Instructor Name: Roberta Gassman MSSW, Senior Fellow  
Class Day & Time: Thursdays, 10:00am-noon, room 106, Social Work Building  
Office Hours: most Thursdays, 12:15-1:00pm, and by appointment; Room 213, Social Work Building, 1350 University Avenue, Madison, WI 53706-1510  
Phone Number: 608-263-4574  
E-mail: rgassman@wisc.edu

FOR CLASS ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS & UPDATES, PLEASE CHECK THE “NEWS” SECTION OF OUR LEARN@UW CLASS SITE REGULARLY. IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT ASSIGNMENTS, POSSIBLE ROOM CHANGES AND OTHER ASPECTS OF CLASS LOGISTICS WILL BE POSTED HERE.

I. Course Overview and Objectives

This advanced graduate elective course will address political advocacy strategies in public policy and government settings. The focus of the course is on the preparation of social workers and those seeking to impact public policy and social change to improve the social and economic well-being of individuals, families, communities and systems. Students in this course will examine the knowledge and political skills, strategies, techniques and actions that influence elected officials and policy makers and the policies, practices, programs, services and resources they establish for people in need through local, state and federal units of government.

Students will be exposed to current social and economic policy challenges, such as the well-being of children and families, especially those of color or living in poverty, people with disabilities, wage inequality and economic security for the underemployed and unemployed, LGBT rights and the rights and safety of women, and the real-world strategies now being advanced to address these challenges in the political arena.

The course will involve a combination of the following:

- interactive presentations and discussion requiring active student preparation and participation;
- visits from prominent advocates, community and state leaders, elected officials and policy makers;
• individual written assignments;
• a visit to the state Capitol;
• group role plays giving students experience in the use of political advocacy and evidence-based data to impact policies and programs serving vulnerable populations.

Using the major state and local units of government surrounding the University as a rich learning environment, students will have the opportunity to see how an idea becomes a law or policy and is implemented and the related impacts of data, researchers, media, citizens, coalitions, elections, advocates, the courts and philanthropic organizations on policy implementation and social change. Students will follow public meetings, advocacy strategies and media coverage and will gain experience in action planning to impact change including the preparation of written communications such as an op-ed piece and a memo to a candidate for executive office.

II. **Course Content** (more information about course readings and assignments is addressed later in sections III. and IV. of this syllabus)

**Week 1: Thursday, September 3**

**Topics: Introductions and Course Overview**

How are political systems and public policy shaped? How do the political environment and public policy impact the economic status and well-being of children, families, vulnerable populations and communities? What are the values of social change? What strategies and techniques can impact public policy and social change? What are the roles of human services practitioners and policy makers in impacting public policy and advancing social change?

Please be prepared to briefly (1-2 minutes) introduce yourself to the class including your educational background, professional experience, why you are in this class and identify a current local, state or national public policy that impacts a vulnerable population, concerns you and why.

**Required Readings:**

• Section 6.04 Social and Political Action (d) and Preamble to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics as revised by the 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly:


- Hoefer, pages 1-11, 220-227
- Amidei, pages, 3-16

No “blog” assignment or posted news article due today.

**Week 2: Thursday, September 10**

**Topics: Impacting Political Systems and Policy for Social Change Overview**

What are the general processes of federal, state and local legislative change? How does an idea become a bill and how does a bill become a law? What are the different roles and responsibilities of the executive and legislative branches, the non-partisan legislative and executive agencies and appointed administrative officials? What impacts elected officials and their appointees and what are the roles of data, advocacy and media coverage? What gets addressed in elections and what happens next? What’s in the executive budget and State of the State and State of the Union addresses? As a case study, a look at how business leaders might impact social change.

**Required Readings:**

- Amidei, pages 17-23


- Office of Management and Budget, The White House, *The President’s Budget for Fiscal Year 2016* (please read page 1 and skim the rest):

https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget

- Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker’s 2015 State of the State Address (please skim):

- President Barack Obama’s 2015 State of the Union Address (please skim):

- Bio for Tom Boldt, CEO, Boldt Construction:
  http://www.theboldtcompany.com/leadership/

“Blog” question: For a policy issue that you care about, could you be most successful trying to impact it on the local, state, and/or federal level/s? How and why?

