

**The University of Texas at Austin**  
**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Course #	Semester	Unique #	Meeting Time	Meeting Place
SW382P	Spring 2003			
<b>Section I</b>		61940	Mondays 5:30-8:30 pm	SSW 2.112
<b>Section II</b>		61936	Tuesdays 11:30-2:30 pm	SSW 2.112

Instructor	Contact Information	Office	Office hours
Yolanda C. Padilla, PhD, LMSW-AP Associate Professor	471-6266 ypadilla@mail.utexas.edu	SSW 3.130K	Tuesdays 2:30-3:30 or appt.

**SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY (POLICY I/MSSW)**

**I. Course Description**

This course examines, from an historical perspective, the overall structure of the current social welfare system with a focus on its impacts on the experience of vulnerable populations. Throughout the analysis, it also considers the parallel historical development of the profession of social work, including the ways in which it responded to the demands of social problems across key periods of social welfare policy transformations. This is the first of a two-course policy sequence in the MSSW program. In the next course in the sequence (Policy II), you will learn about methods for current policy analysis and evaluation, and you will have the opportunity to analyze in depth a policy of interest to you (e.g., a specific bill passed by the most recent Texas legislature).

**II. Course Objectives**

1. Understanding of the dominant *historical themes that have shaped the social welfare policy debate(s)* which is essential for the development of a useful policy orientation toward contemporary issues;
2. Understanding of the *economic constraints and opportunities* in the development of social welfare programs;
3. Understanding of the interrelationships between the *social work profession* and the institutional setting within which it developed;
4. Familiarity with the changes in the nature of *social problems* as well as changes in knowledge and understanding of the factors causing these problems;
5. Knowledge and perspectives on the *basic structure*, laws, and parameters of current social welfare institutions
6. Knowledge of the issues relating to the *policy arenas* of income maintenance, health, mental health, and social services for *vulnerable populations*;
7. Knowledge of the ways social policies *differentially affect* majority groups, women, and ethnic minorities, and;
8. Knowledge of the *roles and responsibilities of social workers* in the policy process.

### III. Teaching Methods

The primary teaching approach in this course will be collaborative learning. Material in the course will be presented through case studies, discussions, videos, small group work, and lectures. Students will be responsible for materials presented through all these activities. Assigned readings are for the week in which they are listed and students should have done the readings and be prepared to discuss them in class. Not all readings will be reviewed by the instructor in class. Videos will be used as tools for addressing key concepts in the course. The videos are not available for individual student viewing, and thus can only be viewed when presented in class.

### IV. Required Course Readings

Three books and a selected set of readings are used in this class. We begin by examining the trends in social welfare policy across major historical eras (*America's Struggle Against Poverty in the Twentieth Century*). We then learn about the current structure of social welfare policies and programs in the United States (*Social Welfare: Politics And Public Policy*). In the process, we take a closer look at the pressing social problems facing the country today (*The Social Health of the Nation: How America is Really Doing*). An additional set of carefully selected readings are used throughout the semester to expand upon the topics of study.

#### Texts

DiNitto, Diana M. 2000. *Social Welfare: Politics and Public Policy*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Miringoff, Marc and Marque-Luisa Miringoff. 1999. *The Social Health of the Nation: How America is Really Doing*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Patterson, James T. 2000. *America's Struggle Against Poverty in the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

#### Selected Readings

\* These readings may be supplemented with additional materials which will be announced in class and made available in the School's Learning Resource Center (SSW 1.218) or electronically.

Bettman, Otto. 1974. *The Good Old Days: They Were Terrible!* New York: Random House.

DeParle, Jason. 1999, November 28. "Early Sex Abuse Hinders Many Women on Welfare." *The New York Times (National Edition)*, pp. 1, 20.

Ehrenreich, Barbara. 1999. "Nickel and Dime: On (Not) Getting by in America." *Harpers Magazine*. 298(1784), 37-52.

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. Retrieved January 6, 2003, from <http://www.nccp.org/GARchap.pdf> [Note: Paper copy not included in the packet of readings. Available electronically; back-up available at the LRC in case of problems with electronic copy.]

