

SWK-S 251 History and Analysis of Social Welfare Policy (3 cr.)

Course Information

Semester Year: xxxx
Section Number: xxx
Location: xxx
Day: xxx
Time: xxx

Instructor: xxx
Office: xxx
Email: xxx
Phone: xxx
Office Hours: xxx

Course Description

This course is designed to provide a historical perspective on the evolution of social welfare policies and programs and allow students to develop beginning policy analysis skills so that students will be able to identify gaps in the service delivery system and inequitable or oppressive aspects of current policy delivery. Students acquire knowledge of the prevailing social, political, ideological, and economic contexts that gave rise to the various social welfare policies and programs and have influenced how programs and policies have changed over time. In addition, the interrelationship and sources of conflict between the evolving profession of social work and social welfare services are explored. This course builds on knowledge and theories learned in S141 Introduction to Social Work and prepares students for S352 Social Service Delivery Systems. In this class students will build critical thinking skills as they consider forces and influences that have led to the social service delivery system that exist today which will allow them to explore practical methods to influence policy in S352. A particular emphasis in this course is to increase students understanding of how social welfare policies impact vulnerable people and build a passion for advocating for social and economic justice.

Course Competencies

Council on Social Work Education (CWSE) 2015 EPAS Competencies addressed by this course.

Primary

- 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected (CSWE, 2015 EPAS, p. 7).

- 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development (CSWE, 2015 EPAS, p. 8).

Secondary

- 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Course Objectives

- S251-01:** Describe the broad historical themes relevant to an understanding of contemporary social welfare programs and issues.
- S251-02:** Identify the origins of major social welfare program and policy developments, and the contributions of outstanding persons involved in such developments.
- S251-03:** Think critically about the relationships between economic, social, political, and cultural forces in social policy development and analysis, and the evolution of social welfare institutions.
- S251-04:** Analyze the major diverse value orientations in the United States, social welfare and social work, and the impact of these values conflicts on social and economic justice and diversity.
- S251-05:** Understand the historical development and characteristics of specific practice fields or service delivery systems, e.g., child welfare, mental health, income maintenance, health, school, and family social services.
- S251-06:** Identify the values commitments and ideological assumptions in social policy analysis.
- S251-07:** Discuss the social welfare system in Indiana.
- S251-08:** Identify the values, commitments, ideological assumptions and research-based evidence in social policy proposals.

Required Texts

Karger, H.J., & Stoesz, D. (2005). American social welfare policy: A pluralist approach (8th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Course Content

In this course, students will explore the history and evolution of policies and discuss the social, political and economic factors that influence policy. Students will learn about and use social policy analysis frameworks to examine how policy is shaped and changes over time.

Because policy practice is rarely done individually, this course is taught using Team Based Learning. Building skills is considered as important as providing content. Students will work in teams throughout the semester on a variety of assignments. They will practice the skills of dividing work, communicating with each other outside of class, conflict resolution and determining how to best apply their strengths to assignments as well as using assignments to address areas of growth.

Students complete team based applications of policy analysis in most class periods. Specific areas addressed include exploring the history of policies and how social norms and economic factors influence policy and change over time. Examining policy issues from multiple perspectives and debating appropriate trade-offs and compromises in the development and application of policy.

The signature assignment to measure competency is an individual policy analysis report.

Resources

- Canvas email will also be used a way to communicate between instructor and students. You are expected to check the course announcements on Canvas before each class.
- Additional readings will be assigned throughout the semester and be posted on Canvas (Resource tab).

Course Outline

Module 1: Course introduction

Dates:

Overview

- A. Introduction to course
- B. Review syllabus
- C. Begin discussion of team goals and expectations
- D. Form team

Assignments

Readings

1. No readings

Written Assignments

1. Questions/concerns
2. Course topic preferences
3. Student information

Module 2: Introduce policy analysis

Dates:

Overview

- A. Clarify difference between policies and programs
- B. Team building exercises
- C. Establish team goals and expectations

Assignments

Readings

1. Karger & Stoesz 6th ed. Pg 2-10 and pg 28-35
2. Resources on underage consumption and prohibition provided in Canvas

Written Assignments

1. Individual goals and roles
2. Team goals and norms
3. Scouting report for team application #1
4. Essay: Policy example

Module 3: Foundations for policy analysis

Dates:

Overview

- A. Policy analysis
- B. Introduce cognitive development

Assignments

Readings

1. No additional readings

Written Assignments

1. Pre class prep: Impressions of underage drinking

Module 4: Values on which policy is based

Dates:

Overview

- A. Provide examples of impact of values on policy
- B. Teams complete task one of team application # 1
- C. Begin work on semester project