Guest speaker: Tom Boldt, CEO, Boldt Construction, supporter of CAP Services, Inc. and other non-profits, on strategies for & benefits of impacting elected officials and policy makers.

**Week 3: Thursday, September 17**

**Topics: The Role of Advocates in Impacting Policy and Social Change, Part I**

How does information change attitudes and behavior? What influences people to organize and take action on behalf of change? How do citizens, advocates, interest groups, stakeholders and lobbyists impact elected officials and public policy?

**Required Readings:**

- King, Coretta Scott, 1983, *The Words of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, Newmarket Press, New York, New York, pages 68-79 (on Learn@UW course site)


- Amidei, pages 62-68

- Biography of State Representative Chris Taylor:
  http://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/taylor/Pages/Biography.aspx

“Blog” question: In terms of promoting the economic well-being of a vulnerable population
that you care about, what might be three ways in which citizens could be effective advocates with elected officials and policy makers and what kind of data would be particularly persuasive and why?

**Guest speaker:** State Representative Chris Taylor on data and strategies that impact elected officials and policy makers.

**Week 4: Thursday, September 24**

**Topics: The Role of the Media and Social Media in Influencing Opinion Leaders, Public Policy and Social Change**

What is the impact of media coverage on the public, elected officials and policy makers and what strategies are important in working with the media, especially in the age of social media and the Internet, and a look at best practices for writing effective op-ed pieces.

**Required Readings:**

- Hoefer, pages 150-179
- Amidei, pages 53-57
- Bobo, Kim, Kendall, Jackie, Max, Steve, *Organizing for Social Change*, 2010, from Chapter 14, pages 159-173, *Using the Media*, (on Learn@UW course site)
- New York Times, *USA Today Goes Viral*, July 13, 2014:  
  [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/14/business/media/usa-today-goes-viral.html?_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/14/business/media/usa-today-goes-viral.html?_r=0)
- *How to Write an Op-Ed Article*, Duke University Office of News and Communications, November, 2013:  
  [http://newsoffice.duke.edu/duke_resources/oped](http://newsoffice.duke.edu/duke_resources/oped)
- *Want to Write an Op-Ed Piece?* Fairleigh Dickinson University, 2013:  
  [http://people.emich.edu/aross15/math110/socsec/opinion/fdu.html](http://people.emich.edu/aross15/math110/socsec/opinion/fdu.html)
Bio of Neil Heinen, Editorial Director, WISC-TV and Madison Magazine:


DAIS celebrates first anniversary of Mortenson Family Center for Hope and Safety, Neil Heinen editorial, Channel 3000, August 6, 2015:


“Blog” question: Selecting a public policy issue that you care about and that impacts a vulnerable population, how has that issue been framed in the media and how has this impacted your view of the issue?

Guest speaker: Neil Heinen, Editorial Director, WISC-TV and Madison Magazine, on strategies for working with the media to raise public awareness on issues related to vulnerable populations.

Week 5: Thursday, October 1

Topics: The Role of Academics, Think Tanks and Philanthropic Organizations in Impacting Policy and Social Change

A look at the role of evidence-based data and strategies for impacting elected officials and policy makers with a focus on economic security for low wage, underemployed and unemployed workers.

Required Readings:

- COWS, Center on Wisconsin Strategy, February, 2014, Pulling Apart2014 – Focus on Wisconsin’s 1 Percent:

- COWS, Center on Wisconsin Strategy, October, 2014, Raise the Floor Wisconsin – Minimum Wage Edition:

- Bandow, Doug, CATO Institute, April 9, 2013, Raising Minimum Wage Will Hurt More than Help:
  http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/raising-minimum-wage-will-hurt-more-help
Urban Institute, 2008, *Beyond Ideology, Politics and Guesswork: The Case for Evidence-Based Policy* (on Learn@UW course site)


Orzag, Peter, Office of Management and Budget Director, June 8, 2009, *Building Rigorous Evidence to Drive Policy* (on Learn@UW course site)

Bio for Dr. Laura Dresser:

http://www.cows.org/staff-page/laura-dresser

“Blog” question: What kind of data might assist national and state political leaders in considering the complex issue of creating more economic and family stability for low wage workers, including raising the minimum wage, and why?

