

SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND ISSUES

Social Work 323K
Fall, 1999
Unique #: 59640

Mon/Wed 11:00—12:30
Room: 2.116

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*Note: SW 323k contains a substantial writing component

Course Description

This course is the second course in the social policy curriculum area required for undergraduate program majors. Prerequisites include Government 310L and 312L (or their equivalents), an introductory economics course, and SW 310 (the first course in the social policy sequence). This course is designed to provide students with the ability to analyze contemporary social welfare policy issues and programs and to understand the relationship between social policy and social work practice. The course focuses on historical, economic, political, and other social conditions that influence policy development in the United States. Specific policy areas discussed are those in which social workers play major roles: income maintenance (with a focus on social insurance and public assistance), health, mental health, child welfare, and aging. Policy issues and programs are addressed as they affect major groups as well as populations at risk (e.g. people of color, people with disabilities, women, gay men and lesbians) with a particular emphasis on social and economic justice. Students will learn to use policy analysis tools in order to understand how policy influences practice and planning decisions and how social workers can influence social welfare policy.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Define social policy from a variety of perspectives;
2. Discuss and interpret the history of the development of social policy and the impact of economics, politics, and social values on policy formation in the United States and the ways that issues of diversity (such as culture, class, gender, physical or mental ability, age) have been addressed;
3. Define key concepts in social welfare policy (e.g. universal, residual, public assistance, social insurance, cash, in-kind);
4. Apply frameworks for analyzing the development of social welfare policy;
5. Apply frameworks for evaluating the effects of social welfare policy;
6. Identify and explain contemporary issues in the development of social welfare policy (e.g. centralized and decentralized policy-making, types of transfers, alternatives for addressing social welfare concerns), including values and ethical dilemmas;
7. Discuss issues and apply theoretical frameworks related to the policy areas of income maintenance, health, mental health, child welfare, and aging;
8. Analyze the impact of social welfare policy in terms of social and economic justice (i.e. differential effects on minority groups and particular populations including people of color, people with disabilities, women, gay men and lesbians; and
9. Analyze the roles of social workers in the social policy process and the effects of social policies on social work practice.

Teaching Methods

The method of the course is founded upon student participation. As professional advocates, it is essential for credentialed social workers to be able to articulate ideas clearly and persuasively. All students are encouraged to participate through discussions in class, via e-mail, or with the instructor or teaching assistant during office hours. The format will include lectures, videos, guest presentations, weekly readings, framed discussions, group exercises, and student briefings.

Required Readings

DiNitto, Diana (1999). Social Welfare: Politics and Public Policy, 5th ed. Needham Heights, MA., Allyn and Bacon.

A packet of other required readings will be placed on reserve for you in the School of Social Work Learning Resource Center, SSW 1.218.

Course Requirements

There are no in-class midterms or final exams. Students will be graded on a series of proportionally weighted requirements, including:

- A) Class Participation (15%)
- B) Weekly Response Papers (20%)
- C) Take Home Essay (35%)
- D) Social Welfare Briefing (30%)

Class Participation

Students will be graded on the quality of their contribution to the collective learning pursuits of the class, including participation in class and group e-mail discussions and/or office visits with the instructor/TA. At the end of the semester students will provide a graded self-assessment of their participation.

Weekly Response Papers

Students will be graded on the submission of ten (10) one to two page, double-spaced, typed response papers to each week's scheduled readings. Students will also submit two (2) questions regarding the readings along with each weekly response. Each response should include a brief summary of the central issues and your response to any of the author's (or authors') main points. With multiple readings, the response papers should be synthetic; that is, highlight the main points and your response to the readings taken as a whole. With regard to the questions, you should feel free to ask questions about issues that are confusing you, about theory or methods, implications, etc. The purpose of the response papers and questions is to motivate you to read the weekly material critically and allow you an opportunity to think through the readings. The papers will be due on Wednesday of each week.

