University of Wisconsin-Madison
School of Social Work
1350 University Avenue; Madison, WI 53706
SW 579 Topic: Generalist Approaches to Macro Practice I & II
Spring 2012

Instructor: Eric D. Lock, MSW
Class: Saturday, March 24-May 19, 1:15-3:15 p.m
Saturday, June 9-June 30, 9:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
Location: Social Work 106
Office Hours: By appointment
Phone: 608 263 3660 (office); 608 334 4101 (cell, better)
Email: elock@wisc.edu

I. Catalogue Description
The purpose of this course is to expose students to the theory and practice of planned change in communities and organizations and help them incorporate a generalist model into practice at these levels of intervention.

II. Course Overview
This course augments students’ knowledge about applying social work practice skills to large-scale settings. The course is divided into four main segments: (1.) social problems and social change; (2.) community social work; (3.) organizational social work; and (4.) advocacy. Group skills and class participation are key elements in this course. Assignments are designed to help students apply academic and research information to the organizational and community issues that surround them. The course will be organized around brief lectures, in-class group activities and class discussions. Because of the accelerated nature of this course, it is essential that students come to class having completed the assigned readings and prepared to engage in substantive discussions. Each class will begin with questions from students and discussion about how the readings apply to current social issues and events.

III. Course Competencies and Practice Behaviors & Assignments
Successful completion of this course means that you will have progressed toward achieving social work competencies by demonstrating the following practice behaviors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies addressed in course</th>
<th>Practice behaviors addressed in course</th>
<th>Assignment(s) measuring behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2.1.1: Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly | * Advocate for client access to the services of social work.  
* Attend to professional roles and boundaries.  
* Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance and communication. | Memos 2 & 3  
Memos 3; class group exercises  
Memos 3; class group exercises |
| 2.1.2: Apply SW ethical principles to guide professional practice | * Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.  
* Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions. | Memo 1, Memo 3 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies addressed in course</th>
<th>Practice behaviors addressed in course</th>
<th>Assignment(s) measuring behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2.1.3: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments | * Distinguish, appraise and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge and practice wisdom.  
* Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention and evaluation.  
* Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities and colleagues. | Memo 1, 2, 3 |
| 2.1.4: Engage diversity and difference in practice | * Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.  
* View selves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants. | Memo 3 |
| 2.1.5: Advance human rights and social and economic justice | * Understand the mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.  
* Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice.  
* Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice. | Memos 2 & 3 |
| 2.1.6: Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research | * Use research evidence to inform practice. | Memo 2 & 3 |
| 2.1.9: Respond to contexts that shape practice | * Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services. | Memo 1 & 3 |
| 2.1.10a: Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities | * Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes. | Memo 2 & 3 |
| 2.1.10b: Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities | * Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives.  
Select appropriate intervention strategies. | Memo 3 |
| 2.1.10c: Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities | * Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals. | Memo 3 |
# IV. Course Content:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week / Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Activities &amp; Work Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: Mar 24</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Mar 31</td>
<td>Social construction of social problems &amp; strategic issue framing</td>
<td>One-page Reflection Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>April 7: No Class Spring Break</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: April 14</td>
<td>Power &amp; Social capital: Contexts for community mobilization</td>
<td>Group Discussion I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: April 21</td>
<td>Social, Political &amp; Community Mobilization</td>
<td>Group Discussion II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: April 28</td>
<td>Defining communities</td>
<td><strong>Short Memo I:</strong> Due in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: May 5</td>
<td>Approaches to community intervention</td>
<td>Group Discussion III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: May 12</td>
<td>Social construction of social policies &amp; public agenda setting Part I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8: May 19</td>
<td>Social construction of social policies &amp; public agenda setting Part II</td>
<td>Group Discussion IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>May 26: Memorial Day: No class</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9: June 2</td>
<td>Part A: Social policy implementation</td>
<td>NOTE: class time changes to 9am-12:15pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10: June 9</td>
<td>Part A: Human service organization environments Part A:</td>
<td><strong>Short Memo III:</strong> Due in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part B: Human service agencies as unique organizations:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11: June 16</td>
<td>Street-level bureaucracies &amp; bureaucrats</td>
<td><strong>Video</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12: June 23</td>
<td>Processes of organizational change &amp; Course Review &amp; Final Memo Discussion</td>
<td><strong>Long Memo</strong> Due Monday, June 25 @ 11:59pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
READINGS

