

**UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE**  
**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**  
**SW 510 Social Work and Social Welfare Policies and Programs**  
**2 credit hours – On-line Class**  
**Section #011**

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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.

**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. 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 readings, PowerPoint's, discussion boards, and assignments. Graded assignments will include a mid-term examination, a policy analysis paper, and discussion boards and a final examination. 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 (25%)
- End of year exam (25%)

## Discussion Board (20%)

### 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.

### Course Texts:

#### Required:

Karger, H. & Stoesz, D. (2006). American Social Welfare Policy (5th ed.) Allyn & Bacon Pub.

Other readings will be available on Blackboard.

### Assignment Descriptions:

#### **Mid-Term Exam: 25% of total grade (October 26)**

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.

#### **Policy Analysis: 30% of total grade (November 16)**

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).

**Discussion Board: 20% (on-going)**

Discussion Boards will either be class related policy discussions or a press analysis. See course outlines for due dates and topics for discussion.

**(Policy in the press analyses)**

Periodically throughout the semester there will be discussion board exercises in relation to current events.

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.

Occasionally, I will upload copies of news articles on policy issues relevant to material covered in your readings. You will read and discuss these on the discussion board to develop the analytical skills needed to assess how the news media covers social welfare issues.

As the semester progresses students 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. 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.

**Final Exam: 30% of total grade (November 30, 2009)**

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.

**Readings and Course Outline:****Class 1: Monday, August 24**

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

**Class 2: Monday, August 31, 2009**

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

**Monday, September 7- No Class—Labor Day****Class 3 Monday, September 14**

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 Board: Relationship between policy analysis and policy practice

Due by 9/15 8am CST

**Class 4 Monday, September 21**

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 Board: Social Work Ethics & Values in policy practice

Due by 9/22 8am CST

**Class 5 Monday, September 28**

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 Board: Topic TBA Press Analysis

**Class 6: Monday, October 5**

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

Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 5

Discussion Board: who are the poor in America?

Due Date: 10/6 at 8am CST

**Class 7: Monday, October 12**

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

Discussion Board: Topic TBA Press Analysis

Due Date: 10/13 at 8am CST

**Class 8: Monday, October 19**

Mid-Term Exam Review

Contemporary Social Trends Affecting Social Welfare, continued

Readings due for this class:

Karger & Stoesz, Chapters 4 & 5

Film: SICKO

Discussion Board Assignment to follow.

**Class 9: Monday, October 26**

Mid-Term Exam

**Class 10: Monday, November 2**

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 Board: Assumptions & myths about public assistance

Due Date 11/3 at 8am CST

**Class 11: Monday, November 9**

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

Discussion Board: TBA Press Analysis Due Date 11/10 at 8am CST

**Class 12: Monday, November 16**

Child Welfare Policy

History of child welfare

Contemporary Issues in child welfare

Foster Care & Adoption

**Policy Analysis Papers Due**

Readings for this class:

Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 15

**Class 13 Monday, November 23**

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)

Discussion Board: Tell us about your policy

Due Date 11/24 at 8am

**Class 14: Monday, Nov. 30**

Final Exam