

# Syllabus American Social Policy Challenges Fall 2005

Faculty: **Kenneth Apfel**  
Course Number: **PA 388K**  
Unique Number: **64045**  
Classroom: **3.102**  
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## **Description**

This course provides an overview of social policy in the United States, with a focus on contemporary issues and challenges facing the nation.

We begin with an overview and history of American social policy, followed by an exploration of the key demographic and economic trends underway in the US, with particular attention placed on the changing picture of the poor, the elderly and our increasingly diverse population. The balance of the course work is devoted to analysis and discussion of the programs that now support the three key areas of US social policy—income security, health care and human capital investment. We examine key contemporary policy issues and options in all of these areas, including welfare reform and support for the poor and disabled, education and training, Social Security and Medicare for the elderly and health care for the poor and uninsured.

Principal readings are from *Understanding Poverty* (Danziger & Haveman) and *A Working Nation* (Ellwood *et al*). In addition, I have assigned a number of book chapters, articles, government publications, as well as topical policy research and advocacy pieces. A very wide range of opinion is presented.

The course requires very extensive reading and class preparation as well as a high level of participation in class. Student assessment will be based on class participation, weekly writings posted to the discussion board, short and lengthy written assignments, and group presentations on a variety of social policy topics.

## Readings

### Required textbooks for purchase at Coop East:

- *Understanding Poverty*, edited by Danziger and Haveman. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001 (noted in syllabus as **UP**).
- *A Working Nation*, by Ellwood *et al.* NY, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 2000 (noted in syllabus as **AWN**).

### Other Key Readings:

The following texts are referenced in the syllabus and are used in class. Copies of the texts will be on reserve in the Public Affairs Library. Copies of the specific readings from the texts are available on **ERes**.

- Clark, *et al.*, *The Economics of an Aging Society*, **EAS**, Blackwell Publishing, Malden, MA, 2004
- *The Texas Challenge*, Murdock, College Station, TX, Texas A&M Press, 2003.
- *Strangers at the Gates*, edited by Waldinger, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 2001.
- *When Work Disappears*, Wilson. New York, NY, Vintage Books, 1997.

In addition, all other reading materials are available on **ERes**.

## Course Requirements

### Class participation and “weekly responses” to readings.

All students are expected to prepare for and actively participate in class discussions. It is absolutely essential that students read the course materials in advance of class.

Prior to each class, I ask that you post a brief reaction—no longer than 100-200 words—to the discussion board, where they will be available for reading by all members of the class. I urge you to read, build on and respond to the comments of the other class members. All reactions are due by close of business on the Sunday before class. Your response should include the following:

1. **Insight/Idea:** What did you see as the most important insight/idea from the readings?
2. **Reaction:** What are your reactions? Are you convinced of any conclusions? If there are apparent inconsistencies or contradictions among the readings what do you make of them?
3. **Class discussion:** What are the one or two key issues questions or concerns would you particularly like to discuss in class?

## **International Presentations**

During the first class session, I will ask all students to rank their interest in the international cases that we will examine over the course of the semester. Teams of students will present and discuss the social policy, pension and/or health care challenges facing a variety of other countries—as examples, the Canadian health care system, the Chilean pension system, the German long term care system, etc. A two page summary memo on the topic is to be prepared by the team and distributed to the class prior to the presentation.

## **Mock Agency Crossfire Sessions**

During the first class session, I will ask all students to rank their interest in the six crossfire sessions that we will hold over the semester. Teams of students will role-play members of Congress, Administration officials, agency policy analysts and leaders of interest groups at these sessions. A one-page memo is to be written by each crossfire participant and submitted to the class prior to the presentation.

## **Individual Policy Paper**

In lieu of a final examination, each student will develop a 20+ page paper on a specific social policy issue. The topic of the paper must be approved by me before the middle of the semester.

## **Student Assessment**

Student assessments will be based on class participation, written assignments and oral presentations. Before the middle of the semester, the class will decide on the relative weights of the various assignments for the purposes of grading. Below is my proposal for assessment:

- Overall class participation and weekly responses 15%
- Individual policy papers 45%
- International presentations 15%
- Mock Hearings & Crossfires 25%

I will be using the +/- grade system, as approved by the Graduate Assembly. For more information:

[http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/student\\_services/academic\\_policies/plus\\_minus.html](http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/student_services/academic_policies/plus_minus.html)

## **Class Schedule and Assignments**

### **1) September 12: Overview & Introduction**

General introductions, overview of course and discussion about the implications of living near or below the poverty level. Please read all below **before** the first class. The ERes password is *boat*.