Assignments

Readings

1. Karger & Stoesz (6th ed.) Pg. 28-35
2. Additional readings provided in Canvas

Written Assignments

1. Scouting report for team application #2
2. Scouting report for Team policy project and Individual research project

Module 5: Complete analysis of policy on underage consumption, begin poverty

Dates:

Overview

- A. Complete tasks 2 and 3 of team application #1
- B. Poverty and marginalization
- C. Begin “TED Talks”

Assignments

Readings

1. Student choice to address research area assigned to teams
2. Additional readings provided in Canvas

Written Assignments

1. Pre class prep: assumptions about poverty
2. Scouting report for legislative process game

Module 6: Poverty

Dates:

Overview

- A. Complete “TED Talks”
- B. Discussion of ideas presented in TED Talks
- C. Teams complete Task 2 of second team application

Assignments

Readings

1. No additional readings

Written Assignments

1. Policy project proposal

Module 7: Poverty: Impact of poverty

Dates:

Overview

- A. Examples of impact of poverty and discussion
- B. Teams complete final task of team application #2
- C. Teams present ideas on policies to address poverty

Assignments

Readings

1. No additional readings

Written Assignments

1. First peer update
2. Strategy for Legislative process game

Module 8: Legislative process

Dates:

Overview

- A. Overview of the legislative process and role of party control of the legislature
- B. Legislative process game
- C. Individual consultation with teams to review semester project.

Assignments

Readings

1. Resources on legislative process provided in Canvas

Written Assignments

1. No written assignments

Module 9: Intimate Partner Violence

Dates:

Overview

- A. History of IPV policy - Teams present timelines of history of IPV
- B. Guest lecture on healthy relationships and policy present in high schools
- C. Discussion of research on IPV, impact of misguided policies, social workers roles
- D. Teams present policy ideas to address IPV

Assignments

Readings

1. Multiple resources provided in Canvas
2. Student choice to research aspects of IPV

Written Assignments

1. Scouting report for team application #4
2. Research update

Module 10: Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Dates:

Overview

- A. Research on harm of specific substances and reasons some are legal and some are not.
- B. Explore gun violence and beliefs about people with mental health challenges
- C. Teams complete team application 4

Assignments

Readings

1. Multiple resources provided in Canvas

Written Assignments

1. Project update (one per team)
2. Peer review #2

Module 11: Consultation on research and team semester projects

Dates:

Overview

- A. Meet individually with students to review research projects
- B. Meet individually with teams to review semester team project

Module 12: Neoliberalism

Dates:

Overview

- A. Present information on the history and impact of neoliberalism
- B. Discuss income inequality and various perspectives on the role of government
- C. Students participate in in-class survey on beliefs regarding government services
- D. Teams complete team application #5

Assignments

Readings

1. TBD Posted in Canvas

Written Assignments

1. TBD Posted in Canvas

Assignments and Grading

More specific instructions for each assignment will be posted on Canvas. Instructor also will discuss details or answer any questions related to assignment during the class and office hours.

All assignments should be produced on a word processor (or typed), double spaced, with one-inch margins on all sides, carefully edited and proofed, using no smaller than a 12 point font, and conforming to APA style (6th ed.)

Assignments

1. Attendance
 - a. DUE:
 - b. Final Grade Percentage:variable depending on number of absences
2. Participation
 - a. DUE:
 - b. Final Grade Percentage:15%
3. Essay
 - a. DUE:
 - b. Final Grade Percentage:2.5%
4. Team applications
 - a. DUE:
 - b. Final Grade Percentage:30%
5. Policy Analysis Report (Signature Assignment)
 - a. DUE:
 - b. Final Grade Percentage:20%
6. Peer and research update
 - a. DUE:
 - b. Final Grade Percentage:2.5%
7. Team policy proposal
 - a. DUE:
 - b. Final Grade Percentage:10%
8. Peer evaluation
 - a. DUE:
 - b. Final Grade Percentage:15%

Assignment Details

Policy Analysis Report (Signature Assignment)

Each student will select a social problem and a policy that already exists that addresses the social problem and use the policy analysis framework from the text to analyze the policy. Students must address the historical background of the policy, the problems that necessitated the policy, the policy description, and analysis the policy including: the goals, political feasibility, economic feasibility and administrative feasibility. Critical thinking is required and all sides of the issue must be considered.

Students must use all relevant questions from the framework to analyze the policy. If students they feel some questions are not relevant to the policy they do not need to answer those questions, but should explain why they are not relevant.

Attendance

Attendance is critical to succeeding in this class. Serious illness, family emergencies, or other unusual circumstances will be taken into consideration if there is timely communication with the instructor. A pattern of arriving late to class will impact a student's attendance grade. **Failure to notify the instructor prior to class of your absence will result in an additional 5 point deduction.**

Present for all classes.....+3 points

Present for all but 1 class.....+1 point

Present for all but 4 classes-5 points

Present for all but 5 classes-10 points

Present for all but 6 classes- 30 points

Absent for more than 6 classesanother 20 points deducted for each additional absence

Participation

Participation points are based on all aspects of the class. Students are expected to be fully engaged in team activities, presentations and class discussions. Texting, sleeping, or other behaviors that are disruptive, or interfere with the student's ability to focus on the class topics will result in a point reduction.

