



SASS 470. SOCIAL POLICY

Instructor

Program

Semester

Office Phone:

Office location:

Office hours:

Class:

Email:

CN:

Room:

Mailing Address:

CASE/Mandel School

10900 Euclid Avenue

Cleveland, OH 44106-7164

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This first semester foundation policy course examines the American social welfare system in a global context. It examines the philosophical, historical, and socio/economic foundations of social welfare and the evolution of social policy and the social work profession in the United States. It then focuses on the problems of poverty and discrimination and analyzes the adequacy and effectiveness of policies and resulting programs designed to address those problems. Consideration is given to the principles of economic and social justice along with other values of the social work profession in this analysis. The connections between social policy and social work practices are also emphasized.

The course then addresses social policy in an interdependent world. Attention is given to cross-national comparisons of social policies designed to prevent and alleviate poverty and social exclusion. Human rights issues and the programs of international organizations designed to promote and protect human rights are discussed. Finally, social work's roles in the field of human rights, both at home and abroad, are considered.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- 1) understand the functions and structure of social welfare within contemporary American society; (EPAAS Program Objective 5 and EPAAS content area 4.4).**

Ability A: Think Critically

Ability B: Advocate for Social Justice

2) demonstrate knowledge of how the dynamic interaction of ideas, socio/economic trends, events, and individuals have influenced the historical development of social welfare policy and the social work profession; (EPAAS Program Objective 5, and EPAAS Content Areas 4.2 and 4.4).

Ability A: Communicate Effectively

Ability B: Advocate for Social Justice

Ability C: Think Critically

3) analyze and critique the policies and programs designed to address problems of poverty and discrimination in American society; (EPAAS Program Objectives 1, 4 & M6, and Content Areas 4.7 & 4.5).

Ability A: Think Critically

Ability B: Communicate Effectively

Ability C: Value a Diverse World

Ability D: Integrate Social Work Values & Ethics

4) apply an understanding of social theory, poverty research, and ethical reasoning to the analysis of a substantive piece of social policy; (EPAAS Program Objectives 1, 8 & 10, and Content Areas 4.2 & 4.4)

Ability A: Think Critically

Ability B: Communicate Effectively

5) identify and utilize linkages between social welfare policy and social work practice; (EPAAS Program Objectives 1, & 8 and Content Area 4.4).

Ability A: Think Critically

Ability B: Communicate Effectively

Ability C: Advocate for Social Justice

Ability D: Integrate Social Work Values & Ethics

6) appreciate and understand the value of cross-national comparisons in the critique of social policies and programs; (EPAAS Program Objective 8, and Content Areas 4.2 & 4.4).

Ability A: Think Critically

Ability B: Value a Diverse World

7) appreciate and understand the global context of Human Rights issues and actions; (EPAAS Program Objectives 1 & 4, and Content Areas 4.1, 4.2 & 4.4).

Ability A: Think Critically

Ability B: Value a Diverse World

8) understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice. (EPAAS Program Objectives 4 & M6, and Content Areas 4.7, 4.1 and 4.2)

Ability A: Advocate for Social Justice

Ability B: Think Critically

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Students who miss more than 20% of class meetings, for any reason, will not be eligible to receive credit for the course and will be required to withdraw from it. In the Intensive Weekend program, students may not miss more than one day; in the full-time program, students may not miss more than three classes. Instructors may permit exceptions at their discretion and may require makeup assignments for any amount of time missed from class.

Conformity to MSASS policies as they pertain to the Professional Code of Conduct, Plagiarism, and Incompletes as stated in the MSASS Student Manual.

➤ Professional Code of Conduct – Failure to meet generally accepted standards of professional conduct, personal integrity or emotional stability requisite for professional practice, as well as inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward colleagues, faculty, or staff (at school or field placement) will be the basis for nonacademic termination policies.

➤ Plagiarism – The submission of work done by another with the intent that it be viewed and evaluated as one's own. Thus, copying on an examination, turning in a term paper or homework assignment done by someone else, intentionally using or presenting false data, and making extensive use of sources without acknowledging them are all interpreted as acts of plagiarism.

➤ Incompletes – A grade of Incomplete is given at the end of the semester only when a student has discussed the matter with his/her instructor and there are extenuating circumstances that clearly justify an extension beyond the requirements established for the other students in the class.

