

SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND ISSUES

Social Work 323k
Fall, 2001
Unique #: 61535

Mon/Wed 11:00—12:15
Room: 2.122

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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.

Note on safety: As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should also notify instructors regarding any safety concerns.

Note on UT disability policy: Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

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

Shirk, Martha, Neil G. Bennet, and J. Lawrence Aber. 1999. Lives On The Line: American Families And The Struggle To Make Ends Meet. Westview Press.

A packet of other required readings will be available at University Duplicating Service (471-1615).

Course Requirements

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

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|----|---------------------|-------|
| A) | Class Participation | (10%) |
| B) | Weekly Quizzes | (20%) |
| C) | Book Review | (20%) |
| D) | Opinion Editorial | (20%) |
| E) | Take Home Final | (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 self-assessment of their participation to the instructor that will be used to help determine the overall grade for participation.

Weekly Quizzes

Students will be given six (6) quizzes throughout the semester. The quizzes will ask basic questions about class notes and readings, so it will be important for students to read the week's assigned readings *before* each class and to be familiar with material discussed in class the previous week. Quizzes will be administered on a random basis and may be given at any time during the course period. Students will be allowed to drop the lowest grade they receive for a total of five quiz scores. Because of this drop policy, no make-up quizzes will be given.

⊕ Book Review

Prepare a review of one book from the following list. The review should be 4-5 pages and 1.5 spaced. Evaluation will be based upon how clearly you describe the content of the book and the analysis you provide of the book's main points. Reviews should also respond to the following:

- a) What main points are presented?
- b) How effectively does the book cover the subject of poverty and/or social policy? Defend your answer.
- c) In what ways does the book relate to the information that has been discussed in class and/or class readings?
- d) Would you recommend the book? Why/why not?

Because this is a short paper, you will need to be concise, making your points clearly and succinctly. Your critical point of view is more important than merely summarizing the main points of the book.

Choose one of the following:

- 1) The Corner: A Year In the Life of An Inner-city Neighborhood, by David Simon & Edward Burns
- 2) Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America, by Barbara Ehrenreich
- 3) If the Gods Had Meant Us To Vote They Would Have Given Us Candidates, by Jim Hightower
- 4) The Lost Children of Wilder: The Epic Struggle to Change Foster Care, by Nina Bernstein
- 5) Compassionate Conservatism: What it is, What it Does, and How it Can Transform America, by Marvin Olasky
- 6) The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is Still the Least Valued, by Ann Crittendon

⊕ **Opinion Editorial**

Many social workers interact with disadvantaged and vulnerable populations on the front lines of government and non-profit service delivery systems. Social workers are thus uniquely situated to understand the impact of social welfare policy on the clients they serve. To develop media advocacy skills, students must write an opinion editorial worthy of submission to a medium or large daily newspaper. The opinion editorial should be 750 words in length, and cover a social welfare topic that is pertinent to course material. Opinion editorials accepted at one of the 10 largest publication dailies in Texas will receive an automatic 100% for the assignment. **The assignment is due no later than November 18.**

Take Home Essay

A short list of questions will be handed out to students during the last week of class. 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 ideas as they resonate with the course materials.

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 8/28	Introduction and overview of the course Rules for being a conscious social worker	
Week 2 9/4	No class on Monday due to holiday Theories of the welfare state	Loeb, <i>We don't have to be saints</i> Jensen, <i>making sense of a complex world</i> Bettman, pp. 42-45, 67-81, 148-151
Week 3 9/9, 9/11	Highlights of social work history The Children's Bureau Social Gospel Movement	Gourley, <i>Good girl work</i> Ladd-Taylor, <i>Before the baby comes...</i> Sinclair, chap's 13-14, pp. 125-140
Week 4 9/16, 9/18	Video/lecture: The New Deal and the Great Depression	Abramovitz, chap. 7 <i>The emergence of the modern welfare state</i> Fisher, <i>The Great Depression</i> Terkel, <i>Hard Times</i>
Week 5 9/23, 9/25	The War on Poverty and the Great Society Social Movements in the 60's From the war on poverty to the war on the poor	Coontz, <i>American families in the 1950s</i> Day, chap. 10 Robinson, <i>Race to class...</i>

