

Course Number: SW 323K**Instructor:** Miguel Ferguson**E-mail Address:**miguelf@mail.utexas.edu**TA:** Stephen Tripodi

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Unique Number: 63835**Office Number:** SSW 3.122b**Semester:** Fall 2006**Office Phone:** 232-5914**Meeting Time/Place:** Tues-Th 12:30-2:30
SSW 2.112**Office Hours:** After class or by appt.

SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND ISSUES

Course Description

This course is in the social policy curriculum area required for undergraduate program majors, and 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 social problems and 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 vulnerable populations (e.g. people of color, people with disabilities, women and children, and the elderly) 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.

Pre-requisites for this course include Government 310L and 312L (or their equivalents), an introductory economics course, and SW 310 (the first course in the policy sequence.)

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. Articulate why our understanding of social policy is essential to performing social work responsibilities and understanding the issues;
2. Define social policy from a variety of perspectives;
3. Discuss and interpret the historical development of social policy and the impact of economics, politics, and social values on policy formation in the U.S. and the ways that issues of diversity (such as culture, class, gender, physical or mental stability, 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. 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. 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 (i.e. differential effects on minority groups and vulnerable populations including ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, women, gay men and women, etc.);
9. Discuss issues and apply theoretical frameworks related to the policy areas of income maintenance, health, mental health, child welfare, and aging;
10. Analyze the roles social workers play in the formation of social policy 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

Selected readings from Karger et al's *Controversial Issues in Social Policy* (3rd edition) will be used throughout the course. The book is available at the co-op. Otherwise, course readings are drawn from an extensive assortment of articles, book chapters, essays, and electronic media sources. The packet of required readings is available at University

Duplicating Service (471-1615). Please call ahead to make sure copies of the reading packet are available.

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 electoral politics will be interwoven throughout the course. Because the past is prologue to the devolution that is currently taking place in the structure of relief and social welfare, 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.

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 | (30%) |
| C) | Film Reviews | (20%) |
| D) | Legislative Briefing | (15%) |
| E) | Final Policy Paper | (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. Since attendance is a key condition of participation, more than two absences will result in a letter grade at *least* one 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 self-assessment of their participation, to include extra-curricular activities that relate to course topics, that will be used to inform the final participation grade.

⊗ Weekly Quizzes

Students will be given five (5) quizzes 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. Quizzes will be given on the following dates: **February 8, February 22, March 8, March 29, and April 19.**

⊕ **Film Reviews**

Review two of the five films from the following list. The review should be 4-6 pages and 1.5 spaced. The evaluation will be based upon how clearly you describe the content of the films and the analysis you provide of the significance of each film. Reviews should also respond to the following:

- a) Summarize the main themes in each film.
- b) How effectively do the films cover the subject of poverty and/or social policy? Defend your answer.
- c) What are the primary strengths and weaknesses of the films? How well do the themes from each film relate to each other?
- d) In what ways do the films relate to the information that has been discussed in class and/or class readings? Critically relate information from the films to two or three of the course readings.
- e) Describe a key scene in each film and why you think it portrays an interesting social issue, problem, or policy.
- f) Would you recommend the films, and if so, to what audience?

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. **The review is due on March 22.**

Choose two of the following (all are available in the UGL audiovisual library or local video stores):

1. Matewan
2. The Grapes of Wrath
3. New Harvest, Old Shame
4. Hoop Dreams
5. Waging a Living

⊗ **Legislative Briefing**

The Texas legislature will be in session during the spring semester. Each student is required to prepare an informative one page briefing that focuses on a specific bill that is being discussed/proposed. The briefing should cover the following points:

- 1) Pertinent information. (e.g. the number of the bill, the sponsor, house or senate affiliation, relevant history, etc.)
- 2) Importance. Why is the bill important/significant?
- 3) Objectives. Succinctly summarize what the bill intends to accomplish
- 4) Costs/benefits. Describe the potential benefits and costs/limits of the legislation (focus on specific populations if this is relevant)

- 5) Social work values. Conclude the briefing with a brief argument why social workers should either support or oppose the bill in question.

