**Chapter 5: Engaging in Mezzo Policy Advocacy**

***Policy Advocacy Learning Challenges and Exercises***

***Excerpted from the book***

**POLICY ADVOCACY LEARNING CHALLENGE 5.1**

**Mapping Agency Policies**

Take any agency with which you are familiar and trace:

* Its mission statement
* Its stated values, or any unstated values that you can determine
* Its revenue stream (i.e., primary funding sources)
* Its budget priorities (i.e., how it allocates funding across its services)
* Its organizational chart, including key personnel and their duties/functions
* Its ways of collaborating and competing with outside agencies
* Any aspects of informal organizational culture that you can determine, including organizational culture type (from those described above or from any typology in the extant literature)

Now, identify *any* written policy that exists within the organization. This can include a policy related to who qualifies for services, how clients or employees file grievances, or any other written policy.

With regard to the policy you identified, discuss or respond to the following questions:

1. How is the policy shaped by the organization’s mission statement?
2. How is the policy shaped by the organization’s revenue streams and budgetary priorities?
3. How is the policy shaped by the organization’s culture?
4. Of the above, which has the most powerful influence on the particular policy you identified?
5. If you had a desire to reform or change the particular policy you identified, how might the most powerful factor you identified in #4 above influence whether and how you proceed with your advocacy efforts?

**POLICY ADVOCACY LEARNING CHALLENGE 5.5**

**A Zero Displacement Policy in Watts**

Consider the community of Watts, as described on pp. 130-133 of your text and in any supplemental information you may locate. Imagine you are working with WLCAC to pass the Zero Displacement Policy. With Challenges 1 and 2 already complete as described in Figure 3.1 and Challenge 3 in progress, outline a detailed plan for completing Challenges 3 through 8 by addressing the following:

* Challenge 3: Secure attention

Identify other decision makers whose support you should bring to the issue and the proposed policy. Even if they will not be the ones to ultimately decide or vote on the policy, what key figures need to be aware of the issue? Are there other individuals or groups within the community or outside of it whose support you will need to secure?

* Challenge 4: Analyze why the problem exists

Consider the high rates of poverty and unemployment that exist in Watts, as well as the current lack of living wage jobs. What historical and socioeco­nomic factors have contributed to this situation?

Consider the reasons why a developer might be unconcerned about displacing residents in the process of building new commercial structures within the community. What historical fears and mistrusts might this lack of concern ignite?

Consider why a developer might choose not to hire from within the community or why it might choose to give its contracts to agencies from outside the community. What will you do to overcome this issue?

* Challenge 5: Develop a Strategy

Outline a strategy for getting this policy approved by the city council. How will you frame the issue? What stories will you tell and how? Who will be featured in those stories? What sorts of materials will you develop? What activities will you undertake (e.g., a press conference, one-on-one meetings, petition gathering, a community town hall)? What opportunities will you be looking for to advance your cause? Who is likely to be your opposition, and how will you address opposition?

* Challenge 6: Develop Support for the Proposal

Identify the range of stakeholders that this issue impacts. Develop a strategy for gaining their support. What types of messages will you develop to target the different groups? For those who are already on your side, how will you further engage them to advance your agenda? For those who are on the fence, how might you bring them over to your side?

* Challenge 7: Implement the Policy

How will you ensure efficient and successful implementation of the policy? What groups of people will be involved in implementing the policy? What types of watchdog activities might you undertake to make sure that the spirit of the policy is being honored? Will you consider engaging in whistleblowing if you see that policy makers are not fully or correctly implementing the policy?

* Challenge 8: Assess the Policy

How will you assess whether the policy has been effective? What are the outcomes of concern to the stakeholder groups? How will you measure outcomes?