1. Course Description:

This course will examine social policies, problems, and trends in social programs and services for older people. It will focus major attention on the strengths and limitations of existing policies and programs related to health, mental health, income maintenance, income deficiency, dependent care, housing, employment and unemployment, and institutional and residential care. This course will provide a framework for an analysis of the services provided to older people. This analysis will include the adequacy with which needs are met in various subgroups of the elderly population and across core diversity dimensions (including ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation). It will also include proposals for change in policies, programs and services. Programs will be compared in terms of access to benefits and services provided to older people.

2. Course Content:

This course will familiarize students with social policies and programs for meeting the rapidly growing needs of the older population in our society. Policies, programs, and services for the elderly population will be examined from historical, observational, and analytical perspectives. This course will increase the student’s awareness of programs and services provided through the Older Americans Act, the Social Security Act, the Affordable Care Act, and as a consequence of public and community initiatives. Students will be exposed to content areas that will enable them to understand aging programs dealing with social services, health care, housing, and other elements of community and institutional long-term care systems.

3. Course Objectives:

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

1. Describe the evolution and organization of policies and services for older people in the context of the problems that give rise to the need for such policies and services.
2. Critique the strengths and weaknesses of the U.S. social service delivery system for older people.
3. Identify the problems facing the development of services for older people and suggest approaches to address these challenges.
4. Identify criteria for assessing the success of programs for older people.
5. Critically evaluate alternative policies and services for older people with a special emphasis on similarities and differences related to human diversity and dynamics of oppression and privilege.
6. Discuss typical ethical concerns related to policies and services for elderly people.
7. Use a political economy framework to critically evaluate policies and services provided to older people in terms of such issues as privilege, oppression, diversity and social justice.

4. Course Design:

This course will include short lectures with discussions, student presentations, and guest lectures by expert policy practitioners. These lectures and presentations will address specific policies and programs/services for older people within both an historical and a contemporary context. Additionally, this course will include a field component in which students will engage in the process of analyzing selected current aging policy issues, under the supervision of the instructor. The readings and assignments are designed to enhance student’s ability to engage in public policy debate, assess the impact of current policy proposals, and identify solutions that represent the best interests of older adults. Assignments will provide an opportunity to develop and demonstrate skills in communications to influence public policy.

5. Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:

- **Multiculturalism and Diversity** will be addressed through analysis of differences in needs among subgroups of the elderly population within the U.S. society and the differential application and impact of policies and services.

- **Social Justice and Social Change** will be addressed by considering issues such as the distribution of social security and other benefits, varying standards for assessing the need for intervention (e.g., protective services and guardianship), and differing outcomes for behavior considered harmful to self or others.

- **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation** will be addressed by considering the spectrum of policies and services ranging from promotion and prevention (e.g., pre-retirement programs and in-home services) to treatment and rehabilitation (e.g., income support for those with inadequate resources and nursing homes).

- **Behavioral and Social Science Research** will be addressed by the inclusion of theoretical frameworks for understanding social roles, social stratification, and societal functioning among older people. The findings of research studies and evidence based intervention relevant to the design and evaluation of policies and services for older adults will also be included.
6. Relationship to Social Work Ethics and Values:

This course will address social work values and ethics in terms of the extent to which policies and services adequately meet the needs of older people. Special emphasis will be given to ethics and values concerning policies and services that provide older people with autonomy.

7. Intensive Focus on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS):

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self knowledge and self awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

Intensive focus content for this course includes social justice, oppression, and power relationships that have implications for social policies and services for elderly people. The “political economy of aging” paradigm, a social policy paradigm by Dr. Carol Estes and colleagues, is used to critically analyze policies and services provided to older people. The political economy of aging paradigm addresses the “interlocking systems of oppression’ of race, class, gender, and aging,” thereby creating an excellent model for understanding oppression, privilege, and proposals for change. These concepts will also be addressed through a series of class discussions about common situations in aging policy practice where PODS issues are prominent in the development and application of public policy.