#### **Readings:**

- Center for Public Policy Priorities: "Making It: What it Really Takes to Live in Texas", 2001, pp 1-7, 28, 29, 60, 61 and optional pp 8-26, **ERes**, <http://www.cppp.org/files/8/making%20it.pdf>
- US Conference on Catholic Bishops: take the poverty quiz at [www.nccbuscc.org/cchd/povertyusa](http://www.nccbuscc.org/cchd/povertyusa) and take a tour of this "forgotten state" at <http://www.nccbuscc.org/cchd/povertyusa/tour.htm>
- Ehrenreich: *Nickled and Dimed*, 11-49, (optional, skim) **ERes**

### **2) September 19: Understanding Poverty**

An examination of Texas, US & international trends in poverty. A discussion of why the poor are poor, and how one's "answer" to the question may shape policy direction.

#### **Readings:**

- Burtless & Smeeding: "The Level, Trend and Composition of Poverty", pp 27-49 & 56-66 **UP**
- Clark: "The Economic Well Being of Older Americans" **EAS**, pp 36-54, **ERes**
- Cancian & Reed: "Changes in Family Structure", pp 69-96 **UP**
- Smeeding et al: "US Poverty in a Cross-national Context", pp 170-175 & 180-185 **UP**
- Corcoran: "Mobility, Persistence and the Consequences of Poverty for Children", pp 127-161 (skim) **UP**
- Wilson: *When Work Disappears*, Chapters 2, 3 & 5, (skim) **ERes**
- DiNitto: "Why are the Poor, Poor?" *Social Welfare*, pp 78-85, **ERes**
- Ellwood: "Values & the Helping Conundrums", pp 14-44, *Poor Support: Poverty in the American Family*

### **3) September 26: Historical Perspectives and Delivery Mechanisms**

Brief history of the evolution of social policy in the US. Crossfire on the various alternative models of delivering support, using child care as an example.

### **Readings:**

- Orloff: “The Political Origins of America’s Belated Welfare State”, Wier, *The Politics of Social Policy in the US*, **ERes**.
- Scholz & Levine: “The Evolution of Income Support Policy in Recent Decades” pp193-228 **UP**
- Starobin: “The Daddy State” *National Journal*, 3/28/98, **ERes**
- Kosterlitz: “The Ownership Society” *National Journal* 1/24/04, **ERes**
- Thompson: “The Roles of Social Insurance, Tax Expenditures, Mandates and Means Testing” pp 9-26, **ERes**.
- Graetz & Mashaw: “True Security: Rethinking American Social Insurance” Book excerpts, (skim) **ERes**.
- Moon: “The Moral Basis of the Democratic Welfare State” From *Democracy and the Welfare State* edited by Gutman (optional), **ERes**.
- DiNitto: “Historical Perspectives on Social Welfare” pp 32-42 from *Social Welfare*, (optional) **ERes**.

### **4) October 3: Is Demography Destiny?**

Discussion of the scope and implications of growing diversity in Texas and the nation, as well as a discussion of the scope and implications of aging trends in the US and the world.

### **Readings:**

- Wadlinger: *Strangers at the Gates*, Chapters 2 (pp. 30-53 & 71-73 only), 3 & 5, **ERes**
- Goodhart: “Discomfort of Strangers”, *Guardian*, 2/20/04, **ERes**
- Huntington: “The Hispanic Challenge”, *Foreign Policy*, March 2004
- Clark: “The Graying of America and the World”, pp 12-33, *EAS*, 2004 **ERes**
- Leibfritz and Roseveare: “Aging Populations and Government Budgets”, from *OECD Observer*, **ERes**
- *The Economist*: “A Tale of Two Bellies”, **ERes**
- Estes: “Inequality and Aging” pp 137-163, (optional) **ERes**
- Peterson: *Grey Dawn*, pp 27-64 (optional) **ERes**

### **5) October 10: What Is Happening to Work, Income & Employer Benefits?**

An examination of changes in work and income in the US, including international comparisons. Team presentation on US private sector pensions.

