

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Course/Unique Number: SW 390N / U# 66385	Office Number: SSW 3.130K
Semester: Fall 2007	Office Phone: 471-6266
Meeting Time/Place: Wed 8:30-11:30 / SSW 2.140	Office Hours: Wed 11:30-1:30
Instructor: Professor Yolanda C. Padilla, PhD, LMSW-AP, ypadilla@mail.utexas.edu	
Teaching Assistant: Monica Faulkner, MonicaF480@aol.com	

POLICY THEORIES (PhD)

I. Standardized Course Description

This course critically examines the theoretical and empirical underpinnings of social welfare policy in United States society. The primary focus is on considering different perspectives on social welfare policy, rather than describing the wide array of program areas within the domain of the social welfare system. We will study a range of approaches to social welfare policy as exemplified in various fields of practice. Accordingly, we will analyze the societal processes that shape social welfare policy, as well as its products and outcomes. Students will also become familiar with applied research methodologies utilized in policy analysis. Students will have an opportunity to conduct an in-depth study of a policy area of their choice.

II. Standardized Course Objectives

1. To evaluate competing values and assumptions in social welfare policy, including underlying perspectives on social problems and the social objectives of the programs formulated to deal with these problems;
2. To gain an understanding of the historical background of contemporary social welfare policy dilemmas;
3. To critically analyze current social welfare policy debates and consider their implications for future alternatives;
4. To consider the relationship between social work and social welfare policy, including social work's stance on and contribution to policy; and,
5. To conduct an in-depth analysis of the conceptualization of policy in a specific area of interest.

*** Course Content and Organization ***

We will approach this course by using case studies to learn various policy analysis approaches which students will apply to their areas of interest. By engaging in applied policy analysis, we will learn about societal processes that shape social welfare policy, including the role of values in problem definition and policy formulation. We will spend much of the class time using

various tools (including on-line resources) to conduct hands-on policy analyses. Each student will leave with a strong grasp of policy issues and the ability to apply policy analysis techniques in their area of interest. I will work with the students to tailor some of the reading selections around their specific areas of interest. Ultimately, the goal is for students to understand and engage in the policy discourse on a range of fields and areas of social work practice.

At the most basic level, social policy is what society (at various levels) decides to do about a given social problem. It is, for example, what our plan will be, say, to respond to child abuse or poverty. From a rational-decision making perspective, policy is based on research about what works best; in reality, however, it is deeply influenced by political forces as well. As social work scholars, given our values and professional goals, then, we will be concerned with how to apply research findings that inform the development of more responsive policies – policies that improve the quality of life of people, understand current political debates on policy, and assess whether given policies indeed further social justice

III. Teaching Methods

This class is conducted using a seminar format. Students are expected to be prepared to discuss assigned topics. The primary teaching approach in this seminar will be collaborative learning. In general, each meeting will include a combination of case studies, hands-on application of concepts, illustrative videos, and formal presentation of material. Assigned readings are for the class session in which they are listed in the syllabus. In addition, several sessions across the semester will be dedicated to gaining expertise on writing for publication on a policy topic selected by each individual student.

IV. Required and Recommended Texts, and Materials

Selected Readings

** Readings are listed under Course Schedule. Required readings are available on UT Blackboard. Additional readings within each topical area will be selected by the students based on their areas of interest will be included in the required reading list*

Required Technical Writing Guides

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Williams, Joseph M. (2007) *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace* (9th ed.). NY: Longman.

Writing for the NASW Press: Information for Authors. (1995). Washington, DC: NASW Press. [Available on-line from NASW at www.naswpress.org under *Resources/Tools for Authors.*]

V. Course Requirements

- A. Policy Analysis Article & Oral Presentation (including adequate progress and timely submission of the various parts of the policy assignment) 90%

- B. Case Study/Student Lead Discussion & Class Participation
(students may be absent one class period without penalty)

10%

Policy Analysis Article

The major assignment for this class is a publishable article focusing on a policy issue of interest to you. The purpose of the article is to inform policy, using and applying concepts and policy analysis approaches learned in class. Generally, you will select from two types of articles, conceptual (which is an original analysis of existing literature) or empirical (which reports on a relevant original research study that you conducted, if available). Because of the comprehensiveness of the assignment, you should choose a topic you know something about. For example, the topic can be based on an issue that you focused on in prior course, a study that you conducted or helped conduct, or some other topic with which you have experience. Select a policy analysis approach from the ones that will be covered in class by reading through the class readings. A detailed description of the assignment is provided separately.

