THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course Number: SOCW 5303-001
Unique Number: 83711
Class Time: Thursday: 2:00 pm-4:50 pm
Office Hours: Thursday: 5:00 pm-7:00 pm
Or by appointment
Instructor Contact Information: esmall@uta.edu

Instructor: Eusebius Small, Ph.D
Semester: Fall 2013
Class Location: SWCA 308
Office Location: SWCA 201C

Foundations of Social Policy & Services
Fall 2013

I. Description of the Course Content
This course provides an introduction to social welfare policy. The course will engage students in the study of how public policies are developed, analyzed, adopted, implemented and the implications of these processes for social rights and social justice. We will study the processes through which social conditions come to be defined as social problems and how these processes influence policy design; the tools of government and components of public policy; the arenas in which public policies are formulated and adopted and sources of influence on these processes; policy delivery and implementation. Throughout we will pay special attention to the ways in which interests are represented or excluded in the policy process and the implications for social rights and social justice. Course content builds on a liberal arts foundation and includes social philosophy, values and ethics, social and economic justice, diversity, populations at risk, and welfare as well-being. An international comparative perspective of policies and services is taken.

Student Learning Outcomes:
By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze and evaluate social welfare policies and policy processes.
2. Understand the values that serve as the underpinning for American society and social welfare policy and discuss the implications and applications in social policy and social work.
3. Apply knowledge of historical influences in social welfare to contemporary issues in social welfare policies, and services.
4. Evaluate the impact of the privatization of social welfare, the neo- conservative perspective and other perspectives, including the impact of devolution of service delivery.
5. Understand the role and influence of the social work profession in respect to social welfare policies and services and conversely, their impact on the social work profession.
6. Demonstrate skills of policy analysis as a means of evaluating past, present and proposed social policies, particularly as they apply to diverse populations and populations at risk.
7. Demonstrate knowledge of a comparative and international perspective on social welfare.
8. Understand and demonstrate the ethical mandate for advocacy and empowerment in
social work, particularly as it relates to oppression, impoverishment and populations at risk.

9. Demonstrate familiarity with researching policy source materials from government documents and other sources.

10. Present policy analysis to various audiences in a professional manner

The role of the instructor in this course is diverse, including such roles as lecturer, facilitator, and consultant and resource person to students. Students are expected to maintain active participation, independent learning, critical thinking including higher order thinking skills of comparison, application, analysis, evaluation and synthesis of materials relating to policy issues, conscientious, thoughtful reading and effective library research. Contributions to class discussions are essential for a fruitful and productive learning experience.

Note: Course Syllabus Changes – The course professor reserves the option to modify the course syllabus throughout the course offering by adding guest speakers, audio visual media, instructional technology, or supplemental materials and/or modify assignments or make substitutions so long as course objectives are met and the overall grading criteria are maintained. The instructor may assess the class members understanding of the course content at any time by administering a pop quiz or other evaluation, which will then be averaged into the final grade.

II. Course Materials

Required Text:

Supplemental Texts:


House Ways and means Committee Green Book can be accessed at: http://www.gpoaccess.gov/wmprints/green/index.html

**Required Media:**
1. The New York Times (or Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, etc.) The NYT is available online at: www.nytimes.com The Times also offers a student discount rate on student subscriptions to hard copy editions.

2. The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer (Mon-Fri, on Public TV). In the local area there are at least 3 showings of the NewsHour per evening (6pm; 9pm; and again around midnight). Check your local listings. The NewsHour is online at www.pbs.org/newshour.

**Supplemental Media:**
- Local Newspaper (Dallas Morning News)
- CNN News and Policy discussions
- “All Things Considered” and/or “Morning Edition” on National Public Radio. This can be accessed locally via KERA-FM (90.1) or KKXT-FM (91.7)
- Evening Network News - (CBS, ABC, NBC)

**Additional Materials:**
All additional reading materials, e.g. journal articles are available on Blackboard in the folder titled, *Course Materials* under respective session folders (weekly sessions). PowerPoint slides are also available in the session folders. You are responsible for downloading PowerPoints for each class prior to the class. No hard copies will be provided.