Green, Jesse. 1997. "Flirting with Suicide." 1997. In Michael Lowenthal (ed.) *Gay Men at the Millennium: Sex, Spirit, Community* (pp. 35-56). New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam.

Hacker, Andrew. 1992. "Being Black in America (Chapter 3)." *Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Isay, David, and Stacy Abramson. 2000, January 2. "No. 587: A Death-Row Inmate Tells his Own Life Story." *The New York Times Magazine*, pp. 34-35.

Pitts, Leonard. 2000, January 14. "More Subtle Than a White Sheet." *Austin American-Statesman*, p. A-15.

Traub, James. 2000, January 16. "What No School Can Do." *The New York Times Magazine*, pp. 52-57, 68, 81, 90, 91.

## V. Course Requirements

### *Assignments and Grading Policy*

<b>1. Weekly Collaborative Learning Group (CLG) Assignments</b>	<b>30%</b>
Reaction Papers (connected with assigned readings)	a
Participation in Seminar Discussion	a
a. Grade based on average of total weekly CLG assignments.	
<b>2. Newspaper Review of Contemporary Issues in Social Welfare Policy</b>	<b>70%</b>
Topic, Proposed Plan for the Review, First Draft	b
b. 10-20 points will be deducted from final project grade for unsatisfactory performance on these parts of the paper.	
Set of Newspaper Articles Collected	5%
Final Draft of Paper	55% <sup>c</sup>
c. For full credit, your initial draft <u>with my comments</u> must be submitted with your final draft – there will be a 10-point penalty on the final paper if draft with my comments is not submitted.	
Oral Presentation	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Description of Assignments (Refer to the end of the syllabus for a detailed description of the assignments.)*

### *Grading Criteria (for Newspaper Review Project)*

90 – 100	=	<u>SUPERIOR (A)</u> : The assignment significantly exceeds expectations. Student does more than is required in the assignment and demonstrates a high level of in-depth critical thinking and analysis (i.e., coherence, integration of ideas).
80 – 89	=	<u>GOOD (B)</u> : The assignment meets <u>all</u> the requirements and demonstrates evidence of in-depth critical thinking and analysis.
70 – 79	=	<u>AVERAGE (C)</u> : The assignment meets the requirements or has <u>minor</u> gaps but lacks evidence of in-depth critical thinking and analysis
<70	=	<u>BELOW AVERAGE (D or F)</u> : The assignment has important gaps, both in terms of not meeting the requirements and lacking in-depth critical thinking and analysis.

## VI. Course Requirements

*Note: Assigned readings are due on the date listed. Authors in bold refer to readings from the assigned texts. Any guest lectures and videos may be scheduled on short notice and will be subject to change in the event of unavoidable scheduling conflicts. Changes in assignments, due dates, and other class information may be made throughout the semester. Announcements will be made in class and/or via e-mail. In case of absence, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain information on announcements made in class during their absence.*

**Week 1** ♦ JAN 13 - MONDAY SECTION / JAN 14 - TUESDAY SECTION

### OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

**Week 2** ♦ JAN 20 - MONDAY SECTION / JAN 21 - TUESDAY SECTION

**\* NO CLASS TODAY \***

### MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY HOLIDAY

**Week 3** ♦ JAN 27 - MONDAY SECTION / JAN 28 - TUESDAY SECTION

DUE	READINGS & CLASS ACTIVITIES
<p><b>(1) REACTION PAPER:</b>  <b>Question:</b> Based on Green’s article on the case of AIDS, reflect on three or four factors that make social policy development in general so complex and why (use concrete examples from the article).</p> <p><b>(2) NEWSPAPER REVIEW:</b>            I – TOPIC</p>	<p><i>The Complexity of Social Problems: Implications For the Design of Social Welfare Policies</i>            Green, “Flirting with Suicide”  <b>DiNitto, Preface; Chapter 1</b>, Politics, Rationalism, and Social Welfare</p> <p><b>MAJOR HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS:</b>  <i>I. The Progressive Era &amp; Social Reform (1900s)</i>            Bettman, <i>The Good Old Days: They Were Terrible!</i>  <b>Patterson, Part I</b>, The Preventive Impulse: <b>Chapter 1</b>, 1900-1930: Snapshots of the Poor; <b>Chapter 2</b>, The Gospel of Prevention: Progressive Style</p> <p>IN-CLASS VIDEO: The Promised Land (The Great Migration), Vol. 1, Take Me to Chicago (<i>Vidcast 5107</i>)</p>

