

MASTER SYLLABUS

SW 4710

**SOCIAL WELFARE IN THE UNITED STATES: CURRENT PROGRAMS
3 CREDIT HOURS**

I. COURSE DOMAIN AND BOUNDARY

This senior-level course helps students develop a critical understanding of the social welfare system in this country, with emphasis placed on the structure of current programs, services, and policies, and how these policies compare internationally. Course content provides students with knowledge and skills to understand major policies that form the foundation of social welfare. Special attention is paid to analyzing and reforming current social welfare policies at local, state, national and international levels and applying the results of policy practice skills in regard to economic, political, and organizational systems. The application of policy practice skills will be implemented to influence, formulate and advocate for policy consistent with social work values; and identify financial, organizational, administrative, and planning processes required to deliver social services.

In the process, program policy gaps and inadequacies are pinpointed, especially as they impact on oppressed and at risk populations. Prospective social workers are introduced to the workings of the political process, its influence on social welfare policy and social work practice, and the ways in which social workers can participate in political activities, advocacy groups and coalitions, and/or organizational change in order to achieve social and economic justice.

II. STUDENT KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- A. Become knowledgeable about contemporary social welfare policies and programs at local, state and federal levels in the United States as a base for entry-level social work practice.
- B. Assess and compare U.S. Social Welfare policy with other countries that have similar and dissimilar economic structures.
- C. Comprehend the workings of the political process and its influence on social welfare policy as well as social work practice.

III. STUDENT SKILL OBJECTIVES

- A. Acquire analytic skills enabling future practitioners to pinpoint gaps in policies and programs, with particular reference to inadequacies experienced by minorities, women, and other oppressed populations.
- B. Identify financial, organizational, administrative and planning processes that are necessary to deliver social welfare services.
- C. Develop an understanding and demonstrates necessary skills for achieving social welfare policy reform, organizational change and promotion of social and economic justice via participation in political advocacy and political practices. Attention to social work organizations and activities such as NASW, PACE (Political Action for Candidate Election), issue advocacy groups and coalitions.

III. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Student achievement of the knowledge and skill objectives is assessed via examinations and/or policy analysis. In addition, students will be asked to demonstrate their ability to advocate for policy change by engaging in some form of political advocacy.

IV. TEXTS/REQUIRED MATERIALS

Karger, H. J. and Stoesz, D. (2006). *American Social Welfare: A Pluralist Approach* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon).

V. ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE

Course content begins with a brief review of the history of social welfare in this country and trends in the development of our social welfare system. Current policies and programs are described and analyzed using a policy analysis framework. Gaps in existing programs (such as welfare and social security) are identified and impacts on the lives of minorities, women, and other oppressed groups are emphasized. The social worker's ongoing role as policy reformer and advocate for social and economic justice is presented through out the course.

VI. COURSE OUTLINE

<p>Session 1 Introduction to the course Review of syllabus course purpose, format, norms, and assignments Lecture/discussion The origins and future of American Social Welfare Early Antecedents of Welfare Statism English Poor Laws; The poor in Colonial America Social work leadership in Social Welfare</p>	<p>Assignment: Read Chapters 1 Social Policy and the American Welfare State and Chapter 2 Social Welfare Policy Research: A Framework for Policy Analysis</p>
<p>Session 2 Lecture/discussion Definitions of Social Welfare Policy Social Problems and Social Welfare Policy Values, Ideology, and Social Welfare Policy The Political-Economy of American Social Welfare The America Political continuum Structural Interests Within Social Welfare A proposed Model for Policy Analysis Researching and Analyzing Social Policies Incompleteness of Policy Analysis</p>	<p>Assignment: Read Chapter 4 Discrimination and Social Stigma in American Society</p> <p>You are to visit the website http://www.globalwelfarelibrary.org Choose an article of interest which will support your assignment related to international social welfare policy. You are to come to class prepared to discuss your findings.</p>
<p>Session 3 Lecture/discussion Discrimination and Oppression Racism: Legal Attempts Remedy Racism Sexism: women at work, income disparities Gays and Lesbians; Ageism; People with disabilities</p>	<p>Assignment: Study for Exam</p>
<p>Session 4 Exam chapters 1, 2, 4</p>	<p>Assignment: Read Chapter 5 Poverty in America</p>
<p>Session 5 Lecture/discussion Measuring Poverty Who make up the poor; Income distribution and inequality; tax policy and incomes; Work and Poverty some theoretical formulations about Poverty Strategies Developed to Combat Poverty</p>	<p>Assignment: Read Chapter 6 The Voluntary Sector Today</p>
<p>Session 6</p>	<p>Assignment: Read Chapter 7 Human</p>