VI. Organization of Course

The class will be conducted in a seminar fashion, which will include lectures, guest speakers, discussions, and student presentations. Lectures will provide a point of departure from basic policy foundation information included in the readings, and update the historical context of issues with discussions about the most relevant current issues in gerontological social work practice today. Required reading and assignments are structured for the purpose of increasing students’ understanding of current programs and policies, and to develop skills in the practice of successful systems change.

VII. Expectations of Faculty and Students

Students are expected to complete all required readings, as well as take initiative in identifying additional reading material as required to successfully complete assignments. Assigned readings will be the topic of classroom discussion, and students will be expected to participate actively in these discussions with knowledge of the reading topics evident. All written assignments must be completed on time, unless prior approval for a late submission is granted by the instructor due to unusual circumstances. Late submissions may be penalized. Students must attend all class
sessions unless illness or other emergency makes attendance impossible. In case of illness or other emergency, the student should contact instructor immediately and follow up with written evidence if requested. Failure to attend class, leaving class early, or submitting untimely assignments will result in points deducted from final grade.

Please see the Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct in the Student Guide to the Master’s in Social Work Degree Program (http://www.ssw.umich.edu/studentGuide/2010/) for a discussion of student responsibilities for academic conduct and integrity. In particular, please pay attention to issues related to plagiarism. Students who are found responsible for academic misconduct are subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the School of Social Work, revocation of degree, or any other sanction deemed appropriate to address the violation.

If you need accommodation for a disability or other special need, please let the instructor know as early as possible (by the third week of class) so that we can work out the necessary arrangements. Also note that Office of Student Services at the SSW offers support to students with disabilities, as well as students with other issues such as emotional, health, family, and financial problems. Please notify instructor if religious observances conflict with class or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

Instructor will present course content, make expectations clear, provide consultation and direction in the completion of assignments, and be accessible to students for discussion. Instructor will be available to students after each class, and can be reached at the Area Agency on Aging 1-B during normal business hours, at home during evenings and weekends, and by e-mail.

VIII. COURSE REQUIREMENTS: PARTICIPATION, WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS, WRITING POLICY AND GRADING CRITERIA

Requirement 1: Legislative Analysis (20 points possible) Due Date: October 18

Part A: Students must select a legislative proposal that is currently under consideration by the U.S. Congress or a state legislature that will significantly impact the older adult population. Students must research the legislative proposal, prepare a fair and thorough analysis of the legislation, and determine an advocacy position that is in the best interest of older adults. The written policy must contain the following elements:

- Bill number and title
- Summary description (no more than three sentences)
- Background (rationale)
- Description of proposal
- Supporting arguments (pros)
- Opposing arguments (cons)
- Position statement (brief statement including position, rationale and any recommended amendments, if appropriate)

The written analysis must be no more than eight pages double-spaced, one-inch margins, 12-point font. Students must obtain a copy of the legislation, engage in field research on the issues
to which it relates, and interview key individuals with a stakeholder interest or decision-making role in the legislative proposal. The analysis will be judged on its breadth, reflection of diverse views, fairness, conciseness, and the extent to which a compelling case is made in support of the advocacy position. Extra credit of one point may be awarded for students who engage in advocacy on their selected issue by either writing an advocacy letter to key decision makers on the issue, or write and submit a letter to the editor.

Part B: Oral testimony of not more than five minutes must be presented in class, advocating the selected position on the legislation, at the October 18 class session. Testimony must simulate a presentation to a committee of Congress or the Legislature that would have jurisdiction over the bill. Following the testimony, questions will be asked. Testimony may be read or improvised. Testimony will be judged based on the apparent understanding of the issue, strength of the argument presented, and the manner in which questions are answered. The oral testimony will be worth 5 of the potential 25 points for this assignment.

Part C: A brief 30 second summation of the legislative issue, commonly referred to as an elevator speech, will be presented orally to the class on October 11. This speech will be judged based on its succinctness, clarity, and effectiveness in communicating the most salient aspects of the legislation, and its impact on older adults. This will be worth five of the potential 25 points for this assignment.

The instructor will review and comment on draft papers, or draft sections of papers, up until the due date. Students must allow 48 hours response time for comments on draft papers, which should be e-mailed to jimmegui@umich.edu.

