



COURSE TITLE/SECTION: SOCW 7329 – Social Policy Advocacy

TIME: Monday 6:00 – 9:00 pm

ROOM: AH 11

FACULTY: Suzanne Pritzker, Ph.D.

OFFICE HOURS: Mondays 12:00 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.
Mondays 4:00 - 4:30 p.m.
Mondays 5:00 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.
and by appointment (SW 415)

E-MAIL: spritzker@uh.edu

PHONE: 713-743-8114

I. Course

A. Description

Provides an understanding of political systems and teaches the skills to affect policy in the legislative as well as administrative arenas.

B. Purpose

This course provides students with an understanding of the political processes and systems that affect their practice. The course examines theory and skills effective in influencing, altering, and monitoring social policy.

II. Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Apply analytical methods to understand the dimensions of power and decision-making at the community, state and national levels;
2. Develop strategies to enhance social and economic justice within organizational and political systems especially as they affect women, minorities of color, gay and lesbian persons, those most economically disadvantaged, as well as strategies to address social class;
3. Identify professional values and ethical positions within, as well as between systems, which may appear to be incompatible with political roles and strategies and develop skills to bridge these incompatibilities in order to affect change;
4. Identify and utilize methods and skills, which develop and sustain inter-organizational networks;
5. Demonstrate advocacy skills, such as testifying, lobbying, and providing staff support

- for public interest, constituency and/or grassroots community groups;
6. Identify institutional and community practices that disempower, and develop strategies to challenge them;
 7. Demonstrate how to share empowerment theory and practice with constituencies who are unfamiliar or inclined to oppose such; and
 8. Continue the development of the professional use-of-self.

III. Course Structure

Content areas addressed in this class include:

1. Understanding power and politics in policy processes;
2. Developing an advocacy agenda;
3. Implementing and evaluating advocacy strategies and tactics.

Class formats will vary from session to session, depending on session content. Interactive lectures and discussion will be the primary format, requiring active participation and engagement. Class instruction may also include in-class exercises, guest speakers, peer-led discussions, and field trip(s). Students are expected to complete all readings as assigned and come to class prepared to discuss them.

The professor reserves the right to alter readings, course topics, and assignments as needed to better accommodate learning goals and time constraints.

IV. Readings

Required readings are listed in this syllabus along with the course schedule. Assigned weekly readings will be available on Blackboard or distributed to students by the professor.

Please note that readings are selected from a diverse array of scholars and activists, and have been purposefully selected to strengthen students' critical thinking and encourage healthy classroom debate. It is not expected that students (or the professor) will agree with all perspectives presented.

To stay abreast of current social policy issues, students are encouraged to follow at least one of the following news sources daily: The Houston Chronicle, The Washington Post, The New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, BBC News, or National Public Radio.

Students are encouraged to share articles, video clips, etc. that complement our class discussions either by bringing them to class or posting them on Blackboard.

V. Course Requirements

The final grade for this course will be based on the following assignments:

- 1) **Class participation and preparedness** – 10 points
- 2) **Reflective essay** – 25 points
DUE: Friday, 2/7 by 6:00 p.m.
- 3) **Advocacy critique** – 15 points
Option A: **Advocacy presentation and discussion**
DUE: TBD, based on sign-up sheet
OR
Option B: **Community government meeting or campaign volunteering**
DUE: Monday, 4/21, by 6:00 p.m.
- 4) **Advocacy strategy and implementation** – 50 points total
 - a. Proposed advocacy strategy summary & planning chart (10 points)
DUE: Friday, 2/28, by 6:00 p.m.
 - b. Final strategy summary & advocacy planning chart (15 points)
DUE: Monday, 5/5, by 6:00 p.m.
 - c. Final project implementation: advocacy tools & project log (25 points)
DUE: Monday, 5/5, by 6:00 p.m.
- 5) **Extra credit**
 - a. Influencing State Policy contest submission (up to 2 points)
DUE: Monday, 5/5, by 6:00 p.m.
 - b. Implementation of additional advocacy tools (up to 1 point each)

Detail about these assignments is provided at the end of this syllabus. All assignments are due by the dates and times specified above. Late submissions will be accepted; however, *the grade value will be reduced by 10% for each day late*, including turning an assignment after the time deadline on the day it is due. The professor reserves the right to require any student to consult the Writing Center regarding assignments in this course.

