

Advocacy. 3 Credits

Course Purpose:

This course explores advocacy as a political act. It is designed to enhance the capacity of workers and civil society to influence decision-makers and policy makers by building the constituency for change and mobilizing public opinion around issues of common concern. It also explores the theoretical foundations of advocacy, key elements of advocacy planning, strategies for action and critical issues in advocacy work today. Further, this course introduces you to how people successful —marketll their ideas particularly within organizations. No matter how good your ideas are, unless you can also effectively sell those ideas to decision-makers, those ideas do not matter.

Good ideas, in short, don't sell themselves. We focus on critical skills that help you not only understand how people are influencing you but also help you more successfully pitch your ideas to others. You'll be exposed to research that answers questions like:

- How do you clearly and memorably communicate your ideas?
- How do you build and maintain affinity and credibility as an advocate?
- How do you become a more effective story-teller when persuading others?
- How do you successfully create and manage networks?
- How do you know when it is the right time to pitch an idea?
- How do you build alliances to get better buy-in for your ideas?
- How do you —pre-sellll ideas?
- How do you successfully lead change in organizations?
- How do you effectively persuade others to adopt your ideas?
- How do you make yourself more impactful in meetings?

Expected Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critically analyze advocacy and its role in leadership, develop and utilize, analytical and critical skills in Institutional leadership and management and increase their knowledge and use of advocacy strategies for institutional/organizational growth and long term sustainability
2. Evaluate critically and describe the conceptual frameworks for engaging in effective advocacy work, demonstrate skills in influencing public policy and mobilizing public opinion in support of social and economic changes
3. Develop knowledge and skills through the sharing of advocacy experiences, issues and approaches, and Explore ways to establish an ongoing learning network for capacity building in advocacy.

Course Content:

- Conceptualizing advocacy (understanding key concepts: politics, power and participation: determining goals: policy influence, civil society strengthening, democratization or social transformation);
- Planning advocacy (Analyzing the social and political context; defining problems and selecting priority issues; identifying advocacy targets, allies, opponents & constituents; designing effective messages; monitoring and measuring effectiveness);
- Building and mobilizing constituencies for change (applying educational methods to raise awareness and mobilize support;
- using the media as a tool for social action;
- expanding constituencies through networking and the use of new information

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technologies);

- Working collaboratively with partners (joint campaigning – structures, working relationships, issues);
- Linking local and global advocacy issues.

Teaching Methods:

Lectures, Short presentations, guided discussions, small group discussions, individual exercises, and structured activities

Course Evaluation:

Continuous Assessments – 40%, Final Examination – 60%

Key Texts:

1. Kinga, K. and C. Sweetman. (2006), *Gender, Development, and Advocacy* (Oxfam Focus on Gender Series) Oxfam.
2. Chambers, D.E (2004), *Social Policy and Social Programs: A Method for the Practical Public Policy Analyst*. Allyn & Bacon; 4th Edition.

Further Readings:

- Avner, M. (2002), *The Lobbying and Advocacy Handbook for Nonprofit Organizations: Shaping Public Policy at the State and Local Level*. Amherst H Wilder Foundation
- Bankoff, G., Frerks, G. and Hilhorst, D. (eds), (2004), *Mapping Vulnerability: Disasters, Development and People*, London: Earthscan
- Covey, J. & Valerie, M., (1997), *The Advocacy Sourcebook: Frameworks for Planning, Action and Reflection*, Boston: Institute for Development Research.
- Deborah, Eade (2002), *Development and Advocacy*, Oxfam.UK
- Gallagher Margaret, (2001), *'Gender Setting: New Agendas for Media Monitoring and Advocacy*. Zed Books.
- Sharma, Ritu (2001), *An Introduction to Advocacy: Training Guide*, SARA Project, Washington: Academy for Educational Development, USAID.
- Street, J. (2001), **Mass Media, Politics and Democracy**. Palgrave Macmillan **Second Edition**

What is Advocacy?

The word advocacy takes its roots from the Latin —*ad vocare*’ meaning to speak for someone. Not only speaking for but also speaking for but also speaking with the people proposing or recommending something or someone for better options. It implies a cause, believing in it, mobilizing and influencing others to support it so as to change the policy or programme that is negatively affecting that cause.

1. Advocacy is a political process by an individual or group which aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions. Advocacy can include many activities that a person or organization undertakes including media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning and publishing research or conducting exit poll or the filing of an amicus brief. Lobbying (often by lobby groups) is a form of advocacy where a direct approach is made to legislators on an issue which plays a significant role in modern politics.