**Guest speaker:** Laura Dresser, Ph.D., Associate Director, Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS), on the role of research and data in impacting policies and outcomes for low wage workers and their families.

**Week 6: Thursday, October 8 (Written Policy Advocacy Reflection Due Today)**

**Topics:** The Role of Advocates in Impacting Policy and Social Change, Part 2

A deeper look at how advocates impact public policy with a focus on advancing the safety of women.

**Required Readings:**

- Hoefer, Chapter 3, pages 43-61
- Amidei, pages 70-71, 78, 93-94
http://www.dawninfo.org/co/tools/oldertools/Advocacy_Bill_Becomes_Law.cfm

- Bio for Patti Seger, Executive Director, End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin:

**“Blog” question**: In terms of promoting the well-being of women and decreasing incidents of domestic violence against women, how might victims of domestic abuse be persuasive advocates with elected officials and policy makers and why?

**Guest speaker**: Patti Seger, Executive Director, End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin, on strategies for impacting elected officials and policy makers.

**Week 7: Thursday, October 15 (Topic and position that you will address in your op-ed piece, memo to a candidate and action plan due today)**

THE CLASS MEETS TODAY IN THE STATE CAPITOL – more information about the logistics for this class, including meeting rooms, will be announced later in the semester and addressed in the “News” section of our Learn@UW class site.

**Topics: Government in Action: A Visit to the State Capitol**

Depending upon final scheduling of fall state legislative meetings, I hope to have us attend and observe a meeting of one of the Speaker’s new task forces or a related legislative standing committee meeting at 10:00am in the State Capitol. These meetings and hearing rooms for the meetings will not be officially announced until a little later during our semester.

If there is not an appropriate legislative task force or standing committee meeting at 10:00am, Ron Hunt, Deputy Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, will address our class on their department’s strategies for serving and improving the well-being of Wisconsin’s children and families and what citizen strategies are most successful in impacting elected officials and policy makers.

At approximately 11:00am, we will have a presentation by and discussion with Terry Anderson, Director of the Wisconsin Legislative Council, who will address the role the Legislative Council plays in studying state needs and public policies and advancing new legislation.

All students must dress appropriately for these meetings – not fancy, but professional, i.e., no jeans. Also, once our schedule is set, out of respect for our speakers and committee members and to not be disruptive to their work, it will be important to please be on time.
Required Readings:

- Amidei, page 77
- Speaker Robin Vos, Speaker Vos Creates Three Bipartisan Task Forces, August 4, 2015:
  [http://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/vos/pressreleases/Pages/Speaker%20Vos%20Creates%20Three%20Bipartisan%20Task%20Forces.aspx](http://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/vos/pressreleases/Pages/Speaker%20Vos%20Creates%20Three%20Bipartisan%20Task%20Forces.aspx)
- Bio of Terry Anderson, Director, Wisconsin Legislative Council:
  [https://www.linkedin.com/pub/terry-anderson/23/9a/ab](https://www.linkedin.com/pub/terry-anderson/23/9a/ab)
- About the Wisconsin Legislative Council:
  [http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lc](http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lc)
- Some additional reading may be added after we know which legislative task force or committee meeting or hearing we may be attending this day at the Capitol. For example, Wisconsin Legislative Council attorneys will be staffing the Speaker’s three new task forces (the Speaker’s Task Force on Alzheimer’s and Dementia, the Speaker’s Task Force on Urban Education, and, the Speaker’s Task Force on Youth Workforce Readiness) and they will prepare background memos for the task force members to assist them with their deliberations. Such a memo, when available, would be helpful reading for our class, as would descriptions of the Department of Children and Families’ newly funded initiatives.
- Bio of Ron Hunt, Deputy Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Children and Families:

“Blog” question: Pick one of the Speaker’s three task force topics which is of interest to you. Given what you know about that topic and see in the media on this issue, if you were an impacted family member or agency professional working on this issue, what might be two recommendations you would like to advance to the task force and why?