STATEMENT ON DISABILITY

Academic accommodations are available to students with documented disabilities. In order to access the accommodations for which you may be qualified, please register with the office of Disability Resources (ESS, Sears 470). The staff there will verify your need for specific accommodations and provide you with a memo to inform me of your needs. Once you have received this memo, please make an appointment to see me privately to discuss your needs. Please be aware that any needed

accommodations cannot be implemented retroactively; therefore timely notification of your needs is in your best interest.

GRADING POLICY

Grade	Points	Meaning	Explanation
A	4	Outstanding/Superior	Exceptional performance; consistently exceeds expectations
A-	3.7	Excellent	Strong performance; often exceeds expectations
B+	3.3	Very Good	Consistently meets and occasionally exceeds expectations
B	3	Good	Meets expectations
B-	2.7	Somewhat Below Expectations	Sometimes falls short of expectations
C+	2.3	Often Below Expectations	Often falls short of expectations
C	2	Below Expectations	Unevenness or inconsistent in grasp of content and experience
C-	1.7	Well Below Expectations	Very inconsistent in grasp of content and experience
F	0	Fail	Complete lack of grasp of content and experience; does not meet minimal expectations
I	0	Incomplete	Automatically becomes an “F” by instructor if work is not completed within the specified time period
W	0		Official withdrawal

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS

The course evaluation is designed to assess the quality of the course, the instruction, and the effect that both had on your learning. Evaluations need to be completed within a two-week time frame: one week prior to and one week after the close of classes. The link for completing evaluations is as follows: <https://its-services.case.edu/course-evals/evaluate>.

The evaluation serves several important functions. Personally, it allows you to reflect on the course and how it impacted your learning. Educationally, it allows the Curriculum Committee to assess the quality of the course in the overall programming for social work practice. Administratively, faculty use the feedback to improve instruction. Therefore, it plays a significant role in the school, and your full and careful attention is appreciated.

COURSE OUTLINE

- Module I:* Social Welfare: Contemporary Issues and Contextual Influences
- Module II:* Policy Analysis and Social Action
- Module III:* Social Policy in an Interdependent World

MODULE I

SOCIAL WELFARE: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES AND CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES

Content

A. Overview of American Social Welfare Today

1. Conceptions of Social Welfare
 - Residual
 - Institutional
2. Functions of Social Welfare
 - Income Support
 - 1) Demogrants
 - 2) Social insurance
 - 3) Public assistance
 - Personal Social Services
 - 1) Services designed to strengthen and repair family and individual functioning
 - 2) Services designed to provide substitute care
 - 3) Rehabilitation for physically and mentally disabled
 - 4) Services designed for socialization and development of individuals, families, and groups
 - 5) Information, advice, and referral services
 - Community Development and Environmental Change
3. Organization of Social Services
 - Criteria
 - 1) Auspice – Who takes responsibility for providing the service?
 - 2) Financing – Who pays the bill?
 - Types
 - 1) Governmental (Federal, State, Local)
 - 2) Non-profit/voluntary (religious, secular)
 - 3) Self-help organizations
 - 4) Other (proprietary, private practice, etc.)
4. Trends and Directions in Service Provision
 - 1) Emphasis on community and home based services (decline of institutionalization)
 - 2) Focus on caregiving and support of family caregivers

3) Mix of hard and soft services (social utilities and case services)

B. Current Social Policy Issues

1. The Minimum Wage
2. Protective Services
3. Privatization of Income Support

(These are examples of issues that can be determined by the instructor based on current events)

C. Foundations of American Social Welfare

1. Ideas about Human Rights and Social Obligations
 - Judeo-Christian Ethics
 - Natural Rights Individualism
 - Economic Individualism
2. Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Economic and Social Theories
 - Social Darwinism (Spencer and Sumner)
 - Socialism (Marxian and non-Marxian)
 - Pragmatism (James and Dewey)
 - The New Economics (Veblen and Keynes)
 - Liberalism (Liberal and Conservative Branches)

D. Historical Stages of Development

1. Mutual Aid
2. Poor Law (from Elizabeth I to AFDC and TANF)
3. Voluntary Humanitarianism
4. Social Security
5. The Welfare State
6. The Service Society

E. Twentieth Century: Evolution of Social Policy and the Social Work Profession

1. The Progressive Era and Social Reform
 - Public Health and Child Labor Law
 - Jane Addams and the Settlement House Movement
2. The New Deal and Social Security
 - A New Role for Government in Social Welfare
 - Harry Hopkins and Title II of the SSA

3. The War on Poverty and the Civil Rights Movement
 - The Rediscovery of Poverty and Discrimination
 - Whitney Young and Social Work's Role in Civil Rights

Resources

Readings:

Ehrenreich, B. (2001). *Nickel and dimed: On (not) getting by in America*. New York: Owl Books.

