The University of Kansas  
School of Social Welfare  

Master Syllabus  

SW 846: Advanced Community and Advocacy Practice-Macro Practice Selective  

Semester, Year                                      Instructor Name  
Phone #                                           Office Hours, Place  

I. COURSE RATIONALE:  
Within the current social-political context of managing and implementing programs, the ability for social workers at all levels in the social service arena to mobilize community resources and advocate with and on behalf of clients is paramount. This course is proposed as a selective to provide students with further knowledge and skills in community and advocacy practice.  

This course is designed to build on the content of the Foundation Practice Course (Social Work 713) by further developing the theories, methods, and skills of community and policy practice. It builds on the "person in environment" perspective by focusing on the client's environment as a partner in practice. The course is designed to help students know and further develop the analytical and empirical skills needed to effectively manage and advocate with and on behalf of different human service communities including organizations, place and non-place based communities, and state and national level policy makers. Throughout the course, skill based exercises are presented to aid in understanding theoretical concepts.  

More specifically, this course is intended to accomplish the following.  

1. To provide a systematic and advanced overview of the theories and concepts of community and advocacy practice (theoretical base).  
2. To examine the methods, strategies, and principles of the multiple ways of intervening within the socio-political context (knowledge base).  
3. To develop advanced skills necessary to apply theory and knowledge to the needs of disadvantaged/minority populations (children, women, ethnic minorities, people who are poor, experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, etc.) as well as to the general population (skill base).  
4. To allow students to explore a personal philosophy and style of community and advocacy practice consistent with social work philosophy, ethnic/gender perspectives, values, and ethics (professional base).  

Individual instructors’ syllabi should be exactly the same as in the master syllabus.
II. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES:
Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Apply knowledge of the history and values pertinent to community and policy advocacy to the practice of macro-level intervention. (Reflects SWAAP Concentration Objectives 6, 9)

2. Demonstrate advanced skills in analyzing the social, political, and economic context of social work practice. (Reflects SWAAP Concentration Objectives 3, 6)

3. Apply skills in addressing the structural factors in American society that create adversity for oppressed groups. (Reflects SWAAP Concentration Objectives 7, 8, 9)

4. Apply advanced theoretical concepts, methods, approaches, and examples of community practice and advocacy. (Reflects SWAAP Concentration Objectives 6, 9)

5. Demonstrate the capacity to identify key actors and work with constituency groups on a variety of levels. (Reflects SWAAP Concentration Objectives 6, 9)

6. Demonstrate the ability to analyze power and influence within the political arena and determine the means to maximize support to address opposition and promote change. (Reflects SWAAP Concentration Objectives 6, 9)

7. Apply the principles, methods, and examples of macro-level needs and capacities assessment. (Reflects SWAAP Concentration Objectives 6, 9)

8. Implement strategies for policy practice that involve the individual, organizations, and communities in the change process. (Reflects SWAAP Concentration Objectives 6, 8, 9)

9. Demonstrate advanced skills in policy practice and community intervention including, community enrichment, social action, inter agency collaboration, coalition building and legislative and resource advocacy. (Reflects SWAAP Concentration Objectives 6, 9)

10. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate community and advocacy practice initiatives. (Reflects SWAAP Concentration Objectives 5, 6, 9)

11. Apply several strategies for analyzing/considering the unintended consequences of community and policy practice interventions. (Reflects SWAAP Concentration Objectives 3, 6, 9)

III. CURRICULUM THEMES:

1. **Strengths**
   Skills and knowledge that identify, tap into, and mobilize the strengths of communities and organizations to create productive exchange and achieve client system goals.

2. **Social and Economic Justice**
   Policy, organizational and community advocacy skills that promote opportunities for oppressed, stigmatized and marginalized populations to access and successfully negotiate
needed environmental resources, and that promote more just, humane and responsive policies, organizations, and communities.

3. **Diversity**
Skills that show respect, sensitivity and appreciation for populations of diversity and their contributions to societal well-being. Populations include those differentiated by race, ethnicity, culture, religion, spirituality, class, sexual orientation, age, gender, and disability. Community Practice skills will be developed in a culturally competent manner.