**Week 4** ♦ FEB 3 - MONDAY SECTION / FEB 4 - TUESDAY SECTION

<p><b>(1) REACTION PAPER:</b>  <b>Question:</b> Based on Patterson’s historical analysis of the foundations of the US social welfare system, in which ways may have these foundations shaped the characteristics of subsequent policy development in this country (e.g., groups left in or left out; types of benefits, etc.)?</p>	<p><b>MAJOR HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS:</b>  <i>II. The Depression &amp; the New Deal (1930s)</i>  <b>Patterson, Part II</b>, Coping and Rehabilitation, 1930-1960: <b>Chapter 3</b>, The Poor in the Depression; <b>Chapter 4</b>, The Early Welfare State; <b>Chapter 5</b>, Withering Away</p> <p>IN-CLASS VIDEO: The Great Depression, Vol. 3, New Deal, New York</p> <p>DISCUSSION: How to Lobby</p>
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**FEB 11: PARTICIPATE IN STUDENT DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE**

(Sponsored by NASW/Texas. Pre-registration required: [www.naswtx.org](http://www.naswtx.org))

Week 6 ♦ FEB 17 - MONDAY SECTION / FEB 18 - TUESDAY SECTION

<p><b>(1) REACTION PAPER:</b>  <u>Question:</u>—Based on Patterson’s discussion of the <i>culture of poverty</i> perspective on poverty, consider how the definition of a social problem influences our policy response. Choose any social problem of interest to you.</p> <p><b>(2) NEWSPAPER REVIEW:</b>                  II - PROPOSED PLAN</p>	<p><i>MAJOR HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS:</i>  <i>III. The Great Society &amp; the War on Poverty (1960s)</i></p> <p><b>Patterson, Part III, Doors to Opportunity, 1960-1965:</b>  <u>Chapter 6, The Depression and The New Deal: 1930-1940;</u> <u>Chapter 7, A Culture of Poverty?</u>  <u>Chapter 8, Girding for War on Poverty;</u> <u>Chapter 9, OEO: A Hand Up, Not a Handout</u></p> <p>IN-CLASS VIDEO: The War on Poverty, Vol 1., In this Affluent Society</p>
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Week 7 ♦ FEB 24 - MONDAY SECTION / FEB 25 - TUESDAY SECTION

<p><b>(1) REACTION PAPER:</b>  <u>Question:</u> Given what you have learned about the history of welfare policy in the US and the new welfare reform, what types of outcomes would you expect; that is, how do you think the poor will fare under this new system?</p>	<p><i>Contemporary Welfare Reform (1990s)</i></p> <p>Ehrenreich, “Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America”</p> <p><b>Patterson, Chapter 15, Welfare Reform, No Consensus;</b> <u>Chapter 16, The Amazing 1990s</u>  <b>DiNitto, Chapter 6, Ending Welfare as We Knew It: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families</b></p> <p>IN-CLASS VIDEO: Ending Welfare as We Know It</p>
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Week 8 ♦ MAR 3 - MONDAY SECTION / MAR 4 - TUESDAY SECTION

<p><b>(1) REACTION PAPER:</b>  <u>Question:</u> What is your <b>personal philosophical base</b> driving you as a social worker and what personal experiences motivates it? Based on that philosophy, what do you believe is truly the cause(s) of poverty or general social problems? Where does the obligation lie to fix these problems: with the person or with society, and why? What does the person and/or society need to do?</p>	<p><i>Assessing the Social Health of the Nation</i></p> <p><b>Miringoff &amp; Miringoff, Foreword (p. v-vii); Intro.; Part I, Seeking the Social Side of the Portrait: Chapter 1, How Are We Doing; Chapter 2, Part of a Tradition; Part II, Framing a Social Health Perspective for the Nation: Chapter 3, There’s Something Else out There</b></p> <p><b>DiNitto, Chapter 5, Helping the “Deserving Poor”:</b> Aged, Blind, and Disabled; <u>Chapter 7, Fighting Hunger: Nutrition Policy and Programs in the US</u></p> <p>DISCUSSION: The Policy Process</p>
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SPRING BREAK

