



Basic Social Policy and Planning: Strategies and Practice Methods

Hobart A Burch

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In *Basic Social Policy and Planning*, Burch presents a generic process for professional intervention and social work leadership that is required of those who desire to achieve improvements in the lives of those they serve. Burch developed this text and guide so that even persons with no prior formal training in social planning can apply these principles in their practices. Because few social workers are content with simply repairing the damages caused by inequities, inadequacies, and injustices in society, *Basic Social Policy and Planning* offers a usable set of guidelines on how to change lives for the better, in small and occasionally large ways, from within any setting--agency, community, and public policy. Social workers, nurses, teachers, and other human service professionals spend their lives relating to the social and emotional needs and problems of people. Burch converts sophisticated policy and planning concepts and techniques into a form which experts and non-experts can understand, relate to, and apply in their practices. He supplies these workers with approaches, methods, models, ways of thinking, and techniques for planning. He covers:

- VIBES (Values, Interests, Beliefs, Ethics, and Slants): Understanding where you and others are coming from and toward what destination you and they are heading
 - Systems theories and worldviews: Understanding how these affect planning
 - Logical analysis of all ways of thinking--scientific and experiential, bounded and nonbounded
 - Different approaches to planning--comprehensive rational analysis; disjointed incrementalism and satisficing; mixed scanning; strategic, decentralized, contingency, transactional, and advocacy planning
 - Global, strategic, tactical, and project management levels of planning
 - Needs assessment and participation of those who will be affected
 - Quantitative and economic planning approaches: Understanding basic ideology and assumptions
 - Quantitative and economic approaches--measurement, pricing, cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis, decision analysis
- When used as a text, the first priority of this book is to give BSW and MSW students the training which they will need and want later in their careers. This training is consistent with Council on Social Work Education's required BSW/MSW foundation courses as well as advance practice courses in most programs. When used as a guidebook for the many practitioners who have learned, since graduation, that they need more skill in setting and achieving policy, agency, and community goals than they learned in school, *Basic Social Policy and Planning* can enhance the "left brain" in social workers, who as a group tend to be stronger in the "right brain" direction with chapters that walk the reader step-by-step through a generic rational planning model and tell why, whom, when, and how to involve others in planning. Because the substance of the book is rooted in advance interdisciplinary planning theory and practice, this book is just what the doctor ordered for a doctoral first course in policy and planning--it provides the "hard" background in planning for professors of policy and macro practice. It is also highly appropriate for new PhDs who are assigned to teach such courses with limited background with its chapters on foundations of policy and planning, various approaches to planning, and quantitative techniques related to costs, benefits, and uncertainties in planning.

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