

Social Work 536 Policy and Advocacy in Professional Social Work

Section

3 Units

Spring 2025, Tuesday, 8:45am – 10:00am PT

Location: (VAC : <https://usconline.zoom.us/j/91951344860>)

SYLLABUS

(Subject to change)

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Office Hours Days & Times:	Tuesdays, 10:00am – 10:30am PT and by appointment. Appointments can be made via email or using https://calendly.com/usc_fatouros
Zoom Meeting Link:	https://usconline.zoom.us/j/91951344860
Course Lead:	Samuel Mistrano
Email:	mistrano@usc.edu
IT Help Hours of Service:	24 hours, 7 days/week
IT Help Contact Information:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please contact your course instructor for course-specific issues (e.g., accessing live sessions, submitting assignments).• VAC Canvas support: (833) 713-1200 or “Help” button in Canvas.• On Campus/Hybrid Brightspace support: (888) 895-2812 or usc@d2l.com• NETID/password issues: USC ITS (213) 740-5555 or consult@usc.edu

For other tech questions, please email the School's learning support team, SDP.LTS@usc.edu, review the onboarding module in the platform, or review a list of helpful resources: [Platform Information](#), [User Guidelines](#), and [Technical Standards for On-Ground, Hybrid, and Virtual Online Platforms* for Students](#)

I. Course Prerequisites and/or Co-Requisites

Policy and Advocacy in Professional Social Work (SOWK 536) is built upon a liberal arts undergraduate foundation. Students are expected to have a basic understanding of how American government works at the local, state, and national levels, and a rudimentary familiarity with the existence of social welfare policies.

II. CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

Social workers practice within complex and interconnecting systems of policy, programs and communities that directly and indirectly impact their clients' lives. This course studies and assesses the impact of anti-poverty programs, security-building insurance systems, and opportunity-creating public policies on clients seeking to navigate within and across these systems, and on the social worker's role therein, at the programmatic, community and state-wide levels.

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a substantive understanding of the American social welfare policies and programs developed and implemented by all levels of government that seek to limit poverty, provide security, and create opportunity for people, families, and communities. These programs, systems, and policies will be assessed for their adequacy, effectiveness, and fairness. Advocacy efforts – past and present – will be explored and even joined in some of these subject areas.

The course will also help develop students' analytic, writing and presentation skills, which are crucial for successful social work practice across the systems, funding streams and communities that make up America. The course seeks to inspire students to develop a case-level, program-level and macro-level policy advocacy orientation, so that – regardless of their professional specialization – USC graduates will be motivated to redress social and economic injustice and empower less advantaged groups.

This course is divided into three modules: (1) the first module examines and assesses programs seeking to alleviate poverty, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit, TANF, food stamps, and Medicaid; (2) the second module studies how America uses various social insurances to create and reinforce family and community-level security, and includes focuses on Social Security, Unemployment and Disability insurances, and Medicare (including the impacts thereon of the Affordable Care Act); and (3) the third module examines how our society seeks to create opportunity through its education, progressive taxation, and other systems. Each of these modules focuses on understanding the policy decisions, financing, program implementation and advocacy interventions creating and impacting these various programs, and the role social workers have within and across them.

SOWK 536 provides a foundation for concentration-specific courses across the clinical and policy arenas, in which students can apply their knowledge, analysis and skill to develop specific improvements across sectors.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students in the Policy and Advocacy in Professional Social Work course (SOWK 536) will:

Objective #	By the completion of this course, students will be able to:
1	Demonstrate understanding of the general provisions and current pivotal issues central to major social welfare policies in several key institutional sectors, and the impact these have on the local community; critically assess various substantive and advocacy-based options for improving / reforming these social welfare policies.
2	Analyze the political, social, and economic histories that have shaped the delivery and financing of major social welfare policies, and assess the differing impacts (positive, neutral, or negative) that these histories, and delivery- and financing-regimes, currently have on vulnerable populations in American society.
3	Effectively advocate for improved services, rights, social justice, and/or fairness and equal protection for and with vulnerable individuals, groups, and/or communities.
4	Demonstrate knowledge of the values, purpose, and roles the social work profession practices within the contexts of program administration and broader policy regimes at multiple levels of governmental (national, state, local); and understand how social workers can effectively intervene and engage in micro, mezzo, and macro advocacy in each of these milieus.

V. CSWE CORE COMPETENCIES ADDRESSED IN THIS COURSE

The following table lists the social work competencies, as established by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE, 2022), that are highlighted and evaluated in this course.

CSWE Core Competencies Highlighted in this Course:
<p>Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice</p> <p>2a. Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels.</p> <p>2b. Engages in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.</p> <p>Competency 5. Engage in Policy Practice</p>

5a. Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services.

