THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

Social Work and Social Welfare Policies and Programs

SW 510-003 | CRN #25358

Spring 2016 | 3 credit hours

Instructor: Susan (Sukey) Steckel, MSSW, LMSW

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Class time and location: Wednesdays 9:00am-Noon | Room 233

Office Hours: Wednesdays Noon-2pm or by appointment | Room 260

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.csw.utk.edu). Students are also expected to sign and adhere to the Social Work Field Placement Code of Conduct.

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).

University Civility Statement: Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other’s well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus: http://civility.utk.edu/

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 100 Dunford Hall (865) 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Dimensions of Diversity: The College of Social Work and the University of Tennessee welcome and honor all people. In accordance with the U.S. National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the U.S. Council on Social Work Education (CSWE 2015 Educational Policy Statement), “the
dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, mental or physical disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, gender identity, immigration status, marital status, national origin, political ideology, race, regionality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. The College values intellectual curiosity, pursuit of knowledge, and academic freedom and integrity. “A person’s diverse life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim” (CSWE 2015 Educational Policy Statement). The College of Social Work promotes social justice and social change, and strives to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice.

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 are examined.

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:

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. 4.1, 4.3, 4.5 (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. 2.3, 2.4, 3.4 (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. 2.2, 2.3 (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. 1.1, 4.2, 4.3, 1.2 (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. 4.5 (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 on Blackboard. 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 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, policy brief, and quizzes. **Students are expected to actively participate in class.** All written assignments should be double-spaced and sources should be documented and referenced using APA format.

The final grade will be determined from the following requirements:

1) Quizzes (30%) (Course Competencies 1-5)  
2) Individual Policy Brief (30%) (Course Competencies 1-5)  
3) Group Policy Analysis Poster and Presentation (40%) (Course Competencies 1-5)  
4) Extra Credit: Social Work Day on the Hill attendance (3 points added to end)

**Grading Scale**

The following grading scale will be used for final course grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Point range</th>
<th>Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>90-94</td>
<td>Very Good – Student consistently meets and occasionally exceeds normal expectations for the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>Good – Student consistently meets normal expectations for the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>Average – There is unevenness in grasping course content. Student is inconsistent in meeting the normal expectations for the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>Poor - There is a lack of understanding of course content. Student does not meet course expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>69 or below</td>
<td>Very Poor – There is a lack of attendance or incomplete or unacceptable assignments. Course expectations are not met.</td>
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Late Assignment Policy
All class assignments are expected to be submitted on their specific due date. Any assignment NOT submitted on the specified due date is subject to a penalty of five (5) points per day (no exceptions, start assignments early and this shouldn't be a problem) until the assignment is turned in. Any assignment that is more than 5 days overdue will not be accepted. No quizzes will be accepted after 1pm Central on April 27th.

Course Texts
Required:

Other readings will be available on Blackboard

Assignment Descriptions

1) Quizzes: 30% of total grade

• All quizzes are located under the tab “QUIZZES.” The quizzes are 10 questions, open book and open note, but you are not permitted to share answers or discuss the quiz with other students. Sharing answers or helping each other constitutes cheating and will result in disciplinary action. Each quiz will be available all semester. The quiz will be timed and you have 1 hour to complete each quiz. Once you open a quiz, you must complete the quiz within 1 hour. Do not open the quiz until you have reviewed the material for that module and you are ready to take the quiz.

• Each quiz will cover all readings up to and including that particular week. (Course Competencies # 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5)

• Quizzes will be open for the whole semester and you may take them at anytime up until April 22, 2015

2) Individual Policy Brief: 30% of total grade

Step One: Before you can complete a policy brief you must first analyze a policy

• 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).

• Again, students will choose one STATE LEVEL policy/issue interest. You may want to visit NASW website at http://www.socialworkers.org/advocacy/default.asp, ‘Legislative Issues’ for ideas.
• You will utilize the Karger and Stoesz framework for analyzing policy. Use this framework to analyze your chosen policy. The policy analysis should be no more than 10 pages. Pg 29 (Chapter 2) in Karger and Stoesz: American Social Welfare Policy 7th (ed).

• 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).

