

# THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

## SW 551 – Seminar in Social Welfare Policy: Aging and Health Policy Spring, 2003

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**Office Hours: Tuesday: 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.; 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

### **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).

### **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 CSW MSSW handbook ([www.csw.utk.edu](http://www.csw.utk.edu)).

### **Disability Accommodations**

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

### **Course Description**

The aging population within the United States and throughout the world is growing faster than the overall total population, and there is a demographic graying of the planet. In America alone, the percentage of Americans 65 years of age and older has more than tripled, and this enormous growth of older people will continue well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Accordingly, increasing attention is being given to the problems of the elderly, social policies, and social and economic costs related to this population.

The course is designed to analyze the major social and economic policy areas affecting the elderly and health care. The social benefits and economic costs relative to both the elderly and the larger society will also be examined within a systems context as well as the implications of this aging phenomenon for society, the social work profession, and the health care industry. Alternate policy strategies are presented and examined in an attempt to deal with the radical social changes, which accompany an aging society.

This course provides an opportunity for the advanced student to gain a deeper understanding of the major public and economic policies affecting the aged and health care. It examines the social, political, and economic antecedents and consequences of current policies.

This course focuses on major legislation impacting the elderly 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 informed policy 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.

### **Course Rationale**

Contemporary issues facing America are the financing and distribution of aging and health policies and related policy development and implementation in these areas. Changes in aging and health care policies are likely to occur in response to cost containment issues, managed care, changing demographics, and market globalization. This course will focus on an analysis of current federal and state health policies as related to the aging population. The impact of these policies on oppressed, marginalized, and vulnerable populations will be examined. Ethical considerations in the development and implementation of aging and health policies and programs will be emphasized.

### **Course Objectives**

Through class discussions and exercises, written assignments, and other activities as deemed necessary, upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the historical, economic, social, and political forces that shape policies on the federal, state, local, and provider levels.
2. Assess the major social/economic conditions and problems that affect the elderly in the United States.
3. Critically assess the complex organizational, financing, and regulations of the current health care delivery system as they relate to an aging population.
4. Apply the NASW Code of ethics and other ethical and value frameworks to value and ethical conflicts inherent in aging and health care policy formulation.
5. Comprehend the relationship between aging and health policy, aging and health services financing, and access to aging and health services that hinder service delivery to unserved and underserved populations.
6. Understand the importance of consumer perspectives on health policies including patient rights, self-help movements, and advocacy programs.
7. Understand the implications of aging and health policies for social work practice and program management.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of contemporary policy developments related to cost containment, ethical and service priorities, service access, and diversity.
9. Demonstrate skill in policy practice activities.

## **Required Texts**

- Aitken, L. & Griffin, G. (1996). Gender issues in elder abuse. London: Sage.
- Keigher, S., Fortune, A, & Witkin, S. (2000). Aging and Social Work: The Changing Landscapes. Washington, D.C.: NASW Press.
- Koff, T.H. & Park, R.W. (1999). Aging Public Policy: Bonding the Generations. Amytyville, N.Y.: Baywood Publishing.

## **Recommended Texts:**

- Braun, K., Pietsch, J., & Blanchette, P. (2000) Cultural issues in end-of-life decision making. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Herr, S. & Weber, G. (1999) Aging rights and quality of life. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Kapp, M. ( 1999) Geriatrics and the law. New York: Springer.
- Saltz, C. (1997) Social work response to the White House Conference on Aging. New York: Haworth.

## **Course Expectations and Assignments**

This course will be conducted as a graduate seminar. Students are expected to be responsible for their own learning and to be in attendance at every meeting. Students are expected to be positively engaged in the learning process within the seminar and to read the required readings for each class. Grading will be based on the guidelines listed below:

Structured Policy Debate	20%
Policy Presentation	35%
Policy Practice Activity and Report	35%
Class Participation	10%

### **Structured Policy Debate**

With a classmate, select a relevant contemporary issue and formulate a pro and con debate for class presentation. The topic must pertain to one of the class units and will be part of the formal class lecture for that class period. The instructor and your cohort will evaluate you on your understanding of the topic, your knowledge of the issues surrounding the topic, and the organization and clarity of your presentation. Submit your topic by class two.

