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| S:\SWK\OU Logos & Pics\Logos\redseal.jpgThe University of Oklahoma Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work |
| SWK 5313 – Policy Practice in Social Work: Analysis and Advocacy3 credits |
| Instructor:  Angela Pharris, PhD | **Semester And Class Time:**Fall 2021 |
| Contact Information: Angela.b.pharris-1@ou.edu | **Office Hours:**TBA  |

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:

* 1. Course Title: SWK 5313 –Policy Practice in Social Work: Analysis and Advocacy.
1. Catalog Description: A historical and descriptive review of federal and state social welfare programming, introduction to practice skills of policy analysis, and advocacy in affecting development, change or implementation of social welfare policy.
2. Hours of Credit: Three (3) Credit Hours
3. Prerequisite: Graduate standing in social work or instructor approval.

## PURPOSE: This is a required course in the curriculum of the Master of Social Work degree program. The purpose of this course is to provide students with an understanding of federal and state social welfare programming, policy analysis, and advocacy skills to help promote more effective and equitable social welfare policy. The historical foundations and current forms of social welfare are presented as societal responses to identified social problems.  The skills of policy analysis is presented in order to foster creative and analytical thinking and to engage students in examining how different policy decisions have differential impacts on diverse client populations while assessing their own personal philosophy of social welfare. The skills of policy advocacy are introduced in order for students to engage in professional strategies that advance macro solutions in the form of policies that are socially, politically and economically just and responsive to complex societal problems.

## EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Given regular class attendance, participation in class activities, completion of assigned readings, and successful completion of course assignments, at the conclusion of the course, students will have the ability to:

1. Identify and describe the historical development of social welfare as a social institution at the federal level.
2. Identify and describe the basic organizational structure and services of the major social welfare provisions in the United States, with particular emphasis upon social welfare programming in Oklahoma.
3. Understand the relationship between political processes and government in the development of social welfare policy.
4. Apply knowledge on political processes relevant to the achievement of social work goals in generalist practice and to critical analysis of social and economic justice.
5. Gain an understanding of how social policies direct social programs and how these policies and programs affect the clients with whom they will be working as generalist social work practitioners.
6. Apply critical thinking skills to analyze, formulate and influence social policies, as demonstrated by: the use of a framework to analyze social welfare policy and applicable social problem according the principles of social and economic justice; informed decision-making around current proposed social policy legislation, based upon principles of social and economic justice; and engagement in informed, planned strategy aimed at social policy advocacy or social action.
7. Engage in evidence-informed policy advocacy targeted at one or more systems, and critically reflect upon the success and challenges of policy advocacy in order to improve practice in the future.
8. Use communication skills differentially across client populations, colleagues, and communities as demonstrated through a formal presentation of analysis of public social policy, social problems, and advocacy alternatives.

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| **Competencies** | **Course content** | **Dimension(s)\*** |
| Competency 1: demonstrate **ethical** and **professional behavior** | Assignment #2 on policy analysis will require students to consider social work ethics and values when analyzing a current policy issue, and create recommendations based on policy informed research and social work values.Assignment #3 will provide students the opportunity to present on their evidence informed policy practice projects in a real or simulated professional presentation environment.  | Knowledge, ValuesSkills |
| Competency 3: advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental **justice** | Assignment #2 will ask students to consider social welfare policy in terms of whether it advances or hinders human rights, and social, economic, and environmental justice, and make recommendations that emphasizes a lens for rights and justice.Assignment #3 on policy advocacy requires students’ to apply policy practice as a tool for advancing human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice. Students will share critical reflections about the successes and limitations of their policy projects as an evaluative assessment of their learning. | Knowledge, ValuesSkills, Cognitive & affective processes |
| Competency 5: engage in **policy** practice | Assignment #2 will require students to conduct policy research, synthesize research, critically analyze a policy issue, consider social work ethics and values within the policy issue, and develop recommendations based on their analysis.Assignment #3 on policy advocacy provides students with the opportunity to illustrate applied learning and critical analysis related to the implementation of policy advocacy projects. | Knowledge, Skills, ValuesSkills, Cognitive & affective processes |

## TEXT(S):

The most recent APA manual is required in every social work course. The current manual (2020) ISBN is: 978-1-4338-3216-1.