## **Readings:**

- Ellwood et al: “Winners and Losers in America”, pp 1-41 **AWN**
- Galbraith: *Created Unequal*, Chapters 2 & 3, skim, **ERes**
- Freeman: “The Rising Tide Lifts...?” pp 97-126 **UP**
- Freeman: “Rising Wage Inequality: US vs. Other Advanced Countries”, *Working Under Different Rules*, pp 29-62, **ERes**
- Kruse: “The New Employee-Employer Relationship”, pp **AWN** (skim)
- Byrnes: “The Benefits Trap” *Business Week*, **ERes**
- Munnell: “Retirement Blues”, Boston College Magazine, Spring 2004, pp 46-50, **ERes**
- Apfel: Op-Ed “Retirees Losing a Benefit” *Dallas Morning News*, 8/11/02
- Private Pensions and Retiree Health Packet, **ERes**

## **6) October 17: Social Insurance Policy for the Elderly: Pensions**

Overview and discussion on current issues on Social Security. Team presentation on the Chilean/UK systems and crossfire on whether to privatize/personalize Social Security.

## **Readings:**

- “Summary of the 2005 Social Security and Medicare Trustees Report”, **ERes** or <http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/TRSUM/trsummary.html>
- Congressional Budget Office: “Social Security: A Primer”, **ERes**
- White House: “Strengthening Social Security”, Feb. 2005, **ERes**
- Pozner: “Testimony on Progressive House W/M Committee, 5/12/05, **ERes**
- Furman: “Evaluating Alternative Social Security Reform Proposals”, House W/M Committee, 5/12/05, **ERes**
- Reno: “Options to Balance Social Security Over the Next 75 Years”, NASI 2/05, **ERes**
- Burke *et al*: *Social Security and Medicare*, pp127-160 Clinton era; some of these readings relate to Medicare for next week, (optional) **ERes**
- Chile/UK Pensions Packet, **ERes**

## **Readings on Social Security Commission: (all optional)**

- President’s Commission: “Strengthening Social Security and Creating Personal Wealth for all Americans”, summary materials, **ERes**
- Diamond & Orszag: “An Analysis of the Plans Proposed by the President’s Commission”, Executive Summary, **ERes**

- Blahous: “Problems With the Diamond/Orszag Paper”, **ERes**
- Diamond & Orszag: “A Response to the Executive Director of the President’s Commission”, **ERes**

## **7) October 24: Social Insurance Policy for the Elderly: Medicare**

Discussion of Medicare debate and future challenges. Crossfire on Medicare Rx drugs.

### **Readings:**

- McLanahan/Apfel/Fatehi: “Medicare Overview” Draft not for circulation or attribution, **ERes**
- Kaiser Foundation: “Medicare at a Glance”, “Medicare Choice”, “Medicare and Rx Drugs”, **ERes**
- Clark: “The Financing & Delivery of Acute Health Services”, pp 271-315, *The Economics of an Aging Society*, 2004 (optional) **ERes**
- Herd: “Understanding the Options”, Draft: not for circulation or attribution, **ERes**
- National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare: “Recommendations”, 1999, (skim) **ERes**
- Butler: “Social Values and Medicare Reform” *The Ethics of Medicare Reform*, Johns Hopkins U, 2002, **ERes**
- Feder & Moon: “Can Medicare Survive its Saviors”, *The American Prospect*, **ERes**
- Rice: “An Analysis of Reforming Medicare Through a ‘Premium Support’ Program” **ERes**
- Serafini: “No Cure All”, *National Journal*, 11/22/03, **ERes**
- Rx Drugs Reading Packet, **ERes**
- Burke *et al*: *Social Security and Medicare*, pp 71-86 and 127-160, Clinton era; Medicare sections, (optional) **ERes**

## **8) October 31: Long Term Care Policy**

Discussion of the long-term care challenges facing the nation. Team presentation on the long-term care system in Germany

### **Readings:**

- Clark: “Additional Health Issues: Long Term Care”, pp 316-343, *The Economics of an Aging Society*, 2004 **ERes**
- Georgetown University Long Term Care Project Packet, **ERes**
- Center for Long-Term Care Financing Packet, **ERes**
- Citizens for Long Term Care, pp 1-20, Kaiser Family Foundation, **ERes**
- Angel: *Who Will Care for Us?*, Chapters 6 & 7, pp.113-157, **ERes**

