Central Michigan University
SWK 450WI
Spring 2025

Course Title:	Social Welfare Policy and Services II - WI
Instructor:	Lissa M. Schwander, LMSW, PhD
Schedule:	Tuesday, 5:30pm – 8:20pm; Anspach 155
Office:	Anspach 034E
Office Hours:	Office Hours by arrangement
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I. Bulletin Description: Analysis and evaluation of social policies and social welfare services. Emphasis on social action, social and economic justice and impact on at-risk groups.

II. Prerequisites, Pre/Co-requisites, Co-requisites, Recommended: Prerequisites: Admitted to the Social Work Program; SWK 250; SOC 221 OR 302; SWK 470. Co-requisite: SWK 480

III. Required Textbooks and Reference Material:

Myers-Lipton, S. (2023). *Change! A student guide to social action*. Routledge.
Netting, F. E., McMurtry, S.L., Thomas, M. L., & Ivery, J. (2022). Social work macro practice, 7th edition. Pearson.

Additional readings: There will be some additional reading provided by the professor and/or peers and guest speakers. These may be handed out in class, available in course reserves, and/or posted on blackboard

IV. Student Learning Objectives:

Social Work is a professional degree program; professional employment in this field often requires licensure. In the State of Michigan social work professionals must have a degree from a college program that has been accredited by Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). To be fully licensed, one must pass a standardized exam and have 2+ years of professional work experience after the degree is earned. A person with a BSW may be employed for "generalist practice".

Social Work 450 is nearly the last step to becoming a professional social worker, as it is among the senior level courses required in the CSWE accredited program at Central Michigan University. CSWE accreditation standards require faculty to teach students to perform 10 competencies and CMU embeds understanding of rural settings into course content. You can learn more about all the competencies and practice behaviors by reading the Social Work Student Handbook by clicking the ink below:

https://www2.cmich.edu/colleges/class/SASW/SocialWork/Documents/SWK_Student_Handbook.pdf

What is unique about SOWK 450 is that **students do macro social work practice as social action rather than just learn about it.** In a traditional course on macro social work practice, students read about theories of social change, analyze social problems, read about campaigns, develop an abstract understand of concepts, all with the professor being the "sage on the stage". In this experiential macro social change action model, students read about theories of social change and apply it to real world campaigns, as well as define a social problem and develop concrete, quantifiable solutions (i.e., demands).

In this experiential macro social change action model, students choose and lead campaigns and are transformed through direct experience of democracy, all with the professor being a "guide on the side" where they are de-centered and cocreators of knowledge. A key part of the macro social change action model is that students have the opportunity to enact a policy (i.e., a rule, regulation, norm, or practice of an institution) on campus or in the community, with the students choosing and developing the campaigns on their own rather than assigned by the instructor. Another exciting part of this course is that you will hear directly from students from other school (via videos) about their social action campaigns. Another key feature of the

macro social change action model is the topic and flow of the course. The motto of this model is "On Your Mark, Go, Get Set." To launch the campaigns by mid-semester, students go through the issue development process (identifying demands and targets) in the opening days of the class. By choosing the campaigns by the 3rd or 4th class, students have enough time to learn about all of the necessary aspects of social change, and then to launch a campaign by the eighth or ninth week, and still have almost half a semester to do several actions.

In Social Work 450, we will meet the above criteria by covering the following learning objectives

1. Apply the NASW Code of Ethics to social workers' historical and current responsibilities to engage in social and political action; to promote social and economic justice; to address social problems; and to engage in services evaluation.
2. Identify, analyze, and utilize governmental and other credible statistical data sources, including local, regional, state and national demographic data and apply it to social justice action.
3. Develop an advocacy plan/social action campaign involving disadvantaged or disenfranchised groups focused on their strengths as sources of empowerment.
4. Demonstrate effective understanding and use of tasks groups and identify strategies for maximizing the effectiveness of task group.
5. Explain and apply multiple policy advocacy skills and understand policy practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro practice levels.
6. Compare & contrast client, cause, legislative, and administrative advocacy.
7. Understand, identify, and/or carry out a social action and/or advocacy campaign.
8. Demonstrates critical thinking and application of person-in-environment perspective and social theories/frameworks to social problems and social policy.
9. Develop, launch and implement a social action campaign to initiate a new policy or modify an existing policy that affects an at-risk or oppressed population.
10. Apply the generalist social work practice planned-changed process for analyzing a social problem and developing a macro-level change effort to address it.
11. Describe the rationale for creating a new or modifying an existing policy in the context of social work practice or NASW policy statements.
12. Compare and contrast social welfare policy and services of at least one other country and the United States.
13. Discuss and critically analyze an empirically tested social welfare policy and/or service evaluation drawn from the empirical literature.