APA. (2020). Publication Manual *of the American Psychological Association, 7th ed.* American Psychological Association: New York. **(Required for all courses)**

Karger, H.J. & Stoesz, D. (2014). *American social welfare policy: A pluralist approach* (8th ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. ISBN 0205401821.

## TEACHING/LEARNING METHODS:

This course is online and designed to allow students to engage in various areas of social policy. The course will use brief pre-recorded lectures, videos, and discussion boards to support student learning. All students are responsible for contributing to class discussion. Structured assignments are outlined and intended to provide experience in policy related social work skills.

## CLASS POLICIES:

Methods of Evaluation

Evaluation of student is based on assessment of written materials submitted, in class presentations of course material, weekly reading quizzes, and overall participation in class discussion and activities.

Final Grade Calculation: Because this course allows you to drop up to two quiz and discussion board grades, your final calculated score in CANVAS will not reflect your final grade in the course until the end of Module 8.

Breakdown of Class Grading

1. Weekly Quiz 10%
2. Discussion Boards 10%
3. Policy Issue Brief Assignment 1 20%
4. Policy Analysis Assignment 2 35%
5. Policy Issue Brief & Final Advocacy Presentation 25%

Grading Scale:

**100-90% = A Excellent Work, exceeds course expectations**

Student displays outstanding work during the course. Evidence is shown via: completion of all assigned readings demonstrated through class discussions and integration of content; superior written work; active engagement in class discussions; evidence of critical thinking; creativity and innovation; demonstrated high level of professionalism and on-time attendance at all class sessions.

**80-89% = B Good: Work meets course expectations**

Student displays good work in meeting course expectations during the course as evidence of: basic mastery of course material through completion of all assigned readings; high quality written work; active participation in class discussions; demonstration of good professionalism; and on-time attendance at almost all class sessions.

**70-79% = C Fair; Work marginally meets course expectations**

Student demonstrates marginal work during the course as evidence by one or more of the following: completion of some but not all assigned readings, marginal written work, difficulty with critical thinking, minimal class participation and multiple absences or a pattern of lateness to class.

**60-69% = D Poor: Work does not meet course expectations**

Student demonstrates poor, unprofessional, and/or inadequate work during the course as evidence by one or more of the following: inadequate understanding of course materials and content, poor quality written work, no class participation, excessive absences from class or chronic lateness to class.

**59% and below = F Failure: Work falls significantly below course expectations**

Student demonstrates very poor, unsatisfactory and/or unacceptable work during the course as evidence by one or more of the following: lack of understanding of course content, poor quality written work, missed assignments, no class participation; excessive absences from class or chronic lateness to class.

1. Academic Conduct

Cheating is strictly prohibited at the University of Oklahoma. As a member of the OU community it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the rules. For specific definitions on what constitutes cheating, review the *Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity* at: <http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html>

Also important to know are “9 Things You Should Already Know About Plagiarism” <http://integrity.ou.edu/files/nine_things_you_should_know.pdf>.

Students are bound by the OU Student Code (<http://www.ou.edu/studentconduct>) and the NASW Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/>), and should also be familiar with the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work Student Performance Policy (<http://www.ou.edu/content/dam/cas/socialwork/docs/Policies/swk-student-performance-policy-revised-2018-2019.pdf>). Plagiarism in any form, which includes but is not limited to cheating on tests, using another’s work without attribution or permission, using your previous work from another course, or allowing someone to use your work, whether on an exam or a paper, will not be tolerated. The NASW Code of Ethics states “Social workers should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud or deception.”  One of the values on which the Code of Ethics is based is that of integrity and one of the ethical principles derived from this value is “Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.”