Case Study in Area of Interest and Student Lead Discussion

Each student will be responsible for selecting one article for a designated week and will lead a class discussion on how the form of policy analysis listed for that week (e.g., evaluation, implementation, etc.) applies to the article. The article will be added to the required weekly reading list for the class. The article should be selected based on a careful understanding of the assigned readings for that week. The student must submit the article to the professor at least two weeks prior to the designated week and will work with the professor for approval of the article. Based on the article selected and supplementary related research, the student will submit a brief 5-page written analysis of their topic. In the bibliography, include the reference to the article and at least 4 other supplementary references. Each student's case study is due the day of their class-lead discussion. (The grade for this assignment cannot be dropped.)

Class Participation

All students will be responsible for all the weekly readings, including the student-selected readings. The class participation grade will be based on the quality of the contribution of each student based on his or her comprehension of the weekly readings. When doing the readings, please bring notes on your reactions to each reading, including your responses to the questions that I pose and how you see the concepts presented in each section illustrated in the articles.

VI. Class Policies

- 1. Class Attendance, Assignment Due Dates, and Class Schedule.** Attend class regularly. Class attendance is required every class period for the entire class period. In the event of an emergency, one missed class period will be excused without penalty. Turn assignments in on the due dates. Class presentations will only be given on the allotted dates. The policy analysis article project and the written case study will be penalized 10 points for each calendar day late. Should you require an Incomplete (grade X), one additional draft will be accepted, and the maximum grade that can be attained for an Incomplete is 85. Assigned

readings are due on the date listed. Any guest lectures and videos may be scheduled on short notice and will be subject to change in the event of unavoidable scheduling conflicts. Students will be informed of any changes in assignments, due dates, and other class content.

- 2. Use of Blackboard in Class.** This course uses Blackboard, a Web-based course management system in which a password-protected site is created for each course. Student enrollments in each course are updated each evening. Blackboard can be used to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to take online quizzes and surveys. You will be responsible for checking the Blackboard course site regularly for class work and announcements. As with all computer systems, there are occasional scheduled downtimes as well as unanticipated disruptions. Notification of these disruptions will be posted on the Blackboard login page. Scheduled downtimes are not an excuse for late work. However, if there is an unscheduled downtime for a significant period of time, I will make an adjustment if it occurs close to the due date. Blackboard is available at <http://courses.utexas.edu>. Support is provided by the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400 on weekdays for limited hours, so plan accordingly.
- 3. University Electronic Mail Notification Policy (Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students).** All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>. In this course e-mail will be used as a means of communication with students. You will be responsible for checking your e-mail regularly for class work and announcements.
- 4. University 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.
- 5. Services for Students with Disabilities.** Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. The University of Texas provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY.

VII. Course Schedule

Student case studies due the day of their class lead discussion assigned below.

Schedule and Assignments Due

Aug 29	<i>Overview of the Course</i> (a) Discussion of student areas of interest for policy article and division of topic areas. (b) Assignment of weekly case studies.
Sept 5	<i>Readings</i>
Sept 12	DUE: Policy Article, Part 1, Statement on key policy issues and themes for your article Class discussion of statements
Sept 19	<i>Writing for Publication Workshop I</i> Consultation with students on their articles
Sept 26	<i>Readings, Student/topic assignment:</i> _____
Oct 3	<i>Readings, Student/topic assignment:</i> _____
Oct 10	<i>Writing for Publication Workshop II</i> DUE: Policy Article, Part 2, Plan for the Policy Article and Narrative Outline
Oct 17	<i>Readings, Student/topic assignment:</i> _____
Oct 24	<i>Readings, Student/topic assignment:</i> _____
Oct 31	DUE: Policy Article, Part 3, First Draft of Policy Article
Nov 7	<i>Readings, Student/topic assignment:</i> _____
Nov 14	<i>Readings, Student/topic assignment:</i> _____
Nov 21	<i>Readings, Student/topic assignment:</i> _____
Nov 28	DUE: Policy Article, Part 4: Student Paper Presentations
Dec 5	DUE: Policy Article, Part 4: Student Paper Presentations (continued)
Dec 7 4 pm	DUE: Policy Article, Part 5, Final Draft of Policy Article & Project Binder* Deliver to the SSW Student Services Desk, "Faculty Box" * Include <u>all parts</u> of the assignment. Use dividers to separate each major section.

