

**UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

**SW 510 Social Work and Social Welfare Policies and Programs**

**(2 credit hours)**

Instructor: Sam Choi, Ph. D., M.S.W.  
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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.utk.csw.edu](http://www.utk.csw.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, 2008).

**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 at 222 Dunford (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

**Course Description**

This is a required Foundation course. Key professional competencies, diversity, justice, critical thinking, and evidence-based practice are emphasized. Organizational, community, and legislated policies related to social issues, problems, and client systems using local to international comparisons. The use of justice, power, social construction and social work values and ethics in analyzing, influencing, developing, implementing, and advocating for policies and programs. The course establishes the connection between social welfare policy and social work practice. As such, first, the course critically analyzes the historic and contemporary contexts of social welfare. Particular emphasis is put on social workers' roles as critical thinkers in affecting change. The influence of social policy on the holistic health and well-being of individuals, society and of social work practice is examined.

**Course Rationale**

This course provides foundation content to students regarding the knowledge about, and orientation to the designs and functioning of social welfare policies, programs, and services. Through their participation in this course, students appreciate and learn the place and influence of social welfare policies and services in the society and make professional use of them for the attainment, maintenance and/or enhancement of the quality of health and well-being of their clients.

## Course Competencies

By the completion of this course, the students are expected to be able to demonstrate (through course activities, assignments, and/or exams):

1. Analyze and synthesize historical and contemporary evidence-based data, structures, and issues, around social problems and policies at local, state, national, and international levels (Policy-F.1; CT/EBP-F.1). (*content: major social problems, social and economic injustice, violence, local, national and global poverty, oppression, and environmental issues and utilizing information technology for identifying same; identify policies designed to alleviate social problems; social and economic justice as a basis for understanding policy; history and background of social policy*).
2. Analyze the informal and formal influence and the social construction of policy's financial, organizational, administrative, and planning processes required to deliver culturally responsive services and service systems. (Policy-F.2; CT/EBP-F.2; At-risk Pops & SJ- F.2; Diversity- F.1, F.5). (*content: services and programs for poor and vulnerable populations; policies and procedures in organization and their relationship to overarching local, state or national policies; culturally relevant services*).
3. Identify agency, local, state, national and international issues in social welfare policy and social service delivery, including the capacity to prevent or promote social and economic justice. (Policy-F.7; At-risk & SJ-F.3, F.4; Values/ethics- F.1). (*content: identification of the interconnections between local national and international social welfare; how specific social welfare policies may prevent or promote social and economic justice*).
4. Analyze policy and its impact on program delivery, the ethics of the profession, and at-risk populations, and begin to develop policy practice intervention skills with policies, programs, and service delivery systems to advocate for basic human rights (Policy-F.2, F.4.; Diversity- F.1, F.4, Values/ethics-F.2, F.3, F.4). (*content: how policy is implemented and developed; how to analyze policy; use of policy practice change strategies to advocate for policy change; how to assess policy adherence to social work values and ethics*).
5. Prepare and present effective, professional, verbal, and written analyses, policy briefs, and proposals to stakeholders (Policy-F.6; CT/EBP-F.3). (*content: analyze policy using policy analysis frameworks; be able to write policy briefs; utilize debate; write proposals for policy change*).

## Course Requirements:

One text and some outside readings are assigned. All readings are available at the Library Reserve. Students are expected to participate in class in an active and involved manner. **Students are expected to complete the readings *PRIOR to CLASS*** and should be prepared to discuss them and be tested over them in class. In addition to assigned articles, students are encouraged to read independently from both professional journals and current news. Additional readings may be assigned during the course of the semester.