5b. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

VI. COURSE FORMAT & INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

This is a letter graded course offered in-person as well as online in the Virtual Academic Center (VAC). The web-based teaching and learning environment provided by Brightspace (<https://brightspace.usc.edu/>) will support access to course-related materials and communication for campus-based students; Canvas, will support access to course-related materials, communication, and live Zoom sessions for VAC students. The course will encompass a combination of diverse instructional methods, which may include, but are not limited to, the following: didactic presentations by the instructor, small- and large-group discussions, case studies, videos, guest speakers, experiential exercises, and computer-based, online activities. Material from the field and individual faculty-practitioner expertise will be used to integrate theory and intention with practice and impacts. As class discussion is an integral part of the learning process, students are expected to come to class ready to discuss the required readings, and its application to theory and practice.

***Please note:** It may be necessary for the instructor to adjust the syllabus and/or course during the semester. In such an instance, the instructor will inform the class both verbally and in writing.

VII. Technology Proficiency & Hardware/Software Required

This course requires the use of Microsoft Office (e.g., Word, PPT) and virtual meeting (e.g., Zoom) applications. The following links for USC technology support may be useful: [Zoom information for students](#), [Blackboard help for students](#), [Software available to USC Campus](#).

For campus-based students, USC is using **Brightspace**. To access Brightspace go to <https://brightspace.usc.edu/d2l/login> to login and find your courses. You also can find Brightspace on myUSC. The mobile app, Brightspace Pulse, also is available in both the Apple App Store and Google Play. Training and resources are available at [Brightspace Student Tutorials](#). Here are technical support resources:

- **Student Guides:** [Brightspace Student Guides](#)
- **Brightspace Technical Support Line:** 888-895-2812
- **Brightspace Email Support:** usc@d2l.com

VAC students are using **Canvas**. Canvas tech support can be reached at 833-713-1200 or use the “Help” button in Canvas.

VIII. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS, DUE DATES & PERCENT OF FINAL GRADE

Assignment	Course Objectives Assessed by Assignment	Unit Due ^[1]	% of Grade
Assignment 1 Community Assessment	1, 2	2/4/25	20%
Assignment 2 Collaborative Op-Ed to Address a Grand Challenge	1, 2, 3	3/11/25	35%
Assignment 3 Advocacy to Impact a Grand Challenge: Lobbying & Public Testimony	2, 3, 4	4/22/25 Presentation assigned for 4/22/25 or 4/29/25	35%
Proactive Learning, & Meaningful Participation		Ongoing	10%

^[1] Please note that in some instances assignment due dates may differ slightly among sections of this course. In those instances, due dates have been adapted to reflect the number of lesson weeks and University holidays for course sections.

Assignment # 1: Community Assessment (20% of course grade, due 2/4/25 before start of class)

Assignment #1 is a five- to seven-page research-based assessment of the resources and challenges faced by those living in a specific geographic community, chosen by the student. The purpose of this assignment is for you to practice researching socio-economic and demographic data, assess the important aspects thereof as they interact with and impact the community, and demonstrate a distanced, professional understanding of a community and its strengths and challenges. **During class 4, there will be an in-class share/presentation**, when students will share their findings with their classmates.

Assignment # 2: Collaborative Op-Ed to Address a Grand Challenge (35% of course grade, due 3/11/25 before start of class)

This assignment is for students to draft, and then submit, a publishable editorial on a substantive policy topic and/or specific policy that was (ideally) identified in students' work in assignment 1. Students will work in pairs for this assignment; each pair will select a social welfare challenge facing a community that impacts, in particular, vulnerable population(s) living therein. The students will research the policy/situation and impacts thereof, write a professional opinion about the issue and a solution thereto, and submit the op-ed to the most appropriate media outlet the students chose, following the rules of that outlet. A draft version of this op-ed will be peer reviewed during class.

During class 9 (on 3/11/25), there will be an in-class share/presentation. The authors will briefly explain their topic, present relevant information for the classmates to fully understand their position, why they chose the issue they focused upon, why they chose that media outlet, and what that outlet's rules are for submitting an editorial / guest commentary, and their experience submitting the writing.

Assignment # 3: Advocacy to Impact a Community Issue: Lobbying and Public Testimony
(35% of grade, due 4/22/25 before class; presentations in class on 4/22/25 and 4/29/25)

Each student, working individually or in a small group, will arrange and conduct a lobby visit with a local or other elected official or their staff on a social welfare policy/challenge that impacts a geographic-based or interest-focused community. The lobby visit will describe the policy/issue, how it impacts the community, and offer a positive policy intervention/solution. Each group will also prepare a short memo describing and analyzing the substantive issue the student seeks to impact and the corresponding policy; the memo will serve as a leave-behind for your lobby visit. In an alternative to lobbying, students could also arrange to conduct public testimony before a decision-making body, with the same parameters as shared above for a lobby visit. In addition to lobbying or testifying, students will share their experiences with their classmates during classes 4/22/25 or 4/29/25.