V. TEACHING METHODS/CLASS FORMAT: In order to achieve the course objectives, a multi-modal approach to teaching will be used. With the macro social change action model in mind, a typical class involves the following: (a) a student doing a 1-2 minute organizational rap (i.e., who, what, why, where, and when of a campaign), (b) a mini-lecture by the professor of the reading, (c) large and small group discussion, in-class exercises, (d) viewing educational videos from past student campaigns and other sources, and (e) group work on their campaigns. These activities are designed to de-center the faculty, empower students to believe that social action is possible, and to give students the opportunity to be active participants in their education.

VI. Course Requirements and Assignments:

Achievement of course objectives require: a) attendance, b) participation in class exercises and discussions, c) reading required course material, d) applying content learned in foundation and introductory social work courses, and e) successful completion of the following:

a. **<u>Class Attendance & Participation (15 points)</u>:** As it is with organizations, your presence matters. This course uses both group-based and project-based learning and attendance and participation in both are necessary. The expectation is that you will be present, on time, and prepared to work in this class. The only absences that will not be penalized are those for medical or legal reasons and you must have appropriate documentation. Students are expected to attend the entire class. The purpose of evaluating your participation is to encourage and reward students who prepare for, and engage in, the habits of the mind. Thus, you will be evaluated on the extent and quality of your participation in the class. Your classroom participation grade will be based on the following criteria:

Excellence (A)-15 Points: requires that you play a leadership role in the large class discussion and your team, apply the text, discuss points articulately and respond intelligently to other's views; ask insightful questions, and take responsibility for the direction of the class discussion and your team.
Above average (B)-10 points: requires that you participate regularly in the large class discussion and your team, demonstrate good knowledge of the text, discuss points articulately and respond intelligently to other's views; ask insightful questions, but you do not take a strong leadership role in the overall class discussion and the direction of your team.
Average (C)- 7.5 points: requires that you follow the discussion in the large class and your team, make occasional comments, have a basic knowledge of the text, and sometimes ask questions in the large group and team.
Below average (D)- 5 points: requires that you occupy a seat and occasionally show signs of life.
Failure (F) 0 points: requires that you occupy a seat but show no signs of life.

At the end of the course, you will be asked to evaluate your level of participation, as well as your teammates. This evaluation will be taken seriously when participation grades are determined.

PROGRAM ATTENDANCE POLICY: Due to the nature of social work classes and the work and competencies addressed in class, extended absences from class, for any reason, may result in the inability of a student to complete the requirements of the class and/or program. Generally speaking, the SWK program policy is as follows: for classes meeting once time per week, any absence beyond one will result in lost points. For classes meeting two times per week, any absence beyond two will result in lost points. Please contact your professor for any extenuating circumstances. It is your responsibility to maintain communication with your professor. Singular, absence from class due to Covid/quarantine and/or any other personal or health related issue are not "excused" absences and may result in lost attendance/participation points. Please reach out to me as soon as possible if you experience a prolonged absence for any reason, best efforts will be made to accommodate such absences.

b. **Campaign Portfolio Work and Log (100 points)**: At the university, you generally demonstrate that you understand the ideas from the course in an exam. This class is different. In this class, portfolios take the place of exams. Importantly, the portfolio is where you demonstrate your knowledge of the text in light of your macro social action experiences. Therefore, you must integrate the text with your community work throughout each portfolio. With no integration of text, you cannot receive above a C on your portfolio. You can talk to your teammates, but all of the portfolios will be your own work. In addition, you will most likely not receive higher than a C on your overall portfolio grade if you do not complete at least 25 hours of macro social action work (1.5 to 2 hours a week). Please use the log document on Blackboard to keep track of your community work, and then turn it in with the portfolios. You will submit your portfolio and log every three to four weeks.