<p>Lecture/discussion The forgotten Sector Advancing Social and Distributive Justice Contemporary Nonprofit Human Service Organizations The future of the Voluntary Sector</p>	<p>Service Corporations</p>
<p>Session 7 Lecture/discussion History of the Corporate Sector Corporate Social Responsibility Corporate Influence on Social Welfare Policy The Future of Corporate Involvement in Social Welfare Human Service Corporations New Human Service Markets Implications for health and Human Service Professionals.</p>	<p>Assignment: Read 8 Privatization and Private Practice</p>
<p>Session 8 Lecture/discussion The privatization of health and Human Service The Challenge of Privatization Unions and the Private Sector Private practice</p>	<p>Assignment: Study for Exam chapters 5-8</p>
<p>Session 9 Exam chapters 5,6,7,8</p>	<p>Assignment: Read Chapter 9 The Making of Governmental Policy</p>
<p>Session 10 Lecture/discussion Technical Aspects of the Policy Process A critical Analysis of the Policy Process The Policy Process Implications for Social Welfare</p>	<p>Assignment: Read Chapter 10 Social Insurance Programs and Chapter 11 Public Assistance Programs</p>
<p>Session 11 Lecture/discussion Definition of Social Insurance The Background of social Insurance Key Social Insurance Programs Unemployment Insurance Worker’s Compensation Earned Income Tax Credit Supplemental Security Income Some Assumptions that Underlie Public Assistance; Aid to Families with Dependent Children; The Evolution and</p>	<p>Assignment: Read Chapter 12 The American Health Care System and Chapter 13 Mental Health and Substance Abuse Policy</p>

<p>Transformation of the AFDC Program General Assistance Issues in Welfare Reform Future Prospects for Welfare Reform</p>	
<p>Session 12 Lecture/discussion The Organization of Medical Services The Major Public Health Care Programs The Health Care Crisis AIDS and Health Care Comparative Analysis: Health Care in Canada, Britain, and Israel Mental Health Reform The Community Mental Health Centers Act Deinstitutionalization Parity for Mental Health Care</p>	<p>Assignment: Read Chapter 14 Criminal justice and Chapter 15 Child Welfare Policy</p> <p>Visit E-Library for Global Welfare at http://www.childpolicyinternal.org/ For information on the formulation, analysis, implementation, evaluation of social policies towards children, youth and families.</p>
<p>Session 13 Lecture/discussion History of Criminal Justice The Criminal Justice system The New Penology War on Drugs History of Child Welfare Policy Protective Services for Children, Adoption Emerging Issues in Child Welfare</p>	<p>Assignment: Read Chapter 18 The American Welfare State in International Perspective</p>
<p>Session 14 SET Administration Lecture/discussion The nature of globalization The Importance of International Social Welfare, International Perspectives on the American Welfare State Dynamics of the American Welfare State Planning the Future of the Welfare State</p>	
<p>Session 15 Final Exam</p>	

Suggested Assignments:

1. Exams/Quizzes on Current Policy and how social policy is apparent within service delivery systems (e.g. current eligibility criteria for programs or services).
2. Policy Analysis Paper (use policy framework discussed in class and/or questions below).
 - a. Current social problem you are concerned with
 - b. What are the policies in place to address this concern?
 - c. Are these policies dictated by local, state or federal statute – or combinations?
 - d. What is working; what is not working especially for at risk populations (your critique of the current policy)?
 - e. How long has the current policy been in place? Who supports and who opposes the policy?
 - f. Interview one advocate, legislator regarding their opinion of current policy.
3. Formation of Policy Alternative Paper
 - a. Based on problem/policy identified for analysis paper, use the information obtained to develop a new policy that might remedy a problem identified with current policy.
 - b. Assess and compare this policy with a similar policy of one other country
 - c. What is your policy alternative? Name it and describe where the change will need to occur (local, state, federal)?
 - d. Describe the feasibility of your alternative (Political, Economic and Administrative). Would this policy be feasible in the country identified in (b)
 - e. Describe how the policy meets your policy goals – e.g. social equality, redistribution of resources, social work values and ethics.
 - f. How will you work to implement your alternative? What are the forces that are for/against the policy and how will you use or sway each?
 - g. Describe your personal feelings about this policy alternative and how you view your role as a social worker in the change process.

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