4. **Critical Perspective**
Skills focused on learning how to learn in the profession now and over a professional lifetime. They include:
   a. Critical examination of a selected number of theories, perspectives and models guiding and explaining practice.
   b. Critical examination of beliefs and assumptions maintaining unjust and oppressive social structures and social practices.
   c. Critical reflection on the student’s own practice, the professional knowledge-value assumptions that guide it, and the personal values, beliefs and biases that influence it for better and/or for worse.

**IV. LIBERAL ARTS PERSPECTIVE:**
The course draws on the liberal arts as one vast and rich source of learning. As a practice course, the effort is to apply relevant knowledge and values from all sources that could illumine and guide actions to achieve the profession’s social purpose. Thus students are supported and challenged to use their knowledge from courses on history, literature, social sciences and fine arts along with the knowledge gained from life experiences and the accumulating body of professional knowledge.

**V. PROFESSIONAL PURPOSE AND VALUES:**
A clear sense of professional purpose and the values embodied in its value system and code of ethics provide a necessary focus for selecting and using knowledge and perspectives from a rich array of learning resources, not least from the diverse client populations served by the profession. This clarity is at the heart of the course’s fundamental task of translating broad statements of professional purpose and values as reflected in the school’s mission statement and curriculum themes into specific purposeful practice acts.

**VI. PREPARATION FOR PRACTICE WITH DIVERSE POPULATIONS:**
This course will focus on special populations through readings and discussion about how institutional racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism and ableism are imbedded in our organizational structures, policies and communities. The importance of both place communities and community of identification in enhancing the well-being of special populations will also be included throughout the course. These topics will support the curriculum themes of social and economic justice and diversity, in order for students to develop the skills for culturally competent practice.
VII. TOPICS- MUST BE COVERED:

- **Advocacy in Human Service Organizations**
  - Inter-organizational advocacy
  - Intra-organizational advocacy
  - Social Work and Advocacy

- **Economic, Political, Organizational, and Social Power**
  - Understanding & analyzing power
  - Direct & indirect power
  - Using power to influence change

- **Identifying “Problems” & Choosing Issues**
  - Service gap analysis
  - Organizational analysis
  - Social problem analysis

- **Empowerment/Strengths and Social Change**
  - Ethical dilemmas
  - The role of social work
  - Feminist strategies

- **Skills, Tactics & Techniques of Community Practice**
  - The human service system
  - Persuasion, building trust
  - Collective action

- **Case Studies in Community Practice/Change**
  - What works/What doesn’t
  - Intra-organizational advocacy

- **Policy Research, Policy Making & Advocacy**
  - Strategies for influencing politicians
  - Identifying options & developing proposals
  - University collaborations
  - Policy analysis

- **Community Organizing, Electoral Politics & Coalitions**
  - Building agendas
  - Mobilization
  - Leadership development
  - Membership & relationship building

Individual instructors’ syllabi should provide a topical outline for the course and provide adequate information to determine where and when the required topics are being covered.
VIII. RECOMMENDED READINGS:
A. If a text (or texts) is recommended for the course, the full reference needs to be included.
B. For master syllabi, if there are certain readings that have been agreed on as “musts” please indicate by putting in a separate section.
C. For master syllabi additional resources (articles and books) should be included in a separate section. This will provide others with resources to develop their course

Recommended Texts:

Individual instructors must either select one of the texts listed or obtain approval from the faculty mentor for an alternative text

Required Readings:


**Additional Resources:**


Sparks, E. (1996). The challenges facing community health centers in the 1990s: A voice from the inner city. In M.B. Lykes, A. Banuazizi, R. Liem & M. Morris (Eds.),


For individual syllabus, remove the word “RECOMMENDED.” In addition individual syllabi need to specify which readings are required and which are recommended. The entire list of “additional resources” does not need to be included in individual syllabi.

IX. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENTS:
The overarching theme of the School is practice-centeredness. Therefore all assignments should be related to current practice areas.

