

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville College of Social Work, Nashville Campus

SW 551 Advanced Policy Analysis and Action
Spring, 2009

Instructor: Rodney A. Ellis, Ph.D., L.M.S.W.

Phone: 615-218-2337

Email: rellis5@utk.edu

Class time: Online

Office hours: Online Mondays from 6-9 and in person by appointment. Unless students are otherwise informed through email and/or Blackboard posts, the instructor will be available every Monday evening from 6:00 to 9:00 Central time in a Blackboard text chat room to answer questions, review projects, and discuss relevant issues.

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 (<http://www.csw.utk.edu/mssw/>).

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. (*Hill topics, 2005*).

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 2227 Dunford Hall Knoxville, TN 37996-4020, (865) 974-6087 (v/tty). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Required Text

Ellis, R.A. (2006). *Impacting social policy: A practitioner's guide to analysis and action*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks Cole/Wadsworth

Organization of the Course and Blackboard

This course will be taught entirely online. There will be NO SCHEDULED CLASS SESSIONS. Students will need to decide what grade they want to earn and will submit the required number of assignments in order to earn that grade. The section below entitled “Required Activities” describes what kinds of projects must be completed in order to earn each grade. This process is known as “contracting for a grade”.

Please note: The assignments must be completed at an acceptable level in order to count toward the grade. Each assignment will, therefore, receive a satisfactory or unsatisfactory grade. Satisfactory completion of every assignment required for a specific grade will result in the student receiving that grade. Failure to complete an assignment or assignments satisfactorily will result in failure of the course. Students who submit an unsatisfactory assignment will have one opportunity to bring that assignment up to a satisfactory level.

Please also note: You MUST submit a written contract specifying which grade you wish to receive by January 26, 2009. Please do NOT post your desired grade on the discussion board. Please submit it directly to the instructor through the Digital Drop Box in Blackboard.

Although both the weekly readings and the **Weekly Worksheets** are a part of the required textbooks, students will need to check the course website on Blackboard weekly. The first reason this will be important is that students are required to make a minimum of one post per week about something relevant to the week’s worksheet. The second reason students must check the Discussion Board at least weekly is that most of the communication between the instructor and the students will take place there. Students who are not frequently in touch on the discussion board risk missing important information. The third reason students will need to check the Blackboard site regularly is that supplemental materials will be posted in various places throughout the semester. Although these materials will not be mandatory, they will be relevant to the lessons and very helpful to students. The nature and location of those materials will be posted under “Announcements” and/or on the Discussion Board.

All the materials needed to earn an A will also be posted on Blackboard, Students who have questions about that assignment should post those questions in the relevant forum on the Discussion Board. The only exception occurs in assignments where students are encouraged to search the Web for specific materials. Students are also encouraged to supplement and enhance their education with additional resources.

Assignments and Grading

Grading: Students will contract for final grades based on the following schedule:

Assignments 1- *In order to earn a “B”-* Successful completion of the Policy Analysis Worksheets for Chapters 1-9 at a level of quality deemed acceptable by the instructor **AND** weekly posts in the Mandatory forums on the Discussion Board.

Assignment 2- *In order to earn a “B+”* - Successful and acceptable completion of Assignment 1 **AND** successful completion of Policy Analysis Worksheets for Chapters 10 and 11.

Assignment 3- *In order to earn an “A”* - Successful and acceptable completion of Assignments 1 and 2 **AND** successful completion of either a Policy Analysis Report or a PowerPoint presentation explaining the results of the analysis at a level of quality deemed acceptable by the instructor.

Students may submit materials for early review by the instructor, thus assuring that instructor comments will be available for the preparation of the final product.

Class Policies

1. Unless other arrangements are made students are expected to submit projects according to the schedule on the syllabus.
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. 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.
4. 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.
5. Please ask all possible questions on the discussion board or in text chat. Past experience teaching this class has shown that most questions asked by any one student also apply to others in the course. The instructor will answer email, but asks that any general questions that might apply to any class member be asked in either the discussion board or text chat.