D. Statement of Reasonable Accommodation

The University of Oklahoma is committed to providing reasonable accommodation for all students with disabilities.  Students with disabilities must be registered with the Accessibility and Disability Resource Center (Norman) or the Office of Disability Resources (Tulsa).  These offices then determine and notify the student and instructor of any accommodations in this course.  Any student who because of a disability may need special arrangements or accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, ensure full participation, and facilitate educational opportunities should consult with the instructor as soon as possible. The office of Disability Services provides an array of services to meet the needs of students with disabilities, please refer to their office or visit their webpage for further information: <http://drc.ou.edu/content/view/166/118/>  or Full details on the registration process may be found at <https://www.ou.edu/drc/drc-registration>

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| OU-NormanAccessibility & Disability Resource Center 730 College Avenue  University Community Center Norman, OK  73019 405-325-3852 (voice) 405-217-3494 (VP)     405-325-4173 (TDD)      Email: adrc@ou.edu  | OU-Tulsa  Office of Accessibility & Disability Resources CenterSchusterman Center 4502 East 41st Street Tulsa, OK 74135 918-660-3107 Email: Joshua-davis@ouhsc.ou.edu   |

1. Provost-Approved University Activities and Religious Observances

It is the policy of the University to excuse student absences that result from religious observances unless such an accommodation would cause undue hardship to the educational and/or university process. In accordance with the procedures stipulated by each college to accommodate varying clinical and educational differences, students must make requests for accommodation of religious holidays in writing within the first week of the term in which the course/clinical experience is offered. Approved accommodations will be provided without penalty for rescheduling of examinations and/or required clinical, lab, or class work that may fall on religious holidays. (Senior Vice President and Provost Approval, 11-9-2011)

F. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act Statement (HIPAA)

In line with the new HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that you understand that any client information that you share, either verbally or written, will need to be de-identified. This means that any information that would allow another to identify the person needs to be changed or eliminated. This includes obvious things like names and birth dates, but may also contain other information that is so unique to the person that it could allow for identification, including, but not limited to diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender is directly related to the case presentation, it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

G. Adjustments for Pregnancy/Childbirth Related Issues

Should you need modifications or adjustments to your course requirements because of documented pregnancy-related or childbirth-related issues, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss. Generally, modifications will be made where medically necessary and similar in scope to accommodations based on temporary disability. Please see [www.ou.edu/content/eoo/faqs/pregnancy-faqs.html](http://www.ou.edu/content/eoo/faqs/pregnancy-faqs.html) for commonly asked questions.

H. Title IX Resources

For any concerns regarding gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, stalking, or intimate partner violence, the University offers a variety of resources, including advocates on-call 24.7, counseling services, mutual no contact orders, scheduling adjustments and disciplinary sanctions against the perpetrator. Please contact the Sexual Misconduct Office 405-325-2215 (8-5, M-F) or OU Advocates 405-615-0013 (24.7) to learn more or to report an incident.

Or, contact the Institutional Equity Office directly at: (405) 325-3549, Norman Campus and Norman-based Tulsa Campus programs: Room 102, Evans Hall and/or the Sexual Misconduct Officer at (405) 325-2215: Walker Center, Room W220. Tulsa-based programs may also contact (918) 660-3107.

Attendance:

You are expected to participate in the course weekly. This is a fast-paced course; students should expect to be engaged in the online learning environment multiple times during the week to engage fully in the learning experience. The lecture materials, videos, assigned readings, and discussions are central to your learning.

In addition to your attendance, your professional presence is required each week. This means you should engage in and foster professional dialogue having read content relevant to the course. The classroom is considered a preparation for your role as a professional social worker. In the classroom you are expected to treat colleagues with respect. Respect is defined in this class as active listening, using appropriate non-verbal communication, and not engaging in disparaging, harassing, or bullying of any kind. This class will incorporate anti-oppressive practices that value dialogue over debate, but we can only learn from examining issues from multiple perspectives. While you may respectfully disagree with your instructor and your peers, you may not disparage, gang-up on, or otherwise treat people with less than the utmost respect, or penalties will be enforced through relevant policies.

Late Assignments

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class on the scheduled due dates. Please make every effort to plan and complete course assignments in a timely manner. However, this semester, like the ones before, are likely to experience many unpredicted disruptions. If you cannot complete an assignment by the due date, please communicate with me and we can work together to establish a reasonable plan for assignment completion.