	* On 9/23 class will meet at the LBJ library	
Week 6 9/30, 10/2	Poverty and inequality in America Is inequality evil? Myths and realities of poverty Class exercise	Anelauskas, ch. 1 CPPP, <i>Texas poverty</i> Rector, <i>myth of widespread American poverty</i>
Week 7 10/7, 10/9	Poverty cont'd Welfare reform Video: Legacy	Newman, <i>Family values</i> <u>Lives on the Line</u> , chaps. 1 & 10
Week 8 10/14, 10/16	Video: cont'd Myths and realities of welfare What's right with welfare? * No class on 10/16	Dodson, <i>Losses and loathing in the welfare years...</i> Chute, <i>Faces in the hands</i> <u>Lives on the Line</u> , ch. 7
Week 9 10/21, 10/23	Corporate welfare Corporations gonna get your mama What's an economy for? Guest lecturer: Prof. Bob Jensen	Olasky, <i>Gov't programs cannot solve poverty</i> Moore, <i>Big welfare mamas</i> Lewis & Allison, <i>Conclusion</i> *Book review due*
Week 10 10/28, 10/30	Talkin' about taxes We're all on welfare now	Sklar, et al, <i>Shortchanging the minimum wage</i> Cox, <i>The Ugly Truth</i> Greenstein & Shapiro, <i>New research findings</i> Karger & Stoesz, <i>Key Social Insurance Programs</i>
Week 11 11/4, 11/6	The demographics of aging Social Security: America's #1 anti-poverty tool Guest lecturer: Shirley Haulotte, MSW	Brandstarter, <i>From baby boom to geezer glut</i> Weller & Bragg, <i>You're in good hands</i> Cocco, <i>A woman's issue?</i> Lustbader, <i>The measure of a good life</i>
Week 12 11/11, 11/13	International perspectives Family values vs. valuing families Free trade vs. Fair trade Presentation: Comparative policy outcomes (J. Harper and A. Braun)	America, <i>Fighting against sweatshop abuses</i> Hewlett & West, <i>A Parents' Bill of Rights</i> <u>Lives on the Line</u> , ch. 12

		*Opinion editorial due (11/18)	
Week 13 11/18, 11/20	Towards the common good Frameworks for evaluating good social policy	Arenander, <i>Sweden sounds like Eden</i> Ehrlich, <i>Toward global security</i> Fraser, <i>After the family wage</i>	
Week 14 11/25	Class exercises Video: Influencing State Policy *No class on 11/27 due to Thanksgiving Holiday	No readings assigned	
Week 15 12/2, 12/4	Take home essay assigned 12/2 Course evaluations 12/4	Take Home Essay Due December 11	

Full Citations for Reserve Readings

Week 1

No reserve readings assigned.

Week 2

Jensen, Robert. 2001. *Writing Dissent: Taking Radical Ideas from the Margins to the Mainstream*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Loeb, Paul R. (1999). We Don't Have to Be Saints. In Soul of a Citizen: Living with Conviction in a Cynical Age. New York: St. Martin's Press

Bettman, O. (1974). The Good Old Days: They Were Terrible! New York, Random House.

Week 3

Gourley, Catherine. (1999). Good Girl Work: Factories, Sweatshops, and How Women Changed Their Role in the American Workforce. Brookfield, CT.: Millbrook Press.

Ladd-Taylor, M. (1986). Raising a Baby the Government Way: Mothers' Letters to the Children's Bureau, 1915-1932. New Brunswick, N.J., Rutgers University Press.

Sinclair, U. (1906). The Jungle. New York, Bantam Books.

Week 4

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

Fisher, Harry (1997). The Great Depression. In Comrades: Tales of a Brigadista in the Spanish Civil War. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press

Terkel, Studs. (1986). Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression. New York: Pantheon Books.

Week 5

Coontz, Stephanie. 1992. "Leave It to Beaver" and "Ozzie and Harriet": American families in the 1950s. In *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*. New York: Basic Books.

