

**The University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work
Foundations of Social Welfare Policy and Services (SOCW 5303.501) Spring 2004**

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Class Time: Monday, 9:00-11:50 AM

Office: Bldg. D, Rm. 6

Office hours: Tuesday, 9-noon, and by appointment

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is designed to provide the student with an introduction to social welfare policy and services. Models for the analysis of social welfare policies and programs are discussed. Students may utilize them in understanding past policy decisions and in analyzing current issues in order to make appropriate decisions. Social welfare policy and program issues will be examined in the course both to illustrate and test the utility of analytic concepts. Importance is placed on understanding current developments in social welfare, especially the neoconservative perspective, and the thrust to “privatize” social welfare. A comparative and international perspective on social welfare is also considered. An important area of concern in the course is the deprived and the oppressed, with dependency and social and economic justice employed as organizing concepts in defining and studying social problems and concomitant social welfare policies and services designed for their remittance. The course identifies various factors affecting the structure and dynamics of social welfare policies and services and the important role of the social work profession (and other human service professions) within that framework. In addition, the course includes content on human diversity, social work values and ethics, and enhancing human well-being.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES: To aid students in understanding:

1. The nature of social welfare policies and policy processes.
2. The values that serve as the underpinning for American society and social welfare policy.
3. The historical influences impinging on contemporary social welfare policies and services.
4. The impact of the current trend to privatize social welfare, and the neo-conservative perspective that under girds it.
5. The role and influence of the social work profession in respect to social welfare policies and services.
6. Policy analysis as a means of evaluating past, present and proposed social policies.
7. The capabilities of welfare states of meeting the needs of dependent populations on a national and international scale.
8. The importance of including a comparative and international perspective on social welfare.

III. FORMAT OF THE COURSE: The role of the instructor in this course is diverse, including such roles as lecturer, facilitator, consultant, and resource person to students. Active participation, thoughtful reading, thinking, and discussion are needed for a successful and productive learning experience.

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS:

Karger, H. J., & Stoesz, D. (2002). *American social welfare policy: A pluralist approach* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

V. GRADING CRITERIA AND ASSIGNMENTS

Expectations for written work: All written assignments must be double-spaced, in 12-point font, with 1 inch margins. Text citations and reference lists must be in correct APA (5th Ed.) format. All sentences should be carefully comprised of a student's own words. Ideas, information, and concepts that originated with any other source must be correctly cited in APA style. Quotations should be used sparingly and must always be noted as such (using APA format). Material that is not correctly cited is considered to be plagiarized and provides grounds for academic discipline. Assignments should be carefully proofed for spelling and grammar.

NOTE: Failure to turn in any part of an assignment by the due date will result in an automatic deduction of 10% for each work day (or part thereof) late (Monday-Friday). Thus, if you do not turn in an assignment when due during class on Monday, the late clock starts running at the end of class. Ten percent of the grade has just been lost. Another 10% will be lost if the paper is not turned in before noon Tuesday. And so on. Assignments may not be submitted via email or fax.

Quizzes (60 points each): Two quizzes will include objective, short answer, and short essay questions covering content from the text and class lectures. Make up exams will be given for emergencies only and at the discretion of the instructor.

Quiz 1: March 8

Quiz 2: April 19

Policy Analysis Paper: (100 points) Using the policy analysis model presented in your textbook Chapter 2 (pp.28-38), evaluate a social welfare policy in your area of interest, experience or expertise. Topics must be approved by the instructor. Evaluate the policy according to the guidelines in the model selected. Your references should include federal or state laws and budgets; federal or state statistics; government documents; academic journal articles; and scholarly books. Newspaper articles and web site references may be incorporated, but should be used sparingly. The paper should be 10-12 pages in length and include a minimum of 8 references. (DUE March 29)

Policy Presentation/Issue Debate (50 points): (April 19 & 26)

- Students, working in teams of 2, will give an in-class presentation on a social policy issue. Teams will sign up for a topic in the second class session.
- Teams should present both the pro and con sides of the issue, with one student representing the "for" argument and one presenting the "against" argument. While the text may provide the basic material, students must go beyond the text for references regarding specific issues. Students may also choose to focus their policy analysis papers on the topics to be presented in class.
- Presentation debates should be from 15-20 minutes, with approximately 5 minutes for questions and discussion. Teams are encouraged to be *creative* in their presentation and to make the presentation accessible to all learning styles.
- Each team must provide the instructor with an outline of its presentation, including additional references used.

