ADVANCED POLICY ADVOCACY, SWK 6210
Spring 2025
WURZWEILER SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

Instructor Name
Email
Phone
Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides students an opportunity to expand on their foundation policy and practice skills to identify policies that are related to social problems, with particular emphasis on problems that disproportionately affect vulnerable populations. Students will connect policy process and outcomes to the NASW Code of Ethics. Students will learn policy analysis and advocacy skills to create policy change.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has."
Margaret Mead

The mission of the social work profession is "to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty" (NASW Code of Ethics, Preamble, 2021). To further this mission, the NASW Code of Ethics implores social workers to "engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully (NASW Code of Ethics, 6.04(a), 2021). Social workers should also "advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice" (NASW Code of Ethics, 6.04(a), 2021). In order to effectively serve the mission of our profession, social workers need to be "aware of the impact of the political arena on practice" (NASW Code of Ethics, 6.04(a), 2021).

The two-course policy sequence for the Master of Social Work program at Wurzweiler School of Social Work is designed to competently prepare students to support the mission of the social work profession. The current course builds on the theory, knowledge and skills of Social Welfare and Social Change (SWK 6201) and other foundational courses, to further develop student understanding of social workers' ethical responsibility to engage in social and political action, and put newly acquired skills into action.

This Advanced Policy Advocacy course prepares students to actively practice policy analysis and advocacy. This course builds upon theory introduced in Human Behavior and the Social Environment courses and content infused throughout the curriculum related to social justice, equity, and equality for populations in need and at-risk.

Students in this course learn how to use policy practice to address a social problem of importance to them. Students choose a social problem that connects with the social work profession as a whole. This problem may intersect with student practicum experiences, career/future practice

goals, and/or social problems of personal significance. Through a deeper exploration of theory, knowledge and skills, students will develop an expertise in policy related to their chosen problem that informs how they design and implement a strategy to impact policy to create positive social change, in accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics.

COURSE COMPETENCY OUTCOMES

This course will help students achieve the following competencies:

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and in policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to engage in anti-racist practice. Social workers understand how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of factors including but not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that this intersectionality means that a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Social workers understand the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Social workers understand cultural humility and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.
Social workers:

- demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and
- demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice
Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects well-being, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings.
Social workers:

- use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare

policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Common Assignment: **Advocacy Project Policy Brief**

Coursework Indicator	Not Competent (1)	Developing Competency (2)	Competent (3)	Advanced Competency (4)
3A Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels	Fails to Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels	Shows evidence of anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels	Engages in anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels	Consistently engages in anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels
3B Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness justice.	Fails to engage in cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness justice	Shows evidence of engaging in cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness justice	Demonstrates cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness justice	Consistently Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness justice
5A Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services.	Does not use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services.	Identifies the issues, but fails to use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services.	Uses social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services in a clear, coherent, and meaningful manner, and demonstrates understanding of issues.	Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services in a concise and meaningful manner that demonstrates mastery of relevant policy issues.
5B Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human	Fails to apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic,	Shows evidence of engaging in practices that apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human	Engages in practices that apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social,	Consistently engages in practices that to apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human

rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.	and environmental justice.	rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.	racial, economic, and environmental justice.	rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

The CSWE rubrics scores will NOT apply to your class grade. Individual scores are NOT made public; however, you can view your individual score at the following address: https://yeshiva.tk20.com/campustoolshighered/start.do

In addition, the aggregated results of the assessments are listed on the Wurzweiler website at the address below: https://www.yu.edu/wurzweiler/msw/assessment

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define social policy and related terms
2. Describe the professional and ethical responsibility of social workers to engage in the policy process
3. Summarize the theory and practice of the policy process at the local, state, and federal levels, including roles of elected officials at all levels
4. Describe the role of social workers in voter engagement
5. Describe the definition of a social problem, including the multiple ways of defining a problem and recommend possible solutions to social problems
6. Analyze the disproportionate impact of social problems on marginalized populations
7. Understand the theories that inform social policy analysis and action
8. Find, evaluate, and analyze existing policies that are relevant to social work practice
9. Use foundational social work skills to develop plans for policy advocacy and apply advocacy skills to proposed policy change
10. Think critically about theory related to power and its uses in advocacy

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Class sessions include lectures (using the delivery method appropriate to the course) that follow the progression of the course outline. Discussions focus on lecture content, reading assignments, current events relevant to social policy and student experiences in practicum and other social work-related professional experiences. A variety of techniques, including group exercises, audio-visual presentations and guest speakers may be used. Students in this class in any format (asynchronously, synchronously online via Zoom, or in person) will participate in online discussions in Canvas in order to meet the required contact hours for the course.