Topics of Discussion and Policy Readings

In addition to the readings listed below, policy readings selected by the students based on their own areas of interest will be included in the required reading list. Each student will be responsible for selecting one article for a designated week and will lead the discussion on applications to the article of the form of policy analysis listed for that week (e.g., evaluation, implementation, etc.). The student must submit the article to the professor at least two weeks prior to the designated week and will work with the professor for approval of the article.

Summary of Topics

- 1. Engaging in and informing the social policy discourse**
How can social work researchers engage in the discourse on social policy at different stages of the policy process? What questions can be answered by research in order to help provide a good foundation for policy formulation? How can evidence be packaged to attract the interest of policy makers?
- 2. Providing policymakers with indicators of social well-being: using data as a tool for change**
What do indicators tell us about social problems, and how can we use them to inform policy?
- 3. Analyzing the safety net provided by federal, state, and local policies**
How might we characterize the system of social welfare in the United States (e.g., is it an integrated system)?
- 4. Implementing social policy: opportunities and challenges**
What elements should be included when translating policy into programs and practice?
- 5. Evaluating social policy: Assessing the extent to which current policy is responding to critical social needs**
How can we tell if policies are making a difference (e.g., have health policies to deal with AIDS resulted in a decrease in the prevalence of AIDS in the population)?
- 6. Basing social policy on evidence-based practice**
What needs to be considered to ensure that current policies are based on interventions that have been shown to be effective (e.g. is the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, TANF, program created by the Welfare Reform Law of 1996 based on research showing that its provisions will increase the self-sufficiency of women in poverty)?
- 7. Analyzing political debates on social policies: the relationship between problem solutions and underlying competing perspectives about problem definitions**
How are political debates around social problems framed?
- 8. Assessing whether social policies reduce inequality and further social justice**
Do policies go far enough to solve a given social problem? Do they reduce social disparities (e.g., do poverty policies not simply facilitate self-sufficiency, but also decrease inequality)? What would a *truly* holistic approach look like?

Detailed Reading List

When doing the readings, please bring notes on your reactions to each reading, including your responses to the questions that I pose and how you see the concepts presented in each section illustrated in the articles.

<p>Sept 5 (1)</p>	<p>Engaging in and informing the social policy discourse</p> <p><i>How can social work researchers engage in the discourse on social policy at different stages of the policy process? What questions can be answered by research in order to help provide a good foundation for policy formulation? How can evidence be packaged to attract the interest of policy makers?</i></p> <p><u>Readings</u> Spicker, Paul. (2005). Social Policy. In <i>An introduction to social policy</i>. Aberdeen, Scotland: The Robert Gordon University. Available: http://www2.rgu.ac.uk/publicpolicy/introduction/author.htm Miringoff, Marc & Miringoff, Marque-Luisa. (1999). <i>The Social Health of the Nation: How America is Really Doing</i>. New York: Oxford University Press. (pp. 1-36) Young, John. (2004). <i>Research and policy: Parallel universes?</i> (Opinions No.14). London: Overseas Development Institute. Bloom, Gerry & Knowles, Caroline. (2005). <i>Mobilising social science research to improve health</i>. (Issue Brief No. 23). Brighton, United Kingdom: University of Sussex, Institute of Development Studies.</p>
<p>Sept 26 (2)</p>	<p>Providing policymakers with indicators of social well-being: using data as a tool for change</p> <p><i>What do indicators tell us about social problems, and how can we use them to inform policy?</i></p> <p><u>Readings (Cases: child health and disability)</u> Moore, Kristin A., Brett V. Brown, & Harriet J. Scarupa. (2003). <i>The Uses (and Misuses) of Social Indicators: Implications for Policy</i>. (Child Trends Research Brief No. 2003-01). Washington D.C.: Child Trends. Rigby, Michael. (2005). Principles and challenges of child health and safety indicators. <i>International Journal of Injury Control & Safety Promotion</i>, 12(2), 71-78. The United Nations Children's Fund. (2007). <i>Child poverty in perspective: An overview of child well-being in rich countries</i>. (Innocenti Report Card 7). Florence: Innocenti Research Centre. Freedman, Vicki A., Martin, Linda G., & Schoeni, Robert F. (2004). Disability in America. (Population Bulletin 59 (3)). Washington, D.C.: Population Reference Bureau.</p> <p>Student case study reading selection:</p>