A. Policy Brief for Lawmakers
Background
One method for advocating on a given social/political issue is to present research and data in the form of a policy brief, usually in the form of a 1-2 page fact sheet or position paper that provides evidence to support a particular position. A policy brief can provide lawmakers and their staff with valuable information about an issue that can help them justify their vote. Staff members and legislative committees often prepare policy briefs or fact sheets for lawmakers on particular issues.

Brevity and clarity are important in writing an effective policy brief. Usually, lawmakers or their staff are working on numerous issues simultaneously and receive conflicting information on key issues. Most are unlikely to read anything that is long or complicated. Many reports from lobbyists, advocates or community groups include an executive summary that resembles a policy brief. The executive summary is succinct and highlights the key points for the benefit of government officials and their staff (as well as the media).

The Assignment
Choose a federal (or state) social welfare policy issue of concern to social workers. Obtain as much relevant information about the issue as necessary for you to gain a
thorough understanding of the key issues involved (i.e., be able to analyze and summarize the issue, the strengths & weaknesses of current or pending legislation directed toward alleviating the problem).

Prepare a typed policy brief of no more than two (2) pages which reflects the:

- Background of the issue
- Current legislative status (if applicable)
- Legislative options or possible policy alternatives
- Your specific recommendations

Your policy brief should be clear about the issue you are discussing. Define the issue in the beginning of your paper and only present background information that is necessary—that which provides context for the issue. Construct your policy brief from the general to the specific, in other words, build your framework and then fill in the details. Your paper will be more effective if you avoid slang or jargon and instead use common language. If you are presenting a position based on values, try to use data or facts to support your position.

The key to a successful and persuasive policy brief is to be concise. As you complete this assignment, think of yourself as someone with expert knowledge in an advisory position to state or federal lawmakers on this issue. Your policy brief should reflect your responsibility to educate and make recommendations regarding a social welfare policy issue to a federal/state social welfare policy committee. (Educational Outcomes 2,4,5,6,7)

Adapted from E.A. Segal & S. Brzuzy, Social Welfare Policy, Programs, & Practice (1998).

B. Analyzing a Social Service System

The intent of this assignment is to provide the opportunity for students to analyze a social service system in any community. Specifically, students should be able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the system and articulate a plan for change to enhance services. Students can work individually or in groups. The assignment can be a final paper, or small papers throughout the semester. The assignment should include the following topics:

1. Who is the target population?
2. Population Needs- paying attention to gender and ethnic considerations
3. What is the continuum of need?
4. What are the formal services in place?
5. What are the informal services in place?
6. How do the services meet or match the identified needs of the population? Are there gaps?
7. How do the formal services function together or separately? Is there duplication of services?
8. One-stop shopping?
How does the target population move through the service system, does the system create barriers?
Are there turf battles that influence services?
8. Who are the key stakeholders in the service system?
9. Which legislators might support or oppose change?
10. Does the system work for the population? Why or why not?
11. Recommendations for change.

An example could be considering the system in Lawrence designed to address “homelessness”. Currently, there is no year round 24 hour emergency shelter. The shelter that does exist operates from October to April and often excludes people through admissions screening. People are not well served. What might a plan for change be? Could include but not be limited to the creation of a new shelter, advocating for change in the existing shelter, or creating other housing opportunities for people. (Educational Outcome 1,2,3,5,6,7,8,9,10)

C. Examining the unintended consequences of policy/community change
This assignment is designed to provide students the opportunity to apply skills in analysis of the change process. This includes the ability to determine the unintended consequences of change. In short paper students should describe an organizational, political or community policy that has been implemented in the past 2 years. The paper should consider, the intent of the change, the target of change, and the consequences of the change. (Educational Outcome 3,10,11)

D. Reaction to observation/participation in community meeting
This assignment is intended to provide students the opportunity to observe and reflect on the skills and processes of community meetings. Students should attend a community meeting and in a short paper describe the purpose of the meeting, the process of the meeting, the skills needed to facilitate the meeting and the outcome of the meeting. (Educational Outcome 3,5,6)

Evaluation
Students will be evaluated based on the written assignments and class participation. The instructor will provide grading criteria for each assignment on first day of class.