Week 10 ♦ MAR 17 - MONDAY SECTION / MAR 18 - TUESDAY SECTION

<p><b>(1) NEWSPAPER REVIEW:</b> III – ANNOTATED OUTLINE &amp; COMPLETE LIST OF REFERENCES</p>	<p><i>Issues in Health Care</i></p> <p><b>Miringoff &amp; Miringoff, <u>Infant Mortality</u></b> (p. 48-53); <b><u>Life Expectancy, Aged 65</u></b> (p. 66-71); <b><u>Health Care Coverage</u></b> (p. 92-97); <b><u>Teenage Births</u></b> (p. 124-129)</p> <p><b>DiNitto, Chapter 8, Improving Health Care: Treating the Nation's Ills</b></p> <p>DISCUSSION: Student discussion of preliminary themes in newspaper reviews</p>
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Week 11 ♦ MAR 24 - MONDAY SECTION / MAR 25 - TUESDAY SECTION

<p><b>(1) REACTION PAPER:</b> <u>Question:</u> Based on the readings, consider how clinical and policy issues are connected (choose a specific area of interest to you)?</p>	<p><i>A Policy Analysis of Social Service Provision</i></p> <p>Isay and Abramson, “No. 587: A Death-Row Inmate Tells his Own Life Story”</p> <p>DeParle, “Early Sex Abuse Hinders Many Women on Welfare”</p> <p><b>Miringoff &amp; Miringoff, <u>Child Abuse</u></b> (p. 74-79); <b><u>Youth Suicide</u></b> (p. 86-91); <b><u>Violent Crime</u></b> (p. 110-115); <b><u>Teenage Drug Use</u></b> (p. 118-123)</p> <p><b>DiNitto, Chapter 10, Providing Social Services: Help for Children, the Elderly, and People with Mental Illness</b></p> <p>IN-CLASS VIDEO: Policy Affects Practice and Students/Practitioners Affect Policy</p>
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Week 12 ♦ MAR 31 - MONDAY SECTION / APRIL 1 - TUESDAY SECTION

<p><b>(1) REACTION PAPER:</b>  <b>Question:</b> Drawing from the ideas in this week’s readings, what social issue would YOU personally and passionately fight for (advocate for) and why?</p>	<p><i>Addressing Inequality: A Critical Aspect of Social Welfare Policy</i></p> <p>Pitts, “More Subtle Than a White Sheet”  Hacker, “Being Black in America”  <b>Miringoff &amp; Miringoff</b>, <u>High School Dropouts</u> (p. 54-59); <u>Poverty, Aged 65+</u> (p. 60-65); <u>Child Poverty</u> (p. 80-85); <u>Wages</u> (p. 98-103); <u>Inequality</u> (p. 104-109); <u>Affordable Housing</u> (p. 136-141); <u>Unemployment</u> (p. 142-147)  <b>DiNitto</b>, <u>Chapter 11</u>, Challenging Social Welfare: Racism and Sexism</p> <p>IN-CLASS VIDEO : The Democratic Process, Saul Alinski and His Legacy</p>
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**Week 13** ♦ APRIL 7 - MONDAY SECTION / APRIL 8 - TUESDAY SECTION

<p><b>(1) NEWSPAPER REVIEW:</b>  IV – DRAFT FULL PAPER</p>	<p><i>Evaluating Social Welfare Policies and Programs</i></p> <p>Gershoff, Child Poverty in the U.S.: An Evidence-Based Conceptual Framework for Programs and Policies  Traub, “What No School Can Do”  <b>DiNitto</b>, <u>Chapter 12</u>, Implementing and Evaluating Social Welfare Policy: What Happens After a Law is Passed?</p>
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**Week 14** ♦ APRIL 14 - MONDAY SECTION / APRIL 15 - TUESDAY SECTION

**STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

**Week 15** ♦ APRIL 21 - MONDAY SECTION / APRIL 22 - TUESDAY SECTION

**STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

**Week 16** ♦ APRIL 28 - MONDAY SECTION / APRIL 29 - TUESDAY SECTION

**STUDENT PRESENTATIONS & WRAP UP**

♦ MAY 7 (WEDNESDAY)

**DUE: V. NEWSPAPER REVIEW FINAL PROJECT**

## **Bibliography**

**Required Readings** *(See Section IV for a complete list.)*

### **Supplemental Readings (Optional)**

Abramovitz, Mimi. (1988). Regulating the Lives Of Women: Social Welfare Policy from Colonial Times to the Present. Boston, Mass: South End Press.

