I. COURSE PURPOSE:

This course is designed to expand and enrich the students’ basic understanding of social welfare policies in the United States—its historical background, and the roles and functions of social workers in relation to that development. Building on knowledge and experience gained from master’s level studies and the practice of social work, this course provides participants with the opportunity to explore the relationship between social work values, societal values, alternative social philosophies, and contemporary social policies designed to support and protect individuals, families and communities. The competing influences of political, economic, legal, religious and public media systems as well as the influence of social science research on policy formulation will be considered. Although primary emphasis in this course will be placed on domestic policies and their impact on intended target populations, attention will be given to new and emerging issues surrounding human rights, globalization and the impact of United States policies on the world order.

More specifically, this course explores the re-emergence of familiar policy themes from earlier eras, noting their rationale and critiquing their application to the contemporary situation. It examines the social values and philosophies that underlie contemporary social policies and critiques the purpose, scope, focus, internal consistency, and key concepts of traditional and emerging conceptual frameworks that have been constructed to examine social policies. Students are encouraged to read substantive social work and interdisciplinary policy materials in their fields of interest, such as family and child welfare, health/behavioral health, refugee resettlement, gerontology, housing, etc.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES:

By the completion of the course, students will demonstrate:

1. awareness of historical and contemporary societal factors that foster as well as deter the social well-being of individuals, families, and communities;
understanding of the role of social policy as both an instrument of societal organization as well as an expression of the multiple and competing goals and social philosophies of a society;

3. knowledge of the influence of political, economic, legal, religious systems, the public media, emerging forms of social networking, and social science research on social policy formulation;

4. understanding of traditional and emerging conceptual frameworks for analyzing social policies;

5. a working knowledge of the process of policy development;

6. a critical understanding of the role of social services as part of the operational programming of social policies.

7. appreciation of the importance of human rights as a basis for social policy and world order;

8. a grasp of the benefits as well as risks of American social welfare policies and programs on global development;

9. awareness of the importance of culturally sensitive social policies and programming;

10. sensitivity to the historical and contemporary impact of policy choices and social planning on people of color, women, children, seniors, and populations at risk;

11. ability to critique and compare the adequacy of social policy frameworks in terms of their descriptive and analytic power;

12. skill in selecting and applying alternative policy concepts and conceptual frameworks to the assessment of established and developing social welfare policies; and,

13. competence in locating and applying conceptual and empirical data from the social and behavioral sciences as well as from interdisciplinary contexts to policy analysis.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

A. Required Texts: Required texts may be purchased at the CUA bookstore and can be accessed through the Mullen Library. Periodical readings can be accessed through the Electronic Journal Title Finder and the Electronic Journal Collections located on the


**B. Recommended Texts:**


**C. Internet Resources**

The rise of global information technology has revolutionized the research process and has changed the nature of social policy analysis and policy practice. The World Wide Web allows organizations to gather policy information quickly and disseminate information to a wide audience. Thus, the task of policy research becomes far easier than was previously possible and students can consult an impressive range of internet resources when exploring policy issues. Government organizations, such as the Census Bureau (www