

**The University of Tennessee College of Social Work Nashville Campus**  
SW 551- Seminar in Social Welfare Policy: Social and Economic Planning  
Spring, 2003

Instructor: Rod Ellis, Ph.D.

Class time: Tuesday 5:30 - 8:30 P.M.

Office Hours: Tuesday, 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

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**Code of Conduct:**

It is the student's responsibility to have read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct code that is in the College of Social Work MSSW Handbook ([www.csw.utk.edu](http://www.csw.utk.edu)).

**The Honor Statement:**

An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity. (*Hilltopics 2002*).

**Disability :**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

**Course Description**

This course focuses on major legislation impacting children, youth and families, examined in the context of social work policy practice. It builds upon the foundation course in social welfare policy, and enables students to use an action-based advocacy approach to provide policy-informed services and to participate in policy implementation and change. The course allows students the opportunity to view problems and issues in the context of the community. Prerequisite: completion of the foundation courses, enrollment in the MCP Certificate Program, or consent of the instructor.

**Course Objectives**

1. Understand the historical, economic, social, and political forces that shape policies on the federal, state, local, and provider levels;
2. Critically assess the complex organizational, financing, and regulation of the current social and economic systems;
3. Critically assess technological and administrative elements in social and economic systems;

4. Apply the NASW Code of Ethics to value conflicts inherent in the formulation of policy related to social and economic systems, particularly as it relates to social and economic justice.
5. Comprehend the relationship between policy and the strengths and needs of specific oppressed groups, available financing for services, and access to issues that hinder service delivery to unserved, under-served, and over-represented populations;
6. Understand the import of consumer perspectives on policies, including consumer rights groups, self-help movements, and advocacy programs;
7. Understand the implications of policies related to the social and economic systems for direct social work practice and program management;
8. Demonstrate policy practice and analysis skills by evaluation of contemporary social welfare and economic policy. Evaluation should include the following elements: rights of consumers, community safety, financing issues, and privatization;
9. Develop a capacity for evaluating proposals of planned change through the systematic application of analytic tools.

### **Course Text and Readings**

Ellis, R.A. (2002). Impacting social policy: A practitioner's guide to analysis and action. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks Cole/Wadsworth.

Additional readings will be identified students as they progress through the stages of analysis and action. A summary of these readings will be provided to the instructor in the form of an annotated bibliography as a portion of the semester's grade.

### **Methods of Instruction**

This course will be taught primarily as a laboratory experience. Students will be lead through the process of analysis and action with regard to several key policy issues related to social and economic systems. Introductory material will be provided through in-class lectures by the instructor. Students will then work in small groups and individually to complete an analysis and action plan for change in the policy area of their choice. Each group's work will be documented through Practitioner's Policy Analysis Worksheets, class presentations, a Policy Document, and a Brief Written Summary. The Worksheets are included at the end of each chapter. They must be completed and submitted by each individual student (students are permitted to photocopy the pages and use the copies to submit). Presentations will be done by groups and will summarize the results of the analysis and action plan. The Brief Written Summary will be a short (no more than five page) summary of the semester's activities and experiences completed by each student. Further instructions will be given for each project during class sessions.

*Grading:* Final grades will be calculated based on the following percentages: (page numbers given are guidelines)

1. Practitioner's Policy Analysis Worksheets- 25%
2. Class presentation- 25%
3. Brief Written Summary- 25%
4. Annotated Bibliography- 25%

### Grading Scale

A = 90-100  
B+= 87-89  
B= 80-86  
C+= 77-79  
C= 70-76  
D+= 67-69  
D= 60-66  
F= <60

### **Class Policies**

1. Students are expected to attend class regularly. They are expected to arrive on time and to remain in class until the completion of the class period. Any student missing more than 2 classes will receive a failing grade.
2. Incompletes will be given only according to the rules specified in the University of Tennessee Catalogue. Please refer to the catalogue for additional information.
3. All written assignments are due at the beginning of the class period of the date specified on the course outline. Assignments received after that time will be marked down significantly.
4. Assignments are to be completed correctly at the time of submission. The instructor will be available to discuss papers and group assignments until one week prior to their due date. After that no assistance will be given. No papers or assignments may be resubmitted once a grade has been given.
5. Cheating and/or plagiarizing will not be tolerated. Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will be subject to the disciplinary procedures outlined in the UT Student Handbook.

6. University policy regarding religious holidays will be observed. As stated by the UT student handbook, any student may request to be excused from class to observe a religious day from his/her faith.