VI. Evaluation and Grading

The following standard grading scale has been adopted for all courses taught in the College:

A =	96-100% of the points	C+ =	76-79.9%
A- =	92-95.9%	C =	72-75.9%
B+=	88-91.9%	C- =	68-71.9%
B =	84-87.9%	D =	64-67.9%
B- =	80-83.9%	F =	Below 64%

VII. Policy on grades of I (Incomplete)

The grade of "I" (Incomplete) is a conditional and temporary grade given when students are either (a) passing a course or (b) still have a reasonable chance of passing in the judgment of the instructor but, for non-academic reasons beyond their control have not completed a relatively small part of all requirements. Students are responsible for informing the instructor immediately of the reasons for not submitting an assignment on time or not taking an examination. Students must contact the instructor of the course in which they receive an "I" grade to make arrangements to complete the course requirements. Students should be instructed not to re-register for the same course in a following semester in order to complete the incomplete requirements.

The grade of "I" must be changed by fulfillment of course requirements within one year of the date awarded or it will be changed automatically to an "F" (or to a "U" [Unsatisfactory] in S/U graded courses). The instructor may require a time period of less than one year to fulfill course requirements. The grade may be changed by the instructor at any time to reflect work complete in the course. The grade of "I" may not be changed to a grade of **W**.

VIII. Policy on academic dishonesty and plagiarism

Students are expected to demonstrate and maintain a professional standard of writing in all courses, do one's own work, give credit for the ideas of others, and provide proper citation of source materials. Any student who plagiarizes any part of a paper or assignment or engages in any form of academic dishonesty will receive an "I" for the class with a recommendation that a grade of F be assigned, subsequent to a College hearing, in accordance with the University policy on academic dishonesty. Other actions may also be recommended and/or taken by the College to suspend or expel a student who engages in academic dishonesty.

All papers and written assignments must be fully and properly referenced using APA style format (or as approved by the instructor), with credit given to the authors whose ideas you have used. If you are using direct quotes from a specific author (or authors), you must set the quote in quotation marks or use an indented quotation form. For all direct quotes, you must include the page number(s) in your text or references. Any time that you use more than four or five consecutive words taken from another author, you must clearly indicate that this is a direct quotation. Please consult the current APA manual for further information.

Academic dishonesty includes using any other person's work and representing it as your own. This includes (but is not limited to) using graded papers from students who have previously taken this course as the basis for your work. It also includes, but is not limited to submitting the same paper to more than one class. If you have any specific questions about plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please raise these questions in class or make an appointment to see instructor. This statement is consistent with the University Policy on Academic Dishonesty that can be found in your UH Student Handbook.

IX. Course Schedule and Assignments

Session 1. January 13

Course overview

Selected political social worker biographies

January 20

No Class

Session 2. January 27

Developing an advocacy agenda: Identifying issues

Bobo, K., Kendall, J., & Max, S. (2001). Choosing an issue. In *Organizing for Social Change*, pp. 14-19

Richan (2006). Setting an action agenda. In *Lobbying for Social Change*, Chapter 2, pp. 37-57.

Suggested Reading

Hoefer, R. (2006). Understanding the issue. In *Advocacy Practice for Social Justice*, pp. 52-74.

IDENTIFY ADVOCACY STRATEGY PROJECT TOPIC BY TODAY

Session 3. February 3

Developing an advocacy agenda: Identifying goals

Bobo, K., Kendall, J., & Max, S. (2001). Developing a strategy. In *Organizing for Social Change*, pp. 34-35.

Sen, R. (2003). Picking the good fight. In *Stir it Up: Lessons in Community Organizing and Advocacy*, pp. 48-61.