To limit the briefing to one page, use concise language and choose your words wisely. The briefings may use single spacing and 11-point font. The entire set of briefings will be put into a single document and made available to each student via Blackboard. The briefing is due **April 12**.

⊗ **Policy Paper**

Like a modern day Rip Van Winkle, you awaken one day to find yourself inexplicably living fifty years in the future (Frozen in an Austin ice storm? Pushed through an intergalactic worm hole? Induced into a coma by watching too many really bad *American Idol* auditions? Who knows?!). Given your intense interest in social policy, you soon discover that the policy landscape of 2057 is much different from what you remember. You are amazed to discover that all U.S. citizens enjoy access to health care, paid maternity/paternity leave, free higher education tuition and vocational training, a right to employment and decent housing, and sufficient retirement income. Your task in this paper is to describe how these changes came to pass, the basic mechanisms of funding and program implementation, and the ways in which society has changed because of the policies that are in place.

Students should work in groups of two. The papers should be 5-7 pages in length, and use 1.5 spacing and 12 point font. **More information about this assignment will be given during the fifth week of class.**

Grades

Grades will be determined as follows:

92-100	A
83-91	B
74-82	C
65-73	D
64 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 1/16, 1/18	Introduction and overview of the course Rules for being a conscious social worker	No readings assigned
Week 2 1/23, 1/25	Theories of the welfare state	Katz , “ <i>Introduction</i> ” Lathrop , “ <i>Child welfare</i> ” Klosterman , “ <i>Speaking truth...</i> ”
Week 3 1/30, 2/1	Highlights of social work history The Children’s Bureau Great Depression	McElvaine , “ <i>Reactions to Hoover</i> ” Black , “ <i>Coming into her own</i> ” Caro , “ <i>The New Deal</i> ”
Week 4 2/6, 2/8	Video/lecture: The New Deal and the Great Depression Quiz #1	Coontz , “ <i>American families in the 1950s</i> ” Kiester , “ <i>The GI Bill...</i> ” Moynihan , “ <i>Tangle of pathology</i> ” Chandler , “ <i>Curiously uninvolved</i> ”
Week 5 2/13, 2/15	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 * On 2/15 class will visit the LBJ library	Sherman , “ <i>African American and Latino Families</i> ” Garrett , “ <i>Living in America</i> ” Mills , “ <i>A tale of two hurricanes</i> ” Karger et al – Debate #2 & #8
Week 6 2/20, 2/22	Poverty and inequality in America Is inequality evil? Myths and realities of poverty Class exercise Quiz #2	Christopher , “ <i>Poverty line 40 years later</i> ” Boushey , “ <i>No way out</i> ” Freeman , “ <i>Solving the new inequality</i> ” Karger et al – Debate #1
Week 7 2/27, 3/1	Poverty cont’d The color of policy Welfare reform	Dodson , “ <i>When there is no time or money</i> ” Lichtenwalter , “ <i>Examining</i> ”

