

**The University of Tennessee
College of Social Work**

SW 550 Community Practice and Political Social Work

Class: **Thursdays 3:40-6:20**
Office Hrs.: **Tuesday, 5:00-6:00,**
 Thursday, 2:30-3:30
 and by appointment

Instructor: **Cynthia Rocha, Ph.D**
Phone: **974-7513 (office)**
 470-9174 (home)

Code of Conduct

It is the student's responsibility to have read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct code that is in the College of Social Work MSSW Handbook (www.csw.utk.edu).

Honor Statement:

An essential feature of the University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity (Hilltopics. 2001).

Disability Services:

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 191 Hoskins Library, (865) 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Course Description:

This course focuses on current management and community practice trends as they impact the delivery of human services and the requisite knowledge and problem solving skills needed to address them. Students will analyze the extent to which such trends are transforming the delivery of human services. This course will focus on the trends in community practice and political social work.

Students will analyze community and political problems and develop and evaluate strategies to resolve such problems. The course provides students with the opportunity to engage in political/community change efforts through the problem solving process. Invited speakers will provide advanced discussion of community and political practice, and a mandatory trip to the state capitol will be used to enhance understanding of the political process of lobbying, testifying, and educating public officials about issues of importance to social workers.

This course is being taught under the guidelines of the University's honor code. Refer to [Hilltopics](#).

Course Rationale:

Human service organizations exist to protect and promote the welfare of the people they serve. These organizations accomplish this through the efforts and influence of multiple interest groups, both internal and external; as well, they are confronted by profound changes in today's increasingly complex society. Social workers at all organizational levels of decision making must be aware of these significant trends and changes and demonstrate the capacity to enlist others within their organizations and the task environment to effectively respond to such changes while at the same time serving the best interests of clients.

Course Objectives:

Upon the completion of the course, students are expected to:

- 1) identify and evaluate current trends and issues in political and community practice in social work.
- 2) gain advanced knowledge in political social work, including lobby and educating legislators on topics of importance to social workers;
- 3) describe factors related to resistance to change in community practice and ways in which to overcome such resistance;
- 4) gain advanced knowledge and skills in implementing organizational/community change;
- 5) develop practice skills in influencing the task environment through task groups and coalitions;
- 6) develop skills in participating in the political process at the state level.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:

This course will utilize a variety of methods to facilitate the learning process. These include the use of lectures, class discussions, simulations, student presentations, case studies, and small group discussion. Students are expected to attend classes on a regular basis and to actively participate in all class discussions and exercises.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Community Practice Paper 35%.
2. Political Social Work paper. 35%
3. Reading Summaries, 25%
4. Class/Trip Participation, 5%

Readings and Required Texts

A readings packet is available from the instructor, although it is suggested that students purchase Burkey - People first , which should be available at the bookstore. This book is a good source for community development and there are several chapters out of it used in this course.

**Criteria for Assignments in
SW550, Advanced Seminar in Management and Community Practice**

1. Community Practice Paper (35% of total grade) 7-10 pages, typed, double-spaced

The Community Practice paper should provide an in depth understanding of a specific topic related to Community-based practice. Topics may include how to effectively perform specific methods (eg. empowerment practice or participatory methods in various areas of social work, organizing, development, administration, supervision, etc.); or it can focus on a specific community practice area. For example, you might want to follow a debate in the literature or discuss best practices described in the literature for a specific area of organizing; community, neighborhood, or international development; or social planning. One way to organize this is to see what other disciplines are doing (eg. Urban planning literature, sociology).

Whatever you choose, make sure that you follow the criteria below:

- a. Introduce your paper. Describe the thesis of your paper. What are you planning to do? What argument will you propose, or what are you going to educate your reader about? Outline what you are going to do. Make sure you provide a framework for the paper. (20 Pts.)
- b. What does the literature say regarding your topic? Analyze your topic given your argument or thesis using the literature to back you up. (40 pts.)
- c. Conclusion, integration, implications, etc. What s it all mean? (10 pts.)
- d. From what academic discipline does the literature come? (10 pts.)
- e. Make sure you use appropriate headings, subheadings, APA style, etc. (10 pts.)
- f. Give a 5-10 minute presentation providing a brief synopsis of what you learned. (10 pts.)