Week 1: Course introductions

What is macro social work practice? How does it bear upon concerns of social change and social justice?


Week 2: The social construction of social problems & strategic issue framing

How do conditions in the world become defined, or framed, as "social problems"? Why do multiple framings of a single condition emerge while other conditions never become defined by society as problems – and to what effect?


Optional Reading


Week 3: Community power & social capital: Contexts for mobilization

What explains why some individuals or communities mobilize against a grievance, while others do not? Why do those who are afflicted by social problems sometimes remain “quiescent”? Are communities increasingly disengaged and disconnected?


Week 4: Social, Political & Community Mobilization


Week 5: Defining communities

What are communities? Are they merely geographic entities? If more, what else? How do they differ? What do they do for their members, and how do members identify with them?


Optional Reading


Week 6: **Approaches to community intervention**

*Given what we’ve learned about communities, how do we intervene within them? What are the challenges as well as opportunities we, and communities, face in these efforts?*


Week 7: **The social construction of social policy & the public agenda setting process**

*How do framings of social problems and policies to address them unite and sometimes attain prized spots on the “public agenda”?


Week 8: **The social construction of social policy & the public agenda setting process**

*Communities experience problems, work to mobilize, and in some cases seek public remedy through social policy. How do framings of social problems and policies to address them unite and sometimes attain prized spots on the “public agenda”?

Readings: Kingdon, J. (1995), *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*. Ch. 8: The Policy Window and Joining the Streams pg. 165-196,


May 26 – no class; Memorial Day

Week 9: **Social policy implementation**

*We consider why public policies and their implemented outcomes – often located within human service organizations – can be so divergent.*


Optional Reading

**Week 10A:**
**June 9**
**Human service organization environments**
*What are the environments within which social service agencies emerge, function and evolve, and how do those environments shape operations?*

**Readings:**

**Week 10B:**
**June 9**
**Human service agencies as unique organizations: Internal characteristics**
*What internally distinguishes social service agencies from other types of organizations? What are the implications of such differences?*

**Readings:**

**Week 11:**
**June 16**
**Street-level bureaucracies and bureaucrats**
*This week we combine insights about policy and organizational practice to consider the role that human service workers – you – play in the implementation of social welfare policies and programs within organizations.*

**Readings:**
Lipsky, M. (1980), Ch. 2: Street-level bureaucrats as policy makers; Ch. 3: The problem of resources, Ch. 4 Goals & Performance Measures, Ch. 5: Relations with Clients, AND Ch. 7: Rationing services: Limitation of access and demand. In *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

**Class activity:** Viewing excerpts from Frederick Wiseman’s “Welfare.”

**Week 12:**
**June 23**
**Organizational change**
*We seek to change organizations that are ill, or at least not optimally functioning by some definition. What may make this task harder than we initially think – and what are effective change strategies?*

**Readings:**

*Wrap-up and Final Paper Review*

*Final Paper Due Monday, June 25 at midnight*
V. Course Format

The class operates as an interactive seminar: you will learn about these skills by reading and writing about them, discussing them with the class, and engaging in in-class exercises. To excel, you must come to each class session prepared to contribute thoughtfully. Also, this course will frequently employ small group breakout discussions. When these discussions occur, they will usually be led by one of your peers. The promise of this format is that enhances student participation by allowing students a smaller, more intimate space in which to comment on readings and delve into questions that some might otherwise be hesitant to bring up in front of the whole class during lecture. However, the success of this format depends greatly on your (students) genuine participation.

