Semester/Year: Spring 2021  
Course Title: Mental Health Policy and Social Justice  
Course Prefix/Number/Section: SOCW 5353 (formerly SOCW 6319)-001/005  
Instructor Name: Genevieve Graaf, PhD, MSW  
Faculty Position: Assistant Professor  
Faculty Profile: N/A  
Office Number: Soc Wk Bldg A 112D  
Phone Number: 217-390-4395  
Email Address: genevieve.graaf@uta.edu  
Office Hours: By Appointment  
Day and Time of Class (if applicable): Tues/Thursday 7 to 8:20 pm  
Location: WH-404  
Equipment: A laptop computer with webcam (including a microphone) and wireless capability or equivalent is required for all SSW classes.  
Canvas: https://uta.instructure.com/  

A. Description of Course Content

Studies programs and policies in the field of mental health. An analytical model is employed in the process of examining critical issues in the mental health arena. Prerequisite: SOCW 5303.

B. Student Learning Outcomes

The Council on Social Work Education requires that accredited social work programs follow the CSWE Educational Policy and Standards that comprises nine competencies as follows:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior  
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice  
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice  
4. Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice  
5. Engage in Policy Practice  
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities  
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities  
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities  
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Specifically, while this course addresses competencies 2, 3, 4, and 8, the main focus is competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice.

**Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**
Advanced social workers in mental health/substance abuse can analyze, using cognitive processes, the relevant cultural, class, gender, race, age, disability, and other diversity issues that influence the prognosis and treatment of populations treated by mental health/substance abuse social workers.

**Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

Advanced social workers in mental health/substance abuse use cognitive and affective processes to understand the range of physical and mental health/substance abuse disease course and recovery issues associated with social stigma and marginalization of persons with mental health/substance abuse diagnoses and psychiatric disabilities, and incorporate them in their assessment and intervention.

Advanced social workers in mental health/substance abuse describe the distribution and determinants of mental health/substance abuse and identify health disparities.

**Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**

Advanced social workers in mental health/substance abuse understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice.

**Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

Advanced social workers in mental health/substance abuse understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation.

**Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

Advanced social workers in mental health/substance abuse understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of interprofessional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may
require interdisciplinary, interprofessional, and inter-organizational collaboration.

C. Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials


Articles


D. Additional Recommended Textbooks and Other Course Materials


Optional Mental Health Recovery Articles:


*Note: The Instructor may assign additional readings throughout the semester.*

**E. Descriptions of Major Assignments and Examinations**

**Weekly Assignments**

- **In Class Discussions**: 3 point per week, 11 (33 points total)

  - Students are assigned to 3 person small groups for in-class discussions
  - In small groups (or breakout rooms) students will discuss the provided prompt, incorporating and relating it to course material (lectures or readings) from the week
  - Group will submit a word document with one paragraph summary of the groups discussion
  - Groups will summarize their discussion for the class

- **Special Assignments**

  1) **Mental Health Policy in the News Presentations** (6 points)

     Students are to look for a specific mental health policy issue in the news: TV, radio (NPR), newspaper, and/or the internet. Students will create 2 to 3 PPT slides that:

     - Summarize the mental health policy and the debate surrounding the policy (3 pts)
     - Reflect your thoughts or reaction to the news item (2 pts)
     - Present in Class – 5 minutes maximum.
     - Students are encouraged to subscribe to Today’s Clips (UT Austin) by sending an email to: Hogg-Communications@austin.utexas.edu.

     - Two other good resources for keeping informed about mental health policy are:
       - MHA/Mental Health America (fka National Mental Health Association): http://www1.nmha.org/newsroom/system/mhHeadline.main.cfm
       - NIMH/National Institute of Mental Health: http://www.nimh.nih.gov/tools/listserv.cfm
       - National Public Radio – podcasts or streaming

     [APB 2.1.3, 2.1.7(4), 2.1.8(2), 2.1.9(2)]

  2) **Three Critical Issues Presentation** (6 points)

     Interview one person involved in the formal delivery of mental health services (phone or on-site). Elicit from them and list in rank order “the three most critical issues in mental health policy or services today.” Have them describe these issues in some detail. For the presentation will create 2 to 3 PPT slides that report the following:

     - Who you interviewed (position and organization, not name) (1 pt)
     - Their top three concerns (3 pt)
     - A 2-sentence professional reflection on their concerns (1 pt)
     - One recommendation of a policy/practice change that might help to address one of these problems (1 pts)
• Present in Class – 5 minutes maximum.