The course will include lectures, class discussions, and class exercises. Graded assignments will include a mid-term examination, a policy analysis paper, a scrapbook, and a final examination. Students are expected to actively participate in class. Late assignments **ARE NOT** accepted unless a student has worked out a previous agreement with the instructor. All written assignments should be double spaced and sources should be documented and referenced, using APA format. The final grade will be determined as follows:

- Policy analysis paper (30%)
- Mid-term exam (30%)
- End of year exam (30%)
- Assignment (Scrapbook—Policy in the Press Analysis) (10%)

### **Grading Scale**

A (95-100) Outstanding/Superior - Exceptional performance. Consistently exceeds expectations.

B+ (90-94) Very Good. - Student consistently meets, and occasionally exceeds, normal expectations for the course.

B (85-89) Good - Student consistently meets normal expectations for the course.

C+ (80-84) Average - There is unevenness in grasping course content. Student is inconsistent in meeting normal expectations for the course.

C (70-79) Poor - There is lack of understanding of course content. Student does not meet course expectations.

F (69-Below) Very Poor - There is a lack of attendance or incomplete assignments. Course expectations are not met.

### **Attendance**

Attendance is required, and will be taken at the beginning of each class period. Students must contact the instructor about absences. In the case of illness, a note from a physician or health clinic is required. *Excessive absences (more than two) may result in your grade being lowered by one letter.* Attendance at all class sessions for the duration of the entire class period (you should arrive by 9:55 so class can promptly begin at 10:00) is required. If you need to arrive late or leave early, please do not come to class. We will all benefit by having a coherent group.

### **Make up Policy**

Unless approved in advance by the instructor, the grade of students who fail to take an exam during the scheduled period will automatically be reduced by one letter grade, and will be reduced by an additional letter grade for each day the exam is not taken. Students may also be given an alternative essay exam at the instructor's discretion.

### **Food**

Feel free to bring food and drink.

### **Sleeping**

Stay awake. Failure to do so will negatively impact your class participation grade.

### **Mobile phones**

Prior to class turn them off or put them in silent mode.

### **Notebook computers**

Feel free to use your laptop for note taking purposes. Please do not spend class time surfing the web or checking email.

### **Course Texts:**

#### Required:

Karger, H. & Stoesz, D. (2006). American Social Welfare Policy (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) Allyn & Bacon Pub.  
Other readings will be available on Library Reserve.

### **Assignment Descriptions:**

#### **Mid-Term Exam: 30% of total grade (October 27)**

This exam covers readings and class discussions related to: 1) History of social welfare policy 2) The profession's commitment to social and economic justice and its focus on vulnerable populations, 3) The process of policy analysis & policy practice, 3) Utilizing evidence-based data and structures to analyze policy 4) Identification of agency, local, state, national & international issues in social welfare policy. Question form for the tests will be mixed, with some multiple choices, true/false, matching and short essays.

A good studying strategy is to review your reading notes as well as the notes you take on lecture and discussion. For material about which you are uncertain, refer back to the associated reading assignment and consider what the author has to say about the topic in question. Otherwise, arrange a time to see me in my office for purposes of further clarification. In addition, I will devote some time prior to each exam for consideration of questions you have about material that might show up on the test.

#### **Policy Analysis: 30 % of total grade (November 17)**

Your readings on policy analysis provide frameworks for analyzing policy. Use one of these frameworks to analyze your chosen policy. Use government documents, historical analyses and research articles to answer the following questions. You may do the policy analysis in pairs. This policy analysis should be done in APA style, with one inch margins. The paper is to be a minimum of 8 pages (not counting your reference pages), and a maximum of 10 pages. You should have a minimum of 6 references and no more than half should be online resources.

This paper will have the following headings (underlined):

1. Description of the Policy: What policy will you analyze? Describe when the policy was enacted and at what level of government. (5pts.)

2. What social problem is the policy designed to alleviate? Provide appropriate Literature review of the problem addressed. Utilize data to explain the social problem. Critically analyze the issues surrounding the problem. (20pts.)

3. Description of the Policy (25pts total)

What benefits or services are provided by the policy? (5pts.)

Who is eligible for the program? (5pts.)