	Video: Legacy	<i>transportation</i> Braman , “ <i>From one generation to the next</i> ” Karger et al – Debate #6 & #14
Week 8 3/6, 3/8	Video: cont’d Myths and realities of welfare Marriage Initiatives & family trends What’s right with welfare? Quiz #3	Edin et al , “ <i>A peek inside the black box</i> ” Schneider , “ <i>Social capital</i> ” Kissane , “ <i>Responsible but uninformed?</i> ” Karger et al – Debate #12
Week 9	*** SPRING BREAK***	
Week 10 3/20, 3/22	Corporate welfare Corporations gonna get your mama What’s an economy for? Guest lecturer: Prof. Bob Jensen Conservative philosophy & electoral politics *Film Reviews due	Boyer , “ <i>How corporations came to have...</i> ” Prins , “ <i>Introduction</i> ” Palaima , “ <i>Greed is blowing the pay gap</i> ” Brouwer , “ <i>Buying the temple</i> ”
Week 11 3/27, 3/29	Conservative philosophy & electoral politics cont’d Talkin’ about taxes We’re all on welfare now Quiz #4	Singer , “ <i>What should a billionaire give?</i> ” Mendenhall , “ <i>A guide to the EITC</i> ” Watts , <i>Bush signs \$70 billion</i> Wolcott , “ <i>Red state Babylon</i> ” Wilentz , “ <i>Worst president in history?</i> ” Cannato , “ <i>Bush has time</i> ”
Week 12 4/3, 4/5	The demographics of aging Social Security: America’s #1 anti-poverty tool Guest lecturer: Dr. Namkee Choi	Himes , “ <i>Elderly Americans</i> ” Baker , “ <i>Glories of privatization</i> ” Marmor , “ <i>Understanding social insurance</i> ” Karger et al – Debate #3
Week 13 4/10, 4/12	International perspectives Family values vs. valuing families	Kaiser , “ <i>In Finland’s footsteps</i> ” Heymann , “ <i>Work, family, and equity index</i> ”

	*Legislative Briefing due	Grant , <i>“Expecting better”</i> Heymann , <i>“Can working families ever win?”</i>
Week 14 4/17, 4/19	Towards the common good Frameworks for evaluating good social policy Quiz #5	Boyer , <i>“From a corporate world...”</i> Wright , <i>“Two redistributive proposals”</i> Maynard , <i>“Evidence-based decision-making”</i>
Week 15 4/24, 4/26	Class exercises Video: Influencing State Policy *Policy paper due 4/26	
Week 16 5/1, 5/3	Policy paper discussions Course evaluations	

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.

Lathrop, J. (1919). Child welfare standards: A test of democracy. In S. Myers-Lipton (Ed.), *Social Solutions to Poverty: America's Struggle to Build a Just Society* (pp. 130-135). Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Klosterman, E., & Stratton, D. (2006). Speaking truth to power: Jane Addams' values base for peacemaking. *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, 21(2), 158-168.

Week 3

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.

Black, A. (1996). Coming Into Her Own: ER as First Lady, in *Casting Her Own Shadow: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Shaping of Postwar Liberalism* (Chapter 2). New York, N.Y.: Columbia University Press.

Caro, R. (1982). The New Deal, in *The Years of Lyndon Johnson: The Path to Power* (Chapter 14). New York, N.Y.: Alfred Knopf.

Week 4

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.

Kiester, E. (1994). The G.I. Bill may be the best deal ever made by Uncle Sam. *Smithsonian*, 25(8), 128-137.

Moynihan, D. P. (1965). *The Tangle of Pathology*. Chapter 4 in *The Negro Family: The Case For National Action*. Available:

<http://www.dol.gov/asp/programs/history/moynchapter4.htm>

Chandler, S. (2004). "Curiously uninvolved": Social work and protest against the War in Vietnam. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 31(4), 3-20.

Week 5

Sherman, A. (2006). *African American and Latino Families Face High Rates of Hardship*. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities [2006, November 21].

Garrett, K. (2006). *Living in America: Challenges Facing New Immigrants and Refugees*. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation [2006, August].

Mills, N. (2006, Summer). A Tale of Two Hurricanes: Galveston and New Orleans. *Dissent*.

Karger et al: Debate #2 & #8

Week 6

Christopher, K. (2005). The Poverty Line Forty Years Later: Alternative Poverty Measures and Women's Lives. *Race, Gender & Class*, 12(2), 34-53.

Boushey, H. (2005). No Way Out: How Prime-age Workers Get Trapped in Minimum-Wage Jobs. *Journal of Labor and Society*.

Freeman, R. B. (1999). *Solving the New Inequality*, in *New Inequality: Creating Solutions for Poor America*. (Chapter 1). Boston: Beacon Press.

Karger et al: Debate #1

Week 7

Dodson, L. B., E. (2005). When there is no time or money: Work, family, and community lives of low-income families. In J. B. Heymann, C. (Ed.), *Unfinished Work: Building Equality and Democracy in an Era of Working Families*. New York: The New Press.