[APB 2.1.3, 2.1.8]

3) Mental Health Policy Analysis Project

This is a four-part assignment that makes up the remainder of the assignments for this course. The four parts are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy Analysis Topics &amp; Groups</td>
<td>3/4/21</td>
<td>3 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Problem Outline</td>
<td>3/23/21</td>
<td>15 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Interventions Outline</td>
<td>4/13/21</td>
<td>15 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group work is encouraged by not required - Up to 4 Group Members may choose to complete this project and the policy presentation (below) together. Final grade on the assignment will be the same for all group members.

1. Mental Health Policy Topic and Group (3 points)

• Select a mental health policy for final policy analysis.
• This can be a federal, state or local policy (in Texas or another state) that is aimed at addressing a specific problem that individuals with mental illness face.
• This can be one of the special populations we are discussing in class (e.g., children, veterans, inmates, or the elderly) or the broader, general population with mental health concerns.
• Examples might be legislation that allocated additional funding for mental health delivery in schools (usually a state level policy) or something large and wide reaching like the Affordable Care Act which expanded mental health insurance coverage for millions of people.
• If doing a local or state law, make sure there is enough research about the policy to enable you to fully examine the effectiveness of the policy for your final assignment. Research can be specific to the law in the state or county you are examining or about an identical/very similar policy in another state or jurisdiction.

In a word document, state the topic for your final policy analysis:

• What is the mental health population and problem? (1pt)
• What is the policy you are specifically looking at for your final project that addresses the problem? (1pt)
• If you are working with a group, who are your group members? If you are working along, state that you are working independently. (1pt)

If working in a group, one person can submit the assignment, and all group members will get the same credit for submission.

1. Mental Health Problem Outline (15 pts)

In 2 to 3 single-spaced pages, describe the characteristics of the mental health problem your final policy analysis will address. Describe in an outline, bulleted format. Include an in-text citations for each fact, as well as a reference page for all sources. Citations and references must adhere to APA 7th edition style.
Please address the following questions (the majority of these are from section B of the Karger & Stoez Policy Analysis Framework):

- Who is the mental health problem population? (1 pt)
- What are the Characteristics of the problem?
  1. What is the nature of the problem? (Define the Problem) (2 pt)
  2. How widespread is the problem? (i.e. How many people does it affect?) (2 pts)
  3. Who does it affect and how does that breakdown in terms of age, race, geography, gender, etc? (2 pts)
  4. How are they affected (What are the consequences of the problem if it is not addressed? Name a minimum of 3 consequences) (3 pts)
  5. What are the causes of the problem? (What are the theories or research about what causes the problem? Name and explain a minimum of 2 theories) (4 pts)
- APA 7th Edition Style Citations and Reference List, Minimum of 4 peer-reviewed research articles or policy research/government reports (1 pt)

[APB 2.1.8(10, (2)]

1. **Mental Health Intervention Outline** (15 pts)

In 2 to 3 single-spaced pages, describe the policy intervention for the mental health problem your final policy analysis will address. Describe in an outline, bulleted format. Include an in-text citations for each fact, as well as a reference page for all sources. Citations and references must adhere to APA 7th edition style.

*There will be very few references on this assignment, as your main source will likely be the legislation itself. However, you may cite sources that summarize the policy in layman's terms as well as the policy itself.*

Your outline should address the following questions:

1. How has this problem been addressed in the past? (1 pt)
2. Identify the name (colloquial and official) and legislative location(s) of the policy (i.e. federal or state, which legislative houses, which executive signed, and year it was passed and/or enacted) (1 pt)
3. What are the long- and short-term goals and outcomes of the policy? (2 pt)
4. How will the policy help to address the problem? (what is the theory of how this policy will address the root cause of the problem) (2 pt)
5. What resources or opportunities are provided through the policy (e.g., power, funding, cash, services, goods, training, evaluation, etc.) (2 pt)
6. Who will be covered by the policy and how is that determined (eligibility: universal vs. selective, means testing, etc.) (1 pt)
7. How will the policy be implemented/administered? (2 pt)
8. Who/What will fund the policy long term and short term? (1 pt)
9. How long will the policy be in existence? (1 pt)
10. What are the criteria, formal or informal that will be used to determine whether the policy is effective? (2 pt)

