I. Catalog Course Description

Contemporary policy issues related to mental health including social determinants of mental health, treatment and access to care, rights and privacy, systems transformation, and disparities in care are examined in this course. The role of social workers in policy advocacy, the history and evolution of mental health policy, and recent mental health policy proposals are discussed. Students will learn to analyze mental health policy and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

II. Course Overview

The purposes are to teach students the skill of policy advocacy as applied to mental health policy; to help students understand the role of values, ideology, preferences, and assumptions in the policy making process; to consider how political and economic structures, special interest groups, and other contextual factors affect policy development, policy implementation, and program delivery; and to analyze mental health policies, programs or conditions that need changes as well as the opportunities for such change. Attention is given to problem definition, characteristics of the populations at risk, and ways that policy issues are shaped through legislation and political processes.

Students will learn how to follow a line of inquiry, which will help them to answer fundamental questions about any proposed policy or program change:

1. Who is it supposed to help and how?
2. Will it do what it is supposed to do?
3. Do we want it? (Implications of costs and benefits?)
4. Is it feasible? How could we get it?

III. Place of Course in Program
This course is part of the Advanced Curriculum and covers the requirement for an advanced policy course. Successful completion of 19:910:504 and the rest of the Professional Foundation courses are a pre-requisite.

IV. Program Level Learning Goals and the Council of Social Work Education’s Social Work Competencies

The MSW Program at Rutgers is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). CSWE’s accreditation standards can be reviewed at www.cswe.org.

In keeping with CSWE standards, the Rutgers School of Social Work has integrated the CSWE competencies within its curriculum. These competences serve as program level Learning Goals for the MSW Program and include the following. Upon completion of their MSW education students will be able to: demonstrate ethical and professional behavior; engage in diversity and difference in practice; advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice; engage in practice informed research and research informed practice; engage with individuals, families, groups organizations and communities; intervene with individual, families, groups organizations and communities; and evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

This course will assist students in developing the following competencies:

Competency 3.1: Describe how social welfare policies and structural forces can promote the well-being of or oppress and marginalize individuals, families, and communities in our society

*Assessment of Competency 3 will be based on the Advocacy Assignment using the Knowledge dimension*

Competency 5.1: Identify how our work with individuals, families, and communities can inform the policymaking process

*Assessment of Competency 5 will be based on the Advocacy Assignment using the Knowledge dimension*

V. Course Learning Goals

Course level learning goals primarily relate to the aforementioned competencies/program level learning goals as the course addresses policy analysis skills and competencies as well as addresses human rights and social, economic and environmental justice through the study of mental health policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation, as well as social work advocacy skills and activities for mental health policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Understand how social problems are identified and addressed through social policies
2. Critically analyze mental health policies
3. Advocate for mental health policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice

VI. School of Social Work Mission Statement and School Wide Learning Goals

The mission of the School of Social Work is to develop and disseminate knowledge through social work research, education, and training that promotes social and economic justice and strengthens individual, family, and community well-being, in this diverse and increasingly global environment of New Jersey and beyond.

School Wide Learning Goals: Upon graduation all students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior;
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice; and
3. Engage, Assess, and Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

VII. Required Texts and Readings


Other required readings can be accessed through the RU Libraries electronic reserve system at https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/. In the QuickSearch box on the Libraries homepage, type the Course NAME or the Course Number and select Course Reserves in the autofill drop down.

VIII. Course Attendance and Participation Policies

Students are expected to attend class regularly and to complete readings on a timely basis so that they can participate effectively in class discussions. All readings are considered required readings unless listed as “Recommended Readings for Review”. Students are expected to come to class having thoroughly read all required readings for the week and be prepared to discuss their thoughts on each reading. In addition, students are expected to take a leadership role in class discussions and exercises. Students are expected to arrive to class on time and stay for the entire duration of class. More than 3 late arrivals or early departures will result in a grade deduction. More than three absences may result in the failure of the class.