**III. Requirements for Course**
Students will be graded through written assignments, examinations, presentations, class participation and attendance. An overall grade will be based on the following areas:

**Class participation and attendance (10 points)**
Due: points to be determined after last day of class.
The instructor will take attendance for every class. Attendance is essential for both learning the material and class engagement. It is also extremely important to be on time to class. More than two absences will affect your grade. Participation will involve being proactive, engaged and contributing to active learning. You will be required to share and discuss pertinent local, national and international issues of the day under “in the news” segment of class. Briefly talk about the issue in few sentences at the beginning of every class. The instructor will award active learning points based upon observation and, if necessary, discussion with the student.

**Specific assignments**

1. **Weekly Reading Quizzes:** A ten-question quiz will be administered on Blackboard each week. The quiz will cover important concepts of the readings assigned for the week from the textbook. Students will have an entire week, until 2 PM the day of the class to complete the quiz on the assigned chapter(s). (Student Learning Outcomes 1-9).
It is improbable that you can skim through the chapter and adequately answer the questions; the quiz requires investment of time to adequately respond to the questions. This segment constitutes 14% of your final grade (see grading section).

2. **Policy Debate Topic (20 points) Due: Finalized by September 05**

Two students will work jointly to select a debate topic on any issue covered in the required text. Both will prepare a one page description of the policy they propose to debate and receive the instructor’s **approval** for the selected topic. The problem topic should be specific and clear, i.e. what general problem does the policy address and why is it important? Clearly identify the general problem area; name the problem; describe its magnitude. For example, you may state, 50% of HIV+ individuals in Washington DC have no antiviral drugs and that if nothing is done, they will die. Defend this assertion or disagree with it by providing factual evidence. Effective debate skills are essential in policy advocacy. This experiential exercise will give you the opportunity to improve your debate skills. The two students will argue opposing sides of a current policy issue. The class will evaluate the quality of the debate based on an evaluation rubric given by the instructor.

3. **Executive Summary (6 points) Due September 26**

You will work in pairs to submit a 1-page Executive summary (see below) describing the social welfare policy selected for your proposed legislative analysis project. You must meet with the instructor for his **approval** of the selected topic and discuss how you plan to move forward before you submit your executive summary. Executive Summary is a short summary, typically, single-spaced appearing on the cover of a brief (paper), succinctly giving an overview of the document.

4. **Policy Analysis Paper (40 points) Due December 5, 2013**

This assignment will require students, in pairs, to write a policy analysis paper on a Bill or Act (state, federal or different country). Policy analysis paper is the core of the course and must be thoroughly researched and well written (Follow the provided outline and rubric). (Student Learning Outcomes 1-8).

5. **Op-Ed Assignment (10 points) Due November 21, 2013**

An op-ed is a persuasive document meant to sway other’s views on a policy or issue. Your op-ed piece should be based on your research for the policy proposal and the conclusions you have drawn from it. The op-ed piece should be no longer than 750-words. To prepare to write the piece, you may want to study the op-ed page of newspapers such as the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Houston Chronicle*, or BBC. If you decide to submit your editorial to a newspaper, carefully follow the paper’s instructions for submission. You can receive 5 extra points toward your final grade if your Op-Ed is published.
IV: Grading
Grade Itemization:
Weekly Reading Quizzes 14%
Class Presentation 20%
Op-Ed Piece 10%
Executive Summary 06%
Final Paper 40%
Class participation 10%

Grading Scale
A= 90-100
B= 80-89
C= 70-79
D= 60-69
Fail= 59 or lower

V. Course Outline/TOPICS AND READINGS

August 22: Session 1

Topic: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE—Syllabus overview and assignment
Assignment: No assignment due.