Shipler, David K. (2005). *The working poor*. New York: Vintage Books.

Karger, J. J., & Stoesz, D. (2005). *American social welfare policy: A pluralist approach (5th ed.)*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. (chapter 1)

Van Wormer, K. (2003). *Social welfare: A world view*. Chicago: Nelson Hall. (chapters 1-4).

Van Wormer, K. (2006). *Introduction to social welfare and social work: The U.S. in global perspective*. Belmont, CA: Thompson/Brooks and Cole.

Media:

Women at Hull House (Progressive Era)
Eyes on the Prize (Civil Rights Movement)

Assignments

- 1) History and philosophy take home exam
- or**
- 2) Think piece about working poor and minimum wage

MODULE II

POLICY ANALYSIS AND SOCIAL ACTION

Content

A. Analyzing Social Policy

1. Purpose of Policy Analysis
2. Approaches to Policy Analysis
 - Empirical Approach
 - Evaluative Approach
 - Normative Approach
3. Models of Policy Analysis
 - Answering Questions
 - Making Choices
 - Evaluating Alternatives

B. Poverty and Income Support: Policy Options

1. Poverty Causes and Measures
 - Individually Based Theories
 - Culturally Based Theories
 - Structurally Based Theories
2. Poverty Policy in the United States
 - The Social Security Act
 - .. Title II – Old Age Survivors and Disability Insurance
 - .. Title IV – Grants to states for services to needy families with children and child welfare services
 - .. Title XVI – Supplemental Security Income
 - .. Title XVIII – Medicare
 - .. Title XIX – Medicaid
 - .. Title XX – Social Service Block Grants
 - .. Title XXI – State Children’s Health Insurance Program
 - The Food Stamp Act
 - The Earned Income Tax Credit Legislation
 - The Economic Opportunity Act
 - The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act
 - The House Choice Voucher Program
 - Community Development Block Grants

- Public and Indian Housing (PIH) Grants
3. Analyzing Income Support Policy
 - Benefits
 - Eligibility
 - Financing
 - Administration

C. Diversity and Discrimination: Policy Options

1. Discrimination and Social Exclusion: Definitions and Dimensions
 - Economic Dimension
 - Educational Dimension
 - Social Dimension
2. Problems of Structural Inequality
 - Race, Politics and Affirmative Action
 - Gender and the Feminization of Poverty
 - Class and Income Distribution
3. Civil Rights Policy
 - Civil Rights Act
 - Voting Rights Act
 - American Disabilities Act
4. Analyzing Civil Rights Policy
 - Costs and Benefits
 - Adequacy
 - Effectiveness

D. Connecting Social Work Practice and Social Policy

1. The Policy Context of Social Work Practice
 - Determines *what* can be done
 - Determines *how* it can be done
 - Determines *how much* can be done
2. Policy Responsibilities for Social Workers
 - Problem Identification
 - Policy Development
 - Policy Advocacy
3. Barriers to Social Work: Advocacy Role

- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of power
- Lack of commitment
- Conflicts between the professional and the organization

4. Advocacy for Policy Change

- Informing policy makers
- Building public support
- Empowering clients

Resources

Readings:

Karger & Stoesz: Chapters 4, 5, 10, and 11

Van Wormer: Chapters 5 and 10

Exercises:

1. Understanding poverty
2. Questions about poverty interventions (see page 12)

Assignments

1. Social Policy Debate (see pages 13-14)

OR

2. Testimony on Social Policy

UNDERSTANDING POVERTY

Question: Where would you set the poverty line?

Using the information from the text or as assigned by the instructor, develop a plan to determine at what level you think the poverty line should be set for a family of four – a woman and her three children, ages 2, 6, and 13. To determine this, you must make a decision about “absolute” vs. “relative” poverty, whether people spend their money with absolute efficiency, what things should society provide for people as a right or out of common decency, etc. Then develop an actual budget (monthly and yearly amounts) covering all that you think that this family needs to live on.