1. **MAJOR COURSE DIVISIONS: *not in order***
2. History and development of the American social welfare state
* Making government policy
	+ Federal, state, local, and tribal policymaking
	+ Policymaking in the legislative, judicial, and executive branches
1. Social Welfare Policy Foundations
* US political spectrum
* US political economy and tax policy
* Social insurance and public assistance programs
* Poverty and oppression in America
* Sectors of policy practice: Public/governmental agencies, private nonprofits, the voluntary sector/ faith-based services/privatization
* Voting and citizen participation
1. Social Welfare Policy Domains

Possible areas (instructors should cover at least six of these major policy areas):

* Income Maintenance and in-kind assistance policy
* Health, Mental Health and Substance Abuse policy
* Criminal and Juvenile justice
* Child and family welfare policy
* Housing/homelessness policy
* Education
1. Social Work Policy Analysis and Advocacy Skills
* Social work roles in policy practice
* Policy Analysis Skills:
* Policy analysis frameworks
* Policy Enacting, Policy Implementing, Policy Assessing
* Policy Advocacy skills:
* Agenda Setting, Problem analyzing, Proposal writing
* Issue activism – practice using social work generalist model
* Applying ethical frameworks to social welfare policy decision-making

## COURSE SCHEDULE:

## The readings should be completed before completing the discussion board or quiz class. There are also assigned videos or additional reading materials in CANVAS. Check weekly for assigned tasks. This course runs Monday-Sunday each week. Each module is expected to last one week.

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| Date | Topic |  Readings | Assignments Due |
| Module 1 *Oct 18th*  | Policy in Social Work Practice | K& S, Chapter 1 & 2 | Discussion 1Quiz 1**In-person CLASS** **10/19 7:00 – 9:00 CST** **Zoom link will be in announcements** |
| Module 2*Oct. 25th* | Social Policy Analysis & Advocacy Skills | K&S Chapter 8Readings in Canvas | Discussion 2Quiz 2 |
| Module 3*Nov. 1st*  | Budgets, Taxes and Income Distribution  | K&S Chapter 7 and 9 | Discussion 3Quiz 3**Office Hours (optional)** to workshop Assignment Zoom link will be in announcements |
| Module 4*Nov. 8th*  | Poverty and Public Policy  | K&S Chapters 5, 10 and 11Readings in Canvas | Discussion 4Quiz 4**Assignment 1: Policy Brief DUE on Monday Nov 7th** |
| Module 5*Nov. 15th* | Policy Discrimination in America  | K&S Chapters 4 and 12Reading in Canvas | Discussion 5Quiz 5**In-person Class 11/11 6:30 – 9:00 CST** |
| Module 6*Nov. 22nd*  | Mental Health and Substance Abuse Policy | K&S Chapter 13 and 14 | Discussion 6Quiz 6**Assignment 2: Policy Analysis Due 11/21 for peer review.** **Peer review comments due 11/24** |
| Module 7*Nov. 29th*  | Child Welfare Policies | K&S Chapter 15Reading in Canvas | ***Dawnland* Screening**Discussion 7Quiz 7**Assignment 2 Paper submitted for a grade 12/5** |
| Module 8*Dec. 6th*  | Housing and Food Policy  | K&S Chapter 16 and 17 | **Policy Advocacy** **Presentation Due** Discussion 8Quiz 8  |

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

## Quiz and Discussion Boards: Each week you will have a brief quiz and a discussion board activity to complete and are created to help you engage with the weekly readings and materials and to assess your learning. Directions will be in Canvas.

## Quiz: paragraphs style response to questions drawn from the readings, videos and lecture for the module. There is a total of 8 quizzes available. Your score will be calculated using your top 6 score grades. You may elect not to participate in two of the weekly quizzes, or if you participate in all eight the lowest scores will be dropped.

**Discussion Board:** Each module has a discussion board. Students are expected to post their response to the posed question each week and engage and learn from each other by reviewing your peers post and engaging/responding. Active participation is expected. Your original post and responses to your peers should be substantive, using course materials and other sources to help your conversations. Good posts do not just “agree or disagree” but should expand the conversation and add your own ideas.

Responses should be complete and clear and written in complete sentences. When appropriate, provide references. Discussions require you to post your contribution first, read the answers by your peers and give at a *minimum of 2 responses* to other postings within the group. Also, you should monitor your own post for questions or comments posted to you.