Respect for Others and Internet Etiquette. This course has room for multiple and diverse perspectives, and it is essential for us to treat each other with respect when opinions are shared. Language should be used which recognizes diversity and is respectful of others. During this course, it may be difficult to disguise references to specific organizations and people, so such information must stay in the classroom. Confidentiality is vital.
The use of cell phones (including text messaging) or any similar type of electronic device is not permitted in class. Please turn them off prior to class. If there is an emergency and you need to leave your device on, please turn it to vibrate and attend to the call in the hallway so that you will not disturb your colleagues. Laptops are permitted to take notes or review course materials. Please be respectful to the instructor and your classmates and do not use your laptop to check email, social media, or search the internet for content unrelated to the course.

IX. Assignments and Grading

SSW MSW Grading Scale: Below is the grading scale for the MSW program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Scores to be rounded up at .5

See the assignments at end of syllabus for a more detailed discussion of grading.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will not be accepted. (Exceptions will be made only in extreme circumstances and must be discussed with Student Services). If a due date conflicts with a religious observance, please consult with the professor prior to the assignment’s due date.

Incomplete grades: Incompletes will only be granted at the discretion of the instructor under special circumstances. It is the student’s responsibility to request an Incomplete from the instructor before the end of the semester. A request signed by the student and the faculty member must be on file when grades are submitted.

Assignment Value

- Weekly Reading Questions: 10%
- In-Class Quizzes: 20% (Quiz #1: 10%; Quiz #2: 10%)
- Group Presentation on Mental Health Care Disparities: 20%
- Semester Project
- Mental Health Policy Analysis: 25%
- Advocacy Action: 25%

1) Weekly Reading Questions (10%)

Students will develop at least one multiple choice question pertaining to the weekly readings for Weeks 2-7, 9, 10, 12, and 13. Question depth can range from the general argument of the reading to a specific point of information that was salient to the student. The question(s) and
four potential answers (with the correct answer highlighted) must be brief and submitted via Canvas to the instructor by 11:59 pm the day before our weekly class meeting. Late questions will not be accepted.

Each question submitted is worth 1 point for a total of 10 possible points during the semester. For each of the quizzes, the instructor will select 10 questions from all of the questions developed by the class. If your question is chosen for a quiz, you will receive 2 extra credit points.

2) In-Class Quizzes (20%)

Two quizzes will be given in-class during the semester. These will take place on Week 8 and Week 15. Each quiz will be comprised of 10 multiple-choice questions regarding the weekly readings. Students are allowed to work together to develop a study guide and use the guide to prepare for the quizzes. However, the quizzes will not be “open book” and students will not be allowed to use any notes or materials during the quizzes.

3) Group Presentation (20%)

You will be assigned a small group that will plan a 12-15-minute presentation on one of the following topics:

- Disparities in Mental Health Care for People of Color/Latinx
- Gender Disparities in Mental Health Care
- Disparities in Mental Health Care for Children and Youth
- Disparities in Mental Health Care for Older Adults
- Disparities in Mental Health Care for LGBTQ

Using the related chapter in Moniz & Gorin (2018), you will work with your group to develop a presentation that covers the following:

a) An overview of the problem – What disparities exist for this group(s)? What is the scale of the problem? How many people are affected? What are the consequences of these disparities?
b) A review of the evidence – What evidence is there that mental health care disparities exist for this group(s)?
c) A discussion of the causes of these disparities - What are the perceived causes of these disparities? What are the known barriers to care for this group(s)? What policies/programs have contributed to these disparities?
d) A discussion of potential strategies or policy reforms that could be used to address these disparities – Based on what you have learned in this class and in the readings, what strategies or policy reforms does your group think would effectively address these disparities? Why would these particular strategies/reforms work?