### **Due date: To be assigned**

### **Policy Practice Activity and Report**

Students will choose a bill introduced in either the Tennessee Legislature or Congress. Students will provide policy practice support to this bill and will work in organized groups. The report might include all or some of the following: organize a letter writing campaign, development or expansion of an alert network, development of position papers, providing testimony, conduct

presentations at community meetings, tracking legislative activity, or providing media relations support. At the end of the project, the group will write a policy practice description paper for each bill the class provided support on this semester. These papers are designed to be group projects and should include the following content:

1. Describe the bill that is being introduced into the legislature. What is its purpose; i.e. what does it intend to do? What is the target population the legislation will address? How will it impact on the profession? How will it impact on vulnerable populations? Is the group supporting or opposing the bill?
2. Describe the overall lobbying strategy developed by the team to provide support or opposition to the bill. Provide specifics. How was the plan developed? Who were the resource people used to develop the plan? What type of assistance did they provide? What activities did the group engage in? Identify the major roles of each team member. How were the roles assigned?
3. Describe what resources were used to develop your position.
4. Describe the impact of the lobbying strategy. Did it accomplish what it was intended to accomplish? Evaluate effective and ineffective techniques (i.e. what worked, what didn't work, and why). What actions would you repeat again and what would you change? Provide a rationale for your response.
5. Describe the potential for future lobbying work in this area. Is there more to work on in this area? What future strategies might be employed?

Use references from the required readings and other sources to support your position. Provide actual examples of all techniques and strategies used (copies of letters, position papers, etc). The paper should be 15+ pages with no spelling or grammar errors. Use APA style and format. It is expected that the paper be a group project. All members of the group should participate equally in its development.

**Due Date: April 8**

### **Policy Presentation**

Students in this course will be responsible for a class presentation on a major aging or health social policy. Possible topics are Income Security/Pensions, Long Term Care, Managed Care, Caregiving Issues, Health Care for the Medically Fragile, HIV/AIDS, Right to Die, Assisted Suicide, Developmentally Disabled Older Adults, Housing, or Health Care Rationing, to name but a few topic areas. However, you are free to choose and negotiate the topic area with me.

Students will be required to critically examine the substantive area/pertinent policies selected for presentation along the following dimensions: 1) historical perspective; 2) value premises, 3) target population; 4) structural arrangements; 5) local service delivery systems, and 6) current concerns. Additionally, students will be required to identify other pertinent legislation, which may have a bearing on the target population. Attention should be given to gaps in services and implications for social work practice. Ethical considerations and the policy's impact on vulnerable populations should be discussed.

Students will be required to submit an annotated bibliography, and a tentative presentation outline by mid-semester.

Students are encouraged to submit a comprehensive outline on their topic, including the annotated bibliography, to seminar participants. Additional handouts, visuals, videos, etc. are encouraged as part of the class presentation.

Presentations should be 30 - 40 minutes in length.

**Due Date: April 15 & April 22**

### **Course Outline**

The course will examine the topics listed below on the specified dates. Revisions to this list will be announced in class. Readings are to be completed before the scheduled class session.

**Week 1: January 14**

**Course Introduction: An overview of policy and advocacy practice**

Koff & Park, Chapter 1: Constitutional Foundations; Chapter 2 Making Policy in the United States

**Week 2: January 21**

**The History of Aging and Health Policy**

Koff, & Park, Chapter 3: Historical Background to Aging Policy

Moniz C. & Gorin, S. (2003). Health and health care policy: A social work perspective. Chapter 1: Efforts to Establish National Health Insurance: 1865-1946; Chapter 2: The Emergence of Employment Based Insurance and Managed Care: 1943-present.

**Week 3: January 28**

**Aging Policy Development: The Older Americans Act, The Federal Council on the Aging, The White House Conference on Aging**

Koff & Park, Chapter 4: The Aging Network; Chapter 5: Interest and Advisory Groups  
Keigher, Fortune, & Witkin: Chapter 8 : The Aging of America and the Older Americans Act

**Week 4: February 4**

**Social Security and Retirement**

Koff & Park, Chapter 6: Social Security, Chapter 9: Employment and Retirement

Keigher, Fortune, & Witkin: Chapter 3: Saving Social Security and Medicare

### **Week 5: February 11**

#### **Health and Long Term Care**

##### **Required**

Koff & Park: Chapter 7: Health Care Policies, Chapter 8: Coordinated Systems of Chronic Care

##### **Suggested**

Keigher, Fortune, & Witkin: Chapter 9: The Effect of Medicaid Coverage on Use of Health Services by Low-Income Elderly People; Chapter 12: The Effects of Functional Disability on Service Utilization: Implications for Long-Term Care; Chapter 14: Preparation for Oncology Settings: What Hospice Social Workers Say they Need; Chapter 18: Adequacy of Discharge Plans and Rehospitalization among Hospitalized Dementia Patients; Chapter 19: Adequacy of Home Care and Hospital Readmission for Elderly Congestive Heart Failure Patients; Chapter 22: HIV -Related Stigma in a Sample of HIV- Affected Older Female African American Caregivers; Chapter 24: Choosing an Adult Foster Home or a Nursing Home: Resident's Perceptions About Decision Making and Control; Chapter 25: The Social Worker in the Emerging Field of Home Health Care.