Day, Phyllis (1997). Civil and Welfare Rights in the New Reform Era. In A New History of Social Welfare. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Robinson, Randall (2001). Race to Class to Race. In The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks. New York, N.Y.: Plume.

Week 6

Anelauskas, Valdas (1999). The Best System the Moneyed Can Buy. Chapter 1 in Discovering America As It Is, Atlanta, GA., Clarity Press, Inc.

Texas Poverty: An Overview. Center for Public Policy Priorities [cited July 2002].

Riedl, Brian, and Robert Rector. 2002. Myths and Facts: Why Successful Welfare Reform Must Strengthen Work Requirements. Washington D.C.: The Heritage Foundation.

Week 7

Newman, Katherine S. 1999. Family Values. In *No Shame In My Game: The Working Poor in the Inner City*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Week 8

Dodson, L. (1998). Losses and loathing in the welfare years. Don't Call Us Out of Name: The Untold Lives of Women and Girls in Poor America. Boston, MA., Beacon Press.

Chute, Carolyn. (2000). Faces in the Hands. In I Was Content and Not Content: The Story of Linda Lord and the Closing of Penobscot Poultry. Carbondale, IL.: Southern Illinois University Press.

Week 9

Olasky, Marvin. 2000. Government Programs Cannot Solve Poverty. In *Compassionate Conservatism: What it is, What it Does, and How it Can Transform America*. Boston: The Free Press.

Moore, Michael (1997). Big Welfare Mamas. In Downsize This! Random Threats From An Unarmed American. New York: Harper Press.

Lewis, Charles, and Bill Allison. 2001. Conclusion. In *The Cheating of America: How Tax Avoidance and Evasion by the Super Rich Are Costing the Country Billions-and What You Can Do About It*. Washington D.C.: Perennial.

Week 10

Sklar, Holly, Laryssa Mykyta, and Susan Wefald. 2001. Shortchanging the minimum wage. In *Raising the Floor: Wages and Policies That Work For All Of Us*. New York: Ms. Foundation for Women.

Cox, Jim. 2002. *The Ugly Truth About the Minimum Wage Law*. [cited July 2002].

Greenstein, Robert, and Isaak Shapiro. 1998. *New Research Findings on the Effects of the Earned Income Tax Credit*. Washington D.C.: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Karger, Howard, and David Stoesz. 2002. *Key Social Insurance Programs*. In *American Social Welfare Policy: A Pluralist Approach*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Week 11

Brandstrater, J.R. (2000). *From baby boom to geezer glut* [internet listing]. Scientific American 2000 [cited 12/28/2000]. Available from <http://sciam.com>.

Weller, Christian, and Michelle Bragg. 2001. *You're in good hands with Social Security*. Electronic Policy Institute 2001 [cited July 27 2001]. Available from www.epinet.org.

Cocco, Marie (2001). *A Women's Issue? Social Security*. Austin-American Statesman. July 6, 29-A.

Lustbader, Wendy. 1991. *The Measure of a Good Life*. In *Counting on Kindness: The Dilemmas of Dependency*. New York: The Free Press.

Week 12

(2000). *Fighting against sweatshop abuses*. America. **182**: 7-12.

Hewlett, Sylvia Ann, and Cornel West. 1998. *A Parents' Bill of Rights*. In *The War Against Parents: What We Can Do for America's Beleaguered Moms and Dads*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Week 13

Arenander, I. 2001. *Sweden Sounds Like Eden for Working Parents*. *Women's E-News* 2001 [cited April 29 2001]. Available from www.womensenews.org.

Hitchens, C. 2001. *Rogue Nation, U.S.A.* *Mother Jones*, May/June, 32-37.

Ehrlich, Paul; Ehrlich, Anne, & Daily, Gretchen (1995). *Toward Global Security*. In *The Stork and the Plow: The Equity Answer to the Human Dilemma*. New York: Putnam Books.

Fraser, Nancy. 1994. *After the family wage: Gender equity and the welfare state*. *Political Theory* 22 (4):591-618.

Week 14-15

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/~crew)

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)