All students will be involved in macro social action. This will require a minimum of 1½ to 2 hours per week of campaign work (**25 hours minimum over 16 weeks,** with about one half of the time DOING something, that is, doing campaign activities (e.g., tabling, fliering, giving organization raps) or campaign actions (marches, rallies, street theater, etc.). If you do not do at least 25 hours this semester, you will most likely not receive a grade higher than a C on your overall portfolio grade, since it is difficult to do reflection if you are not doing campaign activities and actions. Of course, if you want to do more campaign work, that is great. FYI:

The course reading has been reduced to offset the 25 hours of campaign work. It will be possible to do your social action on campus, so all students should be able to work it into your schedule. In addition, class time will be dedicated to your social action campaign, so you will be able to do some of your organizing in class. During the second through fourth classes, you will brainstorm various ideas for a social action campaign, and then you will choose one to work on.

The requirements for the campaign are: (i) that you have a minimum of 3 students on your team, (ii) you have passion for the issue, and (iii) your campaign tries to change some type of policy. The campaign you choose to work on may come from a liberal, conservative, social democrat, or libertarian perspective…or it may have no ideology. Whatever campaign you choose to do, give it your best effort and know that you can make positive change happen.

Importantly, there is no political indoctrination, as students develop and choose what campaigns to work on and can change campaigns at any point in the semester. Furthermore, my role is to offer guidance about strategy and tactics,

and to help students consider the variety of options available, with the students deciding on how to best move forward.

If for some reason a student wants to leave a group, please contact the professor. At that time, the student and professor will discuss what group you would like to join. After the student makes a choice, I will contact the other group. If the group believes there will be little disruption to the group, then the student is able to join. However, if the group feels that there would a disruption to the group due to possible lack of trust and transparency issues, or negative behavior by the student, that group has the right to say no. If the student still wants to join the group even after the student group has said that it would cause a disruption, the professor will make the final decision, as I am ultimately in charge of the classroom environment. Personally, I am fine with any student joining another group if it would cause minimum disruption to the group. At the same time, I am not okay if by a student joining the group, it would cause disruption to the group. As professor, I am responsible for the classroom environment, and I will base my decision on the impact to the classroom environment. If the student has no group to join, then the student will be given an independent study with no negative repercussions to her/his/their grade.

c. **Campaign Presentation and Binder (45 points):** For the final exam, students give a group presentation on your macro social change action campaign. In addition, your group will turn in a campaign binder, which will be evaluated. The binder will be used by future students when they choose their campaigns

d. **4 Scholarly Article Summary (40 points):** Students will write at least a **200 words** summary to each scholarly article that is a required reading and relate it to the corresponding chapter for each week. Your summary can include:

What was the central thesis (purpose) of the paper?
What stood out to you as insightful and applicable to the future of your work as a social worker from the paper?
Of what relevance is the paper to the topic of discussion on our textbook this week?
What questions or recommendations do you have regarding the topic of focus in this paper?
You must also respond to at least one classmate post. **7.5 points** for original response, and **2.5 point for classmate response** of at least **50 words. Article Summary and Responses will be submitted via Blackboard**

VI. Course and University Policies and Resources: It is your responsibility to read and understand these policies.

a. **Departmental Policy Relevant to SWK 450:** The School of Politics, Society, Justice and Public Service is committed to social justice and diversity and to the application of research to solve real world problems. In addition, the department is dedicated to teaching excellence and the promotion of critical thinking as mechanisms for encouraging social justice, diversity, and the solution of social problems.

b. **Class Cancelations:** If class needs to be cancelled for any reason including weather, I will post a group e-mail notification using Blackboard, as early on the given day as possible. Check your "cmich.edu" e-mail account if you have any questions about whether class might or might not be canceled. Or consider being sure your “cmich.edu” address is synced with your phone.

c. **Use of Blackboard and Microsoft Teams:** Blackboard and Microsoft Teams will be the primary mediums of communication. All course material will be posted to Blackboard. Microsoft Teams may be used for small group discussions and meetings with Professor Schwander. It is your responsibility to make sure you have access to the appropriate and necessary technology. Computers are available in the library.

d. **Copies of Assignments:** It is your responsibility to retain a copy of any materials that you email to the instructor.

e. **Blackboard/Safe Assign:** Written assignments are to be submitted via Blackboard and/or Safe Assign unless otherwise noted. Use of Safe Assign will be covered in class prior to the date on which assignments are due. Technical questions can be directed to the Help Desk (989) 774-3662.

f. **Communication Policies:** The following communication policy outlines behaviors that are and are not appropriate in all methods of communication in the online class environment. Any questions about this policy should be addressed to the instructor.