REFLECTIVE ESSAY DUE FRIDAY, 2/7/14 by 6:00 p.m.

Session 4. February 10

Developing an advocacy agenda: Assessing power and identifying targets

Blundo, R.G., Mele, C., Hairston, R. & Watson, J. (1999). The internet and demystifying power differentials: A few women online and the housing authority. *Journal of Community Practice*, 6, 2, 11-26.

Frantzich, S.E. (2008). Power letter writing: Women in the military academies. In *Citizen Democracy: Political Activism in a Cynical Age* (People, Passions, & Power), pp. 128-136.

Sen, R. (2003). Picking the good fight. In *Stir it Up: Lessons*

in Community Organizing and Advocacy, pp. 62-67.

Secretary of the Senate. (2007). *Citizen Handbook: How the Texas Legislature Works*.

Session 5. February 17

Developing an advocacy agenda: Selecting strategies and tactics

Bobo, K., Kendall, J., & Max, S. (2001). Developing a strategy. In *Organizing for Social Change*, pp. 41-43.

Chandler, A. (2007). Click here for change: Your guide to the E-Advocacy revolution. Oakland, CA: PolicyLink & Community Technology Federation of California, pp. 12-19.

Session 6. February 24

Laws and ethics of policy advocacy

Ezell, M. (2001). The ethics of advocacy. In *Advocacy in the Human Services*, pp. 37-50.

Poe, B., Rocha, C. & Thomas, V. (2010). Political activities of social workers: Addressing perceived barriers to political participation. *Social Work*, 55, 4, 317-325.

Raffa, T. (2000). Advocacy and lobbying without fear: What is allowed within a 501(c)3 charitable organization? *Nonprofit Quarterly*, 7, 2, 44-47

ADVOCACY STRATEGY SUMMARY & PLANNING CHART DUE FRIDAY, 2/28/14 BY 6:00 p.m.

ALL PROJECT PAIRS OR INDIVIDUALS MUST SCHEDULE A MANDATORY CONSULTATION WITH THE PROFESSOR BETWEEN MARCH 3 – MARCH 24. A SIGN-UP SHEET WILL BE DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS.

Session 7. March 3

Use of self in policy advocacy

Lavine, D.S. (2002). The necessity of properly identifying your audience and tailoring your arguments to its needs. In *Cardinal Rules of Advocacy: Understanding and Mastering Fundamental Principles of Persuasion*, pp. 5-30.

Lens, V. (2005). Advocacy and argumentation in the public arena: A guide for social workers. *Social Work*, 50, 3, 231-238.

Suggested Reading

SPIN Project. (2003). Framing and messaging. In *Winning Wages: A Media Kit for Successful Living Wage Strategies*, only pp. 25-43.

March 10.

SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS

Session 8. March 17

Strategies and tactics: Influencing legislation and regulation 1

Haynes, K. & Mickelson, J. (2010). Influence through lobbying. In *Affecting Change: Social Workers in the Political Arena*, pp. 108-127.

Richan (2006). Understanding policymakers. In *Lobbying for Social Change*, pp. 105-130.

Suggested Reading

Sharwell, G. (1982). How to testify before a legislative committee. In Mahaffey & Hanks, *Practical Politics: Social Work and Political Responsibility*, pp. 85-98.

Session 9. March 24

Strategies and tactics: Influencing legislation and regulation 2

Hoefler, R. (2006). Ongoing monitoring. In *Advocacy Practice for Social Justice*, pp. 157-176.

Session 10. March 31

Strategies and tactics: Working with media

Wallack, L., Woodruff, K., Dorfman, L. & Diaz, I. (1999). Thinking like an advocate. In *News for a Change: An Advocate's Guide to Working with the Media*, pp. 53-69.