- Alper & Gibson: “Integrating Acute & Long Term Care for the Elderly”, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2001, **ERes**
- Estes: “The Underdevelopment of Community-Based Services in the U.S. Long-Term Care System”, *Social Policy & Aging*, Chapter 10, pp 201-215, (optional) **ERes**
- German Long Term Care Packet, **ERes**

## 9) November 7: Income Policies for the Poor: Welfare Reform

The history of welfare reform. If you were President in 1996, would you have signed the welfare bill? Crossfire session on two key welfare reauthorization issues: work requirements and efforts to strengthen marriage.

### Readings:

- Pavetti: “Welfare Policy in Transition” pp 229-277, **UP**
- Rector: “Why Congress Must Reform Welfare” Heritage Foundation (skim), **ERes** ing Bill Clinton Has Done” *Atlantic* (skim)
- Edelman: “The Worst Th
- DiNitto: “A New Food Stamp Program” *Social Welfare*, pp 216-225 (optional) **Eres**
- Barnett: “Better Off Welfare”, (optional) **ERes**

### The current debate: strengthen work requirements and marriage?

- Besharov: “The Past & Future of Welfare Reform”, October 2002, **ERes**
- CBPP: TANF Reauthorization in 2005, April 2005, **ERes**
- Rector: “Using Welfare Reform to Strengthen Marriage”, *American Experiment Quarterly*, 2001, **ERes**
- Buntin: “Father Time”, *Governing*, March 2005, **ERes**
- Rector: “Myths & Facts: Why Successful Welfare Reform Must Strengthen Work Requirements”. Heritage Foundation, 2002, **ERes**
- Parrott Fremstad: “The Senate TANF Reauthorization Bill” CBPP, 5/12/04, **ERes**
- Zeller: “The Welfare Wars”, Government Executive, July 2002, **ERes**
- Walters: “The Flip Side of Welfare Reform”, *Governing*, March 2002, **ERes**
- Rector: “Welfare: Preserving and Expanding Welfare Reform”. *Agenda 2003: Shaping America’s Future*, Heritage Foundation (optional) **ERes**

## **10) November 14: Policies to Support Families and to Help Make Work Pay**

Discussion of various programs designed to support working families.  
International team presentation on the Scandinavian model of family support.  
Discussion of US disability policy.

### **Readings:**

- Ellwood: “Anti-Poverty Policy for Families in the Next Century: From Welfare to Work—and Worries”, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Winter 2000, pp 187-198, **ERes**
- Heyman: Work-Family Issues and Low-Income Families, **ERes**
- Olsen: “The Advancing Nanny State: Why Government Should Stay Out of Child Care”, CATO Institute, October 23, 1997 **ERes**
- King: “Draft Paper of Effectiveness of Training Programs”, **ERes**
- Clark: “Disability Policy”, pp 237-268, *The Economics of an Aging Society*, 2004 **ERes**
- Apfel: “Should We Establish a System of Mutual Accountabilities for Persons with Disabilities?” OEDC, 2003, **ERes**
- Scandinavian Family Support Packet, **ERes**
- Esping-Anderson: “After the Golden Age?” Welfare State Dilemmas in a Global Economy”, pp 1-11 and 20-27, *Welfare States in Transition: National Adaptations to Global Economies*, Sage Publications, **ERes**
- Kaiser: “In Finland’s Footsteps”, *Washington Post*, 8/8/05, **ERes**
- Garfinkel: “A Brief History of Child Support Policies in the US” *Fathers Under Fire*, pp 14-30, (optional) **ERes**
- Ku: “Improving Transitional Medicaid to Promote Work & Strengthen Health Insurance Coverage”, CBPP, 2002, (optional) **ERes**
- Gueron: “The Role of Education & Training in Welfare Reform”, The Brookings Institution Policy Brief No. 29, April 2002 (optional) **ERes**
- Stanley *et al*: Developing Skills “What We Know About the Impacts of American Employment & Training Programs on Employment, Earnings, and Educational Outcomes”, pp 1-47, (optional) **ERes**

## **11) November 21: Education policy and Service Integration/ Devolution Issues**

Discussion of the ongoing efforts to “sort out” federal/state responsibilities in social policy. Should we centralize in the education area and decentralize our

income support programs? Discussion of the federal & state roles in preschool and elementary and secondary education. Crossfire session on Administration's "Superwaiver" proposal.

