

**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 policy poster project, a scrapbook, quizzes, and class/group participation. 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 Poster Project (50%)
- Quizzes (20%)
- Class/Group Participation (15%)
- Scrapbook—Policy in the Press Analysis (15%)

### **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 (both in class and group meeting) is required. 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.* We will all benefit by having a coherent group.

### **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:**

#### **Policy Poster Project: 50 % of total grade (November 23)**

Students will complete a policy poster project IN GROUPS. This project involves the development of policy poster (based on your policy analysis), policy poster presentation (powerpoint), and abstract of your poster. The goals of this assignment are for you to identify how the current policy addresses social problem and deliver services, to analyze the influences of the policy, and then to develop the recommendations to improve current policies and practices (Course Competencies # 1,2,3,4,& 5). One selected poster (across the different sections; selected by Judges—faculty members as well as community leaders and peers) will be presented at TN Social Work Legislative Conference in 2010. The detailed guidelines and description for 2010 Social Work Legislative Conference and student policy poster presentation will be given at the beginning of this semester. At class 2, small groups with similar policy interests will be formed and will meet periodically throughout the semester to complete policy poster project. Group members will select one policy/issues of your interest. 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 should have a minimum of 6 references and no more than half should be online resources. Some class time will be designed for the group discussion as well as the group consultation with me. You may submit your poster before November 13 to get my feedback.

*Policy Poster: 40% of your total grade*

The policy poster can be presented as a table top display or your powerpoint slides (large font) on the wall.

This POSTER will have the following headings:

1. The Policy of your choice: What policy will you analyze? Describe when the policy was enacted and at what level of government.
2. Background of the policy: 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.
3. Description of the Policy
  - What benefits or services are provided by the policy?
  - Who is eligible for the program?
  - How is the program financed?
  - How is the program administered?

Identify vulnerable and at-risk populations and specific ways in which these groups are impacted by the current policy?

4. **Policy Analysis:** Analyze the program/policy using one of the frameworks provided in your readings as guides—choose one (Examples: Adequacy, equity, efficiency, political feasibility, legality, or economic feasibility).

What are the strengths and limitations of current policy?

Incorporate into the overall policy analysis the six core values of the social work profession identified in the NASW Code of ethics

5. **Recommendations:** What are your recommendations to improve current policy? (at least 5 recommendation). These recommendations should address all levels of social work practice and may include examples of how other states have addressed this same policy issue.

*PowerPoint Presentation of Your Poster: 5% of your grade (November 23)*

Each poster must be accompanied by a PowerPoint Presentation regarding the poster. That is no more than 10 minutes in length. Judges and peers will assess your professionalism of presentation and creativity will be accounted.

*Poster Abstract: 5 % of Total Grade (November 23)*

Each Group must submit the abstract of your poster presentation before your class on Nov.23. Do not exceed 500 words (excluding your references). Follow the APA format.

### **Scrapbook (Policy in the press analyses): 15% of total grade (November 2)**

A goal of this course is for you to gain an applied understanding of contemporary 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 (Course Competencies # 1,3,4, & 5). The news media is important in this respect. During Session 2 small groups (who have similar policy interests) will be formed and will meet periodically throughout the semester to consider policy issues in the news. This is going to be the same group of your policy poster project.

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, cartoons, 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. By November 2, 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.

### **Quizzes: 20% of total Grade**

Brief quizzes (multiple choices, matching, true/false) will be taken online throughout the semester. The purpose of quizzes is to measure student mastery of course competencies based on weekly readings and other assigned activities. Topics covered in each quiz are as follows:

Quiz 1 Ethics in the Policy Process, Historical Context of Social Welfare Policy (CC1 & CC4)

Quiz 2 U.S. Political & Economic Continuum of Policy, Poverty in U.S. (CC1-3)

Quiz 3 Social Insurance Program and Public Assistance Program (CC1-3)

Quiz 4 Health Care System, Mental Health, & Substance Abuse Policy (CC1-3)

Quiz 5 Child Welfare Policy, Discrimination % Oppression (CC1-4)

Each quiz will be available for 9 days. Each week quizzes will be available at 12:00AM (CST) on Monday and close at 11:59PM (CST) on the following Wednesday. Occasionally, exceptions to these timeframes will be made in the event of Blackboard outages or extreme circumstances. Any changes in these time frames will be clearly announced in Blackboard. Students may take quizzes at any point during the week. Quizzes will be open book and have no time limit. However, each quiz must be completed in one sitting. Students will not be permitted back into the quiz after they have left the quiz site and a quiz may not be taken after it closes. Each quiz is worth 5 points. Five quizzes will be administered. The lowest quiz score will be dropped at the end of the semester.

Quizzes account for 20 points of a student's final grade in this course.

### **Class Participation/Group Participation: 15 % of total Grade**

Students are expected to actively participate in class. This includes your active participation in your group project. The policy practice is inherently a group process and to conduct effective policy practice, one must participate in a group process. Therefore, it is imperative that students engage substantively in the group processes and acquires the skills to integrate multiple ideas and activities respectively and successfully. The peer evaluation (group) will be conducted at the end of semester.

**Readings and Course Outline:**

**Class 1: Monday, August 24**

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

Discussion: Identification of Policy Interest  
Legal Search Orientation & Practice I

**Class 2: Monday, August 31**

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  
Policy Poster Project Group Formation  
Legal Search Orientation & Practice II

**Quiz 1 Open on August 31**

**Monday, September 7: No Class—Labor Day**

**Class 3 Monday, September 14**

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?

**Quiz 1 closes on September 16**

**Class 4 Monday, September 21**

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

**Quiz 2 Opens on September 21**

**Class 5 Monday, September 28**

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?

Readings due for this class:

Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 5

**Quiz 2 Closes on September 30**

**Class 6: Monday, October 5**

Social Insurance Programs

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

Readings due for this class:

Karger & Stoesz, Chapters 10

Discussion: The Social Security Crisis

**Quiz 3 Opens on October 5**

**Class 7: Monday, October 12**

Public Assistance Programs

- TANF
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Readings due for this class:

Karger & Stoesz, Chapters 11

Discussion: Assumptions & myths about public assistance

**Quiz 3 Closes on October 14**

**Class 8: Monday, October 19**

The American Health Care System

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

Film: Sicko

Readings due for this class:

Karger & Stoesz, Chapters 12

**Quiz 4 Opens on October 19**

**Class 9: Monday, October 26**

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

**Quiz 4 Closes on October 28**

**Class 10: Monday, November 2**

Child Welfare Policy

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

Speaker from TN Department of Children's Services

Readings for this class:

Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 15

**Your Scrapbook Due before the class**

**Quiz 5 Opens on November 2**

**Class 11: Monday, November 9**  
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  
Group consultation

**Quiz 5 Closes on November 11**

**Class 12: Monday, November 16**

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  
Group Consultation

**Class 13: Monday, November 23**  
**Policy Poster Display and Presentation**

**Class 14: Monday, November 30**  
Contemporary Social Trends Affecting Social Welfare

Discussion/Debate: Finding Solutions in Social Welfare