

Course Number: SW 323K

Unique Number: 63455

Semester: Fall 2009

Meeting Time/Place: Mon-Weds 11:00-12:15
SSW 2.122

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SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND ISSUES

Course Description

This course is the second course in the social policy curriculum area. Prerequisites include Government 310L and 312L (or their equivalents), an introductory economics course, and admission to the social work major. 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 the historical, political, economic, and other social conditions that influence policy development in the United States. Specific policy areas that are 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 majority groups as well as populations-at-risk (e.g., children, people of color, people with disabilities, women, GBLTs) with a particular emphasis on social and economic justice. Students 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.

Standardized Course Objectives:

By the end of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Understand significant historical events and persons that influenced the field of social work and social welfare policy;
2. Analyze the connections between the history and contemporary structures of social policy;
3. Understand the impact of economics, politics, and social values on the identification of social problems and policy formation in the United States and the ways that issues of diversity (such as culture, class, gender, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, and age) have been addressed;

4. Apply conceptual frameworks for analyzing the development of social welfare policy;
5. Define key concepts in social welfare policy (e.g. universal, residual, public assistance, social insurance, cash, in-kind);
6. Understand the major policies that form the foundation of social welfare policy in the U.S.;
7. Apply relevant research frameworks for evaluating the effects of social welfare policy on national, state, and local populations and economically vulnerable sub-groups;
8. Analyze the impact of social welfare policy in terms of social and economic justice and the promotion of social work values;
9. Discuss trends in comparative international social policy;
10. Understand roles social workers play in the formation of social policy and the effects of social policies on social work practice;
11. Exercise policy advocacy skills at the legislative and organizational levels.

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

This course does not use a textbook. Rather, course readings are drawn from an extensive assortment of articles, book chapters, essays, and electronic media sources. The semester begins with a brief review of the evolution of social welfare policy in the U.S. Frameworks for understanding the origins of the modern welfare state are then developed. In particular, these frameworks seek to explain the patchwork of services that form the foundation of, as the title of a popular textbook describes, the “reluctant” U.S. welfare state. The course proceeds to examine trends in poverty, inequality, and social welfare across major historical eras, culminating in an examination of contemporary problems and policies. Since the course is taking place while U.S. troops are engaged in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan, the impact of U.S. foreign policy (and politics) will be interwoven throughout the course. By connecting historical efforts with contemporary policy responses we will be better equipped to understand and evaluate current social problems and attempts to address them via policy.

A packet of required readings is available at University Duplicating Service (471-1615) in the Business School. Please call ahead to make sure copies of the reading packet are available.

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 | (15%) |
| B) | Weekly Quizzes | (20%) |
| C) | Book Review | (15%) |
| D) | Food Stamps Paper | (25%) |
| E) | Opinion Editorial/
Short Film | (25%) |

⊗ 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 and/or TA. Since attendance is a key condition of participation, more than two absences will result in a reduction of one letter grade below an “A”. Each subsequent absence will reduce the overall participation grade by one letter grade. At the end of the semester students will provide a written self-assessment of their participation, to include extra-curricular activities that relate to course topics. Self-assessments will be used to inform the final participation grade.

⊗ Weekly Quizzes

Students will be given five (5) quizzes on a random basis throughout the semester. The quizzes will ask basic questions about class lectures and readings, so it will be important for students to be thoroughly familiar with the readings and lecture material previously discussed in class. Students will be allowed to drop the lowest grade they receive for a total of four quiz scores. Because of this drop policy, **no** make-up quizzes will be given.

⊕ Book Review

Students must write a review of *Caught in the Storm: Navigating Policy and Practice in the Welfare Reform Era*. Book reviews should be 5-7 pages, 12-point font and 1.5 spaced. The grade for the reviews will be based on how clearly you demonstrate your understanding of the book, the depth and vigor of the analysis, and how you respond to the following:

- What main points are presented?
- What are the primary points made in the book, and how well does it advance your understanding of public policies that effect vulnerable groups in society?
- How effectively does the book cover the subjects of social policy, poverty, and politics? What are the primary strengths and weaknesses of the book?
- How well and in what ways does the book relate to the other readings and information that has been discussed in class? (Use at least 2-3 examples)

- e) Would you recommend the book to any particular audience? Why/why not?