## **Course Outline**

### **Class 1- January 14, 2003- Syllabus and introduction to the course**

Syllabus

Introduction to social and economic development

Introduction to Practitioner's Policy Analysis

Identification of policy areas

Division into small groups for analysis

#### **Readings for next class:**

Ellis, Chapter 1: Social Policy: Definitions and Descriptions &  
Chapter 2: Identifying Social Problems.

### **Class 2- January 21, 2003- Problem Identification**

Finish group identification process

Exercises to identify problems

*Policy Practice Seminar-* Conducting the literature review for policy analysis

*Policy Laboratory-* Developing the problem statement

#### **Readings for next class:**

Ellis (2002)- Chapter 3: Practitioner's Historical Review  
Readings identified by students for annotated bibliography.

### **Class3- January 28, 2003- Historical Review**

The history of legislation and case law

Introduction to historical analysis

*Policy Practice Seminar-* Review of literature identified for bibliography

*Policy Laboratory-* Completing the historical review.

Worksheets from Chapter 2 due.

#### **Readings for next week:**

Ellis (2002)- Chapter 4: Practitioner's Review of Norms and Values  
Readings identified by students for annotated bibliography.

### **Class 4- February 4, 2003- Normative Review**

Identifying norms and values in the population

Techniques to determining how norms influence policies

Discussion of identified literature

*Policy Practice Seminar-* Using political discourse.

*Policy Laboratory*- Completing the Normative Review  
Worksheets from Chapter 3 due.

**Readings for next class:**

Ellis (2002)- Chapter 5: Practitioner's Political Review  
Readings identified by students for annotated bibliography.

Class 5- February 11, 2003- Political Review

Assessing the political reality  
Identification of groups and loyalties  
Strategies for dealing with various groups  
*Policy Practice Seminar*- Working with lobbyists  
*Policy Laboratory*- Completing the Political Review  
Worksheets from Chapter 4 due.

**Readings for next class:**

Ellis (2002)- Chapter 6: Practitioner's Delivery System Review  
Readings identified by students for annotated bibliography

Class 6- February 18, 2003- Delivery System Review

Identifying and mapping the delivery system  
Identifying problems in the delivery system  
Techniques for solving problems in the delivery system  
*Policy Practice Seminar*- Mapping the delivery system  
*Policy Laboratory*- Competing the Delivery System Review  
Worksheets from Chapter 5 due

**Readings for next class:**

Ellis (2002)- Chapter 7: Practitioner's Review of Alternative Solutions  
Readings identified by students for annotated bibliography

Class 7- February 25, 2003- Review of Alternatives

Identifying alternatives  
Evaluating alternatives  
*Policy Practice Seminar*- Developing a system for assessing alternatives  
*Policy Laboratory*- Completing the Review of Alternatives  
Worksheets from Chapter 6 due

**Readings for next class:**

Ellis (2002)- Chapter 8: Practitioner's Review of Professional Analyses  
Readings identified by students for annotated bibliography

Class 8- March 4, 2003- Review of Professional Analyses

Understanding cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analysis  
Understanding outcome evaluation in a policy setting.  
Other forms of analysis.  
*Policy Practice Seminar*- Identifying and developing analyses  
*Policy Laboratory*- Completing the Review of Professional Analyses  
Worksheets from Chapter 7 due

**Readings for next class:**

Ellis (2002)- Chapter 9: Practitioner's Interaction Review  
Readings identified by students for annotated bibliography

Class 9- March 11, 2003- Interaction Review

Anticipating unanticipated consequences

Applying techniques of forecasting

*Policy Practice Seminar- Systems, Chaos, and Social Policy*

*Policy Laboratory- Completing the Interaction Review*

Worksheets from Chapter 8 due

**Readings for next class:**

Ellis (2002)- Chapter 10: Summarizing the Analysis

Readings identified by students for annotated bibliography

March 18, 2003- SPRING BREAK

Class 10- March 25, 2003- Class Laboratory

Class 11- April 1, 2003-Summarizing the Analysis

Deciding what form of policy documents you will need

Determining who will prepare the documents

Circulating the documents

Worksheets from Chapter 9 due

*Policy Practice Seminar- Writing PSA's and newspaper articles*

*Children's Policy Laboratory- Completing the summary*

**Readings for next class:**

Ellis (2002)- Chapter 11: Taking Action

Readings identified by students for annotated bibliography

Class 12- April 8, 2003- Planning and Taking Action

Developing a plan for promoting change

Recruiting allies

**ACTION!**

*Policy Practice Seminar- Writing a strategic plan*

*Children's Policy Laboratory- Completing the action plan*

Class 13- April 15, 2003- Workbook completion seminar

Class 14- April 22, 2003- Group presentations

Brief Written Summary and Annotated Bibliography due

Class 15- April 29, 2003- Group presentations

Final Examination- May 6, 2003