Speaker: Terry Anderson, Director, Wisconsin Legislative Council, on the role the Wisconsin Legislative Council plays in advancing new legislation and possibly Ron Hunt, Deputy Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, on strategies for serving and improving the well-being of Wisconsin’s children and families.

Week 8: Thursday, October 22

Topics: Coalitions and Community Building
The power of coalitions and public/private partnerships for community building and advancing strong communities and social change.

**Required Readings:**

- Amidei, pages 50 – 53


- *Governing Wisconsin*, from the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau, *Lobbying in Wisconsin: What Do Lobbyists Do and How Are They Regulated in Wisconsin* (on Learn@UW course site)

- Downtown Madison Inc., agenda:
  
  [http://www.downtownmadison.org/media/2015_DMI_Civic_Agenda.pdf](http://www.downtownmadison.org/media/2015_DMI_Civic_Agenda.pdf)

- Downtown Madison, Inc. Advocacy:
  
  [http://www.downtownmadison.org/advocacy](http://www.downtownmadison.org/advocacy)

- *Susan Schmitz: Madison needs standards for acceptable behavior Downtown, Wisconsin State Journal*, August 11, 2015:
  

- Bio of Susan Schmitz, President, Downtown Madison, Inc. (on Learn@UW course site)

**“Blog” question:** What might be some of the benefits and challenges of working in coalitions on behalf of a strong downtown and why?

**Guest speaker:** Susan Schmitz, President, Downtown Madison, Inc., on community building through working with local leaders and government officials for a strong downtown.
Week 9: Thursday, October 29 (Op-ed piece due today)

Topics: Presenting Information Effectively

An examination of strategies for presenting information effectively in advocacy settings particularly related to improving the well-being of children, the status of minority children and child care policy, and a look at best practices for writing policy memos.

Required Readings:

- Hoefer, pages 133-150
- Amidei, pages 72-73
  

- National Association of Social Workers Policy Statements, 2015-2017, 10th Edition, Early Childhood Care and Services, NASW Press, Washington, DC, pages 82-84 (on Learn@UW course site)

- Policy Memo Writing Tips, Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, 2015:
  

- MIT, Writing Effective Policy Memos, 2004:
  

- Policy Memo, Writing Studio, Thompson Writing Program, Duke University:
  

- Mission of the Wisconsin Council on Children & Families:
  
  

- Biography of Ken Taylor, Director, Wisconsin Council on Children & Families (on Learn@UW course site)

- Race for Results: Wisconsin’s Need to Reduce Racial Disparities, WisKids Count Policy Brief, Fall 2014, Wisconsin Council on Children & Families:
  
  [http://www.wccf.org/assets/RaceForResults.pdf](http://www.wccf.org/assets/RaceForResults.pdf)

- Race to Equity: A Baseline Report on the State of Racial Disparities in Dane County, Wisconsin Council on Children & Families, 2013 (please read overview, pages 3-5, and skim the rest):
  

“Blog” question: Reflecting on this week’s readings, what surprises you the most about how issues related to the well-being of children are presented and why?

**Guest speaker**: Ken Taylor, Director, Wisconsin Council on Children & Families, on presenting information effectively on issues related to children and families and impacting elected officials and policy makers on their behalf.

**Week 10: Thursday, November 5**

**Topics: Understanding the Issue**

A look at how to analyze public policies that impact vulnerable populations and steps for developing solutions to advance social change with a focus on promoting the well-being of people with disabilities.

**Required Readings:**

- Hoefer, pages 62-85

- Family Care changes could have big impact in Dane County, Wisconsin State Journal, March 22, 2015:
  

- Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations, July 13, 2015:
  

  
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXqkuZkJ5Xo

- Bio of Barbara Katz:
  
  http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/~rowley/wfv/Fv/staff.html

**“Blog” question:** What strategies might be most helpful in impacting elected officials and policy makers to promote the well-being of people with disabilities and why?