Take Home Essay

From questions generated by the instructor and from students through the response papers, a short list of questions will be handed out to students during the ninth week. Students will then have one week to submit a ten to twelve (10-12) page essay response. The questions will focus on major issues or problems addressed in class readings, lectures, and discussions. The assignment provides students the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of social welfare policy and issues surrounding economic security, and develop their own relevant ideas as they resonate with the course materials.

Social Welfare Briefing

Students may work alone or team up with a classmate to develop a presentation or briefing paper based on the investigation and evaluation of a particular social welfare policy or program as it relates to problems, issues, programs, and other material covered in class. Students may choose to either present their briefing in class during the final two weeks of the course or submit a 5-7 page briefing paper on a subject that has been approved by the instructor. **More information about this assignment will be given during the third week of class.**

Grades

Grades will be determined as follows:

90-100	A
80-90	B
70-80	C
60-70	D
59 and below	F

Course Evaluation

At mid-term students will have the opportunity to anonymously evaluate the course and the instructor. Feedback from this evaluation will be used, to the extent possible, to strengthen the remainder of the course. At the end of the term students will have the opportunity to evaluate the course and the instructor using the official Course Instructor Survey of the School of Social Work at the UT-Austin. Of course, constructive feedback on the class is welcome throughout the duration of the term.

Course Schedule

Date	Description	Text/Readings
Week 1 8/25	Introduction and overview of the course Rules for being a conscious social worker	* All readings other than DiNitto are on reserve.
Week 2 8/30, 9/1	Theories of the welfare state Video/lecture: The New Deal and the Great Depression	DiNitto, chap. 2, p.p. 32-42 Abramovitz, chap. 7 <i>The emergence of the modern welfare state</i>
Week 3 9/8	No class on Monday due to holiday The War on Poverty	Patterson Chaps. 6,8,9
Week 4 9/13, 9/15	Poverty and inequality in America From the war on poverty to the war on the poor	DiNitto, chap. 3 Sklar, <i>Boom times for billionaires</i>
Week 5 9/20, 9/22	Myths and realities of poverty Class exercise	Massey, <i>The age of extremes</i> Sherman, <i>Poverty matters</i>
Week 6 9/27, 9/29	Welfare reform PBS video: Welfare as we know it	DiNitto, Chap. 6 Rector, <i>Why Congress must reform welfare</i>
Week 7 10/4, 10/6	Myths and realities of welfare What's right with welfare?	Bane, <i>Welfare as we might know it</i> Furstenberg, <i>The effects of welfare reform on the family</i>

Week 8 10/11, 10/13	Discrimination and affirmative action: Education and employment	DiNitto, chap. 11 <i>West, Beyond affirmative action</i> De Balcazar, <i>Common concerns of disabled Americans</i>
Week 9 10/18, 10/20	Social Security: America's #1 anti-poverty tool	Thompson & Upp, <i>The social insurance approach</i> Tanner, <i>Privatizing Social Security</i>
Week 10 10/25, 10/27	Health care policy in the U.S. The basics of managed care Guest lecture: Dr. Cecilia Schulte: "The crisis in primary care"	DiNitto, chap. 8 Reading: TBA *Take home essay assigned
Week 11 11/1, 11/3	Comparative perspectives on the U.S. welfare state	Casper et al, <i>What we can learn from other countries</i> Wilson, <i>A broader vision</i> *Take home essay due (11/3)
Week 12 11/8, 11/10	Towards the common good	Funiciello, <i>Ending poverty as we know it</i> Scopol, <i>Targeting within universalism</i>
Week 13 11/15, 11/17	Frameworks for evaluating good social policy	DiNitto, chap. 12 Fraser, <i>After the family wage</i>
Week 14 11/22, 11/24	Student policy briefings	No readings assigned
Week 15 11/29, 12/1	Student policy briefings	No readings assigned
12/9 9-12, if needed	Student Policy Briefings	

Full Citations for Reserve Readings

Week 1

No reserve readings assigned.

