one pager with further directions regarding this assignment to class.

Required Readings:

- Amidei, pages 50 – 53
- Bobo, Kim, Kendall, Jackie, Max, Steve, Organizing for Social Change, 2001, Chapter 9, Building and Joining Coalitions, pages 100-109, and from Chapter 17, Working with Religious Organizations, 192-201 (on Learn@UW course site)
Developing Political Strategy and Putting It into Action in the Policy-Enacting Task, Organizing Legislative Advocacy Projects in the Policy-Enacting Task, Organizing a Team or Coalition, pages 381-382, and Strategy in Agency Settings in the Policy-Enacting Task, pages 397-399 (on Learn@UW course site)

- Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice Invites You To Take The Food Stamp Challenge, November 30, 2012:
  
  http://wisconsinfaithvoicesforjustice.org/Food-Stamp-Challenge.php

- Governing Wisconsin, from the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau, Lobbying in Wisconsin: What Do Lobbyists Do and How Are They Regulated in Wisconsin (on Learn@UW course site)

- Downtown Madison, Inc. Advocacy:
  
  http://www.downtownmadison.org/advocacy

- The White House Blog, Announcing Strong Cities, Strong Communities, July 11, 2011:
  

- Bio of Susan Schmitz, President, Downtown Madison, Inc. (on Learn@UW course site)

Optional reading:

- McNight, John, Kretzman, John, 2002, Chapter 10, Mapping Community Capacity, pages 157-172, in Community Organizing and Community Building for Health, Minkler, Meredith, editor, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey:
  
  http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=UE6Fy3ZETq0C&oi=fnd&pg=PA157&dq=John+McNight+community+building+&ots=hP6ONMCuZM&sig=wU4mV79XNHghlrxkURfh80LwS0#v=onepage&q=John%20McNight%20community%20building&f=false

“Blog” question: What might be some of the benefits and challenges of working in coalitions on behalf of a strong downtown and why?

Guest speaker: Susan Schmitz, President, Downtown Madison, Inc., on community building through working with local leaders and government officials for a strong downtown.

NOVEMBER 28, THANKSGIVING, NO CLASS
Week 13: Thursday, December 5

Topics: Group Policy Advocacy Role Plays

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT: In small groups, following outside of class group preparation, present a fifteen minute Group Policy Advocacy Role Play on one of the policy topics covered in this course. One to two of you will be the concerned citizen presenter/s and you will identify ahead your position, three written talking points you will use to verbally communicate your points to the official/s in the role play and who the lead official is. Presenters will be advocating a position with the state or local official. One to two of you will be the audience, at least one as the state or local official the citizen/s will be trying to impact in the role play and the other who will play that official’s chief of staff. The official/s will be allowed two to four questions to which the citizens will respond. Both sides should use data and seek to be persuasive, credible and easy to understand. Participant reflections and class discussion will follow.

Required Readings:

- Amidei, pages 26-29
- Tweedie, Jack, National Conference of State Legislatures, Learning a New Language: Effectively Communicating Early Childhood Research to State Legislators, Harvard Family Research Project, Volume X, Number 2, Summer 2004 (on Learn@UW course site)

“Blog” question: Which role/s in the role play are you personally most and least comfortable playing and why?

Week 14: Thursday, December 12 (Action plan due today)

Topics: Group Policy Advocacy Role Plays, Continued, and Wrap-Up

“Blog” question: Which of the learnings from this course would you most like to use in your future paid work life and in your community life and why?

III. Texts and Reading Materials for the Course

The readings for the course include research articles and publications from diverse think tanks, advocacy groups and government agencies including the executive branch, the legislative branch and non-partisan legislative and executive agencies. Readings are from a varied array of scholars and organizations and have been selected to strengthen students’ critical thinking and encourage classroom discussion. It is not expected that students or the instructor will agree with all perspectives presented and students are encouraged to express and be respectful of diverse
points of views.

The course will draw heavily from **2 books available for purchase** through University Book Store:

- Amidei, Nancy, 2010, *So You Want to Make a Difference*, OMB Watch, Washington, DC

**Other required readings are listed in this syllabus under Course Content.**

**Assigned readings are available on the Learn@UW course site** (by week under “Materials”) or via a link to the Internet embedded in this syllabus.

To help be informed and keep abreast of current policy issues, students are expected to **follow at least one major news source daily** such as *The Wisconsin State Journal, The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, The Washington Post, The New York Times, the Wall Street Journal*, National Public Radio, CNN, etc., paying special attention to information about local, state and federal issues and programs that impact vulnerable populations.