2. Political Social Work paper. (worth 35% of the total grade). 7-10 pages, typed double-spaced

This paper is very open. Educate yourself and the class on some topic in political social work. Some examples might include 1) How much lobbying can a 501(c)(3) do before they lose their status? What law governs this policy? 2) Do a literature review on running for political office. 3) How to effectively build a coalition for a specific type of political social change effort. 4) A historical analysis on some issue that passed into law in depth analysis of the process and implementation of the lobbying efforts that went into getting the law passed. What worked, didn't work, etc.

Again, write this as a conceptual paper with:

- a. Introduction the issue that you will analyze (10 pts.),
- b. Provide a framework, thesis, or hypothesis - what will you argue in this paper? (15 pts.)
- b. Literature review of your issue and analysis of topic (35 pts.)
- c. Conclusions and implications of your findings (15 pts.)
- d. Headings for each part of the framework, APA style, page numbers, etc. (15 pts.)
- e. Give a 5-10 minute presentation providing a brief synopsis of what you learned. (10 pts.)

Or you may choose to do an international comparison of a U.S. Policy

Compare a major social program or policy internationally. You may choose to compare two or more similar countries with the U.S. Or you may want to compare third world with first world

countries. You choose the type of comparison you wish as long as the U.S. is one of the countries analyzed, and you have a sound rationale for doing so. Use the criteria below.

- a. What is the problem or policy you wish to address. Introduce to the reader (10%).
- b. Describe your framework that you will use to analyze the chosen policy or problem. What is your thesis, hypothesis or argument? (15%)
- c. What are the countries being analyzed? Why did you choose these countries (you should have a reason)? What is the social policy or program you will compare? Give a reasonable explanation why comparing this policy with these countries makes sense and adds to our understanding (15%).
- d. Analyze in depth the policy or programs in the chosen countries. (25%)
- e. What are the implications of your findings? (15%)
- f. Use APA style and make appropriate use of headings and sub-headings. (10%)
- e. Give a 5-10 minute presentation providing a brief synopsis of what you learned. (10 pts.)

Grading Scale

A =	90-100
B+=	87-89
B=	80-86
C+=	77-79
C=	70-76
D+=	67-69
D=	60-66
F=	<60

COURSE CALENDAR:

Week 1

Course Overview

Emerging Issues in Communities and Organizations
 Community Practice, Development and Organizing
 Social Marketing
 Privatization, Decentralization
 Political Social Work and Legislative Advocacy
 Diversity and ethical considerations in contemporary Social Work
 Announcements and Discussion:
 Field Trip to Capitol
 Guest Speaker on Grassroots Campaigns

Week 2

Topic: Trends: The Changing American Family

Readings:

Zill & Nord (1994). Running in Place: How American Families are Faring in a Changing Economy and Individualistic society. Washington DC: Child Trends. Chapter one.

Rocha, C. (1997) The Working Poor. In Richard L. Edwards (Ed.) Encyclopedia of Social Work, 19th Edition, 1997 Supplement.

O'hare, W. (2002). Tracking the trends in low-income working families. *Population Today*, 30 (6), 1-3.

Week 3:**Trends in Communities and democratic participation**

Readings:

Steyaert, J. (2002). Inequality and the digital divide. Chapter 16 in *Advocacy, Activism and the Internet*

Campfens, (1997). *International Review of community Development*

Week 4:**Community Practice Models**

Readings:

Weil & Gamble (1995) *Community Practice Models*

Johnson (1998). *The Revitalization of community Practice.*

Shragge (1993). *Community Economic Development: Chapter one: Politics*

Week 5:**Community Development**

Readings:

Halpern, (1993). *Neighborhood-based initiatives to address poverty.*

Burkey - *People first: What is Development.*

Uehara et al., (1996). *Toward a value-based approach to multicultural social work research.* *Social Work*, 41 (6), 613-622.