Essay

In one page and in your own words:

Discuss why it is important for social workers to understand and be involved in shaping social welfare policy.

Provide an example from a volunteer or work experience of a policy and how it impacted services provided to clients or the work environment

Pre-class preps

Occasionally during the semester, students will complete a short assignment exploring their assumptions or beliefs about course topics. Pre-class preps are not graded, but must be turned in prior to class. Failure to complete this assignment will result in loss of 2 participation points.

In class team applications

For each topic discussed throughout the semester you will be given time in class to work on a project that helps you practice or better understand an issue or concept that is the focus of the class.

You will receive instructions for the projects prior to class. Teams are expected to prepare for these projects prior to class and submit initial answers prior to class. It may not be necessary for each team member to work on every project outside of class every week. It is up to each team to determine the most effective way to complete these assignments.

There will be time in class for each team to discuss the assignment and finalize your response.

While more specific guidelines will be provided for some projects, generally, the product you produce will be graded based on the following:

- A. Originality of response
- B. Demonstrated depth of understanding of materials provided
- C. Clarity of presentation of your ideas
- D. Evidence of critical thinking

Scouting Reports

Approximately 2 weeks prior to each team-based assignment teams must review the instructions for the assignment and turn in a report in Canvas. Each scouting report will have specific questions that must be addressed. In addition, teams should ask clarifying questions to ensure the instructions are understood. If a scouting report is not submitted on time, there is a one-letter grade deduction for the assignment. It is likely that teams will determine this assignment is best completed by one team member. If that is the case, it is critical that the scouting report is shared with and read by all team members.

Team Policy Proposal and presentation

Each team will research a policy area over the course of the semester and present a policy proposal that is based on research at the end of the semester. The purpose of this assignment is to provide an opportunity for students to learn how policies in a specific area were created, what social influences and values impacted the development of a policy and factors that have made the policy effective as well as unintended consequences.

Teams will determine a policy area they wish to focus on.

1. Teams must research the policy area in great depth and breadth. Multiple sources of information must be accessed. Sources of information can include: people who receive services, people who provide services, academic studies and innovative ideas from think tanks, policy institutes, or advocacy groups.

Research on the prevalence of a problem, populations most impacted by the social issue, historical trends of problem identification and how affected populations are viewed by society and societal responses should inform the team's policy proposal. Each team member is responsible for a specific area of research and will create a product that describes what information was found and conclusions drawn from the research. More detail on this aspect of the assignment is provided in the assignment description of the Individual Policy Research Project.

2. Teams will propose a policy based on research gathered during the semester. The policy proposal must be consistent with social work values and your proposal must include a discussion of how the proposal is compatible with social work values. It is important that team

members communicate and discuss their individual research over the course of the semester as the research gathered will be used to inform and shape your policy proposal.

Early in the semester, teams will write a plan that describes how they expect to complete the project and what tasks each team member will be responsible for. The instructor must approve the plan and will meet with teams to discuss their plans. Each team will need to decide how they will convey their policy proposal and information gathered from their research. In past semesters, teams have written and put on plays, used prezi or power point presentations, written and performed poetry or created games for this project.

3. The policy proposal, while informed by research done by team members, is **not** a summary of the research done by individual team members. The proposal will detail a proposed change in policy that is supported by the research done. The proposal will not necessarily incorporate all research and will likely emphasize some areas of research more than others.
4. The grade for this assignment will be based on how clearly the issue and policy proposal are described, creativity in the use of media (power point slides, webcasts, video clips, youtube, etc.) to present and illustrate the issue, presentation is completed within time limit, each member of team participates in the presentation, enthusiasm shown and engagement of the audience as well as how questions are addressed.

Each team will identify an area of practice or a target population about which you would like to learn more. Some of the broad areas of interest are listed below:

- Civil rights for people of color or women or GLBT
- Health care policy and financing – managed care
- Developmental disabilities
- Child welfare - abuse and neglect, foster care
- Child welfare - education and child care, child labor
- Substance abuse
- Employment, training, and job development
- Family planning - birth control and abortion
- Community planning and service coordination, fundraising
- Welfare reform and self-sufficiency
- Homelessness and housing
- Mental health
- Food & nutrition programs
- Juvenile justice
- Basic needs of elderly
- Public health & sanitation
- Income maintenance

Team Project Updates

During the course of the semester you will be asked to provide updates on the progress of your team project. You will earn full credit for this assignment if substantive updates are provided by the due dates.