⊗ **Food Stamps Report**

It is important for social work students to have personal experience with issues that affect low-income clients. The Food Stamps Program (recently renamed the Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program, or SNAP) is one of the most important programs in the U.S. anti-poverty arena and has experienced a tremendous increase in the number of recipients in the last year. You may elect to fulfill one of the following two options:

Option 1 – submit a 5-7 page report on what it was like to live within the budget and rules of the food stamp program for two weeks; or

Option 2 – submit a 5-7 page report that provides a detailed accounting of your food purchases/expenses for two weeks. The report should examine and compare these purchases in light of food stamp budget allowances and regulations. Both options are intended to familiarize students with the food stamp program, and to demonstrate your knowledge of program strengths and weaknesses. The reports may be submitted anytime during weeks 5-10 (Sept 21 – Oct 28). Whatever option you choose to pursue, the paper should include the following:

- 1) Be clear about which option you have chosen (and why);
- 2) Demonstrate an awareness of program history and rules that apply to the food stamps program;
- 3) Provide information about what it takes to apply for and receive food stamps;
- 4) Describe an appropriate food stamps budget for your household, and defend the appropriateness of the level you have chosen;
- 5) Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the program (conceptually and based on your experience) and recommendations to improve the program based on your analysis;
- 6) Clearly and accurately document your purchases during the two-week period.
- 7) Summarize your experience (Was it valuable? What was learned? Etc.)

⊗ **Op-Ed/Short Film**

Students may team up with one classmate to develop an Opinion Editorial related to problems, issues, programs, policies and other material covered in class. Students who successfully publish an op-ed in any one of Texas' ten largest daily newspapers will receive an automatic 100% for the assignment. Students who have *electronic versions* of op-eds published in a large Texas daily will have two points added to the grade received from the instructor. Students will be required to succinctly summarize their Op-Eds in briefings in class during the final week of the course. Subjects selected for this assignment must be pre-approved by the instructor. **More information about this assignment will be given during the third week of class.**

Or

Working in groups of three, students may present a short film (5-10 minute) to the class on a subject related to topics covered during the course. Students must meet with the instructor prior to selecting their film topic, but may pursue a variety of alternatives as a means to meet the requirements of the assignment. More information on the short film project will be given during the third week of class.

Assignment Due Date: The short films are due on Nov. 23.

Grades

Grades will be determined as follows:

100 - 94 =	A	93 - 90 =	A-	
89 - 87 =	B+	86 - 84 =	B	83 - 80 =B-
79 - 77 =	C+	76 - 74 =	C	73 - 70 =C-

Course Schedule

Date	Description
Week 1 8/26	Introduction and overview of the course Rules for being a conscious social worker
Week 2 8/31, 9/2	Highlights of policy history Historical counterfactuals
Week 3 9/9	No class on 9/7 due to holiday The Children's Bureau What caused the Great Depression?
Week 4 9/14, 9/16	Video/lecture: The Great Depression & The New Deal The G.I. Bill The (elusive) American Dream
Week 5 9/21, 9/23	The War on Poverty and the Great Society From the war on poverty to the war on the poor * On 9/23 we may go to the LBJ library
Week 6 9/28, 9/30	Poverty and inequality in America Inequality: Poverty's kissin' cousin Myths and realities of poverty Class exercise Guest lecture: Prof. Art Sakamoto (9/30)

Week 7 10/5, 10/7	Poverty cont'd The color of policy The Reconquista in Tejas
Week 8 10/12, 10/14	Myths and realities of welfare What's right with welfare? Trends in family formation
Week 9 10/19, 10/21	Corporate welfare Conservative philosophy The financial crisis & TARP *Food Stamp paper due 10/21
Week 10 10/26, 10/28	America: Land of the incarcerated Prison policy and reform
Week 11 11/2, 11/4	The demographics of aging Social Security: America's #1 anti-poverty tool Guest speaker: Dr. Namkee Choi
Week 12 11/9, 11/11	Health care in America Guest lecture: Dr. King Davis
Week 13 11/16, 11/18	International perspectives Family values vs. valuing families Book Review Due 11/16
Week 14 11/23	Towards the common good Frameworks for evaluating good social policy *Op-eds/Short films due 11/23 *No class on 11/25 due to Thanksgiving Holiday
Week 15 11/30 12/2	Op-ed discussions Short film presentations Course evaluations
Final TBA	

Full citations for course packet

Week 1

No readings assigned

Week 2

Katz, W. L. (2001). Introduction. In W. L. Katz & L. R. Lehman (Eds.), *The Cruel Years: American Voices at the Dawn of the 20th Century* (pp. xii-xliv). New York: Apex Publishing.

Reisch, M., & Andrews, J. (2001). Social Work: A Radical Profession?, *The Road Not Taken: A History of Radical Social Work in the United States* (pp. Chapter 1). Philadelphia: Brunner-Routledge.

Week 3

Jackson, D. D. (1986). It took trains to put street kids on the right track out of the slums. *Smithsonian*, 94(10).

