

# Advocacy, Injustice, Oppression & Ethical Decision-making

SWK433-435  
Spring 2010

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## Program mission

Informed by Ignatian ideals, a global perspective, social work knowledge, values, skills, ethics, history and purpose, the Department of Social Work is dedicated to the formation of competent, effective entry level generalist social work practitioners, as social change agents committed to the well-being of self and others, engaging in the pursuit of social and economic justice, empowerment of vulnerable populations, human rights, and the advancement of social work knowledge including the mutual influence of research and social work practice.

## Social Work Program Goals

1. Prepare undergraduate generalist social work practitioners grounded in evidence-informed practice, to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities including an understanding and applicability of the global perspective for practice.
2. Prepare entry level practitioners who apply ethical decision-making based on social work values, standards and ignatian ideals.
3. Prepare social work leaders committed to advancing social and economic justice and human rights along with reducing social and economic inequities in society.

## 1.0 Course Description

This course prepares undergraduate social work practitioners to advance client/system well-being through the advocacy approach. Focus is on applying the concepts and principles of advocacy for social and economic justice with marginalized and disenfranchised populations. Emphasis is on constructing and using ethical and professional social work frames of reference for practice and understanding the interlocking nature of race, class and gender in alleviating oppression and discrimination.

## 2.0 Course Materials

1. Scheider, R.L. & Lester, L. **Social Work Advocacy: A New Framework for Action**, United States: Brooks-Cole, 2001
2. Ferber, A. et al, **The Matrix Reader: Examining the Dynamics of Oppression and Privilege**, Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2009

## 3.0 Professional Social Work Competencies, Practice Behaviors and Course Objectives

Competency	Practice Behaviors	Course Objectives—Students will be able to:
2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Making ethical decisions by applying standards of NASW</li><li>✓ Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decision</li></ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Apply the NASW Code of Ethics to the advocacy approach and issues generated by social and economic inequities.</li><li>2. Understand and use selected models of ethical reasoning in advocacy practice.</li></ol>
2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Distinguish, appraise, integrate</li></ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Use empirical research and</li></ol>

and communicate professional judgments	multiple sources of knowledge, including research based knowledge and practice wisdom	evidence-informed knowledge when using the advocacy approach.
2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power</li>   <li>✓ Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Identify basic principles and concepts of social structure, oppression, privilege and power.</li> <li>5. Explain the interlocking nature of race, gender, class.</li> <li>6. Explain the complexity of institutional forces and systems negatively impacted people of color, gender, immigrants, women and gay/lesbians.</li>   <li>7. Recognize their own perceptions and attitudes about people of color, women, immigrants and gay/lesbian people.</li> </ul>
2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination</li>   <li>✓ Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice</li>   <li>✓ Engage in practices that advances social and economic justice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Identify the nature and scope of power relationships in society and how it exposes oppression and discrimination in society.</li>   <li>9. Explain the definition of advocacy and apply a general practice framework for advocacy within the parameters of social and economic justice</li>   <li>10. Describe social work advocacy contexts---client, cause, legislative, administrative.</li>   <li>11. Apply client, cause, legislative administrative strategies to selected social problems</li> </ul>
2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Analyze, formulate, advocate for policies that advance social well-being</li>   <li>✓ Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Apply strategies for legislative, administrative and organizational change</li>   <li>13. Establish a cooperative working relationship with clients and colleagues for</li> </ul>

		social change efforts.
2.1.10 Engage, assess, intervene and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Select appropriate intervention strategies</li> <li>✓ Help clients resolve problems</li> <li>✓ Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. Attend to and choose social change strategies for collective action.</li> <li>15. Describe and use techniques and strategies to resolve client and system problems</li> <li>16. Apply negotiation, mediation and advocacy techniques for clients and client systems.</li> </ul>

#### 4.0 Course Schedule

##### **Week 1**

- A. Get acquainted, over view of course, course requirements
- B. Understanding the context of injustice and oppression
- C. Constructing identities
  - a. Read in Ferber---Becoming a Visible Man, Gender Relations, Intervention of Heterosexuality, Racial Formations, Social Class Matters, Social Construction of Disability

##### **Week 2**

- A. Examining the intersection of race, class, gender
  - a. Read Ferber
    - i. Toward a New Vision, What White Supremacists Taught a Jewish Scholar About Identity, Is Capitalism Gendered and Racialized?, Theorizing Difference from Multiracial Feminism, Seeing More than Black and White