Instructors will be evaluated by students at two points during the semester (middle and end).

GRADING
A. What Grades Mean  (plus and minuses are assigned at instructors’ discretion)
A = Exceptional work: outstanding: this grade will be assigned to work that shows extensive use of the literature as well as wide use of concrete examples from practice.
B = Fully meets graduate standards: this grade will be assigned to work in which all aspects of assignments are completed satisfactorily, showing a combination of accurate use of theory and principles, and precise descriptions of practice.

C = Overall performance is unsatisfactory, below graduate standards, although all aspects of assignments were completed.

F = Failure: overall quality of work is unsatisfactory, or some aspect of assignments not done.

**Incomplete grades.** A temporary grade of Incomplete may be assigned to a student who, for a reason beyond the student’s control, has been unable to complete the required work in a course on time. It is the student’s responsibility to request an Incomplete from the instructor. A request signed by the student and the faculty member must be on file when grades are submitted. A student may not enroll in a course sequential to one in which he or she has an I or F letter grade. An incomplete not removed by the end of the next semester will be changed to an F.

The Master syllabi should specify:

B. **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

The attendance policy should reflect observance of religious holidays and explicitly spell out the instructor’s policy, including if attendance will impact the overall grade and if it is considered, the specific criteria that will be used. For example: Attendance/participation will affect the final grade. Any student missing more than 2 classes (or the accumulation of hours equal to two classes) will be referred to the Associate Dean. If you miss 3 classes you will not pass this course. Points are deducted for missing class and coming to class late (3 pts. for each absence).

Individual instructors’ syllabi should specify the following:

C. The weighting of each assignment in the course and the dates by which they are done.

C. For every assignment, explain the standards used for grading.

D. If class participation is part of the grade indicate what this means. For example, if 10 points are awarded for class participation, one point will be deducted for every class missed.

E. Indicate the policy on late assignments, e.g., they are not accepted and treated as an “F” grade or the grade is reduced by ___ for each day, week, etc.

F. Indicate how final grades will be determined

**XI. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Students who have special educational needs of any kind, including those related to learning disabilities, other disabilities, English as a second language should discuss necessary accommodations with the instructor within the first two sessions of the course.
The university and School of Social Welfare are committed to provide supportive programs and accommodations to assist students who have special learning needs to successfully meet course expectations. In particular, students who feel that they have a disability that may require accommodation should advise the instructor of such disability and desired accommodation as soon as one obtains written documentation of the disability. The instructor will work with the student and the office of Services for Students with Disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations.

Please notify the instructor if your religious observances conflict with class or due dates for class assignments so we can make appropriate arrangements.

XII. RECORDING AND SHARING RECORDINGS OF LECTURES
Course materials prepared by the instructor, together with the content of all lectures and review sessions presented by the instructor are the property of the instructor. Video and audio recording of lectures and review sessions without the consent of the instructor is prohibited. On request, the instructor will usually grant permission for students to audio tape lectures, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructor, recordings of lectures and review sessions may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

XIII. HIPAA REGULATIONS
The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requires that any personal information that may identify a person must be removed to protect confidentiality. Confidentiality applies to both classroom discussions and to written work. Please follow these simple, yet essential guidelines:

- Always disguise the name and other personal identifying information when you speak and write about a person, following the guidelines established by HIPAA.
- If writing in great detail about a client, ask permission from the client.
- Share nothing about specific clients, agencies or other students outside of the classroom.

Any information shared with the class/instructor will be confidential, within the limits defined by the Code of Ethics and state guidelines.

Individual instructors’ syllabi should be exactly the same as in the master syllabus.

XIV. INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY:
Provide students with information on how to see and/or reach you.
XV. INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY:

In the event of inclement weather students should call

Lawrence: the University (785) 864-SNOW, or if hearing impaired and have
TTY/TDD equipment, (800) 766-3777

Edwards Campus: (913) 897-8499
KCKCC Campus: (913) 334-1100
to determine if classes have been cancelled. Class will be held if classes have not been
cancelled, and students should contact the instructor if weather or driving conditions
make it impossible for them to get to class.