- When you lead group discussion, take your role seriously: come prepared to lead your group’s discussion (see assignment 1 for details on this), think about how you will use your time and take responsibility to set the tone in your group by minimizing banter and getting down to business.
- When you are not leading group discussion, take your role seriously: give that week’s group leader the respect you want your classmates to give you when you lead discussion; be attentive, engage the format and content that your leader presents for that week’s discussion; be enthusiastic and helpful.

VI. Texts and Reading Materials for the Course

Readings. There is no text book for the course. Required course readings are contained in a reading packet available at Bob’s copy and online, at Learn@UW.

Course Web Site

Articles and additional class materials will be available on the class web site available through Learn@UW. Use your net ID and password to logon. In addition, the web site will include:

1. Lecture Outlines ("slides") — generally posted by 8 am on the day of the lecture;
2. Assignment Instructions
3. Class Announcements and random postings of interesting news items by Lock and TAs (send in items you find to your TAs, they’ll post ‘em if appropriate!)

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

Grading

Grades are not assigned on a curve. There are no extra credit or make-up assignments. Grades on each assignment and your final grade will be assigned as follows:

>=94-100 A       Outstanding, surpasses expectations in all areas
>=88-93  A/B     Surpasses expectations in many areas
>=82-87  B       Meets expectations
>=76-81  B/C     Meets expectations in some areas but is below expectations in others
>=70-75 C  Below expectations in all areas, not acceptable graduate level work
>=64-69 D Clearly unacceptable in all areas
<64 F Fails to meet minimal requirements in all areas, not acceptable graduate work.

Please note that the >= sign proceeding the lower cut-off point for each grade implies that numerical grades will not be rounded up. Additionally, your goal for this and other courses should be to make the most of your learning experience, and not to simply “get an A.” Your expectations about the grades you receive on assignments should be wholly based on (1) your efforts, (2) the extent to which you respond to assignment objectives, (3) the quality of your writing (including grammar and spelling, organization and clarity), and (4) your ability to demonstrate critical thinking. If there is something about an assignment that is unclear to you, it is your job to bring this to my attention. Grade expectations should NOT be based on what you have received in other courses. If you have an issue with a grade that you receive in this course, please document the reasons for your appeal in writing with specific attention to the four points raised above.

Assignments

Your assignments for the course are summarized below. Detailed instructions for all assignments are at the end of the syllabus.

1) **Leading Small-Group Discussion** of readings for one class session (15% of Total). For this assignment, you will prepare and lead (facilitate) one group discussion (we’ll define this further in session #1) of a particular week’s readings and themes.

2) **Short Memo 1:** Problem Framing or Claims Making Analysis (15%; 1-2 pages single-spaced). You have two options for this memo: a) analyzing how a social problem has been strategically framed by policy actors or b) analyzing a “claims making” process – either at the policy or individual level.

3) **Short Memo 2:** Agenda Setting Analysis (20%; 2-3 pages single-spaced). Requires students to analyze a recent piece of proposed legislation that has either succeeded or failed to be made into law (or propose a strategy for passing a current or future proposal that has yet to be taken up by a legislative body) and analyze its success or failure.

4) **Short Memo 3:** External Organizational Analysis (15%; 2 pages single-spaced). Requires students to describe and analyze the impacts of the operating environment surrounding a human service agency of their choosing, preferably the field placement site.

5) **Long Memo:** Internal Organizational Analysis: (30%; 5 pages single-spaced). This assignment requires students to develop an analysis of their placement or another human service organization’s mission, goals, and technology—as it pertains to ethical dilemmas surrounding issues of service rationing.

Policies around assignments

- **Late papers.** Assignments that are turned in late without advance arrangement with the instructor will be docked 3% of their numeric points for each day past due.