Lawson, A. (2006). The struggle for financial stability, *A commonwealth of hope: The New Deal response to crisis* (Vol. 62-76). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Tuttle, W. M., Jr. (1995). Rosie the riveter and her latchkey children: What Americans can learn about child day care from the second World War. *Child Welfare*, 74(1), 92-114.

Seaborn, J. (2009, February 15). The New Deal under attack. *Austin American-Statesman*.

Week 4

McElvaine, R. S. (1983). Reactions to Hoover and Economic Breakdown. In R. McElvaine (Ed.), in *Down and Out in the Great Depression: Letters from the Forgotten Man* (pp. Chapter 1). Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press.

Coontz, S. (1992). "Leave It to Beaver" and "Ozzie and Harriet": American families in the 1950s, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (Chapter 2). New York: Basic Books.

Harrington, M. (1959). Our fifty million poor: Forgotten men of the affluent society. *Commentary*, 28, 19-27.

Kamp, D. (2009, April). Rethinking the American dream. *Vanity Fair*.

Week 5

Middleton, H. (2008, August 24). LBJ: A century ago, a leader was born. *Austin-American Statesman*.

Pimpare, S. (2009). The failures of American poverty measures. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, 36(1), 103-122.

Poor Score (2008, March 24). *Houston Chronicle*.

Brown, D. L. (2009, May 18). Poor? Pay up. *The Washington Post*.

Ehrenreich, B. (2009, June 14). Too poor to make the news. *The New York Times*.

Week 6

The Recession and Texas Children (2009). Austin: Texans Care for Children.

Galbraith, J. (2008). *The predator state: How conservatives abandoned the free market and why liberals should too: Chapter 7*. New York: Free Press.

Sobel, E. (2008). *The enduring challenge of concentrated poverty in America* (8). Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. Available: www.dallasfed.org/ca/epersp/2008/3_2_austin.pdf [2009, July 16].

DeParle, J. (2009, May 10). For victims of recession, patchwork state aid. *The New York Times*.

Greve, F. (2009, May 19). America's poor are its most generous givers. *McClatchy*.

Edwards, J. (2007). Conclusion: Ending Poverty in America. In J. Edwards & M. Crain & A. Kallenberg (Eds.), *Ending Poverty in America* (pp. 256-267). Chapel Hill: The New Press.

Week 7

Hennessy, J. (2009). Choosing work and family: Poor and low-income mothers' work-family commitments. *Journal of Poverty* (13), 152-172.

Katz, M. B. (2009, March 5). The death of "Shorty". *Dissent Magazine*.

Huntington, S. (2004). The Hispanic Challenge. *Foreign Policy*(141), 30-45.

Marchevsky, A., & Theoharis, J. (2008). Dropped from the rolls: Mexican immigrants, race and rights in era of welfare reform. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, XXXV(3), 71-96.

Week 8

Altman, J. C., & Goldberg, G. S. (2008). Rethinking social work's role in public assistance. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, XXXV(4), 71-94.

Harris, D. A., & Parisi, D. (2008). Welfare and family economic security: Toward a place-based poverty knowledge. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, XXXV(3), 97-113.

DeParle, J. (2009). Welfare aid isn't growing as economy drops off. *The New York Times*.

Song, J. (2009, March 11). Can two people eat on \$67 a week? *Los Angeles Times*.

Week 9

Burrough, B. (2009, February 28). My fellow Texans, let's consider that our state's day in Washington is done. *Austin American-Statesman*.

Wolfe, T. (2007, November). Pell-Mell. *The Atlantic*.

Brooks, D. (2009, July 22). It's the same old story. *Austin-American Statesman*, pp. 7.

Taibbi, M. (2009, July 2). Inside the great American bubble machine. *Rolling Stone*.

Kroll, A. (2009, May 26). The greatest swindle ever sold. *The Nation*.

Week 10

Gottschalk, M. (2008, Fall). The world's warden: Crime, punishment, and politics in the United States. *Dissent Magazine*.

Moore, S. (2009, July 23). Study finds record number of inmates serving life. *New York Times*.

Johnson, E., & Waldfogel, J. (2002). Parental incarceration: Recent trends and implications for child welfare. *Social Service Review*, 460-479.

Gawande, A. (2009, March 30). Hellhole. *The New Yorker*.

Week 11

Roberts, S. (2004). How we're aging, *Who We Are Now: The Changing Face of America in the 21st Century* (pp. Chapter 4). New York: Henry Holt.

Altman, N. J. (2009, August 21). What FDR could teach Obama. *Los Angeles Times*.

Cauthen, N. (2005). *Whose Security? What Social Security Means to Children and Families*. New York: National Center for Children in Poverty.

