SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
San Diego State University
SW 720: Civic Engagement and the Social Environment

I. PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION

Civic Engagement and the Social Environment is a core course for Social Work Administration and Community Development students. Civic engagement consists of collective actions designed to address issues of public concern. It can take many forms: from volunteerism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. It can include efforts to directly address an issue, work with others in a community to solve a problem, or interact with the institutions of representative democracy. Civic engagement encompasses a range of activities such as setting up a neighborhood improvement organization, registering residents to vote, or gathering likeminded people and organizations to advocate for policy change. This course will emphasize the importance of building social capital (positive helping relationships) through community practice techniques. Students will learn how to value the role of civic engagement, and to engage clients and communities to undertake collective action, going beyond solely services provision. Further, community development and evaluation skills will be addressed through the completion of a grant application project.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

NOTE: Practice Behaviors are from the Association for Community Organization and Social Administration.

EPAS 1: Ethical and Professional Behavior
   a) Promote inclusive communities and organizations [papers]
   b) Apply ethical reasoning in promoting human rights and social justice in assessment, intervention and evaluation of organizational and community practice [papers, presentation, and participation]

EPAS 2: Diversity and difference
   a) recognize diversity through multiple factors including age, race, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, religion, political ideology, immigration status, sex and sexual orientation and how these differences can influence oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim in communities and organizations [papers and presentation]
EPAS 3: Social justice and human rights  
  a) Describe the global interconnections of oppression, and theories and strategies to promote social justice and human rights [papers, presentation, and participation]  
b) appreciate the unique dimensions that cultural, environmental, urban, and rural contexts bring to communities and organizations and those engaged in these macro systems [papers and presentation]  
c) Recommend and evaluate interventions that enhance the connectivity of persons to the communities and organizations that improve their lives as demonstrated by their understanding of issues affecting the macro system and their involvement, or willingness to be civically engaged [papers and presentation]

EPAS 4: Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice  
  a) Use best practice research to develop and implement community and organizational interventions

EPAS 5: Policy practice  
  a) Analyze policies from historical, current, and global perspectives with particular understanding of the role of social, economic, and political forces on policy formulation, and the implications for less powerful and oppressed groups [papers and presentation]

EPAS 6: Engagement  
  a) Facilitate and strengthen the development of civic society and grassroots community groups that are most often excluded from community decision making [papers, presentation, and participation]  
b) Skillfully and respectfully establish working relationships with clients and community partners in accord with social work values, and utilize relationships in forging goals and positive outcomes (CP) [papers and presentation]

EPAS 7: Assessment  
  a) Strategically plan organizational and community change and development relative to improved social, economic, political and environmental well-being [papers and presentation]

EPAS 8: Intervention  
  a) Demonstrate leadership and skill in working with communities and community based organizations in areas such as organizing, planning, collaboration, sustainable development and progressive/effective change, measured through self-assessment, field assessment, and curriculum assessment [papers and presentation]

III. TEXTBOOKS AND READINGS  

Recommended supplemental books (not required):


Readings on Blackboard:


IV. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Grant Proposal Assignment: Identification, analysis, planning, and community practice. The following assignments are to be conducted individually for Part 1, and in groups (e.g., 3-4 people) or individually for Parts 2 & 3.
Part 1. Community Practice Grant Proposal Specific Aims or Letter of Intent (LOI) (1-2 pages, single spaced, Arial font 11 pt.) Due by Oct. 2 midnight (Email to the Instructor).

Each student will examine their internship site or service agency of their choice and analyze the ways the organization engages the internal (e.g. staff, current clients, board members, volunteers) and external community (e.g. non-client populations, external partners, referral sources).

Paper should include the following headings:

A. **Background**: What is the organization’s mission, history, and a summary of current services and programs. (Does it address oppression, social justice, and human rights on any level?)

   **Community Engagement v. Direct Service**: How does civic engagement play a role in carrying out this mission, if at all? What tools, methods, and strategies does the organization utilize to gather community input or bring people together to provide input on programs and services? Identify specific projects the organization or program is doing or has done to bring community members together BEYOND DIRECT SERVICE. *This section should display your understanding of the difference between direct service and civic engagement. Include discussion of the ways the organization engages the internal (e.g. staff, current clients, board members, volunteers) and external community (e.g. non-client populations, external partners, referral sources).*

B. **Statement of Issue/Proposed Actions/Methods**: Briefly state your proposed project, method, and method of analysis. Propose a way the organization would involve the greater community in its efforts.