Axinn, June, and Herman Levin. (1992). Social Welfare: A History of the American Response to Need. White Plains, NY: Longman.

Bane, Mary Jo, and David T. Elwood. (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 and Michael Hanagan. (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, & Gottschalk, Peter. America Unequal. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995.

Danziger, Sheldon, and Gottschalk, Peter. (1995). America Unequal. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Danziger, Sheldon, Gary D. Sandefur, and Daniel H. Weinberg (Eds.). (1994). Confronting Poverty: Prescriptions for Change. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Davies, Martin. (1997). The Blackwell Companion to Social Work. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers.

Day, P. J. A New History of Social Welfare. Englewood, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1989.

Edin, Kathryn, and Laura Lein. (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.

Gensler, Howard. (1996). The American Welfare System: Origins, Structure, and Effects. Westport, CT: Praeger.

- Gilbert, Neil, and Paul Terrel. (1998). Dimensions of Social Welfare Policy. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Harrington, Michael (1963). The Other America: Poverty in the United States. Baltimore: Penguin Books.
- Heffernan, W. Joseph. (1992). Social Welfare Policy: A Research and Action Strategy. New York: Longman. Chapter 10, Histories of Policy
- Katz, Michael B. (1990). The Undeserving Poor : From the War on Poverty to the War on Welfare, New York : Pantheon Books.
- Larner, Mary B., Donna L. Terman, and Richard E. Behrman. (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.
- Murray, Charles. (1984). Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950-1980. New York: Basic Books.
- Olasky, Marvin N. (1996). Renewing American Compassion, New York: Free Press.
- Olasky, Marvin. (1991). Lessons on Compassion: 19th Century Welfare. Current, No. 330: 8-19.
- Patton, Carl, and David Sawicki (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.
- Simon, Barbara Levy. The Empowerment Tradition in American Social Work : A History. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.
- Skocpol, Theda (1992). Protecting Soldiers and Mothers. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press.
- Skocpol, Theda. (1995). Social Policy in the United States: Future Possibilities in Historical Perspective. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Skocpol, Theda. (1992) Protecting Soldiers and Mothers. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press.
- Stroup, Herbert Hewitt. (1986). Social Welfare Pioneers. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.
- The Undeserving Poor: From the War on Poverty to the War on Welfare. (1990). New York : Pantheon Books.
- Van Wormer, Katherine. Social Welfare: A World View. (1997). Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers.

## Collaborative Learning Group Assignments

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The class will be conducted as a seminar using the collaborative learning group (CLG) method. The CLG method fosters students' active participation in learning. The main objective behind the CLG method is to give students an opportunity to systematically analyze and apply concepts taught in the course through group discussion. In preparation for this task, on specified weeks students will be asked to prepare a reaction paper based on the readings assigned for each session. The dates in which the reaction papers are due are listed in the syllabus (reaction papers are not due every week). The reaction papers should critically respond to a specific question listed in the syllabus by week and draw on the concepts in the readings for the week. The reaction papers will serve as the basis for group discussion. They should be 2½ - 3 pages in length (equivalent to double-spaced typewritten pages), but do not need to be type-written. Longer reaction papers will be accepted.

\* Please note that we have NO EXAMS in this class. Thus, this part of the course work is the core of your learning in this class. So please take the weekly readings, the preparation of your reaction papers, and the class participation seriously.

The reaction papers should be written in the form of an essay (rather than in the form of a list or outline) and make explicit references within the essay to all the readings assigned for that week (although some may be emphasized more than others)—unless otherwise specified in the syllabus. To highlight your reference to the readings, underline each reference the first time you mention it. For example, “According to Trattner's chapter on the New Deal (Ch. 7),...” The Reaction Papers should reflect critical thinking: that is, you should analyze, synthesize, evaluate, compare/ contrast, and so on. Always stay grounded in the readings.