All students are expected to **sign up for at least one electronic newsletter from an advocacy or research organization** which includes information or legislative alerts related to pending or upcoming legislation (such as from the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, the Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty, the John K. MacIver Institute for Public Policy, Wisconsin Public Policy Research Institute, the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, etc.).

Students are encouraged to **share articles, clips and alerts that can complement our class discussions** by bringing them to class or posting them on our Learn@UW course site, in the “Discussion” forum section under “Communication”, by 6:00pm on the day before class. More information on this will be given in class.

**IV. Evaluation of Competencies and Practice Behaviors: Assignments, Grading and Methods**

**Grading Scale & Standards:**

Students' final grade will be based on the following:

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<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>What the point totals &amp; subsequent grade generally indicate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Outstanding, excellent work in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88-93</td>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Outstanding, excellent work in many areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82-87</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Meets expectations in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-81</td>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Meets expectations in most areas; below in others</td>
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Below expectations in most areas; not acceptable graduate work  
Below expectations in all areas  
Course failure

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>70-75</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>64-69</td>
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**Assignments:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points/Percentages</th>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly “blog” entries</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Class participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written policy advocacy reflection</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>650 word research based op-ed piece</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two-three page research based memo to candidate</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three-four page advocacy plan</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group policy advocacy role play</td>
<td>10%</td>
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**Assignment Instructions & Grading Rubrics:**

**Every day (30%)**

**“Blog” (15%):** Every class has a “blog” question assigned to it. For each class, you are required to post a 1-2 paragraph “blog” entry responding to the question though our Learn@UW course site, in the “Discussion” forum section, under “Communication.” The weekly questions are noted in this syllabus as well as in the class “Discussion” forum section. “Blog” entries may be informally written but should provide a thoughtful answer that makes reference to the readings and what you’ve seen through the media and electronic advocacy and research newsletters you are following. “Blog” entries are due by 6:00pm on the day before class. You are expected to read each other’s “blog” entries by the beginning of class.

**Class participation (15%):** You are expected to have completed readings before class and to take an active part in class discussions and activities.

**Written assignments (60%)**

**Written policy advocacy reflection (10%):** From what you are following in the readings, press and advocacy/research newsletter you receive, identify a current issue that has attracted advocacy attention and write a two page reflection, with examples, covering: a summary of the advocacy effort that has taken place; description of what appear to be the target/s of the advocacy effort; the apparent goals of the effort; the apparent strategies and tactics used; the apparent effectiveness of the advocacy effort; other strategies or tactics you might suggest. This is due in class on 10/10.

**Advocacy tools project (50%):** You will each become an expert in one current public policy challenge and different strategies and vehicles for impacting it to advance social change. You must submit your chosen project topic in writing by October 17 and this
The project will involve three written assignments:

- **650 word research based op-ed piece (15%)** about the topic you submitted on October 17. Have in mind the media outlet you would like to see this published in. Explain why you are writing about this now. Tell a story, know your audience, be persuasive and use data to support your position. This is due in class on October 31.

- **Two to three page research based memo to a candidate for executive office (15%)** addressing the challenge you submitted on October 17 and that the winning candidate and their level of government will oversee. Address the strategies that are now in place; what other strategies you recommend that they advance and why; what resources and timeframe would be needed to implement your suggested strategies and why; and, how the success of your strategies could be measured and evaluated. This is due in class on November 14.

- **Three to four page advocacy plan (20%)** addressing the challenge you submitted on October 17, assuming you are responsible for planning and leading an advocacy effort to impact the challenge. Include an introduction and overview of the challenge and problem; what is/are your desired outcome/s; what short, medium and long-term action steps you are advocating including use of data, diverse strategic partners, media; who is/are your advocacy target(s); resources needed; how the plan should be monitored once the advocacy is over; and, how the advocacy effort should be evaluated. This is due in class on December 12.

**Group Policy Advocacy Role Play (10%)**: Working in small groups in fifteen minute role plays and playing either citizen advocate or public official audience roles, and following outside of class group preparation, use data, advocacy and communication skills to address a public policy that impacts a vulnerable population.

**V. Course Policies**

**Late work**: Late “blog” entries will not be accepted. I will not accept late written assignments if you have not notified me in advance. For each written assignment, I will deduct one letter grade for each day that the assignment may be late.

**Attendance**: We understand that you may have responsibilities outside of class that could cause you to miss a class. Please email me ahead if you will miss class.

**Personal emergencies and religious observances**: You and your family are important to us. If you are experiencing a crisis, resources are available to help. University Health Services offers counseling on a 24/7 basis. If it is important to request class time off due to an emergency, please contact me as soon as possible. In order to respect and accommodate your religious observances, please inform me in advance so that we can plan accordingly.
**Academic integrity and ethical behavior:** You are expected to adhere to all aspects of the University of Wisconsin policy. The University and I take plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty very seriously. I strongly encourage you to contact me with any questions before turning in an assignment for which you have questions.