C. **Policy**: Include one policy, law, or piece of legislation (national, state, or local) that may affect the organization OR the population OR geographic community the organization serves. Talk briefly about how this policy may have an effect on the organization, and how your grant proposal is in line with or will address the effects of a policy’s aims, e.g. White House’s 2010 National HIV/AIDS Strategy. Include the policy number and information on the policy/legislation, e.g. California Assembly Bill 109 (AB 109) affects current non-violent, non-serious, and non-sex offenders, who after they are released from California State prison, are to be supervised at the local County level. Instead of reporting to state parole officers, these offenders are to report to local county probation officers. *(Note: although this class is not a policy class, it is important to recognize how laws affect our work as social workers. Even if we may not fully understand the details of a policy or law, we should be able to recognize it may affect our organizations and/or the people we serve). This will give a broader context to the grant proposal and how what you propose may have an impact on the community the agency serves.*

D. **Include how your proposal addresses a Grand Challenge of Social Work.**

Part 2. Full Grant Proposal. Students will choose an assignment from Part 1 to do as a group (or individually), and submit ONE paper with all group members’ names on the paper. Paper should be **no longer than 12 pages, single-spaced**, 11 pt. font in Arial, APA Format, with the following headings. Students should identify a potential funder and attach the mission of the funder, and as an option, follow the format of the funder (if it’s comparable to the below page length/suggested headings) and attach the funder’s guidelines for the proposal (not included in page count). Worth 45% of final grade. **Due by Dec. 11, midnight (Email to the Instructor).**
A. Revised Specific Aims or LOI (1-2 pages)
B. Significance & Innovation (1-2 pages)
C. Design/Methods and Method of Analysis (6 pages)
D. Budget and Budget Justification (2 pages)
E. Ethical Conduct and Timeline (1 page)

Part 3. Oral Presentation (25% of grade)

Each presentation should include a visual presentation (PowerPoint) outlying all parts of the grant proposal. Each group member should speak. Length will depend on the number of groups presenting and number of group members in each group. Presentations will have an opportunity to receive critical feedback and discussion from the instructor, peers, and an expert panel.

Attendance

Gaining macro practice skills is a very serious process that requires thought, analysis and inquisitiveness. All students are expected to attend every class, be on time, alert, considerate of fellow students and inquisitive. More than two full absences (4 half sessions) will result in an automatic reduction of your attendance grade to 0%.

| Community Practice Paper Proposal Aims or LOI | 25% |
| Full Proposal | 45% |
| Oral Presentation | 25% |
| Class attendance | 5% |
| **100%** |

Grading

All papers will be graded on their responsiveness to the assignment requirements and formats.

- **Content:** accurate, comprehensive, documented appropriately
- **Persuasiveness:** points are adequately supported
- **Appropriateness & feasibility:** ideas are viable
- **Creativity:** ideas and connections among themes are creative and insightful
- **Organization, completeness, coherence & clarity:** different elements are appropriately sequenced and connected; thoughts are stated specifically
- **Sentence structure, grammar, & spelling:** sentences convey meaning clearly with correct grammar; no fragments or run-on sentences; writing is free of spelling and punctuation errors
- **Style:** interesting, imaginative use of language; tone suitable to purpose and audience

Writing standards are based on what would be expected in a professional document such as a program proposal or a report to executives, a governing board, or community groups. Written feedback may not be provided on deficiencies in style, grammar, etc. Examples of common problems include mixing up words (affect and effect), improper use of singulars and plurals (e.g., criteria, criterion), and improper punctuation (e.g., it's, its'). If you are weak in any of these areas, consult William Strunk & E. B. White's *The Elements of Style*, an editor, or a similar source.
Grading Policies

Grades will be based on criteria and standards of the Graduate Bulletin and the School of Social Work Grading Policy documented in the Graduate Student Handbook. (See the School of Social Work website for a copy of the Graduate Student Handbook or the Graduate Bulletin site under University Policies at: http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/catalog/bulletin/)

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Late papers

Late papers will have the grade lowered one step (e.g., from B to C) for each week they are late (partial changes, i.e., + or -, will be used for fractions of the first week). Work incomplete at the end of the semester will receive an F unless prior arrangements are made.

V. COURSE POLICIES

SDSU Faculty Senate Disability Policy

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Accommodation for Religious Observances

Students will be allowed to complete examinations or other requirements in advance of a religious observance. However, it is the student’s responsibility to contact me in advance so that I can make the necessary arrangements.

For DACA students (“Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals”)

Feel free to contact Jessica Robinson, MSW, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, College of Health and Human Services, for added support. Her on campus location is ED-154, 619-594-6151, email: jmrobinson@mail.sdsu.edu
Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is an act in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation, uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise, forges or falsifies academic documents or records, intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others, engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance, or assists other students in any of these acts.

Academic misconduct, including plagiarism, is a serious offense in academia and will be treated according to the university policy, as written in the SDSU catalog/Graduate Bulletin. Any Academic misconduct, including plagiarism infractions, will be reported to the SDSU Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities as is mandated by the CSU Chancellor.

If you are unsure as to what is plagiarism: Students can take the 30-minute pre- and post- online quiz: SDSU Plagiarism: The crime of intellectual property by SDSU librarian Pamela Jackson, found at: http://infotutor.sdsu.edu/plagiarism/index.cfm.