##### **Week 3**

- A. Understanding the basis for advocacy
  - a. Read Schneider--- Advocates in Action p. xii, Overview of Advocacy, p. 1-5,
- B. Understanding oppression and privilege
  - a. Read Ferber
    - i. White Privilege and Male Privilege, Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference, Defining Racism—Can we Talk?, Costs of American Privilege

##### **Week 4**

- A. Making ethical decisions
  - a. Lecture—Loewenberg model

##### **Review for first exam**

##### **First exam**

##### **Week 5**

- A. Identifying the historical foundation for advocacy
  - a. Read Schneider---Chapter 1: Advocacy's Rich and Diversity History
- B. Historical Context of injustice and oppression
  - a. Read Ferber---Many Americans: The Intersection of Class, Race, and Ethnic Identity, A History of Women's Bodies

##### **Week 6**

- A. Defining advocacy
  - a. Read Schneider---Chapter 2 : Advocacy: A New Definition
- B. Dynamics of Oppression, historical record continued...

- a. Read Ferber---Rape and the War Against Native Women, Race and Criminal Justice, Gay New York, A Brief History of Working Women, From Outsider to Citizen, Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives

#### **Week 7**

##### A. Advocacy framework

- a. Read Schneider---Part II, pp. 87-92

#### **Week 8**

##### **Review for midterm exam**

##### **Midterm exam**

#### **Week 9**

##### A. Examining and applying advocacy framework

- a. Read Schneider---Chapter 3: Representation

#### **Week 10**

##### A. Examining and applying advocacy framework continued...

- a. Read Schneider---Chapter 4: Influence

##### B. Contemporary institutionalized oppression and privilege

- a. Read Ferber---Doing Gender and Doing Gender Inappropriately, We are all Works in Progress, Medicalization of Racial Features

#### **Week 12**

##### A. Advocacy approaches

- a. Read Schneider---Chapter 5: Client Advocacy

##### B. Contemporary institutionalized oppression and privilege continued...

- a. Read Ferber---SES, Race/Ethnicity and Health, Race, Family Values and Welfare, Driving While Black,

#### **Week 13**

##### A. Advocacy approaches continued...

- a. Continue with client advocacy approach

##### B. Contemporary institutionalized oppression and privilege continued...

- a. Read Ferber---Sounds and Silence of Language, Media Magic: Making Class Invisible

#### **Week 14**

##### A. Advocacy approaches continued... Cause advocacy

- a. Read Schneider---Chapter 6

##### B. Changing the system

- a. Read Ferber---Recognizing Resistance to Change, Feminists and Feminism, Holy War, Color Blinded America,

#### **Week 15**

##### A. Advocacy approaches continued... Cause advocacy

##### B. Recognizing Resistance to Change continued...

- a. Read Ferber---Too Many Women in College, Manifesting Gender

#### **Week 16**

##### A. Advocacy approaches continued...Administrative advocacy

- a. Read Schneider---Chapter 7: Administrative advocacy

##### B. Institutionalizing social change

- a. Read Ferber---Uprooting Racism, Las Mujeres Invisibles, Confronting Anti-Gay Violence, Hidden Costs of Being African American

## Week 17

- A. Trends in American advocacy
  - a. Read Schneider---Chapter 9: Current Trends in Advocacy and Practice Implications
- B. Institutionalizing social change continued...
  - a. Read Ferber---Why do we Need Cross-Class Alliances, Motherhood Manifesto, Where do I begin?,

## Week 18

Review for final exam

### 6.0 Course Requirements--attendance

In the event of disruption of normal classroom activities due to a H1N1 flu outbreak, the format for this course may be modified to enable completion of the course. In that event, you will be provided an addendum to this syllabus that will supersede this version.

In the event of a H1N1 outbreak, you are granted up to two (2) days of missed classes without a doctor's note. However you must let me know when you become ill. If you miss more than two (2) classes, you must provide a doctor's excuse. Five points are deducted from the total points for each additional absence after two absences.