- **Incompletes.** An incomplete may be given only when the student has been in full attendance and has done satisfactory work to within 2 weeks of the end of the quarter and has furnished evidence satisfactory to the Instructor that the work
cannot be completed because of illness or other circumstances beyond the student’s control.

- **Plagiarism.** The School, University and I take plagiarism very seriously. Your written assignments should almost always be wholly in your own language. Whenever you use the words of another person verbatim or even paraphrase them, you must clearly give that person credit through proper APA citation format. This ethical rule applies equally to internet material. Students found to have plagiarized, **intentionally or not,** will be disciplined according to University procedures.

**Final grades will be calculated as follows:**

- **Discussion Leadership**
- **Short Memo 1:** Issue Framing or Claims Making
- **Short Memo 2:** Agenda Setting Analysis
- **Short Memo 2:** External Organizational Analysis
- **Long Memo:** Internal Organizational Analysis
- **Participation**

15%

15%

20%

15%

30%

5%

VIII: Course Policies

**Attendance and Class Participation**

Due to the accelerated nature of courses in the University of Wisconsin-Madison Part-Time MSW Program, students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and to arrive on time.

**Promptness**

- Prompt arrival to all courses is required. Instructors may take actions they deem appropriate if a student is consistently tardy.
- Instructors may also consider a significantly late arrival or early departure as an absence.

**Absence**

To ensure a quality educational experience, students must attend and participate in classes.

- Attendance will be taken at each class and students’ level of participation noted
- Excused & Unexcused Absences:
  - The first unexcused absence will result in a student’s grade being dropped one full grade.
  - The second unexcused absence will place the student at risk for failing the course.
  - On a case by case basis, it is left to the instructor’s discretion as to what is defined as an excused absence as well as to determine appropriate follow up plans.
  - Additional graded make-up work appropriate for the content missed may be assigned for excused and unexcused absences.
  - Students are responsible for completing any class requirements for the day missed, and for obtaining from a fellow classmate any assignments, materials, and communications missed due to absence, late arrival, or early departure.
  - Students who must be absent due to inclement weather or other emergencies should contact the instructor prior to the start of class to be considered for an **excused** absence.

**Inclement Weather Policy**

9
If there is inclement weather across the Program area, students will be expected to check their email prior to leaving for class to confirm whether classes are cancelled.

If classes are not cancelled but an individual student concludes he/she cannot safely travel to reach his/her class site, the student must contact his/her instructor(s) regarding his/her plan not to travel. This absence will be considered excused and make-up work may be assigned.

If classes at one or both sites are cancelled by the Program Director and Co-Director, then no makeup assignment will be required for those respective students; however, the class time will be rescheduled. The Program Coordinator will notify students by email within 72 hours of the cancellation regarding the planned class day/time additions.

Student Behavior Policy
In order to learn, we must be open to the views of persons different from us. Each and every voice in the classroom is important and brings with it a wealth of experience, values, and beliefs. In this time we share together over the semester, we should all honor the uniqueness of fellow classmates and appreciate the opportunity we have to learn from each other. Students are expected to respect fellow students’ opinions and refrain from personal attacks or demeaning comments of any kind. All issues of a personal or professional nature which are discussed in class are to be kept confidential, in accord with professional ethics.

In order to maintain an academic environment, cell phones and other electronic equipment must be switched off, and students must refrain from texting during class.

- Students are required to participate actively in all class exercises and to meet all responsibilities associated with group projects/discussions, particularly those negotiated in task group contracts.
- Students are required to complete all class assignments before coming to class and to complete and submit assignments on time within the guidelines provided.
- Students must have access to the Internet and to use resources on the World-Wide Web, as directed in this course.
- Students are expected to make use of the University libraries and other available sources for research purposes.
- Students are expected to offer the instructor clear, constructive feedback on the class.
- Acts of scholarly dishonesty, including plagiarism, can result in a penalty up to and including a failing grade and could result in expulsion from the program. Students are required to know and to follow the UW Madison Student Conduct Code, including the rules governing scholastic honesty. For complete information on this topic, visit the Office of Academic Integrity’s website at [http://www.osai.umn.edu](http://www.osai.umn.edu).