In your communication with other students, please expand or clarify an important point or offer an additional argument to support a position. You may also disagree with a point. If you are disagreeing, please make sure your response is constructive and respectful. Analyze the issue but not the person making the post. Avoid sarcasm, swearing or language that would be considered rude or argumentative.

There are 8 discussion board opportunities, one for each module. Your grade will reflect the quality of your original post, and active participation in the board. If you consistently post at the end of the open time for the module, you should anticipate that will impact your grade in discussion boards. Your final grade will be calculated on your top 6 grade scores. You may elect a week of your choosing to not participate in the discussion board or you may elect to participate in all the boards and drop your two lowest scores during grade calculation.

**Assignment #1: Policy Issue Brief**

Description: A policy issue brief is a short document that states what is known about an issue or **social** **problem** that is affected by government, whereas the government is considered part of the cause or solution to the issue. Issue briefs are designed to give the reader the background on the problem quickly, by clearly identifying social problem or issue for consideration, and indicate a recommendation for action, and provides supporting evidence. Issue briefs are used by policy advocates to communicate main ideas to policymakers. They are brief, clear, and used at every level of government to elevate the issue or problem to key policy makers. Advocates and policy think-tanks often have these brief 2-page document in hand as an aid to educate legislators and other elected officials. Your policy issue brief should not exceed 2 pages and is organized to be engaging and to the point. Your issue brief must address the items listed below.

1. Problem Statement: What is the social problem you are addressing? Discuss the history of the scope of the problem, include facts and document data from reliable sources. What is the present status of the problem as evidence by published literature, the nature of the population affected, or disproportionality affected by the problem? This section tells your story and compels the reader to pay attention and should use data to quickly tell the story.
2. Past and Current Policy: A small subsection that states the origins of the social policies that have been created to address the problem -OR- the history that lacks adequate policy to prevent or resolve the problem. Explain why the status-quo is just not going to work anymore. This is closely linked to your problem statement.
3. Conclusion: You can choose to include by identifying key advocacy organizations/individuals to look toward for more information. Summarize your main point.
4. Provide your sources. Footnote style or small section of your text. You should have a minimum of five credible sources (peer-reviewed articles, think-tanks, or government reports. Avoid newspaper articles, blog posts, wiki, or policy organization which are not grounded in research. You can see a list of think-tanks in Canvas)

You may use pictures, graphs, and text to communicate the main ideas. It should not be an essay and should not be written like a traditional college paper, but a document that a reader could review in a matter of minutes and get all the information. Be sure to use common terms and spell out acronyms. This is a document that should be accessible to someone who is less familiar with the policy problems. The policy brief must address a social problem, so be sure that you are clarifying the group or community that is impacted by the problem. *While not required, I urge you to coordinate this assignment with your policy analysis, which is an in-depth analysis of a policy issue.*

There are examples of professional issue briefs in Canvas from professional advocacy groups, and a few student examples, used with permission.

**Assignment 2: Policy Analysis, Assesses Competencies 1, 3, & 5**

**Policy Analysis-** *(9-11 pages)*

A social policy analysis is designed to engage in a critical review of the current policy environment and evaluate the impact of policy or a collection of policies. For this assignment, you will complete an **analysis of a** **current bill** intended to impact a social welfare problem. As you are researching and working, consider this larger question “if this bill is passed into law, what would be the impact or result of this decision?” This is an analysis, so the purpose is to take the research and information and draw professional conclusions that lead to action or decisions. This is **not** a summary or descriptive paper, which would organize ideas and make a presentation. Be concise, clear, and organized in choosing what to include and how to present the information so that a professional colleague less familiar with the topic will understand it and be persuaded by your analysis and conclusions. The headings and subheadings of the policy should adhere to the guide below. You must utilize at least ***15 scholarly and/or credible sources***in your policy analysis. (These can be journal articles, legitimate websites, and/or various policy-oriented texts or reports from government or advocacy organizations). Use APA style to format your paper.

**Introduction:**

The introduction should provide the reader with information about the selected bill and the issue it is attempting to address. Because this is an analysis focused on this legislation it will help situate your writing and make it clear what you are working to accomplish in this analysis.