For more information visit the Office of Student Rights and Responsibility: http://studentaffairs.sdsu.edu/srr/academics1.html

VI. COURSE TOPICS AND OUTLINE

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Civic Engagement &amp; Community practice for social workers</td>
<td>8/28</td>
<td>Blackboard: Nurius, Preparing professional degree students to tackle Grand Challenges: A framework for aligning social work curricula</td>
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<td>The Grand Challenges for Social Work</td>
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<td>VP of Community Relations job announcement (United Way, San Diego)</td>
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<td>Weil Ch. 7 Evolution, Models, and the Changing Context of Community Practice &amp; Weil Ch. 1 Introduction</td>
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<td>Getting Funded, Ch. 1 (Ensuring Organizational Readiness)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Labor Day- No class</td>
<td>9/4</td>
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| 3 | Human Service programs and the potential for civic engagement  
Cultural Responsiveness  
Guest Speakers: Makeda Cheatom, Executive Director and Founder, WorldBeat Cultural Center  
N. Diane Moss, Managing Director Project New Village | 9/11 | Weil Ch. 19 Cultural Competency  
Blackboard: Rusch, Rethinking Bridging: risk and trust in Multiracial community organizing  
Getting Funded: Ch. 2 (Defining the need) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Assessing Communities:  
Asset based development vs. needs assessments  
Community Organizing Models:  
Conflict Organizing  
Consensus Organizing  
& Combined approaches  
Critical examinations of the social capital theory | 9/18 | Weil: Ch. 5 Theories of Community  
Weil: Ch. 6 Applying Practice Theories in Community Work  
Weil Ch. 10 The Practice of Community Organizing: Comparing and Contrasting Conflict and Consensus Approaches  
Blackboard: Szreter & Woolcock, Health by association? Social capital, social theory, and the political economy of public health  
Getting Funded: Ch. 3 (Designing your project) & Ch. 15 (Crafting Letters of Inquiry) |
| 5 | Developing Organizing Capacity  
Faith based community organizing  
Relational Building, Bridging, Establishing trust as an organizer  
Social action: Nancy Gannon Hornberger, President and CEO, SAY San Diego | 9/25 | Weil: Ch. 32 The Role of Human Service Nonprofits in Promoting Community Building  
Blackboard: Stall and Stoecker, Community Organizing or Organizing Community? Gender and the crafts of empowerment  
Getting Funded, Ch. 4 (Identifying potential funders) |
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
<th>Reading Material</th>
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| 6    | Evidence-based community practice | 10/2 | Specific Aims/ LOI due by midnight. Email it directly to the instructor.  
Weil: Ch. 14 Participatory Methods in Community Practice  
Weil: Ch. 38 Community-Based Research  
Getting Funded, Ch. 5 (Deciding how to fund your project) |
| 7    | Politics and Political Participation  
Identifying Stakeholders | 10/9 | Blackboard: Edwards, Our People Are still Resisting  
Getting Funded, Ch. 6 (Finding a suitable funding match), Ch. 7 (Making a good first impression) |
| 8    | Local Associations and Organizations | 10/16 | Weil: Ch. 39 Community practice in the digital age  
Getting Funded, Ch. 12 (Developing the project budget) |
| 9    | Advocacy, Coalitions | 10/23 | Weil: Ch. 17 Coalitions, Collaborations, Partnerships  
Blackboard: Ishimaru, From Heroes to Organizer (Social capital case study)  
Getting Funded, Ch. 8 (Preparing to write) |
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| 10   | Ethics in community practice | 10/30 | Weil: Ch. 9 Sustainable Community Development  
Getting Funded, Ch. 9 (Composing the need statement), Ch. 17 (Investing in ongoing relationships) |
| 11   | Building Leadership | 11/6  | Weil: Ch. 20 Principles, Skills, and Practice Strategies  
Getting Funded, Ch. 10 (Writing the project description) |
| 12   | Grantsmanship | 11/13 | Getting Funded, Ch. 11 (Designing an evaluation plan), Ch. 16 (Reviewing and submitting your proposal) |
| 13   | Presentations | 11/20 | Getting Funded, Ch. 13 (Establishing your qualifications) |
| 14   | Presentations | 11/27 | Getting Funded, Ch. 14 (Preparing supplemental documents) |
| 15   | Grantsmanship Community Panel (TBD):  
Rosario Martinez-Iannacone, Program Director, Price Philanthropies | 12/4  | Getting Funded, Appendix A. Proposal Development Checklist  
Submit revised specific aims/LOI & budget for panel feedback. |
| 16   | FINAL DAY  
Case Study Review for Comp Exams | 12/11 | Haggerty, Translating Grand Challenges from concept to community: The “Communities in Action” Experience  
Weil, Ch. 25 Creating a model children’s service system: Lessons learned from San Francisco  
**Final Grant Proposal due by midnight. Email it directly to the instructor along with your powerpoint presentation.** |