Active and Proactive Learning, & Meaningful Participation (10% of grade; due Units 1 – 15)

Students are expected to be active and proactive participants in their learning and meaningful contributors to a positive learning environment. This will require mental, physical and perhaps emotional effort, both inside and outside the formal classroom.

Active learning involves completing required readings, activities, and/or asynchronous materials prior to class, and engaging in the class session with thoughtful comments, reflections or questions about concepts, readings and assignments. For VAC courses, active learning also includes remaining visibly onscreen throughout the duration of the live session, unless one has the permission of the instructor to mute the screen.

Proactive learning involves assuming responsibility for learning, anticipating workload and challenges, being organized and meeting deadlines, and taking the initiative to reach out to the instructor with any questions or concerns.

Meaningful participation consists of thoughtful and substantive participation that not only contributes to but enhances class discussion and activities. Meaningful participation also includes efforts that **contribute to a positive learning environment**; that is, one that is open, respectful, professional, engaging, fun, challenging, supportive, and effective. “Environment” refers to the formal classroom, small group settings, other settings, in-person or virtual/remote, in which learning, or teaching might occur, including office hours and communications with the instructor and fellow students, and the overall climate and culture of the class.

Please note: Course readings and classroom discussions will often focus on mature, difficult, and potentially challenging topics. As with any course in social work, course topics may at times be political and/or personal in nature. Course content, class discussions, and self-reflection might trigger strong feelings. Every member of the class is responsible for creating a space that is both civil and intellectually rigorous. Even when strongly disagreeing with another’s point of view, it is important to remain respectful and mindful of the ways that personal identities shape lived experiences. Disrespectful language or behavior based on protected class (e.g., ability, age, race, ethnicity, sex,

gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, pregnancy, etc.) disrupts and detracts from the learning environment and will not be tolerated. All such behavior will be reported to the [Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#). An inclusive learning environment values the diversity in the class as an asset to the educational experience. Students should inform the instructor of any concerns that they have in this regard.

Furthermore, it is each student’s responsibility and right to determine how much personal information they disclose in class discussions, activities, and assignments. Students should be aware that complete privacy or confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in an on-line platform or classroom setting. Students also should note that since this is an academic and professional setting, the instructor may follow up with any student that discloses safety concerns. Students are encouraged to review the list of support resources at the end of the syllabus and to contact the instructor with any questions or concerns.

Please refer to the rubric below for the **criteria that will be used to determine the participation grade**. For each of five criteria, between 0 and 2 points can be earned, for a maximum of 10 points.

Criteria	Never or Rarely	Regularly	Often or Always
a. Student demonstrates active learning.	0	1	2
b. Student demonstrates proactive learning.	0	1	2
c. Student meaningfully participates.	0	1	2
d. Student contributes to a positive learning environment.	0	1	2
e. Student’s participation aligns with course expectations inside and outside of the classroom, synchronously and asynchronously.	0	1	2

Grading Scale

Assignment and course grades will be based on the following:

Grade Point Average / Letter Grade		Corresponding Numeric Grade / Letter Grade	
3.85 – 4.00	A	93 – 100	A
3.60 – 3.84	A-	90 – 92	A-
3.25 – 3.59	B+	87 – 89	B+

2.90 – 3.24	B	83 – 86	B
2.60 – 2.87	B-	80 – 82	B-
2.25 – 2.50	C+	77 – 79	C+

Please note: A grade below “C” is considered a failing grade for graduate students at USC.

Within the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work, grades are determined in each class based on the following standards which have been established by the faculty of the School: (1) Grades of A or A- are reserved for student work which not only demonstrates very good mastery of content but which also shows that the student has undertaken a complex task, has applied critical thinking skills to the assignment, and/or has demonstrated creativity in her or his approach to the assignment. The difference between these two grades would be determined by the degree to which these skills have been demonstrated by the student. (2) A grade of B+ will be given to work which is judged to be very good. This grade denotes that a student has demonstrated a more-than-competent understanding of the material being tested in the assignment. (3) A grade of B will be given to student work which meets the basic requirements of the assignment. It denotes that the student has done adequate work on the assignment and meets basic course expectations. (4) A grade of B- will denote that a student’s performance was less than adequate on an assignment, reflecting only moderate grasp of content and/or expectations. (5) A grade of C would reflect a minimal grasp of the assignments, poor organization of ideas and/or several significant areas requiring improvement. (6) Grades between C- and F will be applied to denote a failure to meet minimum standards, reflecting serious deficiencies in all aspects of a student’s performance on the assignment.

IX. Assignment Submissions, Extensions & Extra Credit Policy

By the specified deadlines, assignments should be submitted through the course’s learning management system (LMS). Students are responsible for ensuring successful submission of their assignments and are encouraged to maintain a copy of the submission confirmation for their records.