Center for Community Change (1997). *How to Tell and Sell Your Story: A Guide to Developing Effective Messages and Good Stories About Your Work*. (Skim Parts 1 & 2)

Session 11. April 7

Strategies and tactics: Grassroots activism and public education

Bryan, D. (2009). Does grassroots lobbying work? A field experiment measuring the effect of an email lobbying campaign on legislative behavior. *American Political Research*, 37, 327-352.

Sacks, O. (1988). The revolution of the deaf. *New York*

Review of Books, 35, 9, 23-28.

Chandler, A. (2007). Click here for change: Your guide to the E-Advocacy revolution. Oakland, CA: PolicyLink & Community Technology Federation of California, pp. 20-31.

Session 12. April 14

Coalition-building and empowerment

Bobo, K., Kendall, J., & Max, S. (2001). Building and joining coalitions. *Organizing for Social Change*, pp. 100-109

Mizrahi, T. & Rosenthal, B. (2001). Complexities of coalition building: Leaders' successes, strategies, struggles, and solutions. *Social Work*, 46, 1, 63-79.

Rome, S.H., Hoehstetter, S., & Wolf-Branigin, M. (2010). Pushing the envelope: Empowering clients through political action. *Journal of Policy Practice*, 9, 3-4, 201-210.

Suggested Reading

Arnstein, S.R. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *American Institute of Planners Journal*, 69, 216-224.

Session 13. April 21

Strategies and tactics: Influencing electoral politics

Haynes, K. & Mickelson, J. (2010). The campaign. In *Affecting Change: Social Workers in the Political Arena*, pp. 156-174.

Haynes, K. & Mickelson, J. (2010). Social Workers as politicians. In *Affecting Change: Social Workers in the Political Arena*, pp. 175-192.

Suggested Reading

Jansson, B. (2003). Engaging in ballot-based policy advocacy. *Becoming an Effective Policy Advocate*, pp. 375-406

Lane, S.R. & Humphreys, N. (2011). Social workers in politics: A national survey of social work candidates and elected officials. *Journal of Policy Practice*, 10, 3, 225-244.

**COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT MEETING OR
CAMPAIGN VOLUNTEERING DUE MONDAY, 4/21/14
BY 6:00 P.M.**

Session 14. April 28

Wrap-up/Evaluating policy advocacy

Belton, K.B. (2001). Assessing your advocacy efforts. *Association Management*, 53, 2, 49-52.

McNutt, J. (2011). Is social advocacy worth the cost? Issues and barriers to an economic analysis of social work political practice. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 21, 397-403.

**FINAL ADVOCACY STRATEGY AND
IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT DUE MONDAY, 5/5/14
BY 6:00 P.M.**

X. Americans with Disabilities Statement:

Whenever possible, and in accordance with 504/ADA guidelines, the University of Houston will attempt to provide reasonable academic accommodations to students who request and require them. Please call 713-743-5400 for more assistance. Instructors may not provide accommodations without supporting documentation from the UH Center for Students with Disabilities.

XI. Addenda:

Consultation. Scheduled office hours are indicated on page 1 of this syllabus and are posted outside of my office door (#415). Other times can be arranged by appointment – please contact the instructor (spritzker@uh.edu) to schedule alternative appointment times. I encourage students to meet to discuss assignment topics, questions related to course content, or other topics that arise as a result of course content, assignments, and discussions.

Course expectations. *Regular, on-time attendance is mandatory; any more than one absence will be reflected in your class participation grade.* If you cannot attend class, you are expected to inform me in advance. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to contact fellow students to obtain missed information.

Blackboard. The course information and readings are on the Blackboard Learn site for this course. Please use Blackboard for submitting assignments and following course announcements. Students are encouraged to post and discuss links or articles relevant to course content on the discussion board in order to strengthen the course learning environment.

Electronic Devices. You are expected to conduct yourself as a professional in this class. Cell phones should be turned off before class, and no laptops should be utilized during class sessions, except as permitted by the professor.

Course Assignments

The final grade for this course will be based on the following assignments:

1) Participation and preparedness – 10 points.