- Weekly grade: 50 points for class participation (100 when no reaction papers is due)  
+ 50 points (maximum) for the Reaction Paper  
= 0 to 100 points
- The Reaction Paper is graded generally as follows:
  - 50** Reaction Paper covers all assigned readings and provides a critical analysis
  - 20** Reaction Paper covers all assigned readings, but provides a superficial analysis
  - 15** Reaction Paper does not cover all assigned readings or is **very** sketchy
- Unless the student is absent, Reaction Papers will not be accepted late (given that their purpose is to be prepared for class).

***In order to provide leeway for emergencies (e.g., car breakdowns, illness, printer problems, etc.) students may drop their 2 lowest weekly grades. No doctor's excuses or any other type of evidence of the emergency is needed. If you are absent, you may submit your Reaction Paper late. Grades for Reaction Papers cannot be dropped.***

### How to Approach the Writing of the Reaction Papers

First, note the overall theme of the readings for the week, which is listed above each weekly set of readings. Focusing on the complexity of the social problem at hand the implications for the design for social welfare policy. Make sure to draw evidence from the readings. Write using a formal tone and preferably in the third person.

## **Newspaper Review of Contemporary Issues in Social Welfare Policy**

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This assignment provides you with an opportunity to examine a policy issue of interest to you. The purpose of the assignment is to begin to analyze the complexity of a specific social problem and the implications of this complexity for the analysis and design of social welfare policy. The assignment will give you the opportunity to integrate the public discourse and everyday manifestations of social problems with an in-depth analysis of the literature. An understanding of the social problem at hand is a first and essential step in the study of policy and forms the foundation for the preparation of, among others, policy briefs, grant proposals, testimony for legislative bodies, research studies, and journal articles.

Specifically, you should follow a policy issue in the news and collect newspaper articles and news magazine articles concerning that issue. As you select your topic, narrow it down such that you focus on a specific aspect of a social problem or population. Some examples include: contemporary issues related to gay and lesbian rights, domestic violence, families leaving welfare, mandatory drug sentencing and minorities, homeless families, and teen suicide. Based on your review of the newspaper articles, you will conduct an in-depth analysis of the policy issues related to the social problem that you selected. The analysis should rely on theoretical and empirical literature on the topic.

Ask yourself what themes/issues are raised in the media about the problem, and evaluate to what extent those themes reflect our current knowledge of the social problem (based on theoretical and empirical literature). In addition, consider the implications for ways in which the problem is or can be addressed from a policy perspective. The assignment is divided into the following parts, described below. Please read the entire assignment over first.

### **PART I. TOPIC (SPECIFIC)**

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Submit one sentence or phrase indicating the topic (social problem) of your newspaper review and why the topic is compelling. The topic should have clear implications for social welfare policy. See DiNitto, pages 1-3, for a definition of social welfare policy and Miringoff & Miringoff for an explanation of social problems/social issues (social health indicators). Be specific: instead of “gays and lesbians,” “gay and lesbian rights” or “issues facing gay and lesbian youth.”

### **PART II. PROPOSED PLAN (3 ARTICLES & 1 PARAGRAPH)**

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Submit a copy of at least three articles that you have collected on the topic of your choice up to this point and a one-page plan for the final paper. Specifically, indicate the direction that you think your paper will take and the major policy issues that are emerging in your newspaper review. Include a discussion on the types of questions you will be asking in your literature review.

### **PART III. ANNOTATED OUTLINE & COMPLETE LIST OF REFERENCES (NEWSPAPER ARTICLES & SCHOLARLY SOURCES)**

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Submit a detailed annotated outline of your paper. Show how you plan to organize your paper. Include a thesis statement, that is, the theme of your paper (e.g., child abuse is a growing problem among families leaving welfare) and a short discussion about the background of the issue. Secondly, list the major sections that you plan to include in your paper and write one or two paragraphs (or more) summarizing the content of each section. By this time in the semester, you should have gathered most of the information that you will use in your final draft and in your oral presentation.

Include a complete bibliography of both the newspapers articles and the scholarly sources you will be using in your paper.