Peer Evaluation

Each student will evaluate the contributions of each team member. There will be a handout for guidance. 20 points of the peer evaluation score is based on the average of all scores provided by your team members and 30 points of the score is based on the quality and timeliness of feedback given in the evaluation of team mates. 10 points of the score is based on your self-reflection on your contributions to the team.

Grading Standards

Papers are graded on the quality of the final product not on the effort you extended completing them. The grade of A is reserved for truly outstanding work that goes beyond basic requirements.

Grades of A reflect Excellence. Excellent scholarly products and academic or professional performances are substantially superior to the “good,” “the high quality,” “the competent,” or the “satisfactory.” They are unusual, exceptional, and extraordinary. Criteria for assignments are not only met, they are exceeded by a significant margin. Excellence is a rare phenomenon. As a result, relatively few BSW students earn A grades.

Grades of B signify good or high quality scholarly products and academic or professional performance. Grades in the B range reflect work expected of a conscientious student in a professional program. Criteria for assignments are met in a competent, thoughtful, and professional manner. However, the criteria are not exceeded and the quality is not substantially superior to other good quality products or performances. There is a clear distinction between the good and the excellent. We expect that most BSW students will earn grades in the B range—reflecting the good or high quality work expected of competent future helping professionals.

Grades of C and C+ signify work that is marginal in nature. The scholarly products or professional performances meet many but not all of the expected criteria. The work approaches but does not quite meet the standards of quality expected of a student in a professional school. Satisfactory in many respects, its quality is not consistently so and cannot be considered of good or high quality. We anticipate that a minority of BSW students will earn C and C+ grades.

Grades of C- and lower reflect work that is unsatisfactory. The products or performances do not meet several, many, or most of the criteria. The work fails to approach the standards of quality expected of a student and a future BSW-level professional. We anticipate that a small percentage of BSW students will earn unsatisfactory grades of C-, D, and F.

Grading scale

Grade minimums are as follows [Note: grades below a C are Unsatisfactory in the BSW Program]:

A	93%	Excellent, Exceptional Quality
A-	90%	Superior Quality
B+	87%	Very Good, Slightly Higher Quality

B	83%	Good, High Quality (expected of most BSW students)
B-	80%	Satisfactory Quality
C+	77%	Marginal, Modestly Acceptable Quality
C	73%	Marginal, Minimally Acceptable Quality
C-	70%	Unsatisfactory Quality

Websites relevant to this course:

[Social Work Policy Analysis on Eastern Michigan University website](#)

List of think tanks with links and brief descriptions.

[Foreign Affairs Online "Think Tanks and Research Institutes" Compilation by Colgate University](#)

Alphabetical listing with brief description. Very extensive list of think tanks and research institutes.

[Influencing State Policy](#)

[Social Work Access Network](#)

Social Work Access Network (Website with many policy resources from a European perspective)

[APA Style Website](#)

Electronic Reference Formats Recommended by the American Psychological Association

Governmental websites:

[U.S. Department of Justice Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse](#)

[U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families, Children's Bureau](#)

[Indiana's Family and Social Services Administration](#)

[Indiana's Division of Family and Children](#)

[AccessIndiana The Official Web Portal for the State of Indiana](#)

Advocacy organizations:

[Coalition on Human Needs](#)

Tracks legislation at the federal level

[Catholic Campaign for Human Development](#)

[National Center for Juvenile Justice](#)

[Welfare Information Network: Child Welfare Services](#)

[Child Welfare League of America](#)

[Child Welfare Information Gateway](#)

[Mental Health America](#)

[Indiana Coalition for Human Services](#)

Relevant journals (Available on-line through the Wells library website)

1. *Advances in Social Work* Published by: Indiana University School of Social Work
2. *Australian Journal of Social Issues* Published by: Australian Council of Social Service
3. *British Journal of Social Work* Published by: British Association of Social Worker
4. *Child Abuse and Neglect* Published by: International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect
5. *Child Welfare* Published by: Child Welfare League of America
6. *Children and Schools* Published by: National Association of Social Workers
7. *Child and Family Social Work* Published by: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
8. *Families in Society* Published by: Alliance for Children and Families
9. *Health and Social Work* Published by: National Association of Social Workers
10. *Journal of Offender and Addictions Counseling* Published by: American Counseling Association
11. *Journal of Children and Poverty* Published by: Routledge
12. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services* Published by: Hawthorn Press
13. *Journal of Health Care for Poor and Underserved* Published by: Johns Hopkins University Press
14. *Journal of Social Policy* Published by: Cambridge University Press
15. *Policy and Practice of Public Human Services* Published by: American Public Human Services Association
16. *Quality in Aging* Published by: Pavilion Journals (Brighton) Ltd.
17. *Social Work* Published by: National Association of Social Workers