The presentations will be conducted as a “mock conference” so you will receive written feedback from your classmates, as well as the instructor, regarding the content of your presentation. Following your presentation, please submit a copy of any materials (e.g. Powerpoints, handouts).
and a description of each group member’s role in preparing the presentation, signed by all group members. **These materials are due on Week 11, the day of your presentation. A copy should be uploaded to Canvas by each group member under the Group Presentation assignment.**

Group Presentation Grading Rubric – 20 points TOTAL
1) Overview of disparities provided, including scale and consequences? (5 points)
2) Sufficient review of the evidence provided? (5 points)
3) Discussed causes of the disparities, including known barriers to care and policies/programs that may contribute to the disparities? (5 points)
4) Provided potential strategies or policy reforms that could be used to address disparities, including a rationale for the proposed strategies/reforms? (5 points)

4) Semester Project

**Mental Health Policy Analysis (25%).** For this assignment, you will select a choice of pending federal or state legislation related to mental health.

Recent mental health bills introduced to the United States Congress can be found here - [https://www.mhanational.org/issues/current-mental-health-legislation](https://www.mhanational.org/issues/current-mental-health-legislation).

Recent bills introduced to New Jersey State legislators can be found here - [https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/Default.asp](https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/Default.asp). Use the search feature to locate bills related to Subject “Human Services – Mental Health.”

You are encouraged to choose a piece of legislation that has the potential to impact your field practicum, if possible, as you may be presenting this project in field. You should familiarize yourself with this piece of legislation, where it is in the legislative process, and identify a policymaker who is a decision-maker in regard to the policy. **Your choice of pending legislation must be approved by the instructor before Week 9.**

Using the Karger & Stoesz policy analysis framework discussed in class, you will critically analyze this policy and write a paper that contains three sections, following the Karger & Stoesz outline:
- Description of the social problem addressed by policy (4-6 pages)
- Historical background and description of the policy (4-6 pages)
- Policy analysis and recommendations (4-6 pages)

The **Mental Health Policy Analysis** portion of the semester project is **due in class on Week 13.**

**Advocacy Action (25%).** Based on this policy analysis, you will develop a 2-page policy brief with a persuasive cover letter. Usually written as a short fact sheet that provides evidence to support a particular position on a given policy, a policy brief can provide public officials with valuable information about an issue that can help them justify their vote. The Policy Brief and Letter are **due in class on Week 14.**

[Master Syllabus last updated February 17, 2020]
Students will also make a brief in-class presentation on their semester project in the form of an “elevator pitch” to a policymaker. Presentations will be given in class on Week 14. The purpose of this presentation is to demonstrate your ability to convey to others the relevance and importance of your policy position in-person. Presentations should be approximately five minutes.

Students will also have the option to mail the policy brief/letter to the identified policymaker or to contact the legislator’s office and advocate directly to that legislator or a staffer regarding their policy position. This action should be completed before the class meets on Week 15.
X. Academic Resources

Library Research Assistance

Dr. Karen Hartmann is the social work the social work librarian on the New Brunswick Campus. karen.hartman@rutgers.edu 848-932-6104; Natalie Borisovets is at Newark, Dana Library natalieb@rutgers.edu 973-353-5909; Katie Anderson is at Camden, Robeson Library: Katie.anderson@rutgers.edu 856-225-2830. They are all available to meet with students.

Writing Assistance

Success in graduate school and within the larger profession of social work depends on strong writing skills. Several resources are available to help students strengthen their professional and academic writing skills. Writing assistance is available to all MSW students as described below.

New Brunswick Campus

All MSW SSW students (New Brunswick, Camden, Newark, Intensive Weekend, online and blended) are eligible to access writing assistance at the New Brunswick Learning Center. Online tutoring may also be available. https://rlc.rutgers.edu/student-info/group-and-individual-academic-support/writing-coaching

Newark Campus

The Newark writing center is available for MSW students on the Newark campus by appointment. http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter

Camden Campus

The Camden learning center provides writing assistance for MSW students on the Camden campus. http://learn.camden.rutgers.edu/writing-assistance

Additional Online Resources

APA Style

Purdue OWL https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/
Purdue OWL Mechanics, grammar, organization https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/

Email Etiquette for Students

https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/694/01/
XI. Course Evaluation

Rutgers University issues a survey that evaluates both the course and instructor. This survey is completed by students toward the end of the semester, and all answers are confidential and anonymous. The instructor may also choose to conduct a mid-point evaluation.