#### **PART IV. DRAFT FULL PAPER**

*[This draft with my comments must be submitted with the final draft.]*

Review the requirements of the final project below (in Part V), and submit a complete draft of the final paper (paper, full bibliography in the correct format, copies of newspaper articles). The draft is **NOT, NOT** intended to be a rough draft for me to fix or edit for you. Rather, it should be the very best you can produce (without missing sections) in terms of content, coherence of ideas, grammar, etc.

#### **PART V. FINAL PROJECT (NEWSPAPER ARTICLES, PAPER, ORAL PRESENTATION, FIRST DRAFT WITH MY COMMENTS)**

##### ITEMS TO SUBMIT AS THE FINAL PROJECT:

- Copies of newspaper articles (10-12 articles)
- Final paper (20-25 pages) plus the References
- References—2 separate lists: (a) at least 20 scholarly sources and (b) 10-12 newspaper articles
- First draft of the paper with my comments
- Cover page with a summary list of substantive changes that you made to the paper based on my comments on the 1<sup>st</sup> draft, e.g., new sections added (do not list editorial revisions)

##### **A. Copies of Newspaper Articles (10-12 articles)**

Articles should be collected throughout the semester (on the average of 1 article per week) in order to track the development of the issue in the media. (A few articles published before the current semester are also acceptable). Submit at least 10-12 articles. You should look for articles that provide some in-depth/substantive discussion of the problem (that does not mean the articles have to be long) and allude to relevant social welfare policies (directly or indirectly). Collect at least a small number of articles from major newspapers, such as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, etc. (available on-line and at the UT libraries). Submit copies of your news articles (but do not submit copies of the scholarly journal articles).

##### **B. Final Paper (20-25 pages) plus the References**

You should answer the question: **What makes this social problem complex, and what are the implications of this complexity for social welfare policy; what aspects are not addressed by current or proposed policies?**

The paper should discuss the overall nature of the social problem and the main themes that emerge from the newspaper articles, including points of contention. In addition, obtain information from at least 20 scholarly sources (journal articles or books) to supplement and expand upon the information obtained from the news articles. The scholarly information and the information from the newspaper articles should be intertwined throughout the paper. Include information from scholarly sources reporting on theoretical, empirical, demographic, and policy studies. Namely,

- theoretical studies: different theories or explanations of why the problem occurs (e.g., causes of child abuse are poor parenting skills, lack of resources, or temperamental characteristics of target children)

- empirical studies: studies to examine whether there is evidence to support hypotheses laid out in theories (e.g., a study showed that parents who are poor are more likely to abuse their children)
- demographic studies: overview of the population characteristics of a specific group (e.g., on the average, 3 percent of children are severely abused)
- policy studies: analyses of the types of policies designed to address the social problem (e.g., the major policies addressing child abuse, such as family support vs. out-of-home placement)

**References:** Include a bibliography with two separate list: (1) newspaper articles and (2) scholarly sources. Use APA style. A copy of the APA Publication Manual and a short APA hand-out is available at the SSW Learning Resource Center. Scholarly references inside the text should be cited in the form (author, date). For the purposes of this paper, citations to newspaper articles should be cited in the form (“Title of Newspaper Article”, Newspaper Name, date). Quoted material should be enclosed in quotation marks. If using sources in a foreign language, please include the title in the original language and a translation into English in parentheses.

**Organization of the Paper.** The paper should connect information from the media and from scholarly resources. It should be organized using subheadings for each of the major sections. Include a final section on the ‘Implications for Social Welfare Policy.’ Thus, your paper should be structured as follows: **Title of Paper**, Introduction (significance of the issue, background information, etc.), Subheading 1 (sub-theme 1), Subheading 2 (sub-theme 2), Subheading 3 (sub-theme 3), Implications for Social Welfare Policy, Conclusion.

### **C. First Draft of the Paper with my Comments**

You are required to return the first draft of your paper with my comments along with the final draft. I will evaluate the final draft of your paper relative to the first draft. Final papers not submitted along with the first draft will be penalized 10 points.

### **D. Oral Presentation**

Prepare a persuasive oral presentation of the newspaper review project. Use of audio-visual aids (power point, overheads, video clips, etc.) is REQUIRED. Breakdown the presentation according to the structure of your paper (background, and major sub-themes).