Devroye, D. (2003). Who wants to privatize Social Security? *Public Administration Review*, 63(3), 316-328.

Week 12

Bageant, J. (2007). An authorized place to die, *Deer hunting with Jesus: Dispatches from America's class war*. New York: Crown Publishers.

Schoen, C., Nicholson, J. L., & Rustgi, S. D. (2009). *Paying the price: How health insurance premiums are eating up middle-class incomes.*: The Commonwealth Fund.

Singer, P. (2009, July 19). Why we must ration health care. *The New York Times*.

Bybee, R. (2009). *Obama's health plan: Far short of "transformational"*. Z Magazine. Available: www.zmag.org/zmag/viewArticle/21873.

Week 13

Shorto, R. (2009, May 3). Going Dutch. *The New York Times*.

Krahe, D. (2009, August 10). How a basic income program saved a Namibian village. *Des Spiegel*.

Greider, W. (2009, May 25). The future of the American dream. *The Nation*.

Stoecker, R. (2009). Community organizing and social change. *Contexts*, 8(1), 20-25.

The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Professional Conduct in Class

Students should act appropriately in class. This means students should arrive on time, be prepared to participate in class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, students are expected to engage one another with respect and professionalism.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>).

Documented Disability Statement

Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

Religious Holidays

By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

Safety

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 notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another

individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Use of Blackboard in Class

This class utilizes Blackboard—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu>—to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to give students online quizzes and surveys. Students can find support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk by calling 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please plan accordingly.

Cell Phones and Computers

Cell phones must be put away during class; computers may only be used for note-taking. Students who disrupt class by using cell phones or computers for non-class related activities may be marked absent and asked to leave for the remainder of that class.

Web-Based Information Sources on Poverty and Family & Child Policy

Government Agencies

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services:

Administration for Children and Youth <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>

Assistant Secretary for Planning & Evaluation (ASPE) http://aspe.hhs.gov/_/index.cfm

NICHAHD National Children's Study <http://www.nationalchildrensstudy.gov>

U.S. Department of Commerce

Bureau of the Census <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty.html>

U.S. Department of Labor

Bureau of Labor Statistics <http://www.bls.gov/>

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Policy Development & Research Information Service <http://www.huduser.org/>

Think Tanks and Advocacy Groups on Children's Issues

Alliance for Children and Families <http://www.alliance1.org/>

Annie E. Casey Foundation <http://www.aecf.org/>

Center for Law and Social Policy <http://www.clasp.org/>

Chapin Hall Center for Children (Chicago)

<http://www.about.chapinhall.org/>

Child Care and Early Education Research Connection

<http://www.childcareresearch.org/>

Children's Defense Fund

<http://www.childrensdefense.org>

Child Welfare League of America

<http://www.cwla.org/>

Child Trends

<http://www.childtrends.org/>

Institute for Child and Family Policy (Columbia)

<http://www.childpolicy.org/>

National Center for Children in Poverty (Columbia)

<http://www.nccp.org/>

Think Tanks and Advocacy Groups on Social Policy in General

Brookings Institution	http://www.brookings.edu/
Center for Budget and Policy Priorities	http://www.cbpp.org/
Center for the Study of Social Policy	http://www.cssp.org/
Institute for Women's Policy Research	http://iwpr.org/
Food Research and Action Center	http://www.frac.org/
Heritage Foundation	http://www.heritage.org/Research/Welfare/
Hudson Institute Welfare Policy Center	http://wp.hudson.org/index.cfm
National Law Center for Homelessness and Poverty	http://www.nlchp.org/
Urban Institute	http://www.urban.org/
(Texas) Center for Public Policy Priorities	http://www.cppp.org/
(Texas) Public Policy Foundation	http://www.texaspolicy.com/

University-based Research Centers

National Poverty Center University of Michigan	http://www.npc.umich.edu/
Institute for Research on Poverty University of Wisconsin	http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp/
Kentucky Center for Poverty Research University of Kentucky	http://www.ukcpr.org/Index1.html
Rural Poverty Research Center University of Missouri	http://www.rupri.org/
Joint Center for Poverty Research Univ of Chicago/Northwestern Univ	http://www.jcpr.org/
Institute for Policy Research Northwestern University	http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/

Center for the Study of Urban Poverty
University of California at L.A.
<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/issr/csup/index.php>

Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change
Case Western Reserve University <http://povertycenter.cwru.edu>

Institute on Race and Poverty
University of Minnesota <http://www1.umn.edu/irp/>

National Center for Children in Poverty
Columbia University <http://www.nccp.org/>

University of Maryland
Casey Journalism Center on Children and Families <http://www.casey.umd.edu>