Active class participation is expected, and is necessary for optimal student learning. Students are expected to come prepared to discuss the weekly readings, as well as broader themes and/or current events that arise around each session's topic. Debate and discussion of different perspectives is expected; however, students are expected to demonstrate respectful conduct towards one another.

Your participation will be assessed using the following criteria:

- Supporting flow of discussion (sharing appropriate and relevant content, reading and integrating weekly readings, integrating relevant field experiences, and furthering classroom discussion of session topics);
- Active listening; and
- Being respectful in comments and action (including regular attendance and arriving on time). Points will be deducted for more than one absence or multiple late arrivals.

2) Reflective essay – 25 points

Each student will *select and read one book* about ordinary citizens or social activists who have engaged in policy advocacy from the following short list of books. If the student wishes to read a book not on this list that specifically describes individuals' personal efforts to engage in policy advocacy, the selection *must first be approved by the instructor*.

1. Lieberman, Alice. (2010). *Women in Social Work who have Changed the World*.
2. Loeb, Paul. (2010). *Soul of a Citizen: Living with Conviction in Challenging Times*.
3. Maathai, Wangari. (2007). *Unbowed: A Memoir*
4. Dellums, Ronald. (2000). *Lying Down with the Lions: A Public Life from the Streets of Oakland to the Halls of Power*.
5. Shilts, Randy. (1988). *The Mayor of Castro Street: The Life and Times of Harvey Milk*.
6. Knight, Louise. (2010). *Jane Addams: Spirit in Action*

Based on the book, students are expected to write a 6-8 page paper. Select the main character (or, in the case of the Lieberman and Loeb books, at least four key characters in the book) and discuss the following:

- a) How does the character(s) engage in policy advocacy?
- b) What motivates the character(s) to do so?
- c) Why did the character(s) choose her/his selected tactics (specific methods of carrying out her/his advocacy)?
- d) What are the personal, community, and social impacts or consequences of her/his work and commitment?
- e) Did reading this book change your perspective concerning the role of advocacy in your life?
- f) How do you anticipate integrating advocacy into your professional social work practice?

(DUE: 2/7/13, by 6:00 p.m.)

3) Advocacy critique – 15 points.

Each student is expected to choose ONE of the following two assignment options:

Option A: Advocacy presentation and discussion. Fourteen students can choose this option.

Students will share with the class a current media item (e.g., tv clip, radio show excerpt, blog post, commercial, news article) describing an effort by ordinary people to engage in advocacy for policy change. Audio/video clips must be less than 5 minutes long.

You are expected to share the media item with the class through a presentation and facilitating a class discussion about the advocacy effort. You are expected to:

- a) Summarize the advocacy effort that has taken place
- b) Describe:
 1. the target of the advocacy effort,
 2. the goals of the effort, and
 3. the strategies and tactics used
- c) Facilitate a class discussion with your fellow students that:
 1. critically assesses the appropriateness and effectiveness of the advocacy effort, and
 2. discusses other strategies or tactics that may have been more effective
- d) Wrap up the discussion with your final observations.

The combined presentation *and* discussion that you facilitate should be limited to 30 minutes. An approximately 2-page paper addressing each of these points is due on the day of your presentation.

(DUE: Sign-up sheet distributed Session 1.)

Option B: Community government meeting or campaign volunteering. Students will attend at least one complete – from beginning to end – local government meeting (e.g., city council, other local municipal board, school board) *or* volunteer 3-5 hours for an existing advocacy effort or political campaign (e.g., city council campaign). This *must be a brand-new experience for you*, and cannot overlap with any other professional or field requirements. This is also expected to be distinct from your Advocacy Strategy and Implementation project, something you would not attend or participate in otherwise.

After attending the meeting/volunteering, each student will be expected to submit a paper that is at least 2 pages long that:

- a) Describes the experience;
- b) Discusses specific things that you learned from the experience; and
- c) Discusses your impressions about how accessible the experience would be for citizens or social work professionals who wish to engage in policy advocacy.

Each student will be expected to briefly discuss their observations in class on 4/28/14.