August 29: Session 2

Topic: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY: What is Social Policy?
Assignment: Quiz 1 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings

Required readings:


September 05: Session 3

Topic: SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY RESEARCH
Assignment: Quiz 2 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings

Required readings:

September 12: Session 4

Topic: RELIGION & SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY
Assignment: Quiz 3 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings

Required reading:

September 19: Session 5

Topic: THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR
Assignment: Quiz 4 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings.
   Executive Summary of the final paper due (see rubric below)

   Required readings:
      a. Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 06: “The Voluntary and For-Profit Sectors”

September 26: Session 6

Topic: PRIVATIZATION; HUMAN SERVICE CORPORATIONS
Assignment: Quiz 5 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings

Required reading:

October 03: **Session 7**

Topic: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES  
Assignment: Quiz 6 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings

Required reading:


October 10: **Session 8**

Topic: DISCRIMINATION & POVERTY  
Assignment: Quiz 7 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings

Required reading:


October 17: **Session 9**

Topic: THE MAKING OF GOVERNMENTAL POLICY; ADVOCACY  
Assignment: Quiz 8 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings

Required reading:


October 24: **Session 10**

Topic: SOCIAL INSURANCE PROGRAMS  
Assignment: Quiz 9 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings.  
Final paper draft due to peer for review (see rubric below)
Required reading:

October 31: Session 11

Topic: HEALTH POLICIES
Assignment: Quiz 10 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings.
Draft due to student author. All papers must be returned and reviewed thoroughly and constructive feedback given. It is the responsibility of the reviewer to ensure that this exercise is completed and the review given to the author on this day.

Required reading:

November 7: Session 12

Topic: MENTAL HEALTH POLICIES
Assignment: Quiz 11 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings.

Required reading:

November 14: Session 13

Topic: The Politics of Food Policy
Assignment: Quiz 12 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings

Required Reading:
   a. Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 17: “The Politics of Food Policy and Rural Life”

November 21: Session 14
Topic: Criminal Justice
Assignment: Quiz 13 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings

Required Readings:

November 28: **Thanksgiving. No Class**

December 5: **Session 15:**

Topic: Child Welfare Policy, REVIEW, WRAP-UP
Assignment: Quiz 14 on Blackboard. It covers today’s readings
Final Paper due in SafeAssign by 7PM (Policy Analysis Paper)

Required reading:

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**SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE 2013**

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VI. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Web Sites:

Please note: The World Wide Web Resources for Social Workers to be found at http://www.nyu.edu/socialwork/wwwrsrw/ is one of the best sources for web based information. It contains over 4,000 hyperlinks to relevant sites, including government agencies.

You will also find the following useful for completion of class assignments:

http://www.fedstats.gov/ The gateway to statistics for over 100 United States Federal Agencies;
http://www.firstgov.gov/ The entrance to many government web-sites;
http://www.whitehouse.gov/fsbr/ssbr.html The White House briefing room on Social Statistics;
http://thomas.loc.gov/home/legbranch/legbranchChapter.html United States Congress, Legislative Branch Web resources;

Check out this poverty web presentation on poverty: http://www.nccbuscc.org/cchd/povertyusa/tour2.htm

Mr. John Dillard. Social Sciences librarian is available for consultation in the social Work e-library on the ground floor of building A.

Mr. Lindsey, UTA Government Documents Librarian, is available for consultation in the UTA Main library.

Writing Center: Dr. Chris Kilgore
http://www.uta.edu/owl/
http://www.uta.edu/ccsl/for-faculty/service-learning-bios/uta/dr.-christopher-kilgore.php

These sites, along with the guidance given by Mr. Dillard and Mr. Lindsey in the policy research session should enable you to locate the sources needed for class assignments.

VII. OTHER INFORMATION AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES
1. Dropping the Class:
   If you choose to drop this course at any point during the semester, please be attentive to specific University calendar dates established for completing this process. It is the student’s responsibility to complete the necessary paperwork according to the University’s schedule. Not doing so will result in a failing grade.

2. Student Support Services:
   The University supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. They include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-6107 for more information and appropriate referrals. Academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form at the University of Texas at Arlington. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University.