Week 6:**Community Organizing and Participation**

Readings:

Rivera, Erlich & Zippay (1994). *Should Today's community organizer use the tactics handed down from earlier generations?*

Chetkov-Yanoov (1986). *Participation as a means to community cooperation*

Shillington, Dotson & Faulkner (1994). *Should only African-American community organizers work in African American neighborhoods?* In M. Austin and J. Lowe (eds.) Controversial Issues in

communities and Organizations. Mass: Allyn and Bacon.

Week 7- Out of Town

**Week 8:
Decentralization and Participation**

Readings:

Burkey. Self-reliant participatory development

Azzarto & Smith (1994) Should health and human services be decentralized?

Latting & Gummer (1994). Can administrative controls and pressure for efficiency and effectiveness be balanced with the staff's demand for decentralization and participation?

**Week 9:
Empowerment Practice**

Readings:

Gutierrez, Glen, & Delois (1995) The organizational context of empowerment practice.

Burkey (1993). Agents of Change

Rose, S.M. (2000). Reflections on Empowerment-Based Practice. Social Work, 45(5), 403-412.

Week 10, Spring Break

**Week 11:
Political Social Work-Computers, Coalitions and Watchdog Orgs.**

Readings:

Richan, (1996) Lobbying in the information age.

Jansson (2003). Developing and using power. Chapter 9 in *Becoming an Effective Policy Advocate*.

**Week 12:
Influencing Legislative Bodies**

Readings:

Richan (1996). Lobbying one on one.

Jansson (2003). Developing Political Strategy. Chapter 10, *Becoming an Effective Policy Advocate*.

Raffa, (2000). Advocacy: Oh Yes, You Can... *The Non Profit Quarterly*, 7 (2).
www.tsne.org/print/158.html

**Week 13: Marketing your Issue - Reaching the Public
Grassroots Political Campaigns**

Readings:

Hardcastle, Wenocur & Powers (1997). Using Social marking.

Schwartz (2002) Net Activism, 2001. How citizens use the internet. In Chapter 7, Advocacy, Activism, and the Internet.

Related Readings

Bradshaw & Gutierrez. (1994). Toward a hybrid model for effective organizing in communities

- of color. Journal of Community Practice, 1(1), 25-41.
- Daley, J. & Wong, P. (1994). Community development with emerging ethnic communities. Journal of Community Practice. 1(1), 9-24.
- Hoff, M. & McNutt, J. (1994). The Global Environmental Crisis: Implications for Social Welfare and Social Work.
- Jansson, B. & Smith, S. (1996). Articulating a New nationalism@ in American social policy. Social Work, 41(5), 441-450.
- Hoff, M. & Rogge, M. (1996). Everything that rises must converge: Developing a social work response to environmental injustice. Journal of Progressive Human Services.
- Hughes, M & Fancett, s. (1996). The challenge of information technology. Computers in Human Services, 13(1).
- Jamieson, D. & O=mar, J. (1991). Managing Workforce 2000; Gaining the Diversity Advantage.
- Lewis, H. (1988). Ethics and the managing of service effectiveness is social welfare. Administration in Social Work, 11(4), 271-284.
- Miller, J. Strategies for Immigration Control: An International Comparison. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Pub.
- NASW Delegate Assembly (1996). International Policy on Human Rights. Social Work Speaks. Policy Statement, Washington DC: NASW Press.
- NASW Delegate Assembly (1996). Immigrants and Refugees. Social Work Speaks. Policy Statement, Washington DC: NASW Press.
- Price, L. (1987). Global neighborhoods. Social Development Issues, 11(1), 49-55.
- Rifkin, J. (1995). The End of Work. New York: Putnam. 249-273
- Rocha, C. (1996). Use of health insurance in county funded clinics: Issues for health care reform. Health and Social Work, 21(1), 16-22.
- Tully, Craig & Nugent (1994). Should only gay and lesbian community organizers operate in gay and lesbian communities? In M. Austin and J. Lowe (eds.) Controversial Issues in communities and Organizations. Mass: Allyn and Bacon.
- Verkaar, E. (1996). The development of a computerized information system for integrated home care in the Netherlands. Computers in Human Services, 13(1).