How is the program financed? (5pts.)  
How is the program administered? (5pts.)  
Is the program:  
Public, private (5 pts.)

4. **Policy Analysis:** Analyze the program/policy using one of the frameworks provided in your readings as guides—choose one (40pts. total)  
Examples: Adequacy, equity, efficiency, political feasibility, legality, or economic feasibility. (5 points) Has the program alleviated the problem? (5 points) Have there been intended or unintended consequences? (5 points)  
Make sure this section has an argument: what is your thesis or hypothesis, than provide information to back up your assertion. (25 points)
5. APA style (citations, page numbers, headings); grammar & format (10pts).

**Scrapbook (Policy in the press analyses): 10% of total grade (November 17)**

A goal of this course is for you to gain an applied understanding of welfare policy matters. This means you should learn how to recognize and interpret poverty and policy issues in the real world and be able to discuss their significance with your coworkers. The news media is important in this respect. During Session 2 small reading groups (who have similar policy interests) will be formed and will meet periodically throughout the semester to consider policy issues in the news.

Occasionally, I will upload copies of news articles on policy issues relevant to material covered in class that day. Group members will read and discuss these to develop the analytical skills needed to assess how the news media covers social welfare issues.

As the semester progresses group members will independently locate news articles on policy topics. This should not require much research. Routinely scanning a major daily newspaper should supply you with numerous articles appropriate for this assignment. *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Chicago Tribune*, and *Tennessean* may be useful sources, all of which are available online with no cost subscriptions. A good strategy may be for each member to pick a newspaper and track its articles over the course of the semester. You may also want to check out some more politically charged media outlets. *The Nation* and *The American Prospect* are popular news sources on the left, with conservative counterparts, *The National Review* and *The Weekly Standard*. While these weekly/monthly magazines are in the library's periodical holdings, some of their articles are published online as well.

So part of this assignment is for individual to accumulate a pool of policy related articles, cartons, etc. Some class time will be designated for this purpose, with the computer lab and library at your disposal. In addition, you will probably need to spend some time outside of class hunting for articles. The material covered in the early class sessions gives an overview of U.S. policymaking and welfare history and it should begin to inform your article selections. Still, it is a good idea to look ahead at topics that we will consider later in this fall so that you can keep these in mind as you search for articles.

Reading group time should be spent sharing articles for reading and discussion. Near the end of the semester, once an individual has considered the sizeable set of articles, **the goal is to then use those as your references for your policy analysis paper.** By Session 12, I expect an individual to submit to me the scrapbook with your written comments. I expect you have a minimum number of 6 articles in your scrapbook.

**Final Exam: 30% of total grade (December 8)**

This exam covers readings and class discussions related to: 1) Analysis of agency, local, state, national & international issues in social welfare policy, 2) Understanding formal and informal influences affecting policy (fiscal, organizational, administrative, etc.), 3) The planning process to deliver services and service systems that are effective and culturally responsive, 4) Identification of issues in social welfare that affect service/program delivery, 5) Using policy analysis to advocate for human rights and social change at the agency, local, state, national and international levels. Question form for the test will be mixed, with some multiple choices, true/false, matching and short essays.

**Readings and Course Outline:**

**Class 1: Monday, August 25**

Course overview. Review syllabus, class assignments, required texts, assigned readings, academic integrity.

Discussion: Identification of Policy Interest

**Monday, September 1: No Class—Labor Day**

**Class 2: Monday, September 8**

Defining social welfare policy  
Values, ideology and social welfare policy  
The U.S. Political & Economic Continuum  
Analyzing and Monitoring Social Welfare Policy  
Policy Research and analysis

Readings due for this class:

Karger & Stoesz Chapter 1, American Social Welfare Policy  
Karger & Stoesz Ch. 2, S.W. Policy Research: A Framework for Policy Analysis  
Rocha, Chapter 1, Introduction to Community-based Policy Practice

Discussion: Identification of Policy Interest (cont.)