Course Outline

Week 1- January 12, 2008- Syllabus and introduction to the course

Open House on Blackboard. Today’s activities are designed to familiarize you with Blackboard and make you aware of the parts of Blackboard that will be used during this course. Begin by reading the first Announcement, then follow the directions you find there. The directions will lead you on a journey through Blackboard. Your journey will end at the Discussion Board, where you need to leave a post introducing yourself. The post is mandatory, and would also be a good place to ask any questions you have about the course.

Readings for next week:

Ellis, Chapter 1, answer Questions for Discussion at the end of Chapter 1 (pp. 13-14).

Read the *Summary of Course Activities* included under “Course Materials” on Blackboard.

Week 2- January 19, 2008- Dr. Martin Luther King Day

No class.

Week 3- January 26, 2008- Introduction to Practitioner's Policy Analysis

Subjects included in readings:

Introduction to Practitioner's Policy Analysis

Assignments due:

Answers to Questions for Discussion from Chapter 1
Post in Mandatory Forum on Discussion Board

Readings for next week:

Ellis, Chapter 2, complete worksheets from that chapter

Week 4- February 2, 2008- Identifying Social Problems for Analysis

Subjects included in readings:

Identification of social problem areas for semester projects

Assignments due:

Worksheets for Chapters 2
Post in Mandatory Forum on Discussion Board

Readings for next week:

Ellis, Chapter 3, complete worksheets from that chapter

Week 5- February 9, 2008- Historical Review

Subjects included in readings:

Policy and case law history
Introduction to historical analysis

Assignments due:

Worksheet for Chapter 3
Post in Mandatory Forum on the Discussion Board

Readings for next week:

Ellis, Chapter 4, complete worksheets from that chapter

Week 6- February 16, 2008- Review of Norms and Values

Subjects included in readings:

Understanding norms and values
Identifying norms and values in the general population

Assignments due:

Worksheet for Chapter 4
Post in Mandatory Forum on the Discussion Board

Readings for next week:

Ellis, Chapter 5, complete worksheets from that chapter

Week 7- February 23, 2008- Political Review

Subjects included in readings:

Assessing political realities

Assignments Due:

Worksheet for Chapter 5
Post in Mandatory Forum on the Discussion Board

Readings for next week:

Ellis, Chapter 6, complete worksheets from that chapter

Week 8- March 2, 2008- Delivery System Review

Subjects included in readings:

Identifying and mapping the delivery system
Identifying problems in the delivery system
Techniques for solving problems in the delivery system

Assignments due:

Worksheet for Chapter 6
Post in Mandatory Forum on the Discussion Board

Readings for next week:

Ellis, Chapter 7, complete worksheets from that chapter

Week 9- March 9, 2008- Review of Alternative Solutions

Subjects included in readings:

Identifying alternatives
Evaluating alternatives

Assignments due:

Worksheet for Chapter 7
Post in Mandatory Forum on the Discussion Board

Readings for next week:

Ellis, Chapter 8, complete worksheets for that chapter

Week 10- March 16, 2008- Spring Break

No class

Week 11- March 23, 2008- Review of Professional Analyses

Subjects included in readings:

Cost-Benefit Analysis
Other professional analyses
Locating professional analyses

Assignments due:

Worksheet for Chapter 8
Post in Mandatory Forum on the Discussion Board

Readings for next week:

Ellis, Chapter 9

Week 12- March 30, 2008- Interaction Review

Subjects included in readings:

Anticipating unanticipated consequences

Assignments due:

Worksheet for Chapter 9
Post in Mandatory Forum on the Discussion Board

Readings for next week:

Ellis, Chapters 10

Week 13- April 6, 2008- Summarizing the Analysis

Subjects included in readings:

Developing written summaries
Developing public presentations

Assignments due:

Worksheet for Chapter 10
Post in Mandatory Forum on the Discussion Board

Readings for next week:

Ellis, Chapters 11, complete worksheets for that chapter

Week 14- April 13, 2008- Action Planning

Subjects included in readings:

Developing action plans
Implementing action plans

Assignments due:

Worksheet for Chapter 11
Post in Mandatory Forum on the Discussion Board

Readings for next week:

None, all chapters completed

Week 15- April 20, 2008- Policy Analysis Report or PowerPoint due (those who contracted for an "A") due

Please note that much of this can be prepared in advance as the semester progresses. Those sections may also be submitted to the instructor for review and recommendations. This assignment may also be submitted early if it is finished early.