As you make these decisions, the most important thing is to get actual data. To set the food budget for example, you should actually develop a menu for one week and go to the store and price all the items on the menu. In your report, describe the criteria you used for each budget item (for example, for housing, should each child have a bedroom? Is air conditioning necessary?), the data collection procedure, the results, the total yearly level at which you would set the poverty line, and any concluding comments you care to make. Make sure to document the source(s) you use to cost out each budget item.

After you have completed the assignment, answer the following questions:

- How does your poverty line compare to the official U.S. poverty line?
- How would your poverty line affect official poverty data compiled by the U.S. Census?
- What ideology does your poverty line reflect – liberal, conservative, or radical?
- What hourly wage will raise a single-parent family above the poverty level? How does that compare to the current minimum wage?

Question: Why do you think the poor are poor? (from your perspective)

There is no consensus on what causes poverty. Consequently, there is no agreement concerning what to do about it. Moreover, what you believe about poverty is heavily influenced by your political perspective, i.e., liberal, neoliberal, neoconservative and conservative viewpoints.

Discuss key concepts from liberal, neoliberal, neoconservative and conservative theories of poverty. Next, develop your own beginning theoretical approach to poverty that builds on thinking from these theory bases. After you have articulated your theory of poverty, discuss how you would use this theory to develop a new approach to ending poverty.

Question: What have you learned from completing this assignment?

To what extent have you expanded or changed your views on poverty? Discuss implications of your current views for your professional social work practice.

Task: Op-Ed or Letter to an Elected Official

Write and submit an “op-ed” to the editor of a major newspaper or write a letter to an elected official who represents you at the federal or state level, briefly summarizing what you have learned from this assignment and identifying specific actions that can/should be taken so that current poverty policy is in line with what you believe about poverty. Provide a copy of your op-ed or letter with the paper.

Questions about Poverty Interventions

You are a group of social workers:

1. Working with individuals and families who are poor. What types of programs and strategies would you use to intervene and assist clients in getting out of poverty?
2. Working in community development in inner city neighborhoods. What types of programs and strategies would you use to intervene and change the culture of poverty?
3. Working in an advocacy role with the National Association of Social Workers or other state or national advocacy organizations. What types of policies would you prepare to deal with regarding problems of poverty in the U.S.A.?

MODULE III

SOCIAL POLICY IN AN INTERDEPENDENT WORLD

Content

A. Lessons from Abroad: Adapting International Social Welfare Innovations

1. Comparative Framework of Policy Analysis
 - Societal Context
 - Social Policy Examination
 - Social Policy Comparison
 - Cross National Similarities and Differences
 - Differential Impact
2. Examples
 - Scandinavian Poverty Prevention Policies
 - British Personal Social Service Programs

B. International Organizations in Social Welfare

1. The United Nations
2. International Non-Government Organizations

C. Human Rights Issues and Responses

1. Human Rights Violations in a Global Society
 - Human Slavery in the United States and around the World
 - Violations of Civil and Political Rights
 - Violations of Economic and Social Rights
2. The International Bill of Human Rights
 - Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
 - International Covenants on Human Rights (1976)
3. Human Diversity and Human Rights
 - Declaration and international convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination (1963-68)
 - Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (1981)
4. Social Work's Role in Promoting and Protecting Human Rights

- Human Rights and Social Work Ethics
- Human Rights and Vulnerable Populations
- Human Rights Dilemmas for Social Workers

D. Human Migration in the 21st Century

1. Immigrants: Legal and Illegal
 - The Immigration Process
 - Transferable Human Capital
 - Implications for Human Services
2. The state of the world's refugees
 - Defending Refugee Rights
 - Return and Reintegration
 - Statelessness and Citizenship
3. Social work's role in immigrant relocation and refugee resettlement
 - Adjustment to receiving country
 - Social and health services
 - Advocacy to prevent marginalization

E. Globalization and the Future of Social Policy

1. Realities of Global Interdependence
2. Social and Sustainable Development
3. Human Services and the Service Society
4. What Role for Social Work

Resources

Readings:

Karger & Stoesz: Chapter 18

Van Wormer: Chapters 10 and 11

Hokenstad, M. C., & Midgley, J. (2004). *Lessons from Abroad: Adapting International Social Welfare Innovations*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.

Reichart, E. (2006). *Understanding human rights: An exercise book*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Exercises

Human Rights Dilemmas

Assignments

Social Policy Analysis

OR

Comparative Social Policy Analysis