<p>Oct 3 (3)</p>	<p>Analyzing the safety net provided by federal, state, and local policies</p> <p><i>How might we characterize the system of social welfare in the United States (e.g., is it an integrated system)?</i></p> <p><u>Readings (Cases: family and immigration)</u></p> <p>Bogenschneider, Karen.(2000). Has Family Policy Come of Age? A Decade Review of the State of U.S. Family Policy in the 1990s. <i>Journal of Marriage & Family</i>, 62(4), 1136-1159.</p> <p>Padilla, Yolanda C. (1997). Immigrant Policy: Issues for Social Work Practice. <i>Social Work</i>, 42(6), 595-606.</p> <p>Student case study reading selection:</p> <p><u>In-class Video: Ending Welfare as We Know It</u> <i>A portrait of the extent to which the 1996 welfare reform legislation is meeting the needs of families in poverty.</i></p>
<p>Oct 17 (4)</p>	<p>Implementing social policy: opportunities and challenges</p> <p><i>What elements should be included when translating policy into programs and practice?</i></p> <p><u>Readings (Case: child health)</u></p> <p>Carol H. Ripple & Zigler, Edward. (2003). Research, Policy, and the Federal Role in Prevention Initiatives for Children. <i>American Psychologist</i>, 58 (6/7), 482–490.</p> <p>Hanks, Carole A. (2006). Community Empowerment: A Partnership Approach to Public Health Program Implementation. <i>Policy, Politics, & Nursing Practice</i>, 7(4), 297-306.</p> <p>Jennifer A. Pinto-Martin, Margaret Dunkle, Marian Earls, Dane Fliedner, and Cynthia Landes. (2005). Developmental Stages of Developmental Screening: Steps to Implementation of a Successful Program. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i>, 95 (11), 1928-1932.</p> <p>Student case study reading selection:</p>

<p>Oct 24 (5)</p>	<p>Evaluating social policy: Assessing the extent to which current policy is responding to critical social needs</p> <p><i>How can we tell if policies are making a difference (e.g., have health policies to deal with AIDS resulted in a decrease in the prevalence of AIDS in the population)?</i></p> <p><u>Readings (Cases: family support, child health)</u></p> <p>Abt Associates, Inc. (2001, April) <i>National Evaluation of Family Support Programs Volume B: Research Studies</i>. Cambridge, MA.</p> <p>Statham, J. (2004) Effective services to support children in special circumstances. <i>Child: Care, Health & Development</i>, 30(6), 589-598.</p> <p>Wise, Paul H.; Wampler, Nina S.; Chavkin, Wendy; Romero, Diana.(2002) Chronic Illness Among Poor Children Enrolled in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i>, 92(9), 1458-1461.</p> <p>Student case study reading selection:</p> <p><u>In-class Video</u>: Our Families, Our Future <i>Six case studies of successful family support programs for families in crisis.</i></p>
<p>Nov 7 (6)</p>	<p>Basing social policy on evidence-based practice</p> <p><i>What needs to be considered to ensure that current policies are based on interventions that have been shown to be effective (e.g. is the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, TANF, program created by the Welfare Reform Law of 1996 based on research showing that its provisions will increase the self-sufficiency of women in poverty)?</i></p> <p><u>Readings (Case: child poverty)</u></p> <p>Gershoff, Elizabeth Thompson, J. Lawrence Aber, and C. Cybele Raver. (2001). Child Poverty in the U.S.: An Evidence-Based Conceptual Framework for Programs and Policies. In R. M. Lerner, F. Jacobs, and D. Wertlieb (Eds.), <i>Handbook of Applied Developmental Science: Promoting Positive Child, Adolescent, and Family Development Through Research, Policies, and Programs</i> (pp. 81-136), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.</p> <p>Student case study reading selection:</p>