**Guest speaker:** Barbara Katz, Co-Director of Family Voices of Wisconsin, past Chair, Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities, member of the Survival Coalition and the Wisconsin Council for Children with Long Term Support Needs and parent of a child with developmental disabilities, on strategies of parents and advocates in influencing social change on behalf of people with disabilities.

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**Week 11: Thursday, November 12 (Memo to candidate due today)**

**Topics: Advocacy Planning**

**IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT:** Briefly meet in the small groups that will be presenting the fifteen minute Group Policy Advocacy Role Plays during the last two weeks of class to: identify the topic your role play will address (from policy topics covered in this class); identify who will be your 1-2 concerned citizen presenters; identify the state or local official you will be trying to impact in a fifteen minute role play meeting; identify who will be the official and, depending upon the size of your group, who will be that official’s chief of staff. I will bring small group assignments and further directions regarding this assignment to class.

**Required Readings:**
- Hoefer, pages 86-103
- Amidei, pages 38-49

- Justified Anger: Rev. Alex Gee says Madison is failing its African-American community, The Capital Times, December 18, 2013:
  

- Justified Anger, Our Madison Plan – Mobilizing Madison for Change, Justified Anger & the Nehemiah Center for Urban Leadership Development, May 29, 2015 (please read Preamble, pages 5 – 7 and Overview, pages 8 – 11, and skim the rest):
  

- Bio of Rev Alex Gee:
  
  http://beta.alexgee.com/about/bio/

**“Blog” question**: What types of facts, stories and allies might be helpful in advocating on behalf of addressing racial inequality and why?

**Speaker**: Rev. Alex Gee, Ph.D., pastor of Fountain of Life Covenant Church, founder/CEO of the nonprofit Nehemiah Center for Urban Leadership Development & Chair of Justified Anger Coalition on strategies for improving race relations including ways to impact community leaders, public investments and policies.

**Week 12: November 19**

**Topics: The Role of the Judicial Branch in Impacting Public Policy and Social Change**

How do citizens and organizations work through the court system and administrative appeals processes to advance change on behalf of vulnerable populations and social change, with the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision on marriage equality, and the legal and related strategic steps that led to it, as a case study.

**Required Readings**:

- The White House, The Judicial Branch:
  
  http://www.whitehouse.gov/our-government/judicial-branch

- Wisconsin Court System, The Wisconsin Court System Overview:
Amidei, pages 21-22

Supreme Court of the United States, opinion in James Obergefell, et al., petitioners v. Richard Hodges, Director, Ohio Department of Health, June 26, 2015; read Syllabus, pages 1-5:


U.S. Supreme Court Marriage Decision, Focus on the Family, June 26, 2015; read pages 1-3, skim rest:

http://www.focusonthefamily.com/socialissues/promos/supreme-court-marriage-decision

Bio of Lester Pines:


“Blog” question: How might you participate in legal advocacy on behalf of an issue that impacts a vulnerable population that you care about?

Guest speaker: Attorney Lester Pines, Senior Partner, Cullen Weston Pines & Bach LLP, on how the courts can impact vulnerable populations. Pines has been active in representing clients, including before the Wisconsin Supreme Court, on major Wisconsin public policy issues such as Voter ID, collective bargaining, access to women’s reproductive health services and marriage equality.

NOVEMBER 26, THANKSGIVING, NO CLASS

Week 13: Thursday, December 3

Topics: Group Policy Advocacy Role Plays, Part 1

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT: First set of small groups, following outside of class group preparation, present a fifteen minute Group Policy Advocacy Role Play on one of the policy topics covered in this course. Two to three of you will be the concerned citizen presenter/s and you will identify ahead your position, three written talking points you will use to verbally communicate your points to the official/s in the role play and who the lead official is. Presenters will be advocating a position with the state or local official. Two of you will be the audience, one as the state or local official the citizen/s will be trying to impact in the role play and the other who will play that official’s chief of staff. The official/s will be allowed two to four questions to
which the citizens will respond. Both sides should use data and seek to be persuasive, credible and easy to understand. Participant reflections and class discussion will follow.