### 7.0 Evaluation and Grading

1. There are three in-class exams worth 100 points each. Exams cover the reading material as well as lectures, presentations, films and guest speakers.
2. Paper. 100 points
  - a. The objectives of the paper are to
    - i. Understand the dynamics of injustice, oppression and discrimination and
    - ii. Understand the multiplicity and intersectional nature of advocacy for social justice focusing on helping marginalized, underserved populations.
    - iii. Apply concepts, principles, strategies and techniques of advocacy to the problem
  - b. Students select a marginalized, under-served or oppressed population who is experiencing some form of injustice. You are free to select domestic or global experiences.
    - i. Identify the problem/form of injustice/oppression.
      - a. Describe the nature and scope of the issue/injustice this population is experiencing.
      - b. Describe the perceived cause of the issue/injustice.
      - c. Analyze into it's component parts—in other words, how is the issue related to other societal aspects such as economics, political, social, cultural, religious, etc.?
      - d. Apply the advocacy concepts, principles, theories, strategies, techniques for changing the issue. While this is a theoretical application of advocacy, I intend to evaluate your change efforts within the criteria of feasibility or doability.
  - c. Paper length and structure—10 pages; use APA for structure and bibliographic references.

### Paper Evaluation criteria

93-100 points= A

An "A" paper is an outstanding piece of writing with no grammatical, punctuation, spelling and usage errors. It describes the topic sufficiently producing a high level of understanding and authority. Attention to problem/form of injustice is well-documented and the nature/scope of the issue is described in enough detail to give the reader an

excellent understanding. The paper is well-analyzed relative to its component parts---relates issue to other societal aspects and their implications. Advocacy content is applied to the change effort. Suggested change effort is feasible/doable. The paper must have an introduction, body and conclusion. Appropriate transitions between major ideas are present. An "A" paper has a minimum of **six (6) outside references** appropriately cited (those not part of the assigned reading). This paper is superior and achieves a high level of intellectual inquiry.

*83-92 points= B*

A "B" paper is still a quality paper but less than an "A" paper in that it has several grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors. This paper does not present a full picture so as not to fully understand the nature and scope of the topic. It is less developed conceptually, organizationally, and methodologically. Some analysis of component parts of the issue attended to but not fully. Some advocacy content applied---not fully developed. Feasibility of suggested change efforts questionable. The paper lacks one of the following---introduction, body, and conclusion. Uneven application of transitional phrases is present. There are less than six outside references.

*73-82 points= C*

A "C" paper addresses the objectives of the assignment in a clear fashion but without direction or depth. Attention to grammar, punctuation, spelling is uneven. The issue is described in general terms and does not give a full picture of its nature and scope. Analysis of the issue is elementary and one-sided. Advocacy content is applied but suggested change efforts are not viable/feasible. Transitions between ideas are missing in most respects. A "C" paper is in control of the subject but not in a comprehensive manner. Three (3) outside references are included in the narrative. Some grammar, spelling and punctuation errors are present.

*63-72 points= D*

Clearly this paper avoids requirements of the assignment---paper objectives are not addressed or address in a minimal fashion. It is characterized by unsubstantiated and general statements reflecting personal opinion and lacks references to bibliographic citations. Some attempt made to analyze the component parts of the issue but is very basic. Advocacy content is missing or applied incorrectly. Transitional phrases are missing. Grammar, spelling, and punctuation make the narrative difficult to read. Less than three (3) outside references are present.

*Less than 63 points= F*

A "F" paper has many grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors. It does not address the objectives of the assignment and minimally deals with the topic. A cogent, analytical position on the topic was not taken. Attention to analysis, application of advocacy content is missing. Outside references are absent.

### **Other considerations**

In writing your paper, please remember that plagiarism is the purposeful use of another person's ideas or words, without attributing those words or ideas to the other person. If you are using information you gained someplace other than your own mind, provide the source, even if this source is your textbook. Plagiarism is very serious, and can result in the failure of the assignment or the class contingent upon the seriousness of infraction. Further, the **Academic Honesty Policy** described at <https://www2.creighton.edu/fileadmin/user/CCAS/docs/acadhonesty.html> is adhered to when a situation of academic dishonesty is identified.

### **Course Grading**

93% and above=A

88%-92%=B+

83%-87%=B

78%-82%=C+

73%-77%=C

63%-72%=D

Below 63%=F

### Class cancellation policy

In the event that class is cancelled, you will be notified by me personally via email and/or the Department of Social Work Administrative Assistant.

### Bibliography

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