Prior to the due date, extensions may be granted for extenuating circumstances at the instructor’s discretion. The instructor will confirm an extension and revised due date in writing/email. If the instructor accepts a late submission, it could be marked down for each day late. Assignments submitted more than one week past the posted due date may not be accepted for grading; however, this is at the instructor’s discretion, assuming extenuating circumstances. The instructor may require documentation of the extenuating circumstance in considering an extension request.

Once an assignment is graded, the grade is final, unless there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., error in determining grade, academic integrity violation). Extra credit on an assignment is not permitted. Re-doing an assignment with the expectation that it will be re-graded is not permitted.

X. Grading Timeline

Students should expect grading and feedback from the instructor within two weeks of assignment submission. The instructor will notify students of any extenuating circumstances that might affect this grading timeline.

XI. Statement about Incompletes and In Progress Grades

The grade of Incomplete (IN) can be assigned only if a student is in good standing in the course and there the work left to be completed is due to a documented illness or some other emergency occurring after the 12th week of the semester. Students must NOT assume that the instructor will agree to the grade of IN. Removal of the grade of IN must be instituted by the student and agreed to by the instructor and reported on the official “Incomplete Completion Form.”

XII. Attendance

As a professional school, class attendance and participation are essential to students’ professional training and development at the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. Students are expected to attend every class and to remain in class for the duration of the class. Students cannot actively, proactively, or meaningfully contribute to a positive learning environment if they are not in attendance. Students are expected to notify the instructor by email of any anticipated absence or reason for tardiness.

University of Southern California policy permits students to be excused from class for the observance of religious holy days. This policy also covers scheduled final examinations which conflict with students’ observance of a holy day. Students must make arrangements in advance to complete class work that will be missed or to reschedule an examination, due to holy days observance.

Please refer to the [USC Student Handbook](#) and to the USC School of Social Work Student Handbook for additional information on attendance policies.

XIII. Classroom Norms

Class ground rules help to promote a positive learning environment by specifying behaviors that are encouraged and discouraged. The instructor will facilitate a class discussion to generate mutually agreed upon ground rules for the learning environment.

XIV. Zoom Etiquette and Use of Technology in the Classroom

For campus-based students, the use of laptops, tablets, smart phones during class generally is not recommended. Students may use these devices, however, if doing so contributes to their learning and is not disruptive to others in the class. For both campus and VAC students, permitted uses of technology include using laptops, tablets, smart phones to access course readings and materials, to take notes, and to complete small group activities and discussions. Non-permitted uses of technology include using laptops, tablets, smart phones to check email and social media, and to text or communicate with others who are not members of the class. Use of smart phones during class is not permitted except in an emergency or during a break. To minimize disruptions, students should place their phones on mute or in airplane mode before coming to class.

XV. Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university’s mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for

the course/section in this academic term. Students may not submit work written by others or “recycle” work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the [Office of Academic Integrity \(OAI\)](#).

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the [Student Handbook](#), the [Office of Academic Integrity’s website](#), and [university policies on Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Special Note on the Use of AI Generators

AI generators, such as such as ChatGPT4 and Bard, can be useful tools. However, AI programs do not replace human creativity, originality, and critical thinking. AI text generators also may present incorrect or biased information and incomplete analyses. Within limited circumstances, with instructor permission and proper disclosure and attribution (see [USC Libraries’ generative AI guide](#)), AI generators may be permitted in this course, per the University’s academic integrity regulations. Using these tools without the instructor’s permission, and without proper attribution and disclosure, constitutes a violation of academic integrity and will be reported to the [Office of Academic Integrity](#).

XVI. Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment. Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation, is prohibited. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor (Living our Unifying Values: [The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media (Living our Unifying Values: [The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

XVII. Course Evaluations

The USC Learning Experience evaluation occurs at the end of each semester. This evaluation is an important review of students’ experiences in the class. The process and intent of the end-of-semester evaluation will be discussed in class by your instructor. In addition to the end-of-semester evaluation, a mid-semester evaluation is implemented in the School of Social Work. The process and intent of the mid-semester evaluation also will be discussed by your instructor.

XVIII. Required Textbooks

Jansson, B. (2020). *Social welfare policy and advocacy: Advancing social justice through eight policy sectors*, (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Cross-Denny, Bronwyn (2022). *Integrated Social Work Practice: Bridging Micro, Mezzo and Macro Level Practice*. New York, NY: Cognella.

Additional readings, videos and on-line material will also be assigned and/or handed out on a class-by-class basis, based on daily occurring current events and policy evolutions, as shared by the instructor.

In addition to the required texts, other required readings are available through USC's online reserves system, ARES, and/or in the USC Libraries. A USC email address and password are required to access the system: <https://reserves.usc.edu/ares/ares.dll>. Use the search bar to locate the course by School, course number or Lead Instructor's last name (Mistrano).

XIX. Recommended Materials & Resources

Guides for Academic Integrity, APA Style Formatting, Writing & Research

American Psychological Association (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Publisher.