Lichtenwalter, S. K., G., & Sales, E. (2006). Examining transportation and employment outcomes: Evidence for moving beyond the bus pass. *Journal of Poverty*, 10(1), 93-115.

Braman, D. W., J. (2003). From one generation to the next: How criminal sanctions are reshaping family life in urban America. In J. W. Travis, M. (Ed.), *Prisoners Once Removed: The Impact of Incarceration and Reentry on Children, Families, and Communities*. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute Press.

Karger et al: Debate #6 & #14

Week 8

Edin, K., Kefalas, M., & Reed, J. (2004). A peek inside the black box: What marriage means for poor unmarried parents. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 66(November), 1007-1014.

Schneider, J. (2006). *Social Capital and Welfare Reform: Organizations, Congregations, and Communities*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Kissane, R. (2006). Responsible but uninformed? Nonprofit executive and program directors' knowledge of welfare reform. *Social Service Review* (June), 322-345.

Karger et al: Debate #12

Week 9

Spring break – no readings assigned

Week 10

Boyer, W. H. (2003). How Corporations Came to Have So Much Power, in *Myth America: Democracy vs. Capitalism* (Chapter 2). New York: The Apex Press.

Prins, N. (2004). Introduction, in *Other People's Money: The Corporate Mugging of America*. New York: The New Press.

Palaima, T. (2006, September 12). Greed is blowing the pay gap out of proportion. *Austin-American Statesman*.

Brouwer, S. (2004). Buying the Temple and Throwing Away the Key, in *Robbing Us Blind: The Return of the Bush Gang and the Mugging of America* (Chapter 20). Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press.

Week 11

Singer, P. (2006, December 17). What should a billionaire give - and what should you? *New York Times*.

Mendenhall, A. M. (2006). A guide to the Earned Income Tax Credit: What everyone should know about EITC. *Journal of Poverty*, 10(3), 51-68.

Watts, W. (2006). *Bush signs \$70 billion tax-cut extension*. MarketWatch. Available: www.marketwatch.com [2006, May 17].

Wolcott, J. (2006, November). Red State Babylon. *Vanity Fair*.

Wilentz, S. (2006, May). The Worst President in History? *Rolling Stone*.

Cannato, V. (2006, December 5). Bush has time - and history - on his side. *Austin-American Statesman*, A-17.

Week 12

Himes, C. (2002). *Elderly Americans* (Vol. 56, No. 4): Population Reference Bureau.

Baker, D. W., M. (1999). The Glories of Privatization, in *Social Security: The Phony Crisis* (Ch. 5). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Marmor, T., & Mashaw, J. (2006). Understanding Social Insurance: Fairness, Affordability, and the Modernization of Social Security and Medicare. *Health Affairs*, 25, 114-134.

Karger et al: Debate #3

Week 13

Kaiser, R. (2005, August 7). In Finland's Footsteps. *Washington Post*, pp. B-01.

Heymann, J. (2004). *The Work, Family, and Equity Index: Where Does the United States Stand Globally?* Boston: Project on Global Working Families.

Grant, J. (2005). *Expecting Better: A State-by-State Analysis of Parental Leave Programs*. Washington D.C.: National Partnership for Women and Families.

Heymann, J. (2002). Can working families ever win? In J. R. Cohen, J. (Ed.), *Can Working Families Ever Win?* Boston: Beacon Press.

Week 14

Boyer, W. H. (2003). From a Corporate World to a Democratic World, *Myth America: Democracy vs. Capitalism* (pp. Chapter 10). New York: The Apex Press.

Wright, E. O. (2006). Two redistributive proposals: Universal basic income and stakeholder grants. *Focus*, 24(2), 5-7.

Maynard, R. (2006). Evidence-Based Decision Making: What Will it Take for the Decision Makers to Care? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 25(2), 249-265.

Week 15

No 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/~crw)

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)