Course Expectations
Students are expected to:
- attend class regularly and participate in class and group discussions;
- read and critically think about assigned readings prior to each class session and come to class prepared to ask questions and discuss the readings;
- complete all assignments by the due date;
- inform the instructor, in the first week of class, of any special accommodations needed for meeting class expectations;
- be respectful of other class members because a diversity of views and opinions may be expressed during discussions.
The instructor is expected to:
- Be available to students, to answer questions in person or by e-mail;
- Give reasonable guidance on assignments and readings;
- Be open to discussing concerns about the course;
- Ensure that course objectives are being met.

Other standards of conduct. Professional responsibility, ethical behavior and integrity are central principles of the social work profession. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the standards of the School, the University, and NASW.

Along these lines, as participants in this class we have the right to ...
- receive meaningful but respectful feedback from other participants;
- have our opinions and experiences listened to and respected;
- feel like our points have been considered by having them responded to by others; and
- admit when we don’t know something;

and we have the responsibility to ...
- give meaningful but respectful feedback to other participants;
- be open to others’ possible disagreements with our opinions and lack of immediate resonance with our experiences;
- contribute to others’ feeling heard by actively responding to the points they raise; and
- ask questions about class issues we’re unsure of.

Disability Accommodations

The instructor supports students’ needs to request academic accommodations due to disabilities. Please advise me if you have such a need early in the term so the class can work as well as possible for you. If you have written documentation of your disability, please present it to me as additional guidance for arranging the accommodations you might need for this class.
General Guidelines for Writing Memos

All of the written assignments for this course will be written in memo format. Below is a general template that you should use for guidance in how to write your analytic memos.

1) Start your memos with the typical **memo header** (Microsoft Word provides numerous memo templates to get you started with this and other details):

   **MEMORANDUM**

   To: [Person of your choice – do not address to the instructor]
   From: You [organizational consultant, agency member, intern – as appropriate]
   Date: Month day, year
   Re: Succinct focus of your memo

   Note in the header above that the content – names, date, “Re” – are tabbed so that they are flush left.

2) Organize the memo into **single-spaced**, text paragraphs (no bullet points), with **double spaces between paragraphs**.

3) Use 1-inch **margins**, 12-point font.

4) Follow the “baker’s keyhole” approach to essay writing:
   a. Begin with a **brief introductory paragraph** that tells the reader what the memo is about: reporting findings, recommending change, and so forth. Give us a “road map” for what you’re doing with the assignment.
   b. End with a **brief concluding paragraph** that reviews for the reader what you covered in the memo: your findings, your recommendations, and so forth.
   c. Develop **body paragraphs** in between that advance the purpose of the memo and provide **topic sentences** stating what the paragraph is about, as well as **transitional sentences** to facilitate flow from one paragraph to another.

5) Use **headers** (distinguish these by **bolding** or **underlining** them) to organize your memo into discreet sections – this helps further guide the reader through the memo.

6) Use a **tone** that reflects appreciation of your reader: avoid the use of academic jargon or other “lingo” that your audience won’t easily follow.

7) Use **language** that is clear and succinct. Further, **check** your language to make sure it is **formal** rather than casual (e.g., use “do not” rather than “don’t”; avoid colloquialisms like, “the thing of it is, ...”) and is **grammatically correct** (e.g., avoid run-on sentences, fragments, spelling problems, and the like).

Support your assertions: provide factual information (with citations as needed) on which you base your observations, interpretation and any recommendations. Address any limitations or costs reflected in your analyses. And avoid engaging in “moral suasion”-based analysis – signaled by language like “should / must / because it’s the rig