APA formatting and style guide: The OWL at Purdue.
<https://owl.purdue.edu/>

USC guide to avoiding plagiarism:
<https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/plagiarism>

USC guide to APA 7th writing style <https://libguides.usc.edu/APA7th>

Sample List of Professional Social Work Organizations

National Association of Social Workers. Available at <http://www.naswdc.org>

Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research.
Available at <http://www.iaswresearch.org>

Society for Social Work and Research. Available at <http://www.sswr.org>

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Available at <https://www.cswe.org/>

XX. COURSE SCHEDULE

The table below presents the topics for each unit of instruction. Students are expected to attend class having completed the required reading and, if applicable, the asynchronous course material.

Unit	Topics	Readings	Notes
<p>1 1/14/25</p>	<p>Adequacy, Security and Justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programs to alleviate poverty ▪ Insurances to create security ▪ Policies to create opportunity ▪ Charity vs. Professionalism ▪ The Grand Challenges for Social Work <p><i>First assignment is handed out: Community Assessment</i></p> <p><i>Required readings include the importance of understanding and being able to assess communities as a foundation of social work practice.</i></p>	<p><u>Required Readings:</u></p> <p>Cross-Denny (2023). Integrated Social Work Practice. Chapter 2: The roots of social work practice (pp 29 – 47)</p> <p>Sherraden, M., Barth, R., Brekke, J., et al. (2015). Social is fundamental: Introduction and context for Grand Challenges for Social Work. American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare.</p> <p>Jansson, B (2020). Becoming a policy advocate in eight policy sectors. In Social welfare policy and advocacy: Advancing social justice through eight policy sectors (chapter 1, pp 1 – 21). Sage.</p> <p>Donnelly F. (2020). Placing the census in context. In Exploring the U.S. Census: Your guide to America’s data (pp.1-21). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE</p> <p><u>Suggested Reading/Resources for Research on Community Analysis (in addition to Research Guide provided by the Library):</u></p> <p>1- For information on counties around the country:</p> <p>National Association of Counties - OVERVIEW of counties: https://ce.naco.org/?dset=Gross%20Domestic%20Product%20(GDP)&ind=Gross%20Domestic%20Product</p> <p>2- For easy access to demographic information about the United States, providing interactive data maps going back to 1790:</p> <p>Social Explorer https://www.socialexplorer.com/</p>	
<p>2 1/21/24</p>	<p>Programs to Alleviate Poverty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EITC, TANF, SNAP, Medicaid, Homeless services 	<p><u>Required</u></p> <p>Jansson, B. (2020). Becoming policy advocates in the safety net sector. In</p>	

Unit	Topics	Readings	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History • Scope of need • Adequacy of programs • Role of social workers 	<p><i>Social welfare policy and advocacy: Advancing social justice through eight policy sectors</i> (chapter 9, pp 239 – 283). Sage.</p> <p>Warde, B. (2017). Social inequality. In <i>Inequality in U.S. social policy: An historical analysis</i> (Chap 3, pp. 66-105). Routledge.</p> <p><u>Recommended Reading:</u></p> <p>Politico (2017). The essential guide to legislation. https://www.politicopro.com/blog/guide-to-legislation</p> <p>Jansson, B. (2020). How policy advocates advanced social justice through American history. In <i>Social welfare policy and advocacy: Advancing social justice through eight policy sectors</i> (chapter 3, pp 51-69) Sage.</p> <p>Stiglitz, J.E. (2013). The price of inequality: How today’s divided society endangers our future. Norton.</p>	
<p>3 1/28/25</p>	<p>Paying for Means-tested Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EITC, TANF, SNAP, Medicaid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding levels • Fairness of financing compared with need • Role of social workers 	<p><u>Required Readings:</u></p> <p>DiNitto, D. & Johnson, D. (2016). Helping needy families: An end to welfare as we knew it. In <i>Social Welfare Politics and Public Policy</i> (Chap 7, pp. 237 – 271). Pearson.</p> <p>Wehrmann, K., & McClain, A. (2018). Welfare reform. In <i>Social work speaks: National Association of Social Workers policy statements, 2018-2020</i> (11th ed.) (pp. 337-340). NASW</p>	
<p>4 2/4/25</p>	<p>The Power of Advocacy: Writing, Speaking, and Activism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examples of activism ▪ Communication ▪ Supporting Your Assertions and Assessing Policy <p><i>1st assignment is due; 2nd assignment handed out</i></p> <p>** for VAC, please also view asynchronous videos in unit 9.4 -</p>	<p><u>Required Readings:</u></p> <p>Cross-Denny (2023). Integrated Social Work Practice. Chapter 5: Macro-level client systems. (pp 79 – 89)</p> <p>Jansson, Bruce (2020). Engaging in macro policy advocacy. In <i>Social welfare policy and advocacy: Advancing social justice through eight policy sectors</i> (chapter 6, pp 129 – 152). Sage.</p> <p><u>Recommended Resources:</u></p>	<p>Assignment 1 Due</p>