Week 2

Abramovitz, M. (1988). The Great Depression and the Social Security Act: The emergence of the modern welfare state. Chapter 7 in Regulating the Lives of Women: Social Welfare Policy from Colonial Times to the Present. Boston, MA: South End Press.

Week 3

Patterson, James T. (1981). America's struggle against poverty, 1900-1980. Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA.

Week 4

Sklar, H. (1997). Boom times for billionaires, bust for workers and children. Z Magazine(November), 32-37.

Week 5

Massey, D. (1996). The age of extremes: Concentrated affluence and poverty in the 21st century. Demography(November), 395-412.

Sherman, A. (1997). Poverty matters: The cost of child poverty in America. Washington D.C.: Children's Defense Fund.

Week 6

Rector, R. (1995). Why congress must reform welfare (#1063): Heritage Foundation.

Week 7

Bane, M. J. (1997). Welfare as we might know it. The American Prospect(Jan-Feb.), 47-53.

Furstenberg, Frank F. (1998). The effect of welfare reform on the family: The good, the bad, and the ugly. Joint Center for Poverty Research.

Week 8

West, C. (1993). Beyond Affirmative Action: Equality and Identity. Chapter 5 in Race Matters. Vintage Books.

De Balcazar, Yolanda, Bradford, Barbara, & Fawcett, Stephen B. (1988). Common concerns for disabled Americans: Issues and options. Social Policy, fall, p.p. 29-35.

Week 9

Tanner, Michael (1996). Privatizing Social Security: A big boost for the poor. (SSP, no. 4): Cato Institute, July 26.

Thompson, Lawrence H. & Upps, Melinda M. (1997). The social insurance approach and Social Security in Kingson, Eric R. and Schulz, James H. (eds.), *Social Security in the 21st Century*, p.p. 3-21, Oxford University Press.

Week 10

Reserve readings to be announced.

Week 11

Casper, L. et. al. (1994). The gender-poverty gap: What can we learn from other countries? American Sociological Review(August), 594-605.

Wilson, W. J. (1996). A broader vision: Social policy options in cross-national perspective. Chapter 8 in When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor. New York: Random House Inc.

Week 12

Funiciello, T. (1993). Ending poverty as we know it. In Tyranny of Kindness: Dismantling the Welfare State to End Poverty in America (pp. 297-320): Atlantic Monthly Press.

Scopol, T. (1991). Targeting within universalism: Politically viable strategies to combat poverty in the United States. In C. Jencks (Ed.), The Urban Underclass (pp. 411-459). Washington D.C.: Urban Institute.

Week 13

Fraser, N. (1994). After the family wage: Gender equity and the welfare state. Political Theory(November), 591-618.

Week 14

No reserve readings assigned.

Week 15

No reserve readings assigned.

Selected Web Sites on Poverty, Antipoverty Policy, and Welfare Reform

Institute for Research on Poverty (www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp/)

See their own publications as well as their links to other poverty-related sources.
The IRP also publishes FOCUS, an excellent welfare and policy related journal.

Joint Center for Poverty Research (www.jcpr.org/)

The Urban Institute (www.urban.org/index.htm)

Center for Research on Child Well-being (www.wws.princeton.edu:80/~crcw)

Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (www.mdrc.org)

The MDRC is a non-profit, nonpartisan social policy research organization. The MDRC leads the field in evaluations of welfare-to-work programs.

The Brookings Institution (www.brook.edu/)

National Center for Children in Poverty (<http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp/>)

Mathematica Policy Research (www.mathematica-mpr.com/)

The following is a list of advocacy research organizations that provide useful information:

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (www.cbpp.org)

Center for Law and Social Policy (www.clasp.org)

Children's Defense Fund (www.childrensdefense.org/)

The Electronic Policy Network (www.epn.org)

The EPN has extensive links to other liberal research centers and The American Prospect, a bi-monthly journal.

Welfare Information Network (www.welfareinfo.org)

Government sites of interest:

U.S. Census Bureau (www.census.gov/)

Congressional Budget Office (www.cbo.gov)

Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov)

