School of Social Work  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
1350 University Avenue  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706  

Social Work 875: Health, Aging and Disability Policy and Services  
Fall 2015: Thursdays, 3:30-5:25pm Room 110 SSW

Instructor: Alison Meier, MSW CAPSW  
Email: aemeier@wisc.edu  
Office Hours: By Appointment

I. Catalogue Description  
This course provides knowledge about the contemporary organization of health care, as well as policies and services for older adults and people with disabilities.

II. Course Overview  
This required policy and services course for students in the Health, Aging, and Disabilities concentration provides knowledge and skills to understand the United States health care system and major policies and services established to provide health coverage and access to medical care and support services for vulnerable populations, including older adults and individuals with disabilities. The course analyzes legislation, policies, and politics that influence the context of social work practice in this concentration with particular focus on health care reform and its impact on access to care and health disparities Additionally, the course reviews and discusses the impact of advocacy strategies aimed at developing and/or changing national and local policy to further expand coverage and access to care for vulnerable populations.

III. Course Competencies and Practice Behaviors  
Successful completion of this course implies that students will have progressed toward achieving some of the core social work competencies by demonstrating the following practice behaviors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Practice Behavior</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly (Competency 2.1.1), by: | Applying knowledge of social services, policies, and programs relevant to the Health, Aging, and Disabilities Concentration, to advocate for clients access to services. | Advocacy Portfolio  
Reading Assignments  
Mid-Term Exam |
| Engage in diversity and difference in practice | Demonstrating an understanding of how culture and values affect diverse conceptualizations and constructions | Reading Assignments |
(Competency 2.1.4) by:

of social problems and solutions in Health, Aging, and Disabilities.

Mid-Term Exam

Advance human rights and social and economic justice (Competency 2.1.5) by:

Appraising how mechanisms of oppression and discrimination impact various groups and outcomes relevant to the Health, Aging, and Disabilities concentration.

Apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance human rights and social and economic justice to impact various groups and outcomes relevant to the Health, Aging, and Disabilities concentration.

Mid-Term Exam
Reading Assignments
ACA Impact Analysis
Advocacy Portfolio

Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services (Competency 2.1.8) by:

Evaluating, formulating, advocating for policies that advance outcomes relevant to the Health, Aging, and Disabilities concentration.

Reading Assignments
ACA Impact Analysis
Advocacy Portfolio

Respond to contexts that shape practice (Competency 2.1.9) by:

Assessing the impact of historical and contemporary contexts on practice and policy in the Health, Aging, and Disability concentration.

Reading Assignments
Mid-Term Exam
ACA Impact Analysis

IV. Course Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Sept. 3</th>
<th>Introduction and Overview of the Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>Sept. 10</th>
<th>Overview of the US Health Care System: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Readings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Health Disparities by Race, Ethnicity and Socioeconomic Status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 17</td>
<td><strong>Readings</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>The Affordable Care Act: Patient Protections and the Individual Mandate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 24</td>
<td><strong>Readings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shi, L., Singh D., Health Services Financing (Chapter 6) in <em>Delivering Health Care in America: A Systems Approach.</em> Jones and Bartlett Learning LLC. (2015) READ PAGES #-#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>The Affordable Care Act: Expanded Access and Affordability Provisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1</td>
<td><strong>Readings</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Week 6  
Oct. 8

**Medicare and Medicaid**

**Assignment Due:** ACA Impact Analysis

**Readings**

Shi, L., Singh D., Health Services Financing (Chapter 6) in *Delivering Health Care in America: A Systems Approach*. Jones and Bartlett Learning LLC. (2015) READ PAGES #-


---

Week 7  
Oct. 15

**Long-Term Care for Older Adults and Individuals with Disabilities**

**Guest Speaker:** Jennifer Fischer, Director, Dane County ADRC

**Readings**


---

Week 8  
Oct. 22

**Mid-Term Exam**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 9</th>
<th>Oct. 29</th>
<th>Advocacy and its Role in Shaping Health, Aging and Disability Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Submission of Advocacy Portfolio Issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Guest Speaker:</strong> Anna Kaminski, Benefits Counselor Manager, ABC for Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Readings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Advocacy Tips, a booklet on advocacy organized by Carolyn Hoffman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Preparing guest columns and editorials.” Community Tool Box; ctb.ku.edu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Writing letters to elected officials.” Community Tool Box; ctb.ku.edu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 10</th>
<th>Nov. 5</th>
<th>Health Policy and Services Affecting Children with Special Health Care Needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Guest Speaker:</strong> Liz Hecht, Policy Preceptor, WI LEND Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Readings</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 11</th>
<th>Nov. 12</th>
<th>Health Policy and Services Affecting Women and the LGBTQ Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Guest Speaker:</strong> Sara Finger, Executive Director and Founder, Wisconsin Alliance for Women’s Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Readings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kates, J. “Health and access to care and coverage for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals in the US.” <em>Kaiser Family Foundation</em>. 2015.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


---

**Week 12**  
**Nov. 19**

**Health Policy and Services Affecting Immigrants and Refugees and Global Impact of US Health Policy**

**Guest Speaker:** Susan Kidd Webster, UW School of Social Work

**Readings**


Bogenschultz, M. “We find a way.” *Medical Care*. 52(10.3), 2014: 64-70.