1. Introduce the legislation you have selected, using the title of the bill and the legislative body it is currently introduced (state, city, federal).
2. Briefly describe the proposed bill and the social problem/issue it is attempting to address, or the social problem that may occur as a result of the proposed bill (if you have selected a current bill that you believe would be harmful).

**Contextual Analysis** *(6 pages)*

Describe the current social, political, economic and ideological context of the social welfare issue.

1. Identify and describe economic factors that are contributing to the social welfare problem. Explain how these economic factors can impact policy responses to the problem.
2. Overview Public opinion/social context on the social welfare issue and bill by providing answers to these questions: How does the general public perceive the issue? How is it framed in the media? What are people saying about the issue and policy responses to it? Are there any advocacy positions or efforts for or against for the bill?
3. Describe current programs and services intended to address the social welfare problem. Explain how the bill, if passed, will address the social welfare issue.
4. Identify potential negative consequences of the bill being passed (state comparisons are helpful).
5. Apply ecological systems theory and describe how this macro system intervention (the bill) is intended to affect each level (macrosystem, mesosystem, microsystem).

 **Policy Recommendations** *(3 pages)*

Describe policy alternatives and *your* formal proposal for change.

1. Describe the specific bill or policy change you believe will solve the issue you have defined. No public policy solves a full social problem. This is a section for you to consider what other steps need to be taken or items that could be included in the policy to improve desirable outcomes.
2. Overview policy alternatives that could better achieve the intended outcome. For example, what have other states/locations done?
3. Describe the intended impact(s) for affected individuals and communities of your proposed solution.
4. Make a case that supports your proposed solution as the best option, despite the alternatives (be sure your proposal is economically sound given very limited state dollars).
5. Explain *how* social work values are embodied in your proposed policy solution.
6. Be sure to provide a conclusion paragraph for the overall analysis.

**Peer Review:** Social work professionals in policy practice write policy analysis papers to guide important policy decisions. You would never present your analysis to a Senator, or your policy organization, without a team providing feedback, perspective, and sharing new ideas to shape your work. For this assignment, you will be building your capacity to review a colleague’s work and provide feedback that helps them advances their work. You will be assigned a peer review in Canvas. Using the course rubric, you will offer concrete feedback to your peer’s assignment. You are not their editor, but you are focused on the content and ideas presented for each area of the rubric. This is not a graded item, but part of the overall grade for Assignment 2. If your partner receives a lower grade on this assignment, the instructor may review your feedback to determine if it was thorough and beneficial. If upon review I determine it did not meet a reasonable expectation for review, it may adjust your final grade on the paper.

After receiving the feedback on your paper, you can critically evaluate the information provided by a colleague and determine if adjustments to your paper should be made before submitting the assignment for a final grade.

**Assignment 3: Policy Presentation & Issue Brief: Assesses Competencies 1, 3, & 5**

Putting it all together, you will share your policy brief (updated from any feedback or new insights from assignment #1 and #2) with a brief verbal presentation. Social workers are policy advocates, and this assignment will help you practice your skills of advocating and presenting to others on a policy position. Your aim is to present the important aspects of the bill you selected in Assignment #2 and **persuade others to** **act** based on your assessment and presentation. This is a visual issue brief that uses a combination of images, and simple statements that convey the key ideas. Your presentation should be **2-5 minutes maximum.** Now that you are an expert on your policy issue, you decide what is the most important and compelling information to share. The only requirement is that your presentation must do the following:

 1). What is the action step you want others to do?

2). Your Policy Recommendation: You will tell the group about your specific policy selected for your analysis and be clear why this policy will impact the social problem it is attempting to address.

Create a video and orally present on your policy analysis and policy practice this semester and share your final policy issue brief..

Present a clear and concise overview of your policy analysis and policy practice *without* notes or note cards (rehearse, rehearse, rehearse).

Maintain audience engagement through eye contact with the audience, clear rate of speech, clarity of ideas.

Post the video recording of your presentation, along with the handout of your issue brief into your assigned discussion board group.

Field questions from the audience in the discussion board after sharing your video presentation.

**X. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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