**Required Readings:**

- Amidei, pages 26-29
- Tweedie, Jack, National Conference of State Legislatures, *Learning a New Language: Effectively Communicating Early Childhood Research to State Legislators*, Harvard Family Research Project, Volume X, Number 2, Summer 2004 (on Learn@UW course site)

**“Blog” question:** Which of the learnings from this course would you most like to use in your future paid work life and in your community life and why?

### Week 14: Thursday, December 10 (Advocacy plan due today)

**Topics: Group Policy Advocacy Role Plays, Part 2**

**IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT:** Second set of small groups, following outside of class group preparation, present a fifteen minute Group Policy Advocacy Role Play on one of the policy topics covered in this course. Two to three of you will be the concerned citizen presenter/s and you will identify ahead your position, three written talking points you will use to verbally communicate your points to the official/s in the role play and who the lead official is. Presenters will be advocating a position with the state or local official. Two of you will be the audience, one as the state or local official the citizen/s will be trying to impact in the role play and the other who will play that official’s chief of staff. The official/s will be allowed two to four questions to which the citizens will respond. Both sides should use data and seek to be persuasive, credible and easy to understand. Participant reflections and class discussion will follow.

No “blog” assignment or posted news article due today.

(IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR GRADED ACTION PLAN RETURNED TO YOU, PLEASE BRING A STAMPED, ADDRESSED ENVELOPE TO CLASS.)

### III. Texts and Reading Materials for the Course

The readings for the course include research articles and publications from diverse think tanks, advocacy groups and government agencies including the executive branch, the legislative branch and non-partisan legislative and executive agencies. Readings are from a varied array of scholars and organizations and have been selected to strengthen students’ critical thinking and encourage classroom discussion. It is not expected that students or the instructor will agree with
all perspectives presented and students are encouraged to express and be respectful of diverse points of views.

The course will draw heavily from 2 books available for purchase through University Book Store:

- Amidei, Nancy, 2010, *So You Want to Make a Difference*, OMB Watch, Washington, DC

Other required readings are listed in this syllabus under Course Content.

Assigned readings are available on the Learn@UW course site (by week under “Materials”) or via a link to the Internet embedded in this syllabus.

To help be informed and keep abreast of current policy issues, students are expected to follow at least one major news source daily such as *The Wisconsin State Journal*, *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, National Public Radio, CNN, etc., paying special attention to information about local, state and federal issues and programs that impact vulnerable populations.

Students are encouraged to sign up for at least one electronic newsletter from an advocacy or research organization which includes information or legislative alerts related to pending or upcoming legislation (such as from the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, the Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty, the John K. MacIver Institute for Public Policy, Wisconsin Public Policy Research Institute, the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, etc.).

Students are expected to share one (only one!) news article weeks 2-13 that can complement our class discussion by posting it on our class Facebook page by 8:00pm on the day before class. More information on accessing and using the Facebook page will be given in class.

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

Grading Scale & Standards:

Students' final grade will be based on the following:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>What the point totals &amp; subsequent grade generally indicate</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Outstanding, excellent work in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88-93</td>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Outstanding, excellent work 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 most 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>
</tbody>
</table>
Below expectations in all areas
Course failure

Assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points/Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Blog” entries for weeks 2-13</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation and news postings for weeks 2-13</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written policy advocacy reflection</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>650 word research based op-ed piece</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-three page research based memo to candidate</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-four page advocacy plan</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group policy advocacy role play</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Assignment Instructions & Grading Rubrics:

Every day (30%)

“Blog” (15%): Classes for weeks 2-13 have a “blog” question assigned to it. For those classes (all but the first and last classes of the semester), you are required to post a 1-2 paragraph “blog” entry responding to the question though our Learn@UW course site, in the “Discussion” forum section, under “Communication.” The questions are noted in this syllabus as well as in the class “Discussion” forum section. “Blog” entries may be informally written but must provide a thoughtful answer that makes reference to that week’s readings and what you’ve seen through the media that you are following. “Blog” entries are due by 8:00pm on the day before class. You are expected to read each other’s “blog” entries by the beginning of class.