3. “Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts” (Regents’ Rules and Regulations, Part One, Chapter VI, Section 3, Subsection 3.2, Subdivision 3.22).

4. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):
   If you are a student who requires accommodations in compliance with the ADA, please consult with the instructor at the beginning of the semester. Faculty members are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodation” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. The student’s responsibility is to inform the instructor of the disability at the beginning of the semester and provide documentation authorizing the specific accommodation. Student services at UTA include the Office for Students with Disabilities (located in the lower level of the University Center) that is responsible for verifying and implementing accommodations to ensure equal opportunity in all programs and activities.

5. Bomb threats:
   If anyone is tempted to call in a bomb threat, be aware that UTA will attempt to trace the phone call and prosecute all responsible parties. Every effort will be made to avoid cancellation of presentations/tests caused by bomb threats. Unannounced alternate sites will be available for these classes. Your instructor will make you aware of alternate class sites in the event that your classroom is not available.

6. Incompletes:
   Incompletes are given only in exceptional and very rare situations that involve Acts of God and/or other things beyond the ability of the student to anticipate or
overcome. Computer problems, for example, do not constitute grounds for an incomplete, nor does misreading the syllabus.

7. Student Retention:
The University of Texas at Arlington supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. They include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-6107 for more information.

Policy Analysis Paper Guidelines

Partner with any member of your class cohort for this project. A thorough and meticulous quality work is expected. The purpose of the policy analysis project is to provide you the opportunity to learn more about the legislative process. You will select from any topic covered in the course text or specific areas of interest such as (HIV/AIDS, Mental Health, Substance Abuse & Child welfare). This project is designed to develop your skills in policy analysis, writing, application and critical thinking skills that are essential to the profession of social work. This project is worth 40% of the final grade. Select a social welfare policy bill on any topic approved by the instructor and has been introduced in the Texas legislature, the U.S. Congress or in a parliament of a particular country. Students should identify legislators, organizations, groups, and committees that have worked on or are currently working on the policy issue of interest. Students should investigate the legislative history of the issue, become familiar with the bill and related proposals to introduce new legislation or modify existing legislation, seek the opinions of those with various views on the issue, and determine which groups and individuals (such as legislators, professional groups, citizen advocacy groups) are supportive of, opposed to, or neutral on the issue and why. Here are the individual components of the Policy Analysis Project:

1. Policy Paper Important Dates:

   Draft given to student peer for review: October 24
   Edits back to student author: October 31
   Final Paper submitted in SafeAssign: December 05

2. Executive Summary (06 points)
   Due: September 26

   You will work jointly with a partner as stated above to submit a 1-page Executive summary (see below) describing the social welfare policy selected for your proposed legislative analysis project. You must meet with the instructor for his approval of the selected topic and discuss how you plan to move forward before you submit your Executive summary.
3. Policy Paper (40 points):

Executive Summary
This is a succinct 1 page overview of the bill/paper. The summary must summarize each of the
required sections of the paper. It must be clear and easy to understand, and provide a snap shot of
the entire paper. It is a 1-page (maximum).

Policy Bill
You should spend 6-8 double spaced pages covering the following broad topic and specifics
to the extent they are relevant to the bill you selected:

(a) A brief introduction of the bill stating its importance for social welfare policy in Texas or
the nation. Thus, the introduction should effectively introduce the topic and clearly state why
the topic/bill is important for social welfare policy (about 1 paragraph)

(b) A description of the problem/issue that necessitated or preceded the bill. Does it clearly
define the problem? Does it identify the affected population? Does it highlight the impact of the
problem? Does it show the urgency of the issue? For example, if you are talking about Ending
the epidemic Act, or Cure for AIDS Act, or President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
(PEPFAR), etc., describe the nature of the problem that necessitated the Act? How widespread
was/is it? How many people are affected? Who (everyone? the poor? particular age groups?)
is affected and how? What are the known or suspected causes of the problem? How will (or
does) the policy address the problem? (about 1-2 paragraphs).