Requirement 2: Public Policy Paper and PowerPoint Presentation (45 points possible) Due Date: December 6 or 13

Students must select a public policy issue that relates to a problem or unmet need of older persons, and research and prepare an 10 – 12 page maximum length (double spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margin) written analysis of the policy issue (not counting the cover page, appendices, or references). The analysis should be well researched, include a broad range of viewpoints on the issue, identify controversial provisions, and focus most of its content on a specific strategy that will provide a solution through policy change. The discussion of the strategy or recommendation for change including the cost/benefit analysis, must be at least half of the length of the paper, and may include discussion of policy or program change implementation issues and strategies. Instructor will discuss a range of public policy issues that can be selected as a topic for the public policy issue from which students may choose, or topics of interest to students can be selected, with prior approval. At a minimum, the policy position paper must include the following components:

- **Cover Page.** Include your name, title of the policy issue, and a summary stating the problem and your proposed solution
- **Problem Statement.** Describe the nature of the problem, using needs information, statistics, secondary data, and other research. Need information should be conveyed in a manner that surprises an informed reader – and contain a wow factor.
• **Solution.** The discussion of action needed to address the problem can include an identification of the barriers that prevent the problem from being solved, and reasons that the policy hasn’t, as well as should, be changed. Consideration must be given to fiscal and social impact, forces related to privilege and oppression, as well as the impact on majority, minority, and other sub-populations of older adults when relevant. The solution should describe the specific recommended policy change needed, and/or describe a programmatic solution that must be developed to address the identified problem. The solution section must include a detailed description of how the solution will be implemented, so the reader can judge its practicality and effectiveness. The proposed solution should address the issues identified in the problem statement section. Data and/or arguments that delineate the cost and benefits of the proposed solution, and justify its implementation, should be included.

• **Strategy.** The paper must include a strategy statement that indicates what actions are needed to implement the solution. Strategies may include obtaining resources or policy changes. Actions to achieve these may include advocacy, coalition building, legislative or administrative actions, funding acquisition, etc.

Papers will be judged on the level of effort apparent, thoroughness, breadth of analysis, and viability of proposed solution. Students must utilize a variety of design and visual tools to communicate the information in an interesting, stimulating, and engaging manner. Each paper must utilize at least one of the following components:

- A data table, chart, or graph
- Sidebar statement
- Text box statement
- Picture or image
- Infographic
- Quotation from an individual

Upon completion of the white paper, students will prepare a PowerPoint or Prezzi presentation and provide an oral and visual presentation in class on their selected issue. Prezzi or other presentations that are an alternative to PowerPoint will receive extra credit. The presentation must summarize and educate the viewer on the issue, and recommend a proposed policy solution. The presentation may be no longer than 10 minutes. This presentation will be worth 10 of the 45 points for this assignment. Sample presentation and design considerations will be reviewed in class.

The presentation must engage the audience utilizing a variety of techniques that will effectively communicate information while capturing their attention. Such techniques may include, but are not limited to:

- Pictures
- Images
- Charts, tables, or graphs
- Video
- Design elements
The instructor will review and comment on draft papers, or draft sections of papers, up until the due date. Students must allow 48 hours response time for comments on draft papers, which should be e-mailed to jimmcgui@emich.edu. Presentations will be scheduled for December 6 and 13.

Requirement 3: Public Policy Event (5 points) Due Date: On or Before December 13

Students are required to attend at least one policy event, such as an area agency on aging board or advisory council meeting, Michigan Commission on Services to the Aging, legislative hearing, aging nonprofit board meeting, or other community forum where aging policy issues are discussed. The instructor will identify qualified events to fulfill this responsibility. A summary of the policy event will be due within two weeks after attendance at the event, should be one page or less, and can be emailed to instructor. Students should be prepared to discuss their policy event and answer questions in class, if called upon. The summary should identify important constituencies represented, one or more policy issues discussed, and any action or outcome(s). Public Policy webinar participation can be substituted for local policy events, with approval from the instructor.

Requirement 4: Class Attendance and Participation (5 points)

Student attendance and participation in class discussion, and understanding of assigned readings and lectures will be assessed. Students are expected to contribute to class discussion with questions, analysis, and examples that relate to course topics. Full participation in class discussion and no more than one unexcused absence are required for full credit. A point may be deducted for each absence or tardiness more than one.

