

**INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

S646 Community Organization & Social Action (3 credits)

Instructor's Name: Carol Metzger
Office: ES 4114B

Semester Year: Fall 2000
Section No.: R820
Room: ES 2104

I. Course Rationale and Description

In relation to the other macro courses, this course focuses on and further develops the "community" dimension of the social work practice. Students deepen their knowledge of and practice with the various techniques and strategies of community intervention gained during the foundation year HBSE and practice courses. Particular emphasis is placed on processes and skills to include groups typically marginalized in the community and society. These groups include, but are not limited to, those distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin. Given today's world, the community perspective includes both the local and global arenas. Students further develop their analytic skills with regard to the external forces which shape a local community and through which they can influence "local" politics.

A strong foundation for this course is the belief that social workers must not only advocate for populations at risk, but must also be leaders in empowering these groups to advocate for themselves in the process of creating a world and a community, that are socially, economically, and politically just. Social work assumes the persistent tension between practice focused on "cases" and "causes." This course further explores and practices ways for placing such tension in balance and deepening the practitioner's ability to help the "cases" to be heard, i.e. people of color, women, lesbian and gay people, the economically and politically disadvantaged, and other populations at risk. Lastly, students strengthen their ability to recognize, analyze, and strategies around the ethical, political and social dilemmas inherent in any work which raises the issues of justice for groups traditionally excluded from positions of power in society.

Course content is delivered through the use of lectures, student presentations building on their field practicum, class discussion, guest speakers, visits to other organizations, simulations, videos, work with computer resources related to community organizing, small group work, and written assignments.

II. Objectives

In this course, students are expected to demonstrate achievement of the following objectives:

1. Integrate the theories and models of the foundation year curriculum with the strategies and techniques of advanced community practice.
2. Critically analyze the dynamics and consequences of social and economic injustice as they impact the "community," including the patterns, dynamics, and consequences of

discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression for people of color, women, lesbian women and gay men, and other populations at risk as well as those groups distinguished by age, ethnicity, culture, class, religion, and physical or mental ability.

3. Critically assess and utilize the various community organizing frameworks for identifying and acting upon the underlying causes of human degradation, powerlessness, and social inequality.
4. Develop sensitivity to groups which have been traditionally marginalized in society such as people of color, women, lesbian women and gay men, and other populations at risk as well as those groups distinguished by age, ethnicity, culture, class, religion, and physical or mental ability, and the skills necessary for empowering such groups.
5. Use advanced skills from the various models in the planning and implementation of community organizing and social action interventions.
6. Develop understanding and skills with "institution-building" and the processes of establishing new or extending existing resources to larger numbers of persons in need of benefits or services.
7. Develop the individual and group skills necessary for effective community building and organizing.
8. Assess the political landscape influencing community issues, and develop and implement strategies appropriate to the situation.
9. Recognize, analyze, and strategize about the ethical, political, and social dilemmas encountered in community organizing and social action.

III. Content Outline & Readings

Aug 28	Introduction and Overview of the course Community: values, history, and social change Overall planning of course activities
Sept 11	Initial planning of direct action Readings: Bobo, Kendall, & Max Chapters 1,2,3
Sept 18	Strategies and tactics for action Readings: Bobo, Kendall, & Max Chapters 4,5,6
Sept 25 Issue paper due	Designing actions Readings: Bobo, Kendall, & Max Chapter 7

Required Texts

Bobo, K., Kendall, J., & Max, S. (1996). Organizing for social change: A manual for activists in the 1990's. 2nd edition. Minneapolis: Seven Locks Press.

Giloth, R. P. (1998) Jobs, wealth, or place: The faces of community economic development. Journal of Community Practice, 5(1 / 2), 11- 27.

Graber, H.V.; Haywood, S.; & Vosler, N. (1996). An empowerment model for building neighborhood community: Grace Hill neighborhood services. Journal of Progressive Human Services, 7(2) 63- 76.

Queralt, M., & Witte, A. D. (1998). A map for you? Geographic information systems in the social services. Social Work, 43(5), 455-469.

Sherraden, M. S., & Ninacs, W. A. (1998). Introduction: Community economic development and social work. Journal of Community Practice, 5(1 / 2), 1-9.

Swartz, S. (1995). Community and risk in social service work. Journal of Progressive Human Services, 6(1), 73-92.

Other readings will be assigned as the semester progresses, based in part on the focus of the class as it progresses.

IV. Course Format & Assignments

1. *Issue action planning and implementation.* For the purpose of these assignments, students are encouraged to work in groups of two or more and choose an issue which affects a population at risk. (Students may chose to work alone.) Groups will conduct a community assessment to determine the issue, create a strategy and plan for organizing around the plan, and present the plan in a workshop, meeting, or advocacy speech format to the class. Components of the assignment are as follows:
 - A. Select a population at risk. Interview members of the population about issues of concern to them. As a group, choose a particular issue. Write a position paper for the class analyzing the particular issue. The paper should be a group effort, taking no more than three pages. Due Sept. 25, 2000.
 - B. Develop an assessment plan for determining the stakeholders, powerholders, and available resources. Collectively write the plan for the class, using no more than three pages. Due Oct. 23, 2000.
 - C. Develop a collective strategy for organizing and action. Present this strategy in a paper of no more than six pages. Include aspects such as possible adversaries, coalitions, other groups, working with resistance, and

fund-raising. Due Nov. 13, 2000.

- D. Advocate for your issue to the class, using skills such as public speaking, workshop planning, meeting facilitating, media, and so on to convince the class to support your goals. Presentations will be time-limited. Evaluation of presentations will be developed and conducted by the class. Presentations will cover 3 class dates and will be scheduled beginning Nov. 20, 2000.

V. **Course Policies, Grading & Evaluation**

Papers should use APA format, 4th Edition, be based on class discussions, assigned readings, and outside references as well as the students' own activities, interviews, assessments and conclusions. Papers are to be each student's independent work. All sources are to be cited. Proof of plagiarism will result in failure. Papers are to be typed and double-spaced. Covers for papers are unnecessary.

V. **Course Policies, Evaluation, & Grading**

Class Procedures and Expectations

The class will operate in a lecture/discussion format, with guest speakers on appropriate topics. Small group discussions will also be used. Written assignments will be based on outside research, assigned readings, interviews, observation, and lecture and discussion material from class.

Students will be expected to complete assigned readings prior to class, attend class, and actively participate in class discussions. Students will also be expected to conduct library research.

Due to the anticipated enrollment for this class, small group discussions and presentations will be offered to allow for opportunities for active participation by students.

Grading

Grading is as follows:

Issue paper	25%
Assessment paper	25%
Strategy paper	25%
Presentation	25%

Evaluation Criteria

Formal student evaluation of the course and its instructor will be completed in compliance with policy and procedures approved by the school.

The educational process will be enhanced by ongoing mutual feedback between and among students and instructor. Such feedback is encouraged, in a climate of mutual respect

I will be available on Mondays prior to class and at other times by appointment. I will be in the associate faculty office (Room ES 4114B) Please feel free to make contact in person or by telephone.

VI. Bibliography

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