<p>Nov 14 (7)</p>	<p>Analyzing political debates on social policies: the relationship between problem solutions and underlying competing perspectives about problem definitions</p> <p><i>How are political debates around social problems framed?</i></p> <p><u>Readings (Case: substance use)</u></p> <p>David A. Rochefort & Cobb, Roger W. Problem definition, agenda access, and policy choice. (public policymaking). <i>Policy Studies Journal</i>, 21(1), 56-71.</p> <p>Drucker, Ernest, & Clear, Allan. (1999) Harm reduction in the home of the war on drugs: methadone and needle exchange in the USA. <i>Drug & Alcohol Review</i>, 18(1), 103-112.</p> <p>Student case study reading selection:</p>
<p>Nov 21 (8)</p>	<p>Assessing whether social policies reduce inequality and further social justice</p> <p><i>Do policies go far enough to solve a given social problem? Do they reduce social disparities (e.g., do poverty policies not simply facilitate self-sufficiency, but also decrease inequality)? What would a <u>truly</u> holistic approach look like?</i></p> <p><u>Readings (Cases: health and welfare)</u></p> <p>Wolf, Steven H. (2004). Society's choice: The tradeoff between efficacy and equity and the lives at stake. <i>American Journal of Preventive Medicine</i>, 27(1), 49-57.</p> <p>Adler, Nancy E. & Newman, Katherine. (2002). Socioeconomic Disparities In Health: Pathways And Policies. <i>Health Affairs</i>, 21(2), 70-76</p> <p>Christopher, Karen . (2004). Welfare as We [Don't] Know It: A Review and Feminist Critique of Welfare Reform Research in the United States. <i>Feminist Economics</i>, 10 (2), 143-171.</p> <p>Student case study reading selection:</p> <p><u>In-class Video</u>: The Democratic Promise: Saul Alinsky and his Legacy <i>A view of the political and economic context of policy reform.</i></p>

VIII. Bibliography: Background Literature on US Social Welfare Policy

- Axinn, June, & Levin, Herman. (1992). *Social Welfare: A History of the American Response to Need*. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Bane, Mary Jo, & Elwood, David T. (1994). *Welfare Realities: From Rhetoric to Reform*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Burtless, Gary T. (1997). Welfare Recipients' Job Skills and Employment Prospects. *The Future of Children*, 7(1), 39-51.
- Chambers, Clarke, A. (1992). Uphill All the Way': Reflections on the Course and Study of Welfare History. *Social Service Review*, 66(4), 493-504.
- Cohen, Miriam & Hanagan, Michael. (1991). The Politics of Gender and the Making of the Welfare State, 1900-1940: A Comparative Perspective. *Journal of Social History*, 24(3), 469-484.
- Danziger, Sheldon, Sandefur, Gary D. & Weinberg, Daniel H. (Eds.). (1994). *Confronting Poverty: Prescriptions for Change*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Davies, Martin. (1997). *The Blackwell Companion to Social Work*. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers.
- Edin, Kathryn, & Lein, Laura. (1997). *Making Ends Meet: How Single Mothers Survive Welfare and Low-Wage Work*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Ewalt, Patricia et al. (1997). *Social Policy: Reform, Research, and Practice*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.
- Figueira-McDonough, Josefina. (1993). Policy Practice: The Neglected Side of Social Work Intervention. *Social Work*, (38)2,179-188.
- Gilbert, Neil, & Terrel, Paul. (1998). *Dimensions of Social Welfare Policy*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Gordon, Linda. (1992). Social Insurance and Public Assistance: The Influence of Gender in Welfare Thought in the United States, 1890-1935. *American Historical Review*, 97(1), 19-52.
- Harrington, Michael. (1963). *The Other America: Poverty in the United States*. Baltimore: Penguin Books.
- Larner, Mary B., Terman, Donna L., & Behrman, Richard E. (1997). Welfare to Work: Analysis and Recommendations, *The Future of Children*, 7(1), 4-19.
- Mead, Lawrence M. (1992). *The New Politics of Poverty: The Nonworking Poor in America*. New York: BasicBooks.
- Mink, Gwendolyn. (1994). Welfare Reform in Historical Perspective. *Social Justice*, 21(1), 114-131.
- Olasky, Marvin N. (1996). *Renewing American Compassion*. New York: Free Press.
- Parsons, Wayne. (1995). *Public Policy: An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Policy Analysis*. NH: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Patton, Carl, & Sawicki, David (1993). *Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Rein, Martin. (1983). *Social Policy: Issues of Choice and Change*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.
- Reisch, Michael. (1997). *Social Work in the 21st Century*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Skocpol, Theda. (1995). *Social Policy in the United States: Future Possibilities in Historical Perspective*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Wilson, William Julius. (1987). *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and*

Public Policy. IL: University of Chicago.