Students are expected to complete all assigned readings on time, attend class in person or complete lecture modules online, and participate knowledgeably in class discussions. In addition to the assigned readings, students are encouraged to skim news sources such as major newspapers (such as The New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, or Globe and Mail), news

COURSE OUTLINE

Note: Your instructor and/or the course Canvas will let you know which readings are required and which are recommended, as well as the distribution of readings and assignments within units that are multiple weeks.

Unit 1: Introduction to Social Policy and Policy Practice

Learning Objectives:

- Identify course objectives and requirements
- Introduce online library searching and writing formats specific to policy work
- Define social policy and related terms
- Review the history of policy practice
- Describe the professional and ethical responsibility of social workers to engage in the policy process
- Give examples of social workers' roles and responsibilities in the policy process

Required Readings:

Lane, S.R., Palley, E.S., & Shdaimah, C.S. (2019). *Social welfare policy in a changing world*. Sage Publishing.

- Chapter 1: Social Work: A Values-Based Profession in a Historical Context (same chapter number in both editions)
- Chapter 2: How Policy is Created and Influenced (Chapter 3 in the second edition)

National Association of Social Workers. (2024). *Social work speaks: National Association of Social Workers policy statements*. NASW Press.

- Role of Government, Social Policy, and Social Work
- Electoral Politics

Henderson, A.S. & Bullock, A. (2021). Policy practice. In *Encyclopedia of Social Work*. Oxford University Press. (Available through E-Reserves)

Binder, N., & Weiss-Gal, I. (2022). Social workers as local politicians in Israel. *The British Journal of Social Work*, *52*(5), 2797-2813.

McLaughlin, A., Rothery, M., & Kuiken, J. (2019). Pathways to political engagement: Interviews with social workers in elected office. *Canadian Social Work Review/Revue Canadienne de Service Social*, *36*(1), 25-44.

Pollack, D. & Kleinman, T.G. (2015). *Social work and the courts: A casebook* (3rd ed.). Routledge. Chapter 7: Social workers in court.

Sewpaul, V., & Henrickson, M. (2019). The (r)evolution and decolonization of social work ethics: The Global Social Work Statement of Ethical Principles. International Social Work, 62(6), 1469–1481.

Stuart, P. (1999). Linking clients and policy: Social work's distinctive contribution. Social Work, 44(4):335-347.

Video introduction to library and YU find: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Blw3Fy6EZrA

Assignments:

1) Class participation
2) Who Represents Me?

Unit 2: The Policy Process and Voter Engagement

Learning Objectives:

- Summarize the theory and practice of the policy process at the local, state, and federal levels
- Apply strategies to find elected officials at all levels
- Examine the history of voting laws in the United States through a social justice lens
- Describe the role of social workers in voter engagement
- Critique the intersections of voting and criminal justice

Required Readings (& listening):

Lane, S.R., Palley, E.S., & Shdaimah, C.S. (2019). Social welfare policy in a changing world. Sage Publishing.

- Chapter 2: How Policy is Created and Influenced (continued from previous unit) (Chapter 3 in the second edition)

National Association of Social Workers. (2024). Social work speaks: National Association of Social Workers policy statements. NASW Press.

- Social Work in the Criminal Justice System
- Voter Participation (12th edition)
- Voter Rights and Voter Participation (13th edition)
- Racism

Abramovitz, M., Sherraden, M., Hill, K., Smith, T. R., Lewis, B., & Mizrahi, T. (2019). Voting is Social Work: Voices from the National Social Work Voter Mobilization Campaign. Journal of Social Work Education, 55(4), 626-644.

Domanski, M. (1998). Prototypes of social work political participation: an empirical model. Social Work, 43(2), 156-167.