Unit	Topics	Readings	Notes
	9.7 now as it relates to lobbying and writing for change.	<p>The Op-Ed Project: https://www.theopedproject.org/</p> <p>NASW-CA Advocacy Tools, including tips for writing an op-ed: https://www.naswca.org/page/7</p>	
5 2/11/25	<p>Insurances and Programs to Create Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social Security, SSI, Disability, Unemployment Insurance, Affordable Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History: Security as the Goal • The Creation of Poverty • Why Income Disparity Matters • Scope of need • Adequacy of programs • Role of social workers 	<p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Prime, H., Wade, M., & Browne, D. T. (2020). Risk and resilience in family well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. <i>American Psychologist</i>, 75(5), 631-643.</p> <p>McNutt, J.G. & Hofer, R. (2016). Poverty, inequality, and income maintenance policy. In <i>Social welfare policy: Responding to a changing world</i>. (chapter 8, p. 160-181). Lyceum.</p> <p>Wusinich, C., Bond, L., Nathanson, A., & Padgett, D. (2019). "If you're gonna help me, help me": Barriers to housing among unsheltered homeless adults. <i>Evaluation and Program Planning</i>, 76, 101673-. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2019.101673</p>	
6 2/18/25	<p>Paying for Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social Security, SSI, Disability, UI, Minimum Wages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does Social Security Work? • Funding levels • Fairness of financing compared with need • Role of social workers 	<p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Jansson, B. (2020). Becoming policy advocates in the gerontology sector. In <i>Social welfare policy and advocacy: Advancing social justice through eight policy sectors</i> (chapter 8, p 197 – 233). Sage.</p> <p>Wehrmann, K., & McClain, A. (2018). Aging and wellness. In <i>Social work speaks: National Association of Social Workers policy statements, 2018-2020</i> (11th ed.) (pp. 20-24). NASW Press.</p> <p>Video: The Atlantic: Social Security: The Greatest Government Policy of All Time? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aVQ7PII3IDE</p> <p>Lam, B. (2016). How can the U.S. salvage social security? <i>The Atlantic Monthly</i>. https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/04/social-security/476331/</p>	

Unit	Topics	Readings	Notes
7 2/25/25	Physical Health: Medicare, Affordable Care Act, and Getting on Agendas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ History ▪ Scope of need ▪ Adequacy of programs / ACA reforms ▪ What Does Our Health Care System Look Like? ▪ Unit 7.5 Video: “Sicko” ▪ Building Agendas with Bruce Jansson: Getting on the Agenda 	<p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Berkowitz, E. (2017). Getting to the Affordable Care Act. <i>Journal of Policy History</i>, 29(4), 519-542. https://doi:10.1017/S0898030617000252</p> <p>Jansson, B. (2020). Becoming policy advocates in the healthcare sector. In <i>Social welfare policy and advocacy: Advancing social justice through eight policy sectors</i> (chapter 7, pp 157 – 190). Sage.</p> <p>Wehrmann, K., & McClain, A. (2018). Health care. In <i>Social work speaks: National Association of Social Workers policy statements, 2018-2020</i> (11th ed.) (pp. 146-151). NASW Press.</p>	
8 3/4/25	Behavioral Health: Medicare, Affordable Care Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Historical Overview of Mental Health in the United States ▪ Mental Health Today with required readings presenting data through 2020 ▪ Role of social workers 	<p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Jansson, B. (2020). Becoming policy advocates in the mental health and substance abuse sector. In <i>Social welfare policy and advocacy: Advancing social justice through eight policy sectors</i> (chapter 10, pp 289 – 327). Sage.</p> <p>Schuman, D., Cerel, J., & Praetorius, R. (2019). Suicide in U.S. women veterans: An interpersonal theory perspective on suicide prevention policies. <i>Social Work in Public Health</i>, 34(5), 418–429. https://doi.org/10.1080/19371918.2019.1616028</p> <p>Wildgen, A. & Denny, K. (2020). Health equity’s missing substance: (Re)Engaging the normative in public health discourse and knowledge making. <i>Public Health Ethics</i>. https://doi.org/10.1093/phe/phaa019</p> <p>National Alliance on Mental Illness [NAMI] (2020). Divert to what? Community services that enhance diversion. https://www.nami.org/Support-Education/Publications-Reports/Public-Policy-Reports/Divert-to-What-Community-Services-that-Enhance-Diversion/DiverttoWhat.pdf</p> <p>Recommended Reading</p>	

