

Introduction to Social Welfare Policy and Services

Social Work 530 (section 006) -- Fall, 2009

Wednesdays, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

2302 School of Education Building

Professor Lawrence S. Root

2770 School of Social Work Building

734/763-6581 lroot@umich.edu

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the history and analysis of social welfare policy and services. It explores current social welfare issues in the context of their history and the underlying rationale and values that support different approaches. Emphasis is placed on major fields of social work service such as: income maintenance, health care, mental health, child welfare, corrections, and services to the elderly. Analytic frameworks with regard to social welfare policies and services will be presented. These frameworks identify strengths and weaknesses in the current social welfare system with respect to multiculturalism and diversity, social justice and social change, behavioral and social science theory/research, and social work relevant promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation programs and services.

Course Content

There are four main content areas for the course.

1. The philosophic and practical basis for social welfare provisions, including consideration of the respective roles and relationships of:
 - the individual
 - the family
 - the community, groups, educational settings, churches, workplaces, and the nonprofit sector
 - the government at various geographic levels.
2. The history of social welfare provisions and the social work profession:
 - from the altruistic philanthropist to the development of professional practice
 - the emergence of distinct methods of practice in their historical context
 - the influence of religious values, ethics, and social and political climates on the profession's development
 - the emergence of specific policies and programs within their historical, social and political contexts.
3. A critical analysis of current social welfare policies, procedures, and programs, nationally and cross-nationally with attention to:

- the strengths and weaknesses of various policies, programs and procedures
 - evolving population needs
 - the ways in which current policies and programs address promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation issues, and social justice/social change perspectives.
4. Descriptions and analyses of major areas of social welfare provision and patterns of their delivery, including, but not limited to:
- services for families, children, adolescents, adults, and the aging (including income maintenance, foster care, protective services, and school social work)
 - mental and physical health services including those targeted toward promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation
 - community service programs
 - correctional services and criminal justice.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the historical basis for the current U.S. social welfare system, including the history and role of the social work profession.
2. Describe and critically analyze current social welfare policies, procedures, and programs with an understanding of their evolution over time as a function of historical circumstances, scientific/research findings, and the role of values.
3. Describe and critically analyze social welfare policies/services from a multicultural perspective.
4. Discuss and critically analyze current debates, trends, and ethical issues in each specific field of service presented in the course including the implications for social work practice and promoting social justice and social change.

Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes

1. *Multiculturalism and Diversity.* This course will seek to identify how the cultural or experiential situation of individuals and groups impact their perspectives on and experience of social welfare policies and practices.
2. *Social Justice and Social Change.* The course critically analyzes current trends and ethical issues and their implications for social justice and social change.
3. *Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation.* The course gives attention to the ways in which current policies and programs address promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.
4. *Behavioral and Social Science Research.* Analytic frameworks drawn from behavioral and social science literature and research are presented for each field of service.

Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values

The historical overview in this course includes an analysis of the value base of the profession. Ethical responsibilities of social workers within fields of service will be reviewed as well as codes of ethical conduct and potential conflicts that can arise.

Course Requirements

The following are course requirements. If students have special needs or circumstances that would interfere with their ability to complete these requirements, they should contact the instructor so that suitable accommodations can be arranged.

Class attendance and preparation

Students are expected to attend and to be prepared to take part in each class session. Attendance is important to keep up with course work. It is the student's responsibility to get materials, handouts, or class notes from one of your classmates if you are not in class. Late arrival to class is disruptive and should be avoided.

In addition to weekly attendance and readings, there may be occasional short assignments designed to develop concepts discussed in class.

Regular attention to news sources

The best way to sharpen your understanding of current policy issues is to be a critical consumer of news. The traditional way to keep current on policy issues is to regularly read a major national newspaper. The New York Times and Wall Street Journal both have delivery in southeast Michigan. Their news accounts are generally considered reliable, although their editorial or opinion pieces generally reflect a particular orientation. The online versions of these papers, and others, such as the Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times, provide good sources of traditional news coverage.

Broadcast news sources, such as daily news shows and specials, such as Washington Week in Review, Meet the Press, and Nightline, provide another useful source of information. The News Hour with Jim Lehrer on Public Television, which covers top national stories, is an excellent weekday source of more in-depth discussion of emerging policy issues.

The proliferation of cable news/commentary, as well as the overwhelming number of online news shows, news aggregators, and blogs, reinforces the importance critically assessing sources.

Library assignment

The Social Work Library has developed a tutorial specifically designed to help individuals obtain Web-based information relevant to social welfare policies and services. The tutorial, which is located at <<http://guides.lib.umich.edu/content.php?pid=44021>>, addresses a broad range of resources about primary sources (such as federal legislation, state and local laws, and

statistics on programs) and secondary sources (such as analyses of the impacts of policies). The website also has a “quiz” to test how well you have mastered this material. You are expected to complete the quiz (with a score of 80% or better) by October 9.

Midterm examination

There will be an in-class midterm covering the introduction to social policy and the historical section (Parts I and II). Students will be able to use their own notes from class or the readings.