2. Advocacy is defined as a key concept in social work practice. It is defined as exerting influence on behalf of organizations and groups within legal power and political structure. —Advocacy involves either an individual or group, or their representatives, pressing their case with influential others, about situations which either affect them directly or, and more usually, try to prevent proposed changes, which will leave them worse off" (Soloman 1985).

3. Advocacy is the pursuit of influencing outcome-including policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social system and institutions- that directly affect people’s lives|| —Advocacy is the deliberate process of influencing those who make policy

decisions. It is a logical argument for a change in policies and practices on a specific issue. It is the process of resolving a conflict or a problem in a democratic manner. When the beneficiary is an individual, the advocacy effort could be considered as private advocacy. But when efforts are directed towards the benefit of the public at large, or a large group of individuals, they could be regarded as public advocacy. —Public Advocacy is a planned and organized set of actions to effectively influence public policies and to have them implemented in a way that would empower the marginalized. In a liberal democratic culture, it uses the instruments of democracy and adopts non-violent and constitutional means.

4. According to David Cohen, the working definition of advocacy is: —Organized efforts and actions that use the instruments of democracy to strengthen democratic processes. These instruments can include elections, lobbying, mass mobilization, civil disobedience, negotiations, bargaining, and court actions. Efforts and actions are designed to persuade and influence those who hold governmental, political and economic power so that they will formulate, adopt and implement public policy in ways that lives of those with less conventional political power and fewer economic resources. Advocacy has a purposeful result: to change society's institutions as well as the power relationships within and among the institutions such that those with less conventional political power and fewer economic resources acquire a greater share of each. Advocacy involves resisting patriarchy at various levels; from personal to public, from family to governance. It also includes:

- engaging institutions of governance to empower the marginalized as well as
- creating and using spaces available within the system;
- using strategically knowledge, skills and opportunities to influence public policy;

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- bridging the gap between micro level activities and macro level policy initiatives;
- Adopting non-violent and constitutional means.

5. Advocacy is speaking acting, writing with minimal conflict of interest on behalf of the sincerely perceived interests of a disadvantaged person or group to promote, protect and defend their welfare and justice by

- being on their side and no-one else's
- being primarily concerned with their fundamental needs
- remaining loyal and accountable to them in a way which is emphatic and vigorous and which is, or is likely to be, costly to the advocate or advocacy group

Therefore, *Advocacy is a value driven political process to effectively influence public policies and get them implemented. To advance social justice and human right to make the government accountable and transparent.* In essence, it is the process of putting forward one's views to the public and decision makers. It is positive action to make change, not just criticism. Its goal is to educate, engage and change. When moving forward with advocacy, we have to focus on all three of these aspects!

—Seeking with, and on behalf of, the poor, to address the underlying causes of poverty by influencing the decisions of governments, companies, groups and individuals whose policies or actions affect the poor. (Tear Fund 1999).

Purpose and Objectives of Advocacy

- The main purpose of advocacy is to engage authorities or government in dialogue so as to affect a change in their existing policies, practices, beliefs and ideas that are anti-people and not poor-responsive.
- In addition, where there were no policies before, advocacy would aim at causing the authorities to enact new policies on emerging issues that are adversely affecting the lives of the people.
- Advocacy is necessary in order to influence the policy makers as a means of addressing roots and causes of the particular problem; contribute more effectively to reduce poverty and preventing deaths and suffering through the use of wide range of intervention; reach a large segment of population and broaden the scope of program impact; and increase financial and material support for programmes.

Secondarily;

- Increase social organization and participation
- Strengthening CSOs (NGOs, CBOs, FBOs) etc. alliance
- Increasing media awareness on an issue that is not germane to the issue on focus
- Or increasing access to policy- makers by the poor masses.

Therefore:

The purpose of advocacy is to:

- **Educate** ourselves and others about an issue or problem that needs to be addressed.
- **Change attitudes:** address specific misconceptions about a problem, including that it is intractable.

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- **Influence law-makers** so that their new laws and changes to existing laws reflect greater awareness of the issues you raise.
- **Support legal and social change advocates** who are campaigning for new laws and enforcement of existing laws that address your concerns.
- **Address policy-makers** so that their agenda includes your issues.
- **Influence the media** so that it draws more attention to your concerns.
- **Pressure public officials** for enforcement of laws and policies addressing your concerns.
- **Develop coalitions and networks** to work together to achieve shared goals.

LEVELS OF ADVOCACY

Advocacy can be at different levels. These are:

- Local or grassroots level advocacy
- State level advocacy
- National level advocacy
- International or global level advocacy