When communicating online, DO:

- Ask questions about class material
- Ask questions about assignments
- Respond to other students' postings in a way that will provoke conversation
- Reply to postings when you are addressed and generally display behaviors that encourage conversation

When communicating online, DO NOT:

- Use offensive or abusive language
- Mock or make derogatory comments about anyone else's posting
- Display inappropriate pictures or graphics
- Leave a posting that is addressed to you unanswered
- Hesitate to post a question that you have – remember, many students may have the same question but are too afraid to ask so you are benefiting them as well by posting it.
- Classroom Civility/Etiquette

Each student is encouraged to help create an environment that promotes learning, dignity, and mutual respect for everyone. This applies to all aspects of the class, particularly communication and interactions. Students who use offensive language, are verbally abusive, display deference or disrespect to others, post inappropriate or offensive pictures or comments, or exhibit other inappropriate behaviors in the online class environment may be subjected to disciplinary action under the Code of Students Rights, Responsibilities, and Disciplinary Procedures.

g. **Religious Holidays:** If an academic or work requirement conflicts with your religious practices and/or observances, you may request reasonable accommodations. Your request must be in writing, and your instructor or supervisor will review the request.

h. **Disability Accommodations:** Central Michigan University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Sect 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you have a disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please register with the Office of Student Disability Services (Park Library, Room 120, 989-774-3018) and contact me with a letter of accommodations as soon as possible. Retroactive requests for accommodations will not be honored. For more, see https://www.cmich.edu/ess/studentaffairs/SDS/Pages/default.aspx.

i. **Late Assignments**: All papers and assignments are due on the date indicated on the syllabus or on the date agreed upon by the group & the professor. Assignments turned in late may be accepted but will assess a penalty at the instructor's discretion.

j. **Incomplete Grades:** A grade of incomplete ("I") will not be given unless the student contacts the instructor and makes special arrangements for making up the required work. In addition to fulfilling other required criteria, only emergency situations that prevent a student from completing the course will warrant consideration of an "I" grade.

k. **Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)/Plagiarism/Copying:**

Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. Social work requires clear, affective writing that often happens in real time with clients. Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, **AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism**. (Adapted from Texas Tech University Teaching, Learning, & Professional Development Center)

Academic honesty is required at all times. Use of AI/Plagiarism/copying may result in the your receiving a failing grade for the course. These rules also apply to information obtained from the Internet. CMU's Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: https://www.cmich.edu/copyright/usage/Pages/Plagiarism.aspx. This link will be posted on Blackboard in the "Course Materials" section. Students will be expected read, understand and comply with it throughout the course.

l. **I am identified as a "Designated Official"** under CMU's Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct policy. However, because this course falls under an exception to the policy, I do not have to report incidents of sexual and gender-

based misconduct made during classroom discussion or in writing assignments made as part of this class only. You may still choose to report dating violence, domestic violence and intimate partner violence, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, or stalking to CMU's Title IX Coordinator. CMU's Title IX Coordinator can be reached at titleix@cmich.edu or 989-774-3253.

m. **Sexual Misconduct Policy: Please see full document posted on Blackboard under Syllabus|Outline|Grading.**

n. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** CMU, SPSJPS and the Social Work program are committed to creating a culture of belonging. To read more about this commitment, visit this site: https://www.cmich.edu/offices-departments/institutional-diversity-equity-inclusion

o. **Other Policies:** Other course policies are described in course assignments and may be elaborated or defined by the instructor during class. The instructor reserves the right to make policy exceptions.

XII. Grading Information:

Assignment Grading:

Class attendance and participation	15 points
Campaign Portfolio Work and Log	100 points
Campaign Presentation and Binder	45 points
4 Scholarly Article Summary	40 points
Total Points	

Final Grade Determination Based on Points Earn

95% and above = A	84% - 86% = B	74% - 76% = C	64% - 66% = D
90% – 94% = A-	80% - 83% = B-	70% - 73% = C-	60% - 63% = D-
87% - 89% = B+	77% - 79% = C+	67% - 69% = D+	Below 60% = E