[APB 2.1.3, 2.1.7(4), 2.1.8(2), 2.1.9]

1. **Mental Health Policy Analysis Presentation** (22 pts)

- You and/or your team will develop a 15-minute PPT, 12 to 15 slide presentation that discusses your whole policy analysis.
- You and your team will deliver the presentation to the class, on the date assigned/selected at the end of the semester
- Slides should be uncluttered and minimal, using only bullet points (with citations when needed) to communicate points.
- In-text citations should be provided for all factual claims you are making, and a final slide should include your list of references (not included in the 12 to 15 slide limit)
- Citations and references must adhere to APA 7th edition style.
- You are expected to use Microsoft PowerPoint and submit your presentations through Canvas in addition to delivering it in class!
- Detailed instructions and grading rubric provided in Canvas.

Presentation Format:

The first 6 to 8 slides should cover the mental health problem and policy description from the outlines you previously submitted.

In the remaining slides, you will analyze the policy that addresses your mental health problem and/supports needed interventions. Include your recommendations related to the policy issue.

**A DETAILED DESCRIPTION AND RUBRIC FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT IS PROVIDED IN A SEPARATE DOCUMENT, ENTITLED “POLICY ANALYSIS DESCRIPTION.” ADDITIONALLY, A PPT DESCRIBING THE FINAL PRESENTATION IS POSTED IN CANVAS, UNDER THE “ASSIGNMENT RESOURCES” MODULE.**

**F. Attendance**

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator in student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. However, while UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients “begin attendance in a course.” UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or engagement online via Canvas. This data is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients.

Information specific to modality and meeting times for this course are provided in the section below.

Attendance is not mandatory, however over 30% of the final grade relies on in-class discussion activities. For this reason, attendance is critical to success in this course.

**G. Grading**

**Total Semester Assignments, Due Dates, and Points**

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
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8
Late Assignments: One point for each day an assignment is late will deducted from the final grade for that assignment. Exceptions to this policy may be made on a case-by-case basis, upon consultation with the instructor.

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels; see "Student Support Services," below.