Class participation (15%): You are expected to have completed readings before class and to take an active part in class discussions and activities including posting one (only one!) relevant news posting on class Facebook page all weeks except for our first and last classes.

Written assignments (60%)

Written policy advocacy reflection (10%): From what you are following in the readings and press, identify a current issue that has attracted advocacy attention and write a two page, single-spaced reflection, with examples, covering: a summary of the advocacy effort that has taken place; description of what appear to be the target/s of the advocacy effort; the apparent goals of the effort; the apparent strategies and tactics used; the apparent effectiveness of the advocacy effort; other strategies or tactics you might suggest. This is due in class on 10/8.

Advocacy tools project (50%): You will each become an expert in one current public policy challenge and different strategies and vehicles for impacting it to advance social
change. You must submit your chosen project topic and the position you will advocate in writing in class on October 15 and this project will involve three written assignments:

- **a 650 word research based op-ed piece (15%)** about the topic you submitted on October 15. Have in mind the media outlet you would like to see this published in. Explain why you are writing about this now. Tell a story, know your audience, be persuasive and use data to support your position. This is due in class on October 29.

- **a two to three page single spaced research based memo to a candidate for executive office (15%)** addressing the challenge you submitted on October 15 and that the winning candidate and their level of government will oversee. Address the strategies that are now in place; what other strategies you recommend that they advance and why; what resources and timeframe would be needed to implement your suggested strategies and why; and, how the success of your strategies could be measured and evaluated. This is due in class on November 12.

- **a three to four page single spaced advocacy plan (20%)** addressing the challenge you submitted on October 15, assuming you are responsible for planning and leading an advocacy effort to impact the challenge. Include an introduction and overview of the challenge and problem; what is/are your desired outcome/s; what short, medium and long-term action steps you are advocating including use of data, diverse strategic partners, media; who is/are your advocacy target(s); resources needed; how the plan should be monitored once the advocacy is over; and, how the advocacy effort should be evaluated. This is due in class on December 10.

**Group Policy Advocacy Role Play (10%):** Working in small groups in fifteen minute role plays and playing either citizen advocate or public official audience roles, and following outside of class group preparation, use data, advocacy and communication skills to address a public policy that impacts a vulnerable population.

### V. Course Policies

**Late work:** Late “blog” entries will not be accepted. I will not accept late written assignments if you have not notified me in advance. For each written assignment, I will deduct one letter grade for each day that the assignment may be late.

**Attendance:** We understand that you may have responsibilities outside of class that could cause you to miss a class. Please email me ahead if you will miss class.

**Personal emergencies and religious observances:** You and your family are important to us. If you are experiencing a crisis, resources are available to help. University Health Services offers counseling on a 24/7 basis. If it is important to request class time off due to an emergency,
please contact me as soon as possible. In order to respect and accommodate your religious observances, please inform me in advance so that we can plan accordingly.

**Academic integrity and ethical behavior**: You are expected to adhere to all aspects of the University of Wisconsin policy. The University and I take plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty very seriously. Please note that the following applies to all Social Work students:

- 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.

I strongly encourage you to contact me with any questions before turning in an assignment for which you have questions.

**Disability accommodations**: If you are a person with special circumstances that you believe may affect your class performance (for example, visual, hearing or learning disabilities or language differences), please let me know so that we may work together to develop strategies that meet your needs and the requirements of the course. The McBurney Disability Resource Center can be of assistance to students with disabilities. You will need to provide documentation of a disability to receive services and accommodations there. Also, please let me know if you have any trouble accessing or using the technologies being used in this course. I will maintain complete confidentiality of any information you share.