(DUE: 4/21/14, by 6:00 p.m.)

4) Advocacy strategy and implementation – 50 points

An important skill for professional social workers is the ability to effectively engage in policy advocacy. Over the course of the semester, each student is expected to develop and implement an advocacy project around a policy issue of professional or personal interest. The advocacy may be on a local, state, or national level. Students are encouraged to complete this project in pairs; however, individual projects are permitted. *This advocacy project cannot duplicate advocacy projects implemented for field requirements or for other courses.*

You are expected to identify a domestic policy issue at the local, state, or national level and develop and implement an advocacy strategy to strengthen policy in this area. This assignment focuses on your plan for bringing about policy change related to this issue.

Due Date	Points	Assignment
February 28, 2014, by 6:00 p.m. or before you begin your advocacy effort, whichever comes first	10	Proposed Advocacy strategy summary & Planning chart
Sessions 8 - 11		Advocacy tool share
May 5, 2014, by 6:00 p.m.	15	Final Advocacy strategy summary & Planning chart
	25	Final project implementation: Advocacy tools & project log
	up to 2	Extra credit: ISP State Policy Contest submission

Proposed advocacy strategy summary & planning chart:

Use the Advocacy Planning Chart distributed in class to plan your proposed advocacy effort. Attach the completed chart to a 3-4 page narrative, in which you:

- a) Using references, identify and describe briefly the broad policy issue or problem you will be addressing in this project and why there is a need for change regarding this issue;
- b) Make a clear statement of the specific policy change you seek, and how this change will impact practice, clients' lives, and social and economic justice;
- c) Justify the specific long-term, intermediate, and short-term goals you hope to achieve through your advocacy;
- d) Specify (including names, titles) the target(s) with authority over the issue that you seek to influence and explain why these person(s) are the appropriate target(s);
- e) Using course readings or other references, describe *and justify* each strategy and tactic you will be using; and
- f) Identify 3 advocacy tactics you will implement this semester, briefly describe how you plan to implement each tactic, and discuss why you think each tactic is appropriate for this advocacy effort.

Advocacy tool share:

For each advocacy tactic you select, you will develop at least one advocacy “tool” from the following list, for a total of three distinct tools:

- a) Talking points to be used in advocating your position;
- b) Fact sheet for a lawmaker;
- c) Op-ed;
- d) Testimony for an elected or appointed body;
- e) Letter to the editor;
- f) Letter to local, state, or national legislator;
- g) Press release;
- h) Radio or TV spot;
- i) Website, if accompanied by dissemination plan;
- j) Phone-banking guide (in-person or virtual);
- k) Coordination plan for a lobby day; or
- l) Other advocacy tools, if approved by course professor.

Between Sessions 8-11, each student is required to present a solid draft of at least one of your three advocacy tools to your fellow students in order to receive constructive feedback from them.

Final advocacy strategy summary & planning chart:

At the end of the semester, students are required to revise both their strategy summary and planning chart, incorporating the professor's feedback and reflecting any changes in the plan since the proposal was submitted.

Regardless of whether a student works individually or in pairs, each individual student must add the following to the end of the strategy summary document:

- g) Provide a multi-paragraph personal reflection of your experience with the project, including an analysis of your own competencies regarding policy advocacy.

Final project implementation: Advocacy tools & project log

Students are expected to develop and submit to the professor three distinct tools necessary for implementing your advocacy project.

At least two of these tools must be implemented through publication submission, presentation, or dissemination to lawmakers or the public. A log that provides evidence of implementation of each tool, along with the date(s) you implemented each tool, the location, and any key stakeholders that were present must be submitted.

Up to 1 extra credit point will be awarded per additional tool submitted for publication, presented, or publicly disseminated.

ISP State Policy Contest submission:

Up to 2 extra credit points will be awarded for following the guidelines for the 2014 ISP State Policy Contest (to be posted on Blackboard) and submitting your contest submission to both ISP and to the professor. This extra credit option requires full implementation of your project.