### **Project Checklist (apply to both the paper and presentation):**

- ✓ Provide a solid and clear introduction, in which you state the purpose of your paper and indicate the major themes/issues that you will be covering. Clearly state how each of the parts of the paper are connected to each other.
- ✓ Present a compelling and concrete picture of the problem by giving hard core demographic data, examples, cases, and by clearly demonstrating the urgency of the issue.
- ✓ Organize the project around the complexities of the problem (e.g., a paper on teen violence could focus on the role of a variety of players in influencing teen violence, such as schools, parents, gun manufacturers, etc.)
- ✓ Demonstrate how your paper and material is driven by your review of the newspaper articles throughout the semester. Tie your topic to current events--things that happened, issues that have been coming up, etc. (e.g., a paper on same-sex unions would bring up policies that were in the

news, such as Hawaii's and Vermont's court cases, the new resolution on same-sex unions approved by the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and so on).

- ✓ Given that this is a newspaper review of an issue across a semester or so, specifically articulate a sense of sequence of events. Furthermore, be sure to differentiate between media events and the scholarly literature. From the scholarly literature, you should obtain demographic information on the problem, as well as empirical and theoretical analyses. What are the major theories explaining your social problem (e.g., why are more minorities in the juvenile justice system)? What theory best explains your problem of interest? Interweave the information you gathered from the newspaper articles with the information you gathered from scholarly sources. For example,
- ✓ *"The major themes that emerge in the media discourse on juvenile delinquency are.... First, the current policies attempting to address juvenile delinquency focus on the punishment of delinquent youth. However, this approach is not substantiated by research studies. In fact, much of the research provides data that would suggest that many of the current policies are ineffective because they do not address the major causes of delinquency. Research shows that one of the major factors predicting delinquency is poverty.... Furthermore, much of the research supports several policy proposals that could be effective, including support services for families. Ironically, however, it does not seem that current policies are addressing the issues that could help alleviate much of the juvenile delinquency we see today...."*
- ✓ Don't use an informal tone (e.g., INAPPROPRIATE: "proponents of the death penalty are inconsiderate and racist" vs. APPROPRIATE: "proponents of the death penalty ignore the data showing that 75% of those on death row are African American and Mexican American and a significant proportion suffer some form of mental illness").

## Class Expectations

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**1. Attend class regularly.**

Class attendance is required every class period for the entire class period (see class requirements).

**2. Turn assignments in on the due dates.**

All assignments submitted after the beginning of class are considered late.

- On days when CLG Reaction Paper (or other written assignments) are not required, the CLG grade will be based solely on class participation/attendance.
- Student presentations can only be given on the allotted dates.  
Major written assignments will be penalized 5 points for each calendar day late.

**3. Follow the rules of scholastic honesty.**

Assignments which show evidence that they have not been completed directly by the student will not be accepted and may result in automatic failure for the course. All written assignments (papers, weekly Reaction Papers, etc.) should be based on individual, not collaborative, work. However, collaborative discussion in and out of class is strongly encouraged. Scholastic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will result in recommendation for dismissal from the University according to University guidelines.

**4. Request and use feedback.**

I will work with you throughout the semester and provide you with feedback and suggestions for revisions on assignments. Please arrange to meet with me prior to the time the particular assignments are due.

**5. Offer feedback.**

Student feedback about the course is welcome, as the course will be viewed as a joint effort between students and the instructor. If you have difficulties with the course content or assignments, or if you are unclear about my expectations of you or your expectations of the course, talk to me as soon as possible during the semester.

**6. Participate in class discussions and other in-class activities.**

This is one way that students can learn from each other. Differences in values, opinions, and ideas with other students (and guest speakers) will be respected.

**7. Present written and oral presentations professionally.**

Grades will be lowered if assignments are not clearly presented. Written assignments should be proofread to avoid grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors. Paginate all your papers.

**8. Use APA Style for referencing.**

The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* is the style manual to be used by the School of Social Work. A handout on APA style is available at the SSW Student Services Office.

**9. Agency and community 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.

**10. Services for students with disabilities**

The University of Texas at Austin 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 or 471-4641 TTY.