**Disability accommodations:** If you are a person with special circumstances that you believe may affect your class performance (for example, visual, hearing or learning disabilities or language differences), please let me know so that we may work together to develop strategies that meet your needs and the requirements of the course. The McBurney Disability Resource Center can be of assistance to students with disabilities. You will need to provide documentation of a disability to receive services and accommodations there. Also, please let me know if you have any trouble accessing or using the technologies being used in this course. I will maintain complete confidentiality of any information you share.

**Electronic devices:** You are expected to conduct yourself as a professional in this class. Laptops will not be allowed in class and all phones should be turned off before class.

**VI. Additional Optional Course Reading Resources**

The following are optional additional reading resources for this course:


- Downey, Kristen, 2009, *The Woman Behind the New Deal - The Life of Frances Perkins, FDR’s Secretary of Labor and His Moral Conscience*, New York, Nan A. Talese, an imprint of The Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Random House, Inc.

- Ellis, Richard, Nelson, Michael, editors, 2014, *Debating Reform – Conflicting Perspectives on How to Fix the American Political System*, Sage, Los Angeles


- Jacobs, Lawrence, Skocpol, Theda, editors, 2005, *Inequality and American Democracy – What We Know and What We Need to Learn*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York


VII. Course Competencies, Practice Behaviors & Assignments

A special note for social work students:

Social Work Education is framed by a competency-based approach to curriculum design. At the conclusion of their education, social work students are expected to be competent in 10 core areas. Competency is achieved through the attainment of measurable practice behaviors learned through classroom and field experiences, and which are derived from social work knowledge, values and skills.

SW869 is an elective course that is crosslisted with PubAffairs974. The focus of this course is on influencing political systems for social change, and Social Work students will find that this course contributes to their achievement of the core competencies as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies Addressed In Course</th>
<th>Advanced Practice Behaviors for Focus Area and Advanced Elective Courses</th>
<th>Assignments Measuring Behavior***</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.</td>
<td>• Apply knowledge of social services, policies and programs to advocate with and/or on behalf of clients for access to services.</td>
<td>Blog, WPAR, RBOEP, RBMTC, AP, GPARP</td>
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<td>2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.</td>
<td>• Weigh values, principles of ethical decision-making, and the NASW code of ethics in order to address ethical dilemmas related to advocacy practice.</td>
<td>Blog</td>
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<td>2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.</td>
<td>• Identify and synthesize multiple sources of knowledge to understand policy and practice issues related to advocacy practice.</td>
<td>WPAR, RBOEP, RBMTC, AP, GPARP</td>
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<td>2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice.</td>
<td>• Demonstrate effective communication skills with diverse communities, constituencies, and multi- and inter-disciplinary colleagues when dealing with issues related to advocacy practice.</td>
<td>Blog</td>
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<td>2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice.</td>
<td>• Demonstrate an understanding of how culture and values affect diverse conceptualizations and constructions of social problems and solutions in policy practice.</td>
<td>AP</td>
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<td>• Actively engage diverse clients, groups, or organizations to promote solutions based on diverse conceptualizations of social problems in policy practice.</td>
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<td>2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.</td>
<td>• Appraise how mechanisms of oppression and discrimination impact various groups and outcomes relevant to advocacy practice.</td>
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<td>• Apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance human rights and social and economic justice to impact various groups and outcomes.</td>
<td>AP</td>
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<td>2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.</td>
<td>• Demonstrate ability to evaluate advocacy practice.</td>
<td>Blog, WPAR, RBOEP, RBMTC, AP, GPARP</td>
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<td>• Evaluate, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance outcomes relevant to advocacy practice.</td>
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<td>• Demonstrate collaboration with clients, colleagues, and other constituencies for advocacy action.</td>
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<td>2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice.</td>
<td>• Assess the impact of historical and contemporary contexts on practice and policy in advocacy</td>
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</tbody>
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• Engage in leadership roles in the focus area.

2.1.10(a–d) Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

- Employ diverse strategies to engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities related to advocacy practice.
- Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to determine a range of potentially effective and appropriate interventions to improve advocacy practice outcomes.
- Demonstrate ability to intervene at different levels (with and/or on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities) to achieve the desired advocacy practice outcomes.

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***Note: WPAR=Written policy advocacy reflection; RBOEP=Research based op-ed piece; RBMTC= Research based memo to candidate; AP=Advocacy plan; GPARP=Group policy advocacy role play.***