Requirement 5: Course Reading Summary Analysis (20 Points) Due Date: See Syllabus

There will be twenty summary paragraphs of assigned readings due, with a point earned for each reading summary submitted on time, for a total of 20 points. A written Summary Analysis paragraph will be required for all assigned readings, as indicated on the syllabus. Summaries are due for reading assignments noted with an asterisk in the Course Outline section of this syllabus (*). Electronic submission is preferred, with the text pasted into the email dialogue box, and emailed to: jimmcgui@umich.edu. Each summary analysis will consist of one paragraph for each separate reading assigned for that week. The analysis should present a major argument or point that the author makes. As you present the point also state the evidence presented to support the point. For example: “The author argues that the Medicare program as it exists today is financially unsustainable because projections are that the trust fund will be depleted in 2013”. In addition, provide a personal comment that represents a personal analysis, conclusion, or reaction/learning from the article. An example might be “I believe a strategy to preserve the integrity of Medicare is needed that will include a means test which results with those with higher incomes paying higher premiums”. Additional comments reflecting the article’s relevancy, desirability of proposed solutions, bias, quality, key learning and treatment of the topic are welcomed, but not expected.

It is expected that you will use your own words in the summary and only rarely use direct
quotes. Grades will be based on:

- accurate summation of material;
- significance of personal perspective or issue addressed
- timely submission of summaries prior to the start of class for which the reading is assigned.

**Writing Expectations**

Written assignments should clearly communicate the student’s information and thought, and be easily understood. Writing should clearly communicate ideas, emphasize a concise writing style that directly makes points over verbose, wordy statements that are vague in their meaning or interpretation, and reflect a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. Written examples for most assignments that provide further direction, resource documents, and links to additional relevant resources, will be available on CTools.

Students are **required** to use appropriate referencing on White Paper written assignment. Students are referred to the section on “Ethical Conduct in the University Environment” of the *Student Guide to the Master’s in Social Work Degree Program 2003-2004* (p. 53) to become familiar with penalties that may result from scholastic dishonesty such as plagiarism in written assignments. Most social work journals and aging journals (See, for example, *Social Work* and *The Gerontologist* respectively) use the style of *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th Edition)*. Students are **required** to write all assignments and cite references, text citations and bibliography in the style of *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th Edition)*. Reference citations are only required for the white paper assignment.

**Written and Oral Assignments Grading Criteria**

The following grading criteria will be used to evaluate all written assignments. Please review them before submitting a paper.

1. **Completeness, Thoroughness and Timely Submission**
   How fully has the issue been addressed? Does the information reflect points from class lectures and/or required reading assignments? Has the student sufficiently researched the issue using library resources, interviews, and other means to gain differing perspectives and full knowledge of the issue? Does the paper or presentation leave the reader with the impression that major questions have been considered or are important issues not addressed? Has the paper been carefully proofread for spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc? Did the student submit the written assignment when it was due?

2. **Organization and Clarity**
   Is the paper or presentation well written and organized in a logical manner? Are there appropriate transitions between, paragraphs, and sections? Are sentence structure, syntax, and grammar of appropriate quality (e.g., clear, concise, coherent sentences) for a graduate student? Have subtitles been used to improve organization? Has the student addressed issues in a way that someone unfamiliar with the issue can understand it? Do different sections of the paper or
presentation cohere into a unified paper? Is wording carefully selected to reflect precision of thought, as opposed to vagueness?

3. Documentation and Referencing
Are there sufficient references and supporting facts, figures, or arguments? Has the theoretical and empirical literature on the subject, and actual data been incorporated into the paper? Are the references well integrated in the text of the paper? Is referencing in the text and the bibliography done according to the style of the American Psychological Association?

4. Critical Thinking, Originality and Creativity
Has the student used analytical skills in a way that suggests more than a restatement of what others have said about the issue? Has the student compared, contrasted, and integrated the different viewpoints and material on the subject in a way that shows he or she has a thorough understanding of the issue? Has the student suggested points that others have not addressed?