(c) The historical background of the bill. Does it provide a historical context for the bill or
policy? How much attention has this problem received historically? How has the problem been
handled previously? What is the legislative history of the bill or policy? Has it changed over
time, how? What recent events led to the creation of the proposed? When and how did the
most recently proposed policy originate in Texas? What are the policies of other states or
countries regarding the problem/issue? (about 1-2 paragraphs)

(d) A thorough description of the policy. What resources or opportunities is the policy expected
to provide for people affected (e.g., economic opportunity, cash, in-kind services, redistribution
of goods and services, empowerment, status, preventive services, education, other)? Who will
be covered by the policy and how (e.g., selective entitlement, universal entitlement, means
testing, other)? How will the policy be implemented? What is the policy’s intended short- and
long-term goals and intended outcomes? Under what administrative auspices will the policy be
further developed and implemented? What funding is needed? What provisions are made for
overseeing, evaluating, and coordinating policy implementation? What criteria will be used to
determine the policy’s outcomes and effectiveness? How long is the policy expected to exist
(i.e., is there a specific requirement for review and continuation)? On what knowledge base or
scientific grounding, if any, does the policy rest? Is there empirical evidence that the policy
may achieve its intended result? (about 1 ½ pages)

(e) Identification of individuals and groups concerned about the policy issue and their
positions on the matter. Each student is encouraged to interview concerned individuals and
groups (including elected officials, legislative assistants, members of citizens' or advocacy groups, human service providers, consumer groups, and others) and to attend meetings of organizations, agencies, and committees where the issue is discussed. Do not simply list the individuals and groups concerned and their positions. Information gleaned from these activities, as well as your review of the literature, should be discussed in detail. What are their arguments for or against the bill? Are their arguments based on evidence? What biases color their views on this issue? (about 1 page).

(f) **An analysis of the policy.** Parts f, g, and h are the heart of the paper and should comprise about half the length of the paper. Your analysis should utilize a policy analysis model studied in class. Address issues such as the value premises or ideological assumptions that underlie the policy. Are the goals just, democratic, and attainable? Do they contribute to a better quality of life by promoting social and economic justice, self-determination, self-realization, civil liberties or rights, empowerment, or other benefits, or do they adversely affect the quality of life of the target or other groups? The analysis should drive the way you use the model. The analysis should not be forced to fit the model (about 1 page).

(g) **Your conclusions.** Does the Conclusion effectively wrap up the paper? Based on your objective analysis, what conclusions have you reached about the proposed policy? Are the goals politically feasible (i.e., is there sufficient support to pass the proposed legislation or to sustain its implementation)? Is public sentiment favorable toward the goals? Are the goals of the proposed policy economically feasible (i.e., is sufficient funding available to implement the policy and is it likely that funding will be continued as needed in the future)? Are the goals administratively feasible (i.e., are there responsible administrative agencies capable of effectively implementing the policy to achieve its stated goals)? Are there alternative policies that might better achieve the goals? Is the policy important enough to justify the expenditure of scarce resources? (about 1-2 paragraphs to 1 page)

(h) **Your recommendations.** What are your recommendations regarding the proposed policy? Do you recommend it as it is currently stated? Would you suggest modifications? How would you improve it? Your recommendation should demonstrate clear critical skills and analyses (about 1-2 paragraphs)

(i) **Five or more scholarly references.** Include both theoretical and empirical scholarly references. Scholarly references should be recent (2003 to present). Be careful about dubious sources of information (e.g., non-scholarly references on the internet) for your information. You may ALSO include references from the popular literature (newspapers, magazines) but these do not substitute for the minimum of 5 scholarly references.

*Please note: The policy brief should be a balanced, unbiased, critical evaluation of the policy issue or proposal, presenting accurate and fair empirical evidence, as well as the positions of proponents and opponents. No matter how strongly you feel about the policy issue, you are presenting an objective analysis to help others make informed decisions.*

**Have a productive Semester**