• When choosing a bill as the topic of your Brief, remember it must address an issue that impacts the quality of life for a disadvantaged group of people.

**Step Two: Create your brief based on the information you compiled in your analysis.**


  - The best policy briefs are:
    - Concise—Legislator will not read lengthy, verbose reports;
    - Timely—Addresses an issue of current public concern;
    - Action-Oriented—Problem can clearly be addressed through legislation;
    - Evidence-Based—evidence is cited and analyzed;
    - Professional—Rational, without insulting, divisive or inflammatory rhetoric;
    - Feasible—A problem(s) that can actually be solved or improved;
    - Accessible—Free of jargon, clear, understandable language;

**The Policy Brief will follow the subsequent outline and should contain the headings for I-VII:**

I. **Title of the paper**: 15 points
   The title aims to catch the attention of the reader, and needs to be descriptive and relevant.
   --5 of these 15 points is for adding your name and university to the brief.

II. **Executive summary**: 15 points
    --A description of the bill
    --Should you say anything else here, be sure to represent both sides, don’t turn your audience off so that they will choose not to read further.

III. **Context and importance of the problem**: 25 points
    The purpose of this element of the brief is to convince the target audience that a current and urgent problem exists which requires them to take action.
    --A clear statement of the problem or issue in focus
    --A short overview of the root causes of the problem
    --A clear statement of the policy implications of the problem that clearly establishes the current importance and policy relevance of the issue

IV. **Critique of policy option(s)**: 15 points
    The aim of this element is to detail shortcomings of the current approach or options being implemented and therefore, illustrate both the need for change and focus of where change needs to occur. In doing so, the critique of policy options usually includes the following:
--A short overview of the policy option(s) in focus
--An argument illustrating why and how the current or proposed approach is failing.
It is important for the sake of credibility to recognize all opinions in the debate of the issue.

V. Policy recommendations: 15 points
The aim of the policy recommendations element is to provide a detailed and convincing proposal of
how the failings of the current policy approach need to change. As such this is achieved by
including:
--A breakdown of the specific practical steps or measures that need to be implemented

VI. Appendices: 5 points

VII. References: 10 points

Sources of background information and supporting data must be included. Like any expert
preparing a policy brief to support your legislative testimony, you will rely primarily on the
evidence generated by sound research on your topic.

For your policy brief, you must rely on scholarly sources, using AT LEAST:

- 3 articles published in peer reviewed research journals. Critically appraise your evidence
- 2 reports published by at least two think tanks or philanthropic and/or research organizations
  (e.g., Kaiser Foundation, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Children's Defense Fund, Heritage
  Foundation, American Enterprise Institute, Institute for Women's Policy Research,
  Commonwealth Fund, Brookings Institution, Urban Institute, Annie E. Casey Foundation,
  Families in USA).
- 2 Substantive Reports from Governmental Agencies. These may be generated by federal or
  state courses. Good federal sources for social welfare data include: U.S. Census Bureau,
  General Accounting office, Centers for Disease Control, office of Management and Budget,
  Congressional Budget Office, national Institutes of Health and Mental Health, Department of
  Health and Human Services, and its constituent agencies.

You may use more references than these minimum requirements, but all cited material must be
drawn from theses scholarly sources.

Significant points will be deducted for not using APA style and for issues with spelling/grammar.
The Writing Resources link on Blackboard has a number of helpful writing and APA tips.

Step 3: Once you have completed the brief you will email the brief to your chosen legislative
representative and BLIND COPY (BCC) the professor on this email. The body of the email should be
professional, introduce the issue and then contain the brief as an attachment. The policy brief
should be 1-2 pages in length, including charts, tables and graphs, but excluding references.

3) Group Policy Analysis Poster and Presentation (40% of total grade)

- Students will complete a policy poster project IN GROUPS. This project involves three parts:
  1) The development of policy poster (based on your policy analysis),
2) The presentation of your policy poster information (using powerpoint), and
3) The abstract of your poster (due a week before your presentation).

• 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).

• Small groups with similar policy interests will be formed and will meet periodically throughout the semester to complete the policy poster project. Group members will select one STATE LEVEL policy/issue interest. You may want to visit NASW website at http://www.socialworkers.org/advocacy/default.asp, ‘Legislative Issues’ for ideas.