IX. Grading Scale

Grades will be determined by adding the scores from all assignments and classroom participation and conversion into a letter grade using the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>99 - 95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>94 - 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89 - 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86 - 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>82 - 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79 - 77</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76 - 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>72 - 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 - 69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X. Required Texts and Supplemental Readings

Required Text and Readings:
There is no text book for this course. Readings will be provided in electronic format, either through a link to an article available over the internet, or through a posting of a .pdf file on the course CTools site. Additional readings will be a part of the required reading for some class sessions, and will be provided as handouts. In addition is expected that students will need to complete a significant amount of additional reading in order to successfully complete the white paper and legislative analysis course assignments.

XI. Course Outline

The schedule of course topics may be adjusted during the semester to accommodate guest presenter schedules and community events. The revised syllabus will be posted on CTools. Any such changes will be done with at least one-week notice. The course outline topics will be supplemented with modules or mini-lectures on current or emerging topics in aging public policy, as time and current events warrant.

Week 1 September 6
Introductions
Course Overview
Student Expectations
Role of public policy in gerontology practice
Read: Social Work Code of Ethics – Preamble and Ethical Standards Sections 4, 5, and 6

Week 2   September 13
Historical perspective on Aging public policy
Discussion of Aging Policy in the Media findings
Aging policy arenas and where policy can be found
Partisanship and policy
Read: Koff and Park, Aging Public Policy Bonding the Generations, (.pdf)
Chapter 2: Making Policy in the United States*
Chapter 3: Historical Background to Aging Policy*

Week 3   September 20
Advocacy and Legislation Strategies for Change
Review Legislative Analysis assignment
Read: How to be an Effective Advocate Outside of Washington DC)*
NCOA Public Policy Priorities for 112th Congress (pdf)*
Area Agency on Aging 1-B 2011-12 Advocacy Platform (.pdf)*

Week 4   September 27
Medicare and Medicaid
Read: Medicare and You 2012, pages 14-85 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (.pdf)*
Status of the Social Security and Medicare Programs: Summary of the 2011 Annual Reports,
Social Security and Medicare Boards of Trustees* (Medicare sections only)
http://www.ssa.gov/oact/TRSUM/index.html
Medicaid State Comparison Kaiser Family Foundation State Health Facts*
http://www.statehealthfacts.org/medicaid.jsp
Myths about the Medicaid Program and the People It Helps, AARP Public Policy Institute
(.pdf)*

Week 5   October 4
Integrated Care for Dually Eligible Individuals (Note: readings may be updated, check with
Instructor)
Read: Explaining the State Integrated Care and Financial Alignment Demonstrations for
Dual Eligible Beneficiaries
http://kaiserfamilyfoundation.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/8368.pdf*

Dual Eligible Demonstration Projects:
Top Ten Priorities for Consumer Advocates
**Week 6** October 11

**Elevator Speeches Due**

Long Term Care

Resource allocation exercise

Read: Long Term Care: Financing Overview and Issues for Congress, Julie Stone, Congressional Research Service

**Week 7** October 18

**Legislation Analysis Oral Presentations and Discussion**

**Week 8** October 25

Review of White Paper Group Assignment

The Aging Network

Read: Public Policy and Aging Report, The Aging Services Network: Broad Mandate and Responsibilities, Summer 2008, Volume 18, Number 3, O’Shaughnessy pages 1-16 (.pdf)

**Week 9** November 1

TBD, White Paper

**Week 10** November 8

TBD, White Paper Research

**Week 11** November 15 White Paper and Posters Due

Housing

Read: MAHSA Housing Continuum (handout)

*Aging Americans: Stranded Without Options, APTA Linda Bailey* (.pdf)

*Homelessness Among Elderly Persons, National Coalition for the Homeless, Fact Sheet #15* (.pdf)

Transportation

Read: Impact of Federal Programs on Transportation for Older Adults, Koffman, and Raphel, Weiner; AARP Public Policy Institute (.pdf)

**Week 12** November 22

Income Maintenance and Social Security

Read: Summary of the 2008 Annual Reports, Social Security and Medicare Boards of Trustees


**Week 13** November 27 Thanksgiving Break

**Week 14** December 6
White Paper Presentations

Week 15    December 13
White Paper Presentations