Unit	Topics	Readings	Notes
		Roth, Alisa. (2018). <i>Insane: America's Criminal Treatment of Mental Illness</i> . New York, NY: Basic Books	
<p>9 3/11/25</p>	<p>Fiscal Systems: Paying for Health Health Care Costs in America</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medicare and Medicaid: How They Are Funded ▪ Unit 9.2 presents trends through 2015, required reading follows trends through 2020, and projections and options currently in discussions on possible future paths. ▪ Medicare and Medicaid: How They Are Funded <p>(VAC: units 9.4-9.7 are viewed during Unit 4, as stated above)</p> <p><i>2nd assignment due, including peer-reviewed in-class group presentations</i></p> <p><i>3rd assignment handed out</i></p>	<p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Bradley, E., Sipsma, H., & Taylor, L. (2016). American health care paradox - high spending on health care and poor health. <i>QJM: Monthly Journal of the Association of Physicians</i>, 110(2), hcw187–. https://doi.org/10.1093/qjmed/hcw187</p> <p>The Commonwealth Fund (2020). International health care system profiles: The United States. https://www.commonwealthfund.org/international-health-policy-center/countries/united-states</p> <p>Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2020). Life Experiences and Income Inequality in the United States. Download full report here: https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2019/12/life-experiences-and-income-inequality-in-the-united-states.html</p>	<p>Assignment 2 Due</p>
<p>10 3/25/25</p>	<p>Power of Advocacy: Case Study of Making Change and Saving Lives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How to Survive a Plague 	<p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Bent-Goodley, T. (2015). A call for social work activism. <i>Social Work</i>, 60(2), 101–103. https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/swv005</p> <p>Hartmann, D. (2019). The Olympic “Revolt” of 1968 and its lessons for contemporary African American athletic activism. <i>European Journal of American Studies</i>. 14 (1). Open Access Journal available here: https://journals.openedition.org/ejas/14335</p> <p>France, D. (2020). The activists: How Act-Up forever changed patients’ rights, protests and American political organizing as it’s practiced today. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/04/13/t-magazine/act-up-aids.html</p>	
<p>11 4/1/25</p>	<p>Programs: Education and Children Initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creating Opportunity: Education 	<p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Gladwell, Malcom. (2009, May 11). How David beats Goliath: When underdogs</p>	

Unit	Topics	Readings	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ K-12, charters, colleges, for-profits ▪ History and videos in unit 11.4 and 11.5 present data through 2015, required readings will present data and trends through 2020. ▪ Scope of need ▪ Adequacy of programs ▪ Unit 11.7 on the role of college “The College’s Life” – important historical reading from William Deresiewicz on “The Neoliberal Arts-- How College Sold Its Soul to the Market.” ▪ Role of social workers 	<p>break the rules. The New Yorker. https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2009/05/11/how-david-beats-goliath</p> <p>Jansson, B. (2020). Becoming policy advocates in the education sector. In Social welfare policy and advocacy: Advancing social justice through eight policy sectors (chapter 12, pp 379 - 420). Sage.</p> <p>Stewart, M. (2018). The birth of the new aristocracy. The Atlantic Monthly. 322 (2) 8-12.</p>	
<p>12 4/8/25</p>	<p>Programs: Education and Children Initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating Opportunity: Child Welfare Initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ History ▪ Scope of need ▪ Adequacy of programs ▪ Historical 2006 Reading in Child Welfare Case: Her Most Difficult Call – The Case for Marie and Her Sons New York Times) ▪ Unit 12.5 Views on Agency Change by Professor Bruce Jansson ▪ Role of social workers 	<p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Jansson, B. (2020). Becoming policy advocates in the child and family sector. In Social welfare policy and advocacy: Advancing social justice through eight policy sectors (chapter 11, pp 333 – 371). Sage.</p> <p>Doyle, J. J., Jr, & Aizer, A. (2018). Economics of child protection: Maltreatment, foster care, and intimate partner violence. Annual Review of Economics, 10, 87–108. Open access available here: https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-economics-080217-053237</p>	
<p>13 4/15/25</p>	<p>Taxation and Government Budget Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic government budgeting at the federal level, including a review of the sources of federal income and its disbursement, and aspects of tax expenditures and loopholes. State budgets may be used, depending on current events and relevance. • Historical data through 2015 is explored in videos, current data through 2020 and trends presented in required readings. • Describe tax policy at the individual level • Examine the role between tax policy and social service 	<p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Jansson, B. (2001). On the magnitude of failed national priorities. In The sixteen-trillion-dollar mistake (chapter 15, pp 349 – 390). Columbia University Press. (For historical context)</p> <p>Musell, R.M. (2020). Understanding government budgets: A guide to practices in the public services (2nd ed.) (chapters 2 and 3, pp 9-36). Routledge.</p>	