**Class 3 Monday, September 15**

Policy Practice and Policy Implementation  
Affecting Change  
The Legislative Process  
Monitoring policy implementation

Readings due for this class:

Rocha, Chapter 2, Essentials of the Planning Process  
Rocha, Ch.8. Essentials of Legislative Policy Practice

Discussion: Clarifying different analysis strategies

Discussion: Relationship between policy analysis and policy practice

**Class 4 Monday, September 22**

Ethics and values in the Policy Process  
Understanding the Social Work Code of Ethics  
Trends affecting social welfare policy: devolution

Readings due for this class: NASW Code of Ethics

Discussion: Social Work Ethics & Values in policy practice

**Class 5**

**Monday, September 29**

Historical Development of Social Welfare Policy and Services and the Relationship to the Social Work Profession.

History of Social Welfare Policy

Two Ideological roots: Institutional vs residual views of social welfare.

The Three Discoveries of Poverty.

Readings due for this class:

Chapters 3-5: Dolgoff, R. & Feldstein, D. (2007). Understanding Social Welfare Policy (on reserve):

- Chapter 3. Social Values and Social Welfare: England from the middle ages onward,
- Chapter 4. Social Values and Social Welfare: the American Experience,
- Chapter 5. America, Poverty, Two Paths.

Discussion: How have societal values defined welfare?

Discussion: How has the profession of social work changed over the years?

**Class 6:**

**Monday, October 6**

Issues of Discrimination & Oppression - historical trends in American Society Value Poverty and Vulnerable populations

- The feminization of poverty
- The Working Poor
- People with disabilities
- Race & Poverty

Discussion: who are the poor in America?

Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 5

**Class 7:**

**Monday, October 13**

Issues of Discrimination & Oppression - historical trends in American Society

Contemporary Social Trends Affecting Social Welfare

- GLBTQ Population
- Immigration
- Aging Population

Readings due for this class:

Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 4

**Class 8:**

**Monday, October 20**

Mid-Term Exam Review

Contemporary Social Trends Affecting Social Welfare, continued

Readings due for this class:

Karger & Stoesz, Chapters 4 & 5

**Class 9: Monday, October 27**  
Mid-Term Exam

**Class 10: Monday, November 3**  
Social Insurance Programs

- U.S. Social Policies and programs for senior and disabled citizens
- Social Security (OASDI)
- Supplemental Security Income
- Unemployment insurance
- Workers Compensation

Public Assistance Programs

- TANF
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Readings due for this class:

Karger & Stoesz, Chapters 10 & 11

Discussion: Assumptions & myths about public assistance

Discussion: The Social Security Crisis

**Class 11: Monday, November 10**  
The American Health Care System

- Who are the Uninsured?
- Medicare, Medicaid
- Reforming US Health Care
- Health Care: an International Perspective

Mental Health & Substance Abuse Policy

- Mental Health Reform
- History of Community Mental Health & Deinstitutionalization
- Prevention
- Substance Abuse: history and services

Film: Faces of TennCare

Readings due for this class:

Karger & Stoesz, Chapters 12 & 13

**Class 12: Monday, November 17**  
Child Welfare Policy

- History of child welfare
- Contemporary Issues in child welfare
- Foster Care & Adoption

Speaker from TN Department of Children's Services

**Scrapbook and Policy Analysis Papers Due**

Readings for this class:  
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 15

**Class 13: Monday, November 24**  
U.S. Social policies and programs for the poor  
AFDC, Nutritional Programs: Food Stamps, WIC, Medicaid, Housing,

Readings due for this class:  
Karger & Stoesz, Chapters 11, 16, 17 (through page 454)

**Class 14: Monday, December 1**  
Final Exam Review  
Discussion/Debate: Finding Solutions in Social Welfare

**Class 15: Monday, December 8**  
**Final Exam**