### **Week 6: February 18**

#### **Housing and Social Services**

Koff & Park: Chapter 10: Housing and Social Services

Keigher, Fortune, & Witkin: Chapter 10: Use of Health and Human Services by Community - Residing People with Dementia.

Saltz, C. (1997) Social work response to the White House Conference on Aging: Chapter 5: The Aging Family

### **Week 7: February 25**

#### **Mental Health Care Issues**

Herr, S & Weber, G. (1999). Aging, rights, and quality of life: Chapter 2: Aging and Advocacy; Chapter 3: International Human Rights Standards: Aging and Disabilities; Chapter 11: Mental Health: Issues of Access and Quality of Life

Keigher, Fortune, & Witkin : Chapter 23: Husbands Caring for Wives with Dementia: A Longitudinal Study

Saltz, C. (1997) Social work response to the White House Conference on Aging: Chapter 4: Meeting Mental Health Needs of Older People: Policy and Practice Issues for Social Work.

## **Week 8: March 4**

### **Legal and Ethical Issues**

Kapp, M. (1999) Geriatrics and the law: Chapter 3: Informed Consent and Truth Telling; Chapter 4: Medical record Keeping: Documentation, Patient Access, and Confidentiality; Chapter 6: Disability Programs and Protections for Older Persons; Chapter 8: Involuntary Commitment, Guardianship, Protective Services, Representative Payees, and Powers of Attorney

Galambos, C. (1997) Quality of Life for the Elder: A Reality or an Illusion? In Social work response to the White House Conference on Aging, pp. 27 - 44.

## **Week 9: March 11**

### **Elder Abuse and Exploitation**

Aitken & Griffin: Gender Issues in elder abuse: Entire book pages 1-156.

## **Week 10: March 18**

### **Spring Break**

## **Week 11: March 25**

### **End of Life Decision Making, Health Care Rationing**

Keigher, Fortune, & Witkin: Chapter 27: Preserving End-of -Life Autonomy: The Patient Self-Determination Act and the Uniform Health Care Decisions Act

Braun, K.; Pietch, J. & Blanchette, P. ( 2000) Cultural issues in end-of-life decision making: Chapter 1: An Introduction to Culture and Its Influence on End-of-Life Decision Making; Chapter 2; Physical aspects of Dying; Chapter 3: Cognitive Changes that Affect Capacity and End-of-Life Decisions; Chapter 4: Autonomy, Advance Directives, and The Patient Self-Determination Act, Chapter 5: Ethical Considerations and Court Involvement in End-of Life Decision Making

## **Week 12: April 1**

### **The International Year of the Older Person and Future Agendas**

Keigher, Fortune, and Witkin: The Developing Agenda for Older Persons and Older Societies: Coming of Age by Sharon Keigher;; The Aging Are Coming and They are Us by Colleen Galambos & Anita Rosen; How Ripened are You? By Stanley Witkin; Towards a Society for All Ages: The International Year of Older Persons by Terry Hokenstad; Independence: Chapter 1: The Role of Government in a “ Society for All Ages”.

Saltz, C. (1997) Social work response to the White House Conference on Aging:

Chapter 1: Social Work Response to the 1995 White House Conference on Aging; Chapter 2: Productive Aging: 1995 White House Conference on Aging Challenges for Public Policy and Social Work Practice; Chapter 7: Emerging Issues for Social Workers in the Field of Aging: White House Conference Themes; Chapter 8: From Issues to Action.

### **Policy Practice Activity and Report Due**

## **Week 13: April 8**

### **Ethnic and Cultural Considerations**

**Keigher, Fortune, & Witkin:** Chapter 7: Hospice Access and Use by African Americans: Addressing Cultural and Institutional Barriers through Participatory Action Research; Chapter 11: Perceptions of Dementia, Caregiving, and Help Seeking Among Asian and Pacific Islander Americans; Chapter 20: African American Grandparents Raising Grandchildren; Chapter 21: Custodial Grandparents in Latino Families: Patterns of Service Use and Predictors of Unmet Needs

## **Week 14: April 15**

### **Class presentations**

## **Week 15: April 22**

### **Class presentations**

## **Week 16: April 29<sup>th</sup>**

### **Wrap-up and class evaluations**

## **Bibliography**

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- Holstein, M. & Mitzen, P (eds) ( 1998). Ethics and aging: Bringing the issues home. Generations , vol .22, no. 3, Fall.
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