Presentation on a current policy issue

In Part III, students, working in small groups, will present a current policy issue. This is intended to simulate a short presentation to an interest group. The audience/context for the presentation will be specified by the instructor, based on the topic addressed and in consultation with each group. Although the format/content may vary with the specific topic, the typical presentation will: (1) identify the policy issue and the options facing policy makers; (2) describe the relevant arguments and evidence concerning the issue; and (3) seek a conclusion by the class of a decision concerning the policy issue.

Written policy brief

The final project will be a written presentation on a current policy issue. It is expected that this will be an individual project, building on the in-class group presentation. This presentation may be in the form of a traditional paper or it may include additional elements, such as hyper-links or multi-media. Ideally, the product can be used by the student as a part of their professional portfolio.

General expectations for written work

Written work will be evaluated in relation to how well it addresses the topic and the clarity of presentation. It is important to re-read work before turning it in. If possible, you should have someone who is unfamiliar with your subject read your paper before you submit it. Ask them to read for clarity of your writing, if you omitted a word or phrase, or if you used the wrong word. Spell checkers and grammar checkers are useful, but not as reliable as a human reader.

Students are expected to avoid “language that might imply sexual, ethnic, or other kinds of discrimination, stereotyping, or bias. (*Health and Social Work, 11:3, Summer 1986.*)

Plagiarism – presenting another’s words or ideas as your own – is a serious violation of academic integrity and can be grounds for failure on an assignment and other disciplinary action as described under the School’s policies on academic misconduct.

Grading

The criteria used for each letter grade are:

- A** Demonstration of a level of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in completion of the assignment that clearly exceeds expectations for the assignment or the course
- B** Mastery of subject content at level of expected competency at the graduate level – fully meeting course expectations
- C** Demonstrates some understanding of subject content, but improvement is needed to have mastery of the subject matter
- E** Student does not demonstrate sufficient understanding of course material to receive course credit

A plus (+) or minus (-) designation is used to indicate gradations above or below the level indicated by the grade.

All grading has a subjective element. If, after you read my feedback, you have questions about your grade, please feel free to see me about them.

All assignments are due on the date specified. If you have schedule conflicts with one of the due dates, please see me ahead of time. If you have any special needs with respect to religious observances, health, disability, or other concerns that may affect your fulfillment of any course requirements, please see me individually.

The final grade for the class will be determined taking into account the following:

Class preparation and participation	10%
Midterm examination	35%
Class presentation of policy issue	20%
Policy brief (written assignment)	35%

Course Materials

There are two required texts and electronic reserves of readings for this class. In addition to the texts and reserve readings, Internet-based and other class resources may be suggested.

Barusch, Amanda Smith (2009). *Foundations of Social Policy: Social Justice in Human Perspective* (3rd edition). Belmont, CA: Thomson-Brooks/Cole. (The 2006, 2nd edition is an acceptable substitute)

Axinn, June & Stern, MarkJ. (2008). *Social Welfare: A History of American Response to Need* (7th edition). NY: Allyn & Bacon.

Additional readings are available online (“electronic reserves”) on Ctools course site.

Internet: You will find many useful resources for researching papers on the internet. In general, use peer-reviewed materials or original historical materials for primary source material for your research. Government web sites may also be used as primary sources. If you use research published by research institutions (think tanks), try to balance their analyses with reports from other institutions with different political or ideological perspectives. When citing a website, be sure to fully spell out the website address (URL) and the download date so that the reader can find the page you used.

Course Outline

Part I: Introduction and a framework addressing social welfare policy

Session 1--Sept. 9 Introduction to course and initial discussion of social policy frameworks

Readings:

Axinn and Stern, Ch. 1: Introduction

Session 2--Sept. 16 Overview of social welfare and social policy analysis

Readings:

Barusch

Ch. 1: Social Justice and Social Workers

Ch. 2: The Government's Role

Ch. 3: Policy Analysis and Policy Practice

Electronic Reserve:

Michael Reisch (2002). "Defining social justice in a socially unjust world." Families in Society: Journal of Contemporary Human Services, 83 (4). Pp. 343-354.

Part II: Historical focus—development of social welfare programs in the US

Session 3--Sept. 23 Colonial times to the Civil War

Readings:

Axinn and Stern

Ch. 2: The Colonial Period: 1647-1776

Ch. 3: The Pre-Civil War Period: 1777-1860

Electronic Reserve:

Somers M. R. & Block, F. (2005). From poverty to perversity: Ideas, markets, and institutions over 200 years of welfare debate. American Sociological Review, 70, (2), pp. 260-287.

Session 4—Sept. 30 From the Civil War through the Progressive Era and Emergence of Professional Social Work

Readings:

Axinn and Sterner

Ch. 4: The Civil War and After: 1860 – 1900

Ch. 5: Progress and Reform: 1900 – 1930

Electronic Reserve:

Howard N. Rabinowitz (1974). "From exclusion to segregation: Health and welfare services for southern Blacks, 1865-1890," Social Service Review 84(3): 327-354.