• Your readings on policy analysis provide the Karger and Stoesz framework for analyzing policy. Use this framework to analyze your chosen policy. Use government documents, historical analyses and research articles to answer the following questions. You should have a minimum of 10 references listed below. Some class time will be designed for your group’s discussion as well as group consultation with your professor.

• The policy poster will be presented as a tabletop display.

• This POSTER and Presentation will have the following five headings* and address the following information:

1) **The Policy:** 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 there 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.

*Headings may change slightly; Professor will share final rubric with students.
• Each poster MUST be accompanied by a PowerPoint Presentation regarding the poster. This presentation must be **no more than 30 minutes in length**. Posters must contain graphs and pictures in order to receive full credit.

• Poster Abstract: **Due one week before Poster Presentation**
Each Group must submit the abstract of your poster presentation. Do not exceed 500 words (excluding your references). Follow APA format.

• Details of grading this group project are as follows:
  
  o Groups may either chose to be graded as a group on this project or have their individual parts graded. **Upon submission of the poster to class, each group will be expected to let the professor know of their decision for grading.** In addition, each group member will submit their portion of the work completed on this project. **I reserve the right to deduct points from an individual’s final grade if the work is not correct or reflective of graduate level work.**

  o Students are expected to actively participate in class presentations. This includes your active participation in your group project and in viewing others’ presentations.

  o The practice of policy 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. **Be aware, if one group member is not pulling their own weight, not showing up on time or at all for meetings, being difficult to deal with, or simply refusing to do work, then this member may receive an automatic zero for the project.** This is a professional program in which my goal is to prepare students to lead an organization. If students are not acting professionally, then it brings the whole group down and this simply will not be tolerated here or in the workforce.

5) **Extra Credit: Social Work Day on the Hill attendance (3 points added to end)**

**Course Outline**

**Class 1: January 13**

**TOPICS:**
• Course overview: Review syllabus, class assignments, required texts, assigned readings, academic integrity.
• Come to class having already reviewed the syllabus and blackboard site. Be ready with questions before class.

**Class 2: January 20**

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

Class 3 January 27

TOPICS:
• 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

Class 4 February 3

TOPICS:
• 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

Class 5 February 10

TOPICS:
• 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:
  • Chapter 3. Social Values & Social Welfare: England from the middle ages onward
  • Chapter 4. Social Values and Social Welfare: the American Experience
  • Chapter 5. America, Poverty, Two Paths.
Class 6: February 17: Policy Poster Abstracts Due

TOPICS:
- 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

Readings due for this class:
  Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 5

- Policy Poster Abstracts due

Class 7: February 24: Group Policy Poster Presentations

- Policy Poster Presentations begin

Class 8: March 2: Group Policy Poster Presentations

- Policy Poster Presentations end

Class 9: March 9

TOPICS:
- 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
  Film: Brother Outsider

March 16: Spring Break, No class

Class 10: March 23

TOPICS:

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

Public Assistance Programs
• U.S. Social policies and programs for the poor
• AFDC, Nutritional Programs: SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, Housing
• Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Readings due for this class:
Karger & Stoesz, Chapters 10 & 11, 17 (369-379)

Class 11: March 30

Social Work Day on the Hill: Extra Credit for attendance

Class 12: April 6

TOPICS:
• The American Health Care System
• Who are the Uninsured?
• Medicare, Medicaid
• Reforming US Health Care
• Health Care: an International Perspective

Readings due for this class:
Karger & Stoesz, Chapters 12
Film: Sicko

Class 13: April 13 Policy Brief Due

TOPICS:
• Mental Health & Substance Abuse Policy
• Mental Health Reform
• History of Community Mental Health & Deinstitutionalization Prevention
• Substance Abuse: history and services

Readings for this class:
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 13
Film: Willowbrook

Class 14: April 20

TOPICS:
• History of child welfare
• Contemporary Issues in child welfare
• Foster Care & Adoption

Readings due for this class:
  Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 15

Class 15: April 27 Quizzes due

  • Wrap-up
  • All quizzes must be taken by April 27 at 1pm Central.