XII. Academic Integrity

All work submitted in a graduate course must be your own.

It is unethical and a violation of the University’s Academic Integrity Policy to present the ideas or words of another without clearly and fully identifying the source. Inadequate citations will be construed as an attempt to misrepresent the cited material as your own. Use the APA citation style which is described in the Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition.

Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be properly cited in the text or footnote. Acknowledgement is required when material from another source is stored in print, electronic, or other medium and is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one’s own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: “to paraphrase Plato’s comment…” and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material. Information which is common knowledge, such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be footnoted; however, all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, only materials that contribute to one’s general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a subtle issue. Any question about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the faculty member.

Plagiarism as described in the University’s Academic Integrity Policy is as follows: “Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the use of another person’s words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course. Some common examples of plagiarism are:

- Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.
- Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one’s own words another person’s written words or ideas as if they were one’s own.
- Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.
• Incorporating into one’s work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other nontextual material from other sources without proper attribution”.

Plagiarism along with any and all other violations of academic integrity by graduate and professional students will normally be penalized more severely than violations by undergraduate students. Since all violations of academic integrity by a graduate or professional student are potentially separable under the Academic Integrity Policy, faculty members should not adjudicate alleged academic integrity violations by graduate and professional students, but should refer such allegations to the appropriate Academic Integrity Facilitator (AIF) or to the Office of Student Conduct. The AIF that you should contact is Laura Curran, at lacurran@ssw.rutgers.edu. The student shall be notified in writing, by email or hand delivery, of the alleged violation and of the fact that the matter has been referred to the AIF for adjudication. This notification shall be done within 10 days of identifying the alleged violation. Once the student has been notified of the allegation, the student may not drop the course or withdraw from the school until the adjudication process is complete. A TZ or incomplete grade shall be assigned until the case is resolved. For more information regarding the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures, see: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers.

XIII. Disability Accommodation

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’ disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form.

XIV. Other Resources

Our school is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and our school policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, which regards sexual misconduct — including harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. We understand that sexual violence can undermine students’ academic success and we encourage students who have experienced some form of sexual misconduct to talk to someone about their experience, so they can get the support they need.

Confidential support and academic advocacy are available through the Rutgers Office on Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance, 732.932.1181, http://vpva.rutgers.edu. Services are free and confidential and available 24 hrs/day, 7 days a week.
Active Shooter Resources: Over the years, there has been an increase in the number of active shootings on campus. It is important that you know what to do in cases there is an active shooter on campus. Please go to this site to retrieve information that will reduce your personal risk in case of an active shooting on campus-http://rupd.rutgers.edu/shooter.php.

XV. Policy on Audio/Video Taping & Course Materials

Course materials prepared by the instructor, together with the content of all lectures and review sessions presented by the instructor are the property of the instructor. Video and audio recording of lectures and review sessions without the consent of the instructor is prohibited. On request, the instructor will usually grant permission for students to audio tape lectures, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructor, recordings of lectures and review sessions may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

XVI. Course Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week One: Introduction to Mental Health Policy &amp; Assessment of Current Policy Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module Learning Objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To provide an overview of the course and discuss course expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To assess own philosophical approach, policy skills and activities and determine strengths and limitations in these areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To introduce the current state of mental health care in the U.S. and the role of policy in that context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Resources &amp; Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch <em>Bedlam</em> Film [in class]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Week Two: Defining Mental Illness |
Module Learning Objective
• To understand how mental illness has been defined as a social issue
• To gain awareness of the scope and magnitude of this social issue

Learning Resources & Materials
   Readings:


Recommended Reading for Review:


Week Three: History & Development of U.S. Mental Health Policy – up to ACA

Module Learning Objective
• To identify historical trends in mental health policy over time
• To understand the potential effects of social policy on people with a mental illness

Learning Resources & Materials
   Readings:


Week Four: History & Development of U.S. Mental Health Policy – ACA to now
Module Learning Objective
- To identify historical trends in mental health policy over time
- To understand the potential effects of social policy on people with a mental illness

Learning Resources & Materials
Readings:


Week Five: “Nothing About Us, Without Us”: How Consumer Advocacy Has Shaped Contemporary Mental Health Policy

Module Learning Objective
- To examine how consumer advocacy has shaped contemporary mental health policy

Learning Resources & Materials
Readings:


Week Six: In-Depth Policy Analysis: Assisted Outpatient Treatment Laws as Example

Module Learning Objective
- To examine a mental health policy in-depth
- To apply a policy analysis framework to a mental health policy

Learning Resources & Materials
Readings:


https://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/browse-by-state/new-jersey
https://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/grading-the-states/new-jersey


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**Week Seven: Social Change & Policy Advocacy Skills**

**Module Learning Objective**
- To learn about various types of policy advocacy and how social workers can act as policy change agents

**Learning Resources & Materials**

**Readings:**


**Recommended Reading for Review:**


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**Week Eight: Review of Current Mental Health Legislation & Quiz 1**

**Module Learning Objective**
- To identify current key policies related to mental health at the State and Federal level
- To understand the potential impact of current policies on individuals, groups, and communities
Learning Resources & Materials

Readings:

Familiarize yourself with the current, proposed mental health legislation at the federal level and at the state level in New Jersey by skimming each of the mental health bills listed on the websites below.

For each bill, create a brief summary that includes: 1) the intended purpose of the bill (1-2 sentences max); 2) the sponsor; and 3) the latest action (i.e. where it is in the legislative process). Bring your brief summaries to class.

Recent mental health bills introduced to the United States Congress can be found here—https://www.mhanational.org/issues/current-mental-health-legislation.

Recent bills introduced to New Jersey State legislators can be found here—https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/Default.asp. Use the search feature to locate bills related to Subject “Human Services—Mental Health.”

Additional New Jersey-specific mental health policy updates can be found here https://www.mhanj.org/policy-and-advocacy/

Week Nine: Current Issues in Mental Health Policy: Systems Transformation

Module Learning Objective
- To identify and understand mental health policy related to systems transformation

Learning Resources & Materials

Readings:


Read: Executive Summary [look to middle of page for link] and Goal 1: Americans understand that mental health is essential to overall health. [Note: Other parts of this report may also be a good resource for you]


### Week Ten: Current Issues in Mental Health Policy: Treatment and Access

**Module Learning Objective**
- To identify and understand mental health policies related to treatment and access

**Learning Resources & Materials**

**Readings:**


### Week Eleven: Group Presentations on Disparities in Care

**Module Learning Objective**
- To understand the potential effects of mental health policy on key groups

**Learning Resources & Materials**
**Readings:**


**Week Twelve: Current Issues in Mental Health Policy: Rights and Privacy**

**Module Learning Objective**

- To identify and understand mental health policies related to rights and privacy

**Learning Resources & Materials**

**Readings:**


**Week Thirteen: Current Issues in Mental Health Policy: Social Determinants of Mental Health**

**Module Learning Objective**

- To identify and understand mental health policies related to social determinants of health

**Learning Resources & Materials**

**Readings:**


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**Week Fourteen: Semester Project Presentations**

**Module Learning Objective**
- To convey to others the relevance and importance of a policy position

**Learning Resources & Materials**
- **Readings:** None Required

**Week Fifteen: Course Summary & Quiz 2**

**Module Learning Objective**
- To apply understanding of course objectives to social work practice

**Learning Resources & Materials**
- **Readings:** None Required