XIII. Course Schedule: The schedule is subject to change, students will be informed of any changes.

	Topic & Activities	**Readings**	**Assignments**
Week 1 January 14	• Introduction, review syllabus, course expectations.	NONE	NONE
Week 2 January 21	• An Introduction to Macro Practice in Social Work	**Textbooks:** Netting Chapter 1, Myers-Lipton Chapter 1	NONE
Week 3 January 28	• Understanding Communities • Setting the Tone	**Textbooks:** Netting Chapter 4, Myers-Lipton chapter 2 **Scholarly Article**: Reisch, M. (2017). Why macro practice matters. Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance, 41(1), 6–9.	Submit Scholarly Article Discussion Post via Blackboard**, Sunday, February 2 by 11:59pm** Submit Portfolio 1 Online via Blackboard**, Sunday, February 2 by 11:59pm**
Week 4 February 4	• Assessing Communities • Change Theory	**Textbooks:** Netting Chapter 5, Myers-Lipton Chapter 3	Submit Portfolio 2 via Blackboard **Sunday, February 9, by 11:59pm**
Week 5 February 11	• Assessing Human Service Organizations • Building Power • Research	**Textbooks**: Netting Chapter 8, Myers-Lipton Chapters 4 & 5 **Scholarly Article**: Alexander, B. N. (2020). Leading collective action to address wicked problems. Nonprofit Management and Leadership, 30, 445–465.	Submit Scholarly Article Discussion via Blackboard**, Sunday, February 16 by 11:59pm** Submit Portfolio 3 via Blackboard**, Sunday, February 16 by 11:59pm**
Week 6 February 18	• Designing and Building Support for an Intervention • Group Dynamics	**Textbooks**: Netting Chapter 9, Myers-Lipton Chapter 6	Submit Portfolio 4 via Blackboard**, Sunday, February 23 by 11:59pm**
Week 7 February 25	• Selecting Appropriate Strategies & Tactics • Strategy & Tactics • Campaign Kickoff	**Textbooks:** Netting Chapter10; Myers-Lipton Chapters 7 & 8 **Scholarly Article**: Hyde,	Submit Scholarly Article Discussion Post via Blackboard**, Sunday, March 2 by 11:59pm**

	•	C. A. (2018). Leading from below: Low power actors as organizational change agents. Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance, 42:1, 53–67.	Submit Portfolio 5 via Blackboard**, Sunday, March 2 by 11:59pm**
Spring Break March 1-7			
Week 8 March 11	• Planning and Implementing an Intervention Campaign Plan •	**Textbooks**: Netting Chapter 11; Myers-Lipton Chapter 9	Submit Portfolio 6 via Blackboard**, Sunday, March 16 by 11:59pm**
Week 9 March 18	• Monitoring and Evaluating the Intervention • The Hero's and Shero's Journey •	**Textbooks**: Netting Chapter 12; Myers-Lipton Chapter 11 **Scholarly Article**: Edwards, K., Praetorius, T., & Nielsen, A. P. (2020). A model of cascading change: Orchestrating planned and emergent change to ensure employee participation. Journal of Change Management, 20(4), 342–368.	Submit Scholarly Article Discussion Post via Blackboard**, Sunday, March 23 by 11:59pm**
Week 10 March 25	• Group Campaign Work	**Group Campaign Activities Watch Videos**	Submit Portfolio 7 via Blackboard**, Sunday, March 30 by 11:59pm**
Week 11 April 1	• Group Campaign Work	**Group Campaign Activities Watch Videos**	Submit Portfolio 8 via Blackboard**, Sunday, April 6 by 11:59pm**
Week 12 April 8	• Group Campaign Work	**Group Campaign Activities Watch Videos**	Submit Portfolio 9 via Blackboard**, Sunday, April 13 by 11:59pm**

Week 13 April 15	• Group Campaign Work	**Group Campaign Activities Watch Video**	Submit Portfolio 10 via Blackboard**, Sunday, April 20 by 11:59pm**
Week 14 April 22	• NO CLASS (Use it to prep for your Group presentations and finish your group binder)	**Work on Your Group Presentation & Binder**	**NONE**
Week 15 April 29	• **PRESENTATIONS**	NONE	**In-Class Group Presentation** All presentation Slides and Campaign Binder by **Tuesday, April 29, by 5:00pm**
FINALS WEEK	• **PRESENTATIONS – If needed**	**In-Class Group Presentation**	**NONE**