### **Readings:**

- Rivlin "Rethinking Federalism", *Reviving the American Dream*, pp 110-125, **ERes**
- Karoly: "Investing in the Future: Reducing Poverty through Human Capital Investments" **UP**, pp 314-356
- DiNitto: *Social Welfare*, pp 320-355, **ERes**
- WELPAN: Developing a Workable Cross Systems Waiver Authority: perspective of the WELPAN Network" June 2002, **ERes**
- President's Budget: "Superwaiver" pp 35-36, **ERes**
- Greenstein: "Superwaiver Would Grant Executive Branch and Governors Sweeping Authority to Override Federal Laws" CBPP, 2002, **ERes**
- Fremstad: "Is the Superwaiver the Only Way?", CBPP, 2004, **ERes**
- Kafer: "Education: Opening Doors to Excellence", *Agenda 2003: Shaping America's Future*, Heritage Foundation **ERes**
- US Department of Education: "Four Pillars of NCLB", 2004 **ERes**
- Jennings: "Knocking on Your Door", American School Board Journal, September 2002, **ERes**
- Payne: "The Implementation of the Accountability Provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act: A State Perspective", CA Department of Education 2004, **ERes**
- Linn: "Rethinking the No Child Left Behind Accountability System", National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing, U CO Boulder, **ERes**
- Kafer: "No Child Left Behind: Where Do We Go From Here?", The Heritage Foundation, July 6, 2004, **ERes**
- Keller: "Texas School Finance in 2002", (optional) **ERes**

## **12) November 28: Health Policies for the Non-Aged**

Discussion of government role in providing/encouraging health insurance for low income and uninsured non-elderly individuals. Congressional hearing on Administration's health insurance tax-credit proposal.

### **Readings:**

- Iglehart: "The American Health Care System", **ERes**
- Apfel: "Health Insurance for the Uninsured", pp 12-19, LBJ School Journal, Fall 2003 **ERes**
- Mullahy & Wolfe: "Health Policies for the Non-Elderly Poor", **UP**, pp 278-313

- Liska: “Medicaid: Overview of a Complex Program”, Urban Institute, **ERes**
- Serafini: “Balancing Act”, *National Journal*, 8/13/05, **ERes**
- Holohan & Spillman; “Health Care Access for Uninsured Adults”, Urban Institute, (optional) **ERes**

#### **Readings on Insurance Health Tax Credits:**

- Pauly & Herring: “Expanding Coverage via Tax Credits: Trade-offs & Outcomes”, *Health Affairs*, January 2001, **ERes**
- Council of Economic Advisors: “Health Insurance Credits”, 2002, **ERes**
- Park: “Health Insurance Proposals in Administration’s Budget could Weaken the Employer-Based Health Insurance System”, CBPP, 2002, **ERes**
- Gruber: “Testimony on House Hearing on Health Insurance Tax Credits”, February 13, 2002, **ERes**
- Owcharenko: “Health Care: Helping the Uninsured”, *Agenda 2003: Shaping America’s Future*, Heritage Foundation **ERes**

### **13) December 5: The Future?**

Where we should go from here? In addition, international team presentation on Canadian health care system (a follow-up to last week).

#### **Readings:**

- Murdock: “Summary, Implications & Assessment of Alternative Futures”, pp., *The Texas Challenge*, **ERes**
- Wilson: “A Broader Vision”, *When Work Disappears*, Chapter 8, pp. 207-238, **ERes**
- Blank: Chapter 4, “Enhancing the Opportunities, Skills, and Security of American Workers”, pp 105-123, **AWN**
- Steurle: “Eight Pathways to the Government We Deserve”, The Urban Institute No. 14, October 1998, **ERes**
- Niskanen: Chapter 3, “Creating Good Jobs & Good Wages, pp 92-104, **AWN**

#### **Readings on Health Care:**

- Reinhardt: “International Perspectives on Health Policy Reform” pp 161-182, *Social Security and Medicare*, **ERes**
- Anderson: “Health Spending in the US and the Rest of the Industrialized World”, *Health Affairs*: July 2005
- Canada Health Care Packet, **ERes**