Elizabeth Bussiere (1997). "The 'Maternalist' Movement for Mothers' Pensions in the Progressive Era," in (Dis)Entitling the Poor: The Warren Court, Welfare Rights, and the American Political Tradition, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, pp. 47-62.

Session 5--Oct. 7 The Great Depression, the New Deal and the Shaping of U.S. Social Welfare Policy

Readings:

Axinn and Stern

Ch. 6: The Depression and the New Deal, 1930-1940

Barusch

Ch. 4: The Social Security Act

Electronic Reserves:

Paul K. Longmore & David Goldberger (2000). "The League of the Physically Handicapped and the Great Depression," The Journal of American History 87(3): 888-922.

Donna Cooper Hamilton & Charles V. Hamilton (1997). "Coping with the New Deal," in The Dual Agenda: The African American Struggle for Civil and Economic Equality, New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 8-42.

Library assignment to be completed by October 9

Session 6--Oct. 14 From the Great Society and the War on Poverty to Ending-Welfare-as-We-Know-It

Readings:

Axinn and Stern

Ch. 7: War and Prosperity: 1940-1968

Ch. 8: Conservative Resurgence and Social change: 1968-1992

Ch. 9: Social Welfare and the Information Society: 1992-2007

Barusch

Ch. 5: Poverty

Electronic Reserves:

Michael Harrington (1962). "The invisible land," in The Other America: Poverty in the United States. Penguin Books.

Jared Bernstein (2001). Let the war on the poverty line commence.
Foundation for Child Development.

Mark R. Rank (2003). "As American as apple pie: poverty and welfare." Contexts: Understanding People in their Social Worlds 2 (3). Pp. 41-49.

Session 7--Oct. 21 No class meeting -- Internet-based Q&A session to be scheduled as a review for midterm

Session 8—Oct. 28 Midterm

Part III: Specific policies, programs, and vulnerable populations

In each of the policy areas below, we shall address targets for social work and social welfare policies. Student presentations will highlight particular current policy issues within these broad areas.

Session 9—Nov 4 Children and Child Welfare

Readings:

Barusch

Ch. 11: Children

Electronic Reserves:

Mary Larner, Richard E. Berhman, Marie Young, Kathleen Reich, "Caring for infants and toddlers: Analysis and recommendations" The Future of Children (2001). Pp. 7-19.

Linda Gordon (1995). "Putting children first: Women, maternalism, and welfare in the early twentieth century," in Linda K. Kerber, Alice Kessler-Harris, and Kathryn Kish Sklar, eds. U.S. History as Women's History: New Feminist Essays, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, pp. 63-86.

"Kids Count" webpage: <<http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/>>

Sessions 10 & 11—Nov. 11 & 18 Health and Disabilities

Readings:

Barusch

Ch. 6: Physical Illness

Ch. 7: Mental Illness

Ch. 8: Disability

Electronic Reserves: (select according to your specific interests)

- Mardi Coleman et al (2005). Overview of Publicly Funded Managed Behavioral Health Care. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health*, 32 (4), 321-340.
- Stephen H. Gorin (2000). "Inequality and health: Implications for social work," *Health & Social Work* 25 (4). Pp. 270-275.
- Carol Mowbray & Mark Holter (2002). Mental health and mental illness: Out of the closet. *Social Service Review*, 76 (1). pp. 135-179.
- CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services), The Mental Health Parity Act
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/healthinsreformforconsume/04_t_hementalhealthparityact.aspxsummary>.
- Carol Mowbray, Kyle Grazier, & Mark Holter (2002). Managed Behavioral Health Care in the Public Sector: Will it Become the Third Shame of the States. *Psychiatric Services*, 53 (2), 157-170.
- Human Rights Watch (2003). Summary, Recommendations, and Background. In *Ill-equipped: U.S. prisons and offenders with mental illness*. New York, NY. Pp. 1-29.
- CDC, Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities
<<http://www.cdc.gov/omhd/About/about.htm>>

Session 12--Nov. 25 Policies and Services for the Elderly

Readings:

Barusch

Ch. 13: The Elderly

Electronic Reserves:

Federal Interagency Forum on Aging Related Statistics (2008). *Older Americans update 2008: Key indicators of well-being*. Hyattsville, MD. 1-75.

Session 13--Dec. 2 Discrimination and Opportunity

Readings:

Barusch

Ch. 9: People of Color

Ch. 10: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Individuals

Ch. 12: Women

Electronic Reserves:

The Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University (June 2006). *African American Men Survey*. The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, Washington, DC.

Also, go to the Washington Post website for a variety of current perspectives on the situation of African American men in the U.S.

<<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/metro/interactives/blackmen/blackmen.html>>

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Federal laws prohibiting Job Discrimination: Questions and answers.

<<http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/qanda.html>>

Cynthia C. Poindexter (1997). Sociopolitical antecedents to Stonewall: Analysis of the origins of the Gay Rights movement in the United States. *Social Work* 42 (6): 607-615.

Session 14--Dec. 9 Employment and Labor Standards

Readings

Barusch

Ch. 14: Working Americans

Electronic Reserves:

Root and Choi (in press). Work in the lives of social work clients: Perspectives of field instructors, *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*