Lane, S. R., & Pritzker, S. (2018). Planning the Political Intervention: Voter engagement. Springer International Publishing. Chapter 8 (Available via Canvas)

LeRoux, K., & Krawczyk, K. (2014). Can nonprofit organizations increase voter turnout? Findings from an agency-based voter mobilization experiment. Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 43(2), 272–292.

Lo Wang, H. & Devarajan, K. (2019, Dec. 31). 'Your body being used': Where prisoners who can't vote fill voting districts. Morning Edition: National Public Radio. (6 minutes) https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2019/12/31/761932806/your-body-being-used-where-prisoners-who-can-t-vote-fill-voting-districts

Rutenberg, J. (2015, July 29). A dream undone: Inside the 50-year campaign to roll back the Voting Rights Act. The New York Times Magazine. https://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/29/magazine/voting-rights-act-dream-undone.html

Assignments:

1) Class participation

Unit 3: Defining Social Problems

Learning Objectives:

- Describe the definition of a social problem, including the multiple ways of defining a problem
- Recommend possible solutions to social problems
- Analyze the disproportionate impact of social problems on marginalized populations

Required Readings:

Lane, S.R., Palley, E.S., & Shdaimah, C.S. (2019). Social welfare policy in a changing world. Sage Publishing.

- Chapter 4: Family Policy (Chapter 6 in the second edition)
- Chapter 5: Child Welfare Policy (Chapter 7 in the second edition)

National Association of Social Workers. (2024). Social work speaks: National Association of Social Workers policy statements. NASW Press.

- Women in the Social Work Profession
- Transgender and Gender Nonconforming People (12th edition)
- LGBTQIAS+ Issues (13th edition)
- Sovereignty, Rights, and the Well-Being of Indigenous Peoples (12th Edition)
- Sovereignty, Rights, and the Well-Being of Indigenous Peoples Living in the United States (13th Edition)

- People with Disabilities
- Immigrants and Refugees

Brick, Y. (1989). Judaism and social policy. *Social Policy and Administration, 23*(3): 262-276.

Danziger, S.K. & Staller, K.M. (2013). Social problems. In *Encyclopedia of Social Work*. Oxford University Press. (Available through E-Reserves)

Stein, G.L., & Sherman, P.A. (2005). Promoting effective social work policy in end-of life and palliative care. *Journal of Palliative Medicine, 8*(6), 1271-1281.

Assignments:

1) Class participation
2) Advocacy Project, Part 1: Social Problem Analysis

Unit 4: Policy Analysis

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the theories that inform social policy analysis and action
- Find and evaluate existing policies that are relevant to social work practice
- Analyze social policies
- Using poverty as an example, research and evaluate social policies related to social problems

Required Readings:

Lane, S.R., Palley, E.S., & Shdaimah, C.S. (2019). *Social welfare policy in a changing world*. Sage Publishing.

- Chapter 3: Practical Theories for Understanding and Analyzing Policy (Chapter 4 in the second edition)
- Chapter 9: Work and Employment Policy (Chapter 11 in the second edition)

Gilbert, N., & Terrell, P. (2012). *Dimensions of social welfare policy (8th Ed.)*. Prentice-Hall. Chapter 3.

National Association of Social Workers. (2024). *Social work speaks: National Association of Social Workers policy statements*. NASW Press.

- Economic Justice
- Welfare Reform
- Workplace Discrimination

Frakt, A. & Pearson, E. (2019, Dec. 31). How cutting food stamps can add costs elsewhere. *The New York Times*

https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/31/upshot/food-stamps-lower-health-care-costs.html

Lane, S. R., & Pritzker, S. (2018). Political social work. Springer International Publishing. Chapter 6 (Available via Canvas; Please read pages 151-163)

Pimpare, S. (2013). Welfare reform at 15 and the state of policy analysis. Social Work, 58(1), 53-62.

Schuman, D.L. & Schuman, D.L (2016) A value-critical choice analysis of a policy to prevent suicide in veterans and service members, Social Work in Public Health, 31(6), 537-548.