Unit	Topics	Readings	Notes
	funding, adequacy, and fairness		
14 4/22/25	The Power of Advocacy: American Society Doing Big Things <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large-scale progress and reform • How Social Workers Engage in Community Organizing • Social Workers and Social Justice: Changing the Policy! 	Required Reading: Bird, M. (2016) Social justice advocacy in the belly of the beast. Journal of Women and Social Work.31 (2), 257-262.	Assignment 3 due Presentations
15 4/29/25	Reforming Budgets – Impacting Agency Budgets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Special Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ In-depth exploration of a special topic currently in the news and relation to the 12 Grand Challenges for Social Work. Examples could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Civil rights – justice for all ○ Women’s issues – including violence against women ○ Immigration ○ Marriage equality ○ Crime – and jail/prison decarceration ○ The 2020 General Election ○ Cultural issues - #BLM and the anti-racism movement 	Required Reading/Audio file: An oral history interview with Suzanne Dworak-Peck (2012). Open access link here: http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15799coll34/id/451/rec/43	Presentations Cont.
	Exam Week – NO CLASS		

XXI. Statement on University Academic and Support Systems

Students and Disability Accommodations

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University’s educational programs. The [Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers in the classroom or in practicum. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course/practicum placement. The LOA must be given to each course/practicum instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible, as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. Students may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Student Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress:

To be eligible for certain kinds of financial aid, students are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward their degree objectives. Visit the [Financial Aid Office webpage](#) for [undergraduate-](#) and [graduate-level](#) SAP eligibility requirements and the appeals process.

Support Systems

Students' health and well-being are important. Reaching out for assistance with physical, emotional, social, academic, spiritual, financial, and professional wellbeing is encouraged. USC has resources and support systems in place to help students succeed. Additional resources can be found on the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work Website at: <https://dworakpeck.usc.edu/student-life/we-care-student-wellness-initiative> or by reaching out to the Student Wellness Coordinator in the SDP Office of Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (sdp.adc@usc.edu).

Counseling and Mental Health Services:

USC offers a variety of mental health services and resources. Students who have opted to pay the student health fee (SHF) can access short-term counseling services, as well as other mental health services, through the USC Counseling & Mental Health Center by calling 213-740-9355 (WELL) 24/7 or visiting the website at <https://sites.usc.edu/counselingandmentalhealth/>.

Students who elected not to pay the student health fee, or who live out-of-state, can visit <https://studenthealth.usc.edu/for-online-students/> for mental health information and resources or contact the Student Wellness Coordinator at sdp.adc@usc.edu for additional support with access to services.

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-2500

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

[USC Emergency](#) - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

[USC Department of Public Safety](#) - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

[Kortschak Center for Learning and Creativity](#) - 213-740-7884, kortschakcenter@usc.edu

The Kortschak Center offers academic coaching and resources.

[The Writing Center](#) - 213-740-3691, writing@usc.edu

The Writing Center offers individualized feedback on any kind of writing.

XXII. List of Appendices

- A. Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work ADEI Statement
- B. Preamble to the NASW Code of Ethics
- C. Tips for Maximizing Your Learning Experience

Appendix A: Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement

At the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work, we aspire to promote anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion in our courses and professional practice. We value the diverse backgrounds and perspectives that our students bring into the classroom as strengths and resources that enrich the academic and learning experience. We offer and value inclusive learning in the classroom and beyond. We integrate readings, materials and activities that are respectful of diversity in all forms, including race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, ability and disability, socioeconomic status, religion, and political perspectives. Collectively, we aspire to co-create a brave space with students and instructors to critically examine individual and collective sources of bias, prejudice, discrimination, and systematic oppression that affect the ability of people and communities to thrive. In this way, we fulfill our professional responsibility to practice the [NASW Code of Ethics](#), abide by the [CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards](#), and address the [American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare, Grand Challenges for Social Work](#).

APPENDIX B: NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS CODE OF ETHICS

Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2017 NASW Delegate Assembly

Preamble

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- service
- social justice
- dignity and worth of the person
- importance of human relationships
- integrity
- competence

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

APPENDIX C: TIPS FOR MAXIMIZING YOUR LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN THIS COURSE

- ✓ Be proactive! TOGETHER, let's do everything we can to make this an educational and enjoyable experience for you. Try to anticipate issues that could present challenges and PLEASE REACH OUT TO ME so that we can problem-solve before rather than after the fact.
- ✓ Be mindful of getting proper nutrition, exercise, rest and sleep!
- ✓ Create a professional self-care plan.
- ✓ Complete required readings, assignments and activities before coming to class.
- ✓ Keep up with the assigned readings and assignments. Don't procrastinate!!

- ✓ Come to class and participate in an active, respectful and meaningful way.
- ✓ Come to class prepared to ask any questions you might have. If you don't understand something, ask questions! Ask questions in class, during office hours, and/or through email!
- ✓ Stay offline while in class.
- ✓ Form study groups with other students in the class or in another section of the class.
- ✓ Take advantage of office hours and extra review/discussion sessions offered by your instructor. Contact me if you are concerned about or are struggling in class.
- ✓ If you believe it is necessary to receive support from a content tutor or Writing Support, please inform or involve me. I want to be able to help and support you in any way possible, but I need to know that you want/need support!! I am also happy to meet with you and your tutor.
- ✓ Keep an open mind and positive attitude!