Workshop Objectives

- Analyze challenges and opportunities of policy practice in agency settings;
- Describe recent national policy decisions;
- Examine leadership roles for policy practice;
- Identify policy practice learning opportunities.

First...Quick Updates

- Director: Dr. Goutham Menon
- New Faculty: Dr. Heather Gough, Dr. Jennifer McClendon, and Dr. Maureen Rubin
- Accreditation
- Integrative Projects

“Social workers cannot afford to stand by and allow others to make policies that we are expected to implement. Social workers, those who have studied and implemented the policies, have seen the effect of programs and the defects in programs and know the unfulfilled needs of the people and thus ought to be able to initiate legislative efforts...”
Council on Social Work Education

Educational Policy 2.1.8

Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.

Competency Based Education

Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice.

Social workers know 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.

Knowledge to Practice

Practice Behaviors

Social workers:
• analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being; and
• collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.
Policy Knowledge to Practice

What do you remember from your policy classes?

What knowledge do you put into practice?

A Challenge for Field Instructors

So what do we do?

• Clarify what policy practice actually is …

• Brainstorm ideas on how to push students to practice and demonstrate competency …

• Discover the hidden practice opportunities within your agency …

Policy vs. Policy Practice

Policy

“In its broadest sense, social policy represents a collective strategy to address social problems. This collective strategy is fashioned by laws, rules, regulations, and budgets of government…”

(Jansson, 2005, p. 19)
Field instructors commonly defer to these rules and regulations for the student’s policy experience... then they struggle assessing the student’s “practice behavior.”

Policy Practice

Efforts to change policies in legislative, agency, and community settings by establishing new policies, improving existing ones, or defeating the policy initiatives of other people.

Policy Practitioners

- Policy analyst
- Lobbyist
- Community Organizer
- Government or legislative relations associate
- Legislator

Field instructors often feel that if they are not in these positions, they cannot offer policy experience to students.

Policy Practice Opportunities

- Influencing agency policy
- Shaping, implementing or writing agency policy
- Influencing state or federal implementation of policy
- Influencing legislative efforts to develop or change policy
- Initiating, supporting, and mobilizing around judicial decisions
Policy Practice Context

Voting Rights Act Ruling: June 25, 2013
• *Shelby County v. Holder*
  – Section 4(b), the “coverage formula,” is unconstitutional.
  – Significantly weakens the “pre-clearance” requirement for jurisdictions with historical racism in voting rules.
  – Puts responsibility back on Congress to rework Section 4(b).

Policy Practice Context

ICWA: June 25, 2013
• *Adoptive Couple v. Baby Girl*
  – Custody dispute between child’s biological father, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, and a couple that petitioned her adoption.
  – Initial decision was to give father custody rights per ICWA.
  – Ruling states that ICWA doesn’t apply because the father never had physical or legal custody at time of adoption.

Policy Practice Context

DOMA Ruling: June 26, 2013
• *U.S. v. Windsor*
  – Marriage discrimination for same-sex couples is unconstitutional.
  – Federal government will honor and recognize same-sex marriages … from states that have legalized same-sex marriage.
• *Hollingsworth v. Perry*
  – Strikes down CA’s Proposition 8.
  – Allowed CA to resume issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples.
**Policy Practice Context**

Department of Homeland Security: June 15, 2012
- “Prosecutorial Discretion”
- Some protection for undocumented children (came to United States under age 16, not older than 30)
  - Administrative closure for pending cases
  - Decision to not prioritize such cases (if meeting certain criteria)

**Policy Practice Context**

Senate Passes Immigration Reform: June 27, 2013
- Overall reform to immigration system
- Significantly increase border resources
- Path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants
  ➢ Passed 68-32
  ➢ Stalled in the house

**Impact**

- What is the potential impact of these policy decisions on direct practice in your agency?

- What practice challenges do you anticipate encountering as a result of these recent events?
Guidelines

- You don’t need to be the expert...redirect the questions back onto the student.
- Encourage discussion about indirect impacts.
- Require students to provide evidence for their judgments. Move them to making informed decisions instead of mere opinions.

Guidelines

- Require “good” evidence...not just Wikipedia.
- Distinguish between policy as a product vs. policy as a process:  
  Product= need to read, understand, implement  
  Process= opportunities to shape and impact

Case

You are a social worker at a small family resource center. Your student has been shadowing you and has gone to a couple of various community meetings with you. She commented that she has been hearing a lot of “buzz” from professionals about the Affordable Care Act and how “crazy” it is going to be. She wants to know what your opinion is and what the Family Resource Center is going to do about it. In what ways can this become a policy practice opportunity?

Discussion

Do you offer a response to your student right away (i.e. your own thoughts and ideas)?

Look at your list...Which tasks are “knowledge” oriented? Which tasks are “practice” oriented?

How can you push the student further on this topic?
Push them to analyze...

Ask about the policy:
- What are the bases of social allocations? (who is eligible?)
- What are the types of social provisions to be allocated? (for what services?)
- What are the strategies for delivery of these provisions? (how are services structured and delivered?)
- What are the ways to finance these provisions?

Example = ACA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allocation</th>
<th>All people to have healthcare insurance coverage. Only those who can document a financial need or those who categorically are eligible for Medicare will receive state-support in obtaining healthcare coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision</td>
<td>Insurance must be obtained to provide for the basic health needs of citizens. The insurance will be used to offset the costs of health care. For people who demonstrate financial need or are categorically eligible, the state will provide insurance coverage. For those who do not meet these criteria but who are not able to purchase their own or do not have it provided by an employer, the state will help subsidize the purchase of insurance from private companies through exchanges. Government regulation of private market to protect consumers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example = ACA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivery</th>
<th>Federal law, requiring state participation. Expands on the existing Medicare and Medicaid programs. The state will not engage directly in the provision of health care. Health care will remain in the private market. Medicare will be run by federal government while Medicaid will be administered at the state level. Both programs may chose to contract out to private for-profit organizations to provide insurance coverage.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Continue payroll taxes on employers and employees. Businesses must pay for employee coverage if they employ more than 50 employees. Insurance exchanges will rely on collective buying power to leverage discounts from private companies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Push them to analyze...

Question the policy on the basis of values:

**Equality** = numerical equality implies equal treatment to everyone. The question becomes equality of opportunity or equality of outcome

**Equity** = denotes fair treatment. People get out of system what they contribute to the system.

**Adequacy** = strives to ensure a basic and descent well-being for all members apart from equality or equity.
In your agency...

• Utilizing the Learning Agreement template, brainstorm a list of learning activities you can have your student do.

• How will you observe and assess (i.e. measure) their performance on these items?
  – Reflective dialogue with you
  – Review of student’s written materials
  – Observation of student’s presentation

Questions?

Thank you