**Electronic devices**: You are expected to conduct yourself as a professional in this class. **Laptops will not be allowed in class (except to take notes, only) and all phones should be turned off before class.**

**VI. Additional Optional Course Reading Resources**

The following are optional additional reading resources for this course:


• Downey, Kristen, 2009, *The Woman Behind the New Deal - The Life of Frances Perkins, FDR’s Secretary of Labor and His Moral Conscience*, New York, Nan A. Talese, an imprint of The Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Random House, Inc.

• Ellis, Richard, Nelson, Michael, editors, 2014, *Debating Reform – Conflicting Perspectives on How to Fix the American Political System*, Sage, Los Angeles

• Ezell, Mark, 2001, *Advocacy in the Human Services*, Belmont California, Brooks/Cole, a division of Thompson Learning

• Ferguson, Margaret, editor, 2006, *The Executive Branch of State Government – People, Process, and Politics*, ABC-CLIO, Inc., Santa Barbara, California


• Jacobs, Lawrence, Skocpol, Theda, editors, 2005, *Inequality and American Democracy – What We Know and What We Need to Learn*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York


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VII. Course Competencies, Practice Behaviors & Assignments

A special note for social work students:

Social Work Education is framed by a competency-based approach to curriculum design. At the conclusion of their education, social work students are expected to be competent in 10 core areas. Competency is achieved through the attainment of measurable practice behaviors learned through classroom and field experiences, and which are derived from social work knowledge, values and skills.

SW869 is an elective course that is cross listed with PubAffairs974. The focus of this course is on influencing political systems for social change, and Social Work students will find that this course contributes to their achievement of the core competencies as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies Addressed In Course</th>
<th>Advanced Practice Behaviors for Focus Area and Advanced Elective Courses</th>
<th>Assignments Measuring Behavior**</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.</td>
<td>• Apply knowledge of social services, policies and programs to advocate with and/or on behalf of clients for access to services.</td>
<td>Blog, WPAR, RBOEP, RBMTC, AP, GPARP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.</td>
<td>• Weigh values, principles of ethical decision-making, and the NASW code of ethics in order to address ethical dilemmas related to advocacy practice.</td>
<td>Blog</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments. | • Identify and synthesize multiple sources of knowledge to understand policy and practice issues related to advocacy practice.  
• Demonstrate effective communication skills with diverse communities, constituencies, and multi- and inter-disciplinary colleagues when dealing with issues related to advocacy practice. | WPAR, RBOEP, RBMTC, AP, GPARP |
| 2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice. | • Demonstrate an understanding of how culture and values affect diverse conceptualizations and constructions of social problems and solutions in policy practice.  
• Actively engage diverse clients, groups, or organizations to promote solutions based on diverse conceptualizations of social problems in policy practice. | Blog |
| 2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice. | • Appraise how mechanisms of oppression and discrimination impact various groups and outcomes relevant to advocacy practice.  
• Apply strategies of advocacy | Blog |

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<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| 2.1.6 | Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.  
- Demonstrate ability to evaluate advocacy practice.  
Blog, WPAR, RBOEP, RBMTC, AP, GPARP |
| 2.1.8 | Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.  
- Evaluate, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance outcomes relevant to advocacy practice.  
- Demonstrate collaboration with clients, colleagues, and other constituencies for advocacy action.  
Blog, WPAR, RBOEP, RBMTC, APGPARP |
| 2.1.9 | Respond to contexts that shape practice.  
- Assess the impact of historical and contemporary contexts on practice and policy in advocacy practice.  
- Engage in leadership roles in the focus area. |
| 2.1.10(a–d) | Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.  
- Employ diverse strategies to engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities related to advocacy practice.  
- Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to determine a range of potentially effective and appropriate interventions to improve advocacy practice outcomes.  
- Demonstrate ability to intervene at different levels (with and/or on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities) to achieve the desired advocacy practice outcomes.  
AP, WPAR, RBOEP, RBMTC, AP |
**Note: WPAR=Written policy advocacy reflection; RBOEP=Research based op-ed piece; RBMTC= Research based memo to candidate; AP=Advocacy plan; GPARP=Group policy advocacy role play.

8/24/15