---

**Nov. 26**

**NO CLASS- THANKSGIVING**

---

**Week 13**  
**Dec. 3**

**Emerging Trends and Challenges Impacting US Health, Aging and Disability Policy**

**Readings**


Emanuel, E. “The coming shock in health care cost increases.” *The Wall Street*


Blumberg, L., Holahan, J. “After King v. Burwell: Next steps for the Affordable Care Act.” The Urban Institute. 2015. READ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Week 14
Dec. 10
Speed Advocacy, Course Evaluation and Wrap-Up

Assignment Due: Advocacy Portfolio

V. Text and Reading Materials
Required course reading materials are online at the Learn@UW course site. The instructor or guest speakers may assign additional reading materials throughout the course of the semester. Since much of the subject matter of this course is newsworthy and the subject of national debate, students are encouraged to read reputable news sources and follow emerging issues, as well as the status of key reforms and legislation so they are able to incorporate this content into class discussions.

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

Methods
This course will utilize a variety of teaching, learning and evaluative methods including lecture, readings, exams, videos, expert guest speakers and participatory learning activities.

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>outstanding; surpasses expectations in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88-93</td>
<td>AB</td>
<td>surpasses expectations 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 some areas; below in others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-75</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>below expectations in most areas, not acceptable graduate work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64-69</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>below expectations in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;64</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>fails to meet minimal expectations in all areas, not acceptable work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your grade in the course will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACA Impact Analysis</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy Portfolio</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignments
Detailed descriptions of assignments are provided at the end of the syllabus.

Class Participation and Attendance  10%
In order for you and your fellow classmates to benefit from this course, attendance and active participation are expected. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class and I will note your level of participation. If you are unable to attend class, please email me prior to class so that you can receive an excused absence; you may receive no more than two excused absences per semester. Two points will be deducted from your grade for each unexcused absence incurred.

You are also expected to participate through making comments including incorporating relevant current events into class discussion, asking questions and being involved actively and thoughtfully in class exercises. Net of attendance, highest participation grades will go to students who achieve an effective balance of speaking, inquiring and actively listening.

ACA Impact Analysis  25%
Students will complete a 4 page paper analyzing how the Affordable Care Act has impacted a specific population’s health, access to health insurance and health care, quality of care received and ability to pay for health insurance and care. The paper will also explore barriers that continue to exist for populations even after passage of the Affordable Care Act. **Due: Oct. 8**

Midterm Exam  35%
The exam will focus on terms and concepts discussed during the first half of the semester. It will include short answer, true and false and multiple choice. Students will be given a study guide 2 weeks prior to the exam. **Date of Exam: Oct. 22**

Advocacy Portfolio  30%
Students will complete an Advocacy Portfolio related to a policy or issue relevant to the class. Students are encouraged to advocate for policies or programs that address inequities or disparities impacting the health and well-being of vulnerable, oppressed, and marginalized populations. **Students must send a brief explanation of their selected issue/policy to the instructor for approval no later than Oct. 29.**
**Due: Dec. 11**

VII. Course Policies

Support for Students Requiring ADA 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.
**Student Behavior Policy**

In order to learn, we must be open to the views of people different from ourselves. Each and every voice in the classroom is important and brings with it a wealth of experiences, values and beliefs. In this time we share together over the semester, please honor the uniqueness of your classmates, and appreciate the opportunity we have to learn from each other. Please respect your fellow students’ opinions and refrain from personal attacks or demeaning comments. Finally, remember to keep confidential all issues of a personal or professional nature discussed in class.

**Technology in Class**

A minimal level of external distractions is essential to a productive learning environment. Mobile devices are not to be used in class, and laptop and tablet computers are to be used only for *unobtrusive* note-taking (and only if there are no complaints from your classmates). If you choose to use a computer in class, you cannot have a web browser open at any time.

**Late Assignments**

Assignments turned in late without the student’s initiating an advance arrangement with the instructor will be docked 5 percentage points (on a 100-point scale) for each day past due.

**Code of Ethics, Student Rights and Responsibilities & Plagiarism**

BSW and incoming MSW students read and signed electronic forms of the NASW Code of Ethics, the School of Social Work Plagiarism Policy and the Student Rights and Responsibilities. In doing so, they agreed that while in the BSW or MSW Program they would honor the NASW Code of Ethics and Student’s Rights and Responsibilities, as well as adhere to the Plagiarism Policy and that should they not do so, sanctions would be imposed. BSW and MSW students are expected to adhere to these policies in the classroom, in the field and in the preparation of course assignments.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct, which is not tolerated by the University or the School of Social Work. Plagiarism seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another without citation or authorization.

The School of Social Work defines plagiarism as:

1. The appropriation of passages or complete works of another person and submitting them as one’s own work – in either written materials or speeches.

2. The presentation of ideas of others as one’s own without giving credit.

There are two major forms of plagiarism:

1. Using direct quotes from others’ written or spoken work and presenting them as one’s own words without using proper quotation marks or offsetting and/or with failure to identify the source of the ideas.
2. Paraphrasing the ideas or research findings of another person(s), with failure to identify the source of the ideas.

Note that slight changes to the author’s original text, even with a citation, is plagiarism. Please see http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_paraphrase.html

Process:
- If an instructor suspects a student has plagiarized, the instructor will contact the student to discuss their concern.
- If the instructor determines that the student has plagiarized, the instructor will decide on a sanction in accordance with the misconduct rules in UWS 14.

Sanction:
- Based on the seriousness of the sanction, the instructor may inform the Dean of Student’s Office. The only sanctions that can be imposed without notifying the Dean of Students Office are: 1) oral reprimand; 2) written reprimand presented only to the student; and 3) an assignment to repeat the work on its merits.
- More serious sanctions may include a zero on the assignment or exam, a lower grade in the course or failure in the course. The School of Social Work will inform the Dean of Student’s Office when imposing any of these sanctions. This action is taken so the Dean of Student’s Office can decide whether to seek additional sanctions.
- Repeated acts of academic misconduct may result in more serious actions such as removal from the course in progress, disciplinary probation or suspension, or expulsion (http://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/acadintegrity.html).
- Note: Students can appeal any sanctions.

For more information:
Academic misconduct rules procedures can be found in UWS 14: http://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/docs/UWS14.pdf

For guidelines on quoting and paraphrasing:
UW-Madison Writing Center http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html
ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

ACA Impact Analysis

Due: October 8. Submit to Learn@UW by 3:30pm.

Purpose: As a social worker in the field of the Health, Aging and/or Disability, you will be required to understand how local and national policies directly impact clients and assist them in navigating the complexities of large systems and programs.

Building on course lectures and materials from weeks 2-5, the purpose of this assignment is to further your understanding of the Affordable Care Act through analysis of its impact on a population of your choice.

Instructions: For this assignment, please choose a specific population of focus. Populations may be defined by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, employment status, age, gender, sexual orientation or other factors. You may choose to define a population by more than one factor. For example, you may choose to focus on low-income individuals living with HIV/AIDS.

Using APA format, referencing both relevant course materials and outside resources, write a single-spaced 4-page paper which includes the following:

1. Overview of your chosen population’s experience with the health care system prior to passage of the Affordable Care Act including discussion of;
   a. Findings on overall health and/or health outcomes of the population
   b. Ability to access health insurance/types of health insurance available to them
   c. Ability to access health care and quality of care received
   d. Ability to pay for health insurance and/or health care

2. Analysis of how the Affordable Care Act has impacted the above areas for your chosen population since its passage.

3. Analysis of barriers to health insurance and/or health care that still exist for your chosen population even after passage of the Affordable Care Act and potential solutions to address these barriers.

Grading: This assignment will be graded on a 100-point scale and is worth 25% of your overall grade.
ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

Advocacy Portfolio

Submit Issue for Approval: Via email no later than October 29.
Due: December 10. Submit to Learn@UW by 3:30pm.

Purpose: Social workers witness first-hand how local and national policies impact the lives of their clients and as such have a critical role in advocacy. The purpose of this assignment is for you to apply strategies of advocacy and social change to advance the health and well-being of a specific population.

Instructions: Select a policy or issue that is relevant to the class. Policies/issues selected should address inequities or disparities impacting access to health coverage, services and/or outcomes for vulnerable populations. Your selected policy/issue must be approved by the instructor. Please submit a brief explanation of your policy or issue to the instructor via email no later than October 29.

Once your topic has been approved, develop an Advocacy Portfolio with the following components:

• **Develop an Advocacy Plan Outline** which includes the following:
  
  o **Definition of the problem**: This is a broad statement of the problem or issue that you want to address. (This should be short. It can be one sentence or a single paragraph).
  
  o **Proposed response**: The response (e.g. policy, legislation, awareness, education) is the solution or partial solution to the identified problem. It is a short realistic goal. (This should be short. It can be one sentence or a single paragraph).
  
  o **Talking points** to be used by others to promote and support your issue.
  
  o **A list of likely allies and opponents**. Include a brief explanation of how identified allies might support your efforts, and how and/or why opponents might resist or oppose your efforts. This can be presented in table or list format.

• **Write a 1 page letter to an elected official** or an administrator to convince them to support your issue.

• **Write a 700-1,000 word op-ed column to a paper or magazine** outlining the problem, the proposed solution and reasons others should support your issue.
• **Develop a bibliography** (APA Format) outlining the sources you used to gather information for your portfolio including, readings, magazines, websites, interviews, etc.

Tips and examples of all of the above components are included in materials posted on Learn@UW.

In addition, to submitting the above, we will play “speed advocacy” in class on December 10 so you can practice being an advocate on your topic and learn about others advocacy efforts.

**Grading:** This assignment will be graded on a 100-point scale and is worth 30% of your overall grade.