

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course/Unique Number: SW 382R / U# 62920

Office Number: SSW 3.130K

Semester: Spring 2009

Office Phone: 471-6266

Meeting Time/Place: Tues 2:30-5:30 / SSW 2.122

Office Hours: Thurs 1:30-2:30 & appt. / TA: Tues 1:30-2:30 (SSW 3.112)

Instructor: Professor Yolanda C. Padilla, PhD, LMSW-AP, ypadilla@austin.utexas.edu

Teaching Assistant: Monica Faulkner, MonicaF480@aol.com

SOCIAL POLICY ANALYSIS AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS (MSSW)

I. Standardized Course Description

This course critically examines, from both historical and current perspectives, the overall structure of the American social welfare system with a focus on the disproportionate social, economic and political problems of vulnerable populations. The course also considers the parallel historical development of the profession of social work, including the ways in which it responded to social problems across key periods of social welfare policy development (for example, the New Deal, the War on Poverty, urban renewal, the contemporary period of welfare reform).

II. Standardized Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the dominant historical themes that have shaped social welfare policy in the United States;
2. Understand the economic and political constraints and opportunities in the development of social welfare problems and policies;
3. Understand the relationship between the history of the social work profession and the development of social welfare policy;
4. Apply social work values to critically analyze social problems;
5. Gain knowledge and skills as a background for analyzing major policies that form the foundation of social welfare and analyze organizational, local, state, national and international issues in social welfare policy and social service delivery;
6. Understand social welfare policy arenas impacting service delivery, social work practice, and attainment of individual and social well-being;
7. Understand how social policies differentially affect diverse populations in American society;
8. Gain knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of social workers in the policy process, including advocacy, leadership, research, and community organizing, with the goal of promoting and advocating for social and economic justice through both organizational and social change.

Course Content and Organization

Every form of social work practice embodies a social welfare policy. In this class, we will see how the seemingly individual and family level problems of our clients are connected to a larger web of social issues and how social policies attempt to respond. In order to be effective social workers, we need to understand policy and the factors that shape it. This class provides tools for social workers to think critically about social welfare policy. We will study five broad areas of policy within which our clients are disproportionately involved: poverty and hunger, health and disability, housing and homelessness, social services, and criminal justice (with a focus on juvenile justice). We will learn about (a) the various social welfare programs and policies within each field, and (b) a macro-policy analysis model that highlights the role of history, politics, economics, ideology, and social movements in policy development. Students will produce a policy brief on a relevant social welfare policy topic. The policy brief is designed for inclusion in a professional portfolio that may be used as evidence of your abilities as you apply for your advanced field placement or a professional position upon graduation.

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, formal presentation of material, and hands-on application of concepts.

IV. Required Readings

Textbook: Blau, Joel. (2007, 2nd Edition). The Dynamics of Social Welfare Policy. New York: Oxford University Press.

Selected Readings: Available on UT Blackboard.

DiNitto, Diana M. 2007. Social Welfare: Politics and Public Policy. Boston : Pearson/Allyn and Bacon. [Chapter 5, Helping the “Deserving Poor”: Aged, Blind, and Disabled; Chapter 10, Providing Social Services: Help for Children, the Elderly, and Individuals with Mental Illness.]

Edelman, Marian Wright. November/December 2006. Losing the Children, Early and Often. The Crisis, 16-19.

Roberts, Albert R., and David W. Springer. 2006. Social Work in Juvenile and Criminal Justice Settings. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas. [Chapter 14, Juvenile Justice Policy: Trends and Issues]

Siegel, Larry J. 2002. Juvenile Delinquency: The Core. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. [Chapter 11, The History and Development of Juvenile Justice]

2008 Policy Guide. July 2008. Washington, DC: National Alliance to End Homelessness. [Pages 1-22]

V. Course Requirements

A. Policy Brief	30 %
B. 2 Exams	60 %
C. Legislative Session Activity Summary	5 %
D. Class participation (<i>Can drop one absence in case of emergency</i>)	<u>5 %</u>
TOTAL	100 %

Policy Project: Policy Brief. Students will apply the policy development model learned in the class to a specific social welfare policy issue. Detailed instructions will be provided.

