How should social work education respond to the changing political landscape?

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MAKING SENSE of the NEW POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

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Social Messes

Different views of problem and solutions are contradictory

Most problems are interconnected to other problems

Multiple value conflicts

Risk difficult or impossible to calculate

Considerable Uncertainty

Ambiguous

Consequences difficult to imagine

Data are often uncertain or missing

1. Defining an ideal

2. Analyzing the issues
find the power to **imagine** a **future** that reflects the kind of world we desire and to **invent the ways to realize it**

— John Dewey

*The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy, 1917*
Defining an ideal
Inspiration from legacies of influential leaders
Signing of the Voting Rights Act
President Lyndon B. Johnson
August 6, 1956

LBJ Presidential Library. Photo by Yoichi Okamoto
Essay assignment

Had you lived during the times of [the Great Society, Jane Addams, Frederick Douglass, other] what do you think it would have been like to practice social work then? How would you feel about the life chances of clients? How does your view of what it would have meant to practice social work in those times compare to how you think it will be when you start your career given the current historical times?
Legacies of influential leaders can help us “recognize ourselves in new ways... and cultivate the gift of fanning the spark of hope in the past.”

In Paul Kramer, History in a Time of Crisis, 2017
Analyzing the issues

Implications of policies and recommendations
Analyzing the issues

The exposure of social inequality

...is inequality making us sick?
With this election, “things are being illuminated that have been going on for a very long time.”

Bryan Stevenson
Founder & Executive Director
Equal Justice Initiative

Source: eji.org
UNNATURAL CAUSES
...is inequality making us sick?
Analyzing the issues

The role of social work
What human services will face:

- core mission challenges as they struggle to protect marginalized groups
- pressure to subsidize basic services that traditionally have been regarded
- increased regulatory challenges
- the growth of hybrid market and mission-oriented strategies (social enterprises)
What social work will be called to do:

• Engage in advocacy to protect and enhance basic human rights

• Prioritize efforts

• Communicate accurate, up-to-date data to partners and stakeholders as concerns or changes emerge

• Sustain a high-quality social work education
Let Them Call Me Rebel

Abandoned Families

20 Years at Hull House

ANTIBLACK RACISM & THE AIDS EPIDEMIC

Abandoned Families
Five Keys to
Re-Imagining Political Possibility in a Post-Obama Moment

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About Me

- Policy and education experience
- CSWE Public Policy Initiative
- Why do I advocate?
- Does advocacy make a difference?
How do you become an advocate?

You already are an advocate.
Why Do We Advocate?

To:
- Tell our stories
- Make someone aware of our perspectives
- Attempt to influence
- Learn more about someone else’s opinions
Why Advocacy Matters?

• Know that success can take many forms.
• The opportunity to inform someone of your priorities is a win.
• Your efforts are helping expand advocacy efforts and promote social work.
Thinking Analytically

- Personal Opinion
- Non-negotiable principles
- Intended Influence
- Negotiable Outcomes
- Best Case Scenario
- Most Viable Scenario
How do we do this?

• Ask questions
• Read, watch, listen to reliable news sources
• Identify stakeholders who are aligned with your perspective
• Identify opposing viewpoints
• Try out your argument on people whose opinions you value
Tools for Effectiveness

• Be prepared
• Develop background materials
• Know your audience (client, family member, policymaker, etc)
• Tell a personal story
Questions?

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