H. Make-Up Exams

N/A

I. Course Schedule

Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Analysis Topic Area</th>
<th>Class Week:</th>
<th>Class Content/Activities</th>
<th>Required Readings/Viewing</th>
<th>Assignments:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topics</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/19/21</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>· Introduction and Course Overview</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>· Assign Discussion Groups, Review Discussion Assignments</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/21/21</td>
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<td>· What is Mental Health Policy? Film: <em>Shallow Water</em></td>
<td>Mechanic, Chapter 1</td>
<td>In Class Discussion #1: Reflections on <em>Shallow Water</em> (3 pts)</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>· Policy Making TED Talk: The Moral Roots of Liberals and Conservatives</td>
<td>Karger &amp; Stoez: Chap 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>· Political Ideology</td>
<td>Mechanic Chapter 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/28/21</td>
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<td>· Policy Analysis</td>
<td>Find MH Policy in the News Article</td>
<td>In Class Presentations: <em>MH Policy in the News</em> (6 pts)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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| Week 3  | 2/2/21 | · Defining Mental Illness  
· The DSM V | Mechanic, Chapter 2 |  |
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<tr>
<td>2/4/21</td>
<td>· Crazywise Discussion</td>
<td>Film: Crazywise</td>
<td>In Class Discussion #2: Reflections on Crazywise (3 pts)</td>
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</table>
| Week 4  | 2/9/21 | Psychiatric Epidemiology | Frank & Glied, Chap 2  
Mechanic, Chap 4, p. 70 to 83 |  |
| 2/11/21 | Psychiatric Etiology | Chap 5, p. 102-119 |  |  |
| Week 5  | 2/16/21 | · Mental Health Needs of Veterans  
TED Talk: Training Soldiers to Come Home | Film: Thank You for Your Service | In Class Discussion #3: Film Reflections (3 pts) |
| 2/18/21 | · Criminal Justice and Mental Health  
· Co-occurring MI & SA  
Film: A Revolving Door | Films:  
· The Released  
· Bedlam Behind Bars | In Class Discussion #4: Film Reflections (3 pts) |  |
| Week 6  | 2/23/21 | Children’s Mental Health: Defining the Population and Their Needs  
| 2/25/21 | · Structural Competence  
· Underserved Populations: Racial and Sexual Minorities, Older Adults | Mechanic, Chap 4, p. 63 to 95; Chap 6 p.153-163  
Metzl & Hansen, 2014 | In Class Discussion #5: Structural Competence Reflections (3 pts) |  |
| Week 7  | 3/2/21 | · Three Critical Issues Presentations | Three Critical Issues Presentations (6 pts) |  |
| 3/4/21 | *Library Research Skills*  
· Policy Presentation Description/ Review | Policy Analysis Topics & Groups Due (3 pt) |  |  |
| **Week 8** 3/9/21 | · Mental Health Interventions  
* A collection of 4 short films | Mechanic, Chap 5, p. 119-132  
Frank & Glied, Chapter 3 | In Class Discussion #6: Film Reflections (3 pts) |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/11/21</td>
<td>· History of MI Services</td>
<td>Frank &amp; Glied, Chapter 6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 9</strong> 3/16/21-3/18/21</td>
<td><strong><strong>SPRING BREAK!!!</strong></strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Week 10** 3/23/21 | · Recovery  
· Stigma | Mechanic, Chap 10  
Helfinger & Hinshaw, 2010 | Mental Health Problem Outline Due (15 pts) |
| 3/25/21 | · Home and community-based care, integrated care  
· The Consumer Movement | Madness Radio – Select One to Listen to | In Class Discussion #7: Radio Reflections (3 pts) |
Huang, et al. (2005) |  |
| 4/1/21 | · Problems in Children’s Mental Health Care  
Audio Clips | In Class Discussion #8: Film Reflections (3 pts) |
| **Week 12** 4/6/21 | Funding Mechanisms for Mental Health Care: Behavioral Health Parity, Medicaid, Medicaid Waivers, and the Affordable Care Act | Mechanic, Chap 7  
Graaf, G., & Snowden, L., 2017  
Frank, Goldman, & Hogan, 2003 |  |
| 4/8/21 | · Managed Care | Mechanic, Chap 8 | In Class Discussion #9: Financing MH Care (3 pts) |
| **Week 13** 4/13/21 | · Mental Health Workforce | Mechanic, Chap 9  
Frank & Glied Chap 5 | Mental Health Intervention Outline Due (15 pts) |
| 4/15/21 | · Mental Health Workforce | Frank & Glied Chap 5 |  |
| **Week 14** 4/20/21 | MH and the Law: Civil Commitment | Mechanic Chap 11 |  |
| 4/22/21 | Film: *When Medicine Got it Wrong* |  | In Class Discussion #10: Civil Rights (3 pts) |

Describing the Policy/Intervention - -
As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.

**J. Expectations for Out-of-Class Study**

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional three hours (for each hour of class or lecture per week) of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for assignments and exams, and reviewing online content, etc.

**K. Librarian to Contact**

The Social Sciences/Social Work Resource Librarian is Brooke Troutman. Her office is in the campus Central Library. She may also be contacted via E-mail: brooke.troutman@uta.edu or by phone: (817)272-5352.

The following is a list of commonly used library resources:

- Library Home Page
- Library Services
- Subject Guides
- Subject Librarians
- Course Reserves
- Library Tutorials
- Connecting from Off-Campus
- Ask a Librarian

**L. Grade Grievances**

For more information on the grade grievance process please see the BSW Program Manual or the MSW Program Manual. Grade grievance can be submitted through the BSW Grade Grievance form or the MSW Grade Grievance form located on the Forms and Resources website.

**M. Institutional Policies**

UTA students are encouraged to review these institutional policies and informational sections and reach out to the specific office with any questions. The following policies can be found on the UTA Syllabus Institutional Policies page:

- Drop Policy
- Observance of Religious Holy Days
- Disability Accommodations
N. Mandatory Face Covering Policy

All students and instructional staff are required to wear facial coverings while they are on campus, inside buildings, and in classrooms. Students that fail to comply with the facial covering requirement will be asked to leave the class session. If students need masks, they may obtain them at the Central Library, the E.H. Hereford University Center's front desk, or in their department. Students who refuse to wear a facial covering in class will be asked to leave the session by the instructor, and, if the student refuses to leave, they may be reported to UTA’s Office of Student Conduct.

O. Emergency Exit Procedures

Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exits, which are the stairwells located at either end of the adjacent hallway. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.