Legislative Session Activity. Participate in one Lobby Day at the Texas Legislature and write a 1-page single-spaced summary. You must participate in at least 3 hours of the Lobby Day activities (which often include a training, a rally, and time to visit with legislators). We will provide a list of some possible choices. Select a Lobby Day addressing a social welfare issue (e.g., the Humane Society Lobby Day would not qualify). If in doubt, check with us first. Please submit your summary as soon as you complete your activity, but not later than the last day of the semester.

Extra Credit. Receive up to 5 extra points on your first or second exam by participating in a legislative activity, which may include: a different lobby day, a legislative committee meeting/hearing, a political rally, or one-to-one meetings with legislators. You must participate for at least 3 hours and submit a one-page single-spaced summary of your experience. Please submit your summary as soon as you complete your activity, but not later than the last day of the semester.

VI. Class Policies

- 1. Class Attendance, Assignment Due Dates.** Class attendance is required every class period for the entire class period. Class presentations can only be given on the allotted dates. Assignments will be penalized 10 points for each calendar day late. UT does not allow Incompletes (grade of X) to provide additional time to complete assignment. Students will be informed of any changes in assignments, due dates, and other class content.
- 2. Use of Blackboard in Course.** This course uses Blackboard to distribute course materials, to communicate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, etc. 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 (<http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>). It is the student's responsibility to keep

the University informed as to changes in 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.

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.

VIII. Course Schedule

Readings are for the dates assigned. The readings labeled as “Chapter” are from the textbook. Other readings are available on Blackboard. Videos and guest speakers are planned to complement class material.

Jan 20	Course overview <i>Introduction to the Place of Social Welfare Policy in Social Work Practice</i>
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The Social Welfare Policy Analysis Model

Jan 27	<i>Social Problems and Social Welfare Policy Responses</i> Chapter 1: Introduction to Social Welfare Policy: Social Problems, Social Policy, Social Change Chapter 2: Definitions and Functions of Social Welfare Policy
Feb 3	<i>Policy Analysis Model: Economic and Political Components</i> Chapter 3: The Economy and Social Welfare Chapter 4: The Politics of Social Welfare Policy
Feb 10	<i>Policy Analysis Model: Ideological Component</i> Chapter 5: Ideological Perspectives and Conflicts
Feb 17	<i>Policy Analysis Model: Social Movements Component</i> Chapter 6: Social Movements and Social Change
Feb 24	<i>Policy Analysis Model: Historical Component</i> Chapter 7: Social Welfare History in the United States
Mar 3	Exam 1

Fields of Social Welfare Policy

Mar 10	<i>Poverty: Income and Food</i> Chapter 8: Income Support: Program and Policies Chapter 12: Food and Hunger: Programs and Policies
Mar 17	<i>Spring Break</i>
Mar 24	<i>Health and Disability</i> Chapter 11: Health Care: Programs and Policies <u>Reading</u> : DiNitto, “Helping the Deserving Poor: Aged, Blind, and Disabled”

Mar 31	<p><i>Housing and Homelessness</i> Chapter 10: Housing: Programs and Policies <u>Reading:</u> National Alliance to End Homelessness, “2008 Policy Guide” (pages 3-22)</p>
Apr 7	<p><i>Social Services</i> <u>Reading:</u> DiNitto, “Providing Social Services: Help for Children, the Elderly, and Individuals with Mental Illness”</p>
Apr 14	<p><i>Criminal Justice System (With a focus on Juvenile Justice)</i> <u>Readings:</u> Edelman, “Losing the Children, Early and Often” Siegel, “The History and Development of Juvenile Justice” Roberts & Springer, “Juvenile Justice Policy: Trends and Issues”</p>
Apr 21	Student presentations
Apr 27	<i>1st Biennial Professional Social Work Day at the Legislature 2009 (National Association of Social Workers)</i>
Apr 28	Student presentations
May 5	Exam 2

IX. 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. *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.