Attendance and Participation (30 points): Students are expected to be on time and attend all class sessions, complete reading assignments and be prepared to participate in class discussions and small group activities. **NOTE:** Excessive absences (3 or more) or tardiness exceeding 15

minutes will result in the reduction of a student’s final grade by one letter grade. **To avoid a failing grade due to absences, it is the student’s responsibility to withdraw from the class according to the University guidelines and time frame.**)

Grading Scale: A = 270-300 points (90%-100%) D = 180-209 points (60%-69%)
 B = 240-269 points (80%-89%) Fail = 179 points or lower
 C = 210-239 points (70%-79%)

VI. COURSE OUTLINE: Class session dates, outline of topics and reading assignments

| Session # & Date | Topics | Required Readings |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Session 1: January 26 | Course overview: Introduction to American social welfare policy | Karger & Stoesz (2002), Chapter 1. |
| Session 2: February 2 | Social welfare policy research; The policy-making process. | Karger & Stoesz (2002), Chapters 2 & 8 |
| Session 3: February 9 | Discrimination and stigma in social welfare policy Guest speaker: John Dillard, UTA Social Work Librarian. | Karger & Stoesz (2002), Chapter 4 |
| Session 4: February 16 | Poverty and hunger in the U.S. | Karger & Stoesz (2002), Chapters 5 & 17 |
| Session 5: February 23 | Homelessness and housing policy in the US | Karger & Stoesz (2002), Chapter 16 |
| Session 6: March 1 | Voluntary sector and privatization | Karger & Stoesz (2002), Chapters 6 & 7 |
| Session 7: March 8 | <i>Quiz I</i> | |
| Session 8: March 15 | Spring Break | |
| Session 9: March 22 | Social Insurance; Tax policy & Income distribution | Karger & Stoesz (2002), Chapters 9 & 10 |
| Session 10: March 29 | Public assistance; Child welfare policy. <i>Policy analysis papers due.</i> | Karger & Stoesz (2002), Chapters 11 & 15 |
| Session 11: April 5 | Health, Mental health and substance abuse policy: | Karger & Stoesz (2002), Chapters 12 & 13 |
| Session 12: April 12 | International perspectives/ Social development | Karger & Stoesz (2002), Chapter 18 |
| Session 13: April 19 | <i>Quiz 2</i> | |
| Session 14: April 26 | Team presentations/ Issue debates | |
| Session 15: May 3 | Team presentations/ Issue debates; Course wrap-up | |

Example List of Debate Topics

- Capitalism is at the root of most, if not all, social problems in the United States.

- The “digital divide” is as important an issue as the unequal distribution of wealth in the United States.
- The distribution of wealth and income in the United States results is basically fair.
- Present policies to eliminate racial or ethnic discrimination are not slowly working and should be changed.
- Present policies to eliminate sexual discrimination are not working and should be changed.
- Present policies to eliminate discrimination against gays, lesbians and transgendered people are not working and should be changed.
- The culture of poverty explanation for poverty is the best explanation for long-term, persistent poverty in the United States.
- More effort should be made to help the working poor, as opposed to the nonworking poor.
- Religious organizations should play a larger role in combating social ills than government programs.
- Privatization of human services programs is the way policy should be moving.
- Corporate welfare should be drastically cut back or eliminated.
- The current governmental process in the United States is controlled by special interest groups.
- The current tax system promotes the common good.
- Social security should be privatized to allow people to make their own investment decisions for their retirement.
- Welfare dependency is a serious problem, even after welfare reform.
- The national government should run income assistance programs, not the states.
- Health care in the United States should be run more like it is in Canada or Britain.
- Substance abuse should be decriminalized.
- Society should leave the family alone—parents know best how to rear their children.
- Homelessness is basically a mental health issue.
- Hunger is not as large a problem in the United States as obesity is.
- The American system of human services is as good as what is going on in other countries.
- Etc., etc.

Additional Important Information

Student Support Services: The University supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. They include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-6107 for more information / appropriate referrals.

Academic Honesty: It is the philosophy of the University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion for the University.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. (Regents Rules and Regulations, Part one, Chapter VI, Section 3, Subsection 3.2, Subdivision 3.22).

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 93112-The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens. As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty at the beginning of the semester and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels.

Bomb Threats: If anyone is tempted to call in a bomb threat, be aware that UTA will attempt to trace the phone call and prosecute all responsible parties. Every effort will be made to avoid cancellation of presentations/tests caused by bomb threats. Unannounced alternate sites will be available for these classes. Your instructor will make you aware of alternate class sites in the event that your classroom is not available.