Assignments:

1) Class participation
2) Advocacy Project, Part 2: Social Policy Research

Unit 5: Policy Advocacy: Creating plans, using theory, finding allies

Learning Objectives:

- Develop a plan for policy advocacy, using mental health as a sample topic
- Think critically about theory related to power and its uses in advocacy
- Compare theories and research that describe the use of coalitions and other organizing techniques
- Research advocacy organizations

Readings:

Lane, S.R., Palley, E.S., & Shdaimah, C.S. (2019). Social welfare policy in a changing world. Sage Publishing.

- Chapter 11: Health Policy (Chapter 13 in the second edition)

National Association of Social Workers. (2024). Social work speaks: National Association of Social Workers policy statements. NASW Press.

- Mental Health

Lane, S. R., & Pritzker, S. (2018). Political social work. Springer International Publishing. Chapter 6 (Available via Canvas; Please read pp. 163-170.)

Lyons, P., Beck, E. & Lyons, M.J. (2011). Capitalizing capitol capital: Child welfare policy advocacy. Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services, 92(3), 269-275.

Sanders, L., Martinez, R., Harner, M., Harner, M., Horner, P., & Delva, J. (2013). Grassroots responsiveness to human rights abuse: History of the

Washtenaw Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights. *Social Work, 58*(2), 117-125.

Assignments:

1) Class participation
2) Advocacy Project, Part 3a: Social Policy Change

Unit 6: Policy Advocacy: Putting your social work skills into action

Learning Objectives

- Apply foundation social work skills to advocacy work
- Apply advocacy skills to proposed policy change
- Identify the steps to successful advocacy

Readings:

Hoefer, R. (2001). Highly effective human services interest groups: Seven key practices. *Journal of Community Practice, 9*(2), 1-13.

Jackson-Elmoore, C. (2005). Informing state policymakers: Opportunities for social workers. *Social Work, 50*(3), 251-261.

Kleinkauf, C. (1981). A guide to giving legislative testimony. *Social Work, 26*(4), 297-303.

Lane, S. R., & Pritzker, S. (2018). *Political social work*. Springer International Publishing. Chapter 6 (Available via Canvas; Please read p. 170 through to the end).

Noum, H. (2020). Between majority and minority: A model for understanding and promoting culturally competent policy practice in multicultural societies. *British Journal of Social Work, 50*(2), 506-524.

Rome, S. H., & Hoechstetter, S. (2010). Social work and civic engagement: The political participation of professional social workers. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare, 37*, 107-129.

Assignments:

1) Class participation
2) Advocacy Project, Part 3b: Advocacy Groups
3) Advocacy Project, Part 4: Testimony
4) Practice LMSW Questions
5) Policy in Real Life

Unit 7: Future Directions in Policy Practice

Learning Objectives

- Identify skills used by others in advocacy campaigns
- Discuss future directions in policy practice
- Explore international considerations for policy practice

Readings:

National Association of Social Workers. (2024). Social work speaks: National Association of Social Workers policy statements. NASW Press.

- Substance Use Disorder Treatment
- Healthcare

Bowles, W, Boetto, H, Jones, P. & McKinnon, J. (2018). Is social work really greening? Exploring the place of sustainability and environment in social work codes of ethics. International Social Work, 61(4), 503-517.

Kleinkauf, C. (1981). A guide to giving legislative testimony. Social Work, 26(4), 297-303.

Kriz, K., & Skivenes, M. (2015). Challenges for marginalized minority parents in different welfare systems: Child welfare workers' perspectives. International Social Work, 58(1), 75-87.

Larkin, H., Henwood, B., Fogel, S.J., Aykanian, A., Briar-Lawson, K.H., Donaldson, L.P., Herman, D., Little, S.B., Meyer-Adams, N., Padgett, D.K., Patchner, M.A., & Streeter, C.L. (2016). Responding to the grand challenge to end homelessness: The national homelessness social work initiative. Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services, 97(3), 153-159.

Han, H. (2019, Dec. 16) When does activism become powerful? The New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/16/opinion/activism-power-victories.html

Padilla, Y. C., & Fong, R. (2016). Identifying grand challenges facing social work in the next decade: Maximizing social policy engagement. Journal of Policy Practice, 15(3), 133-144.

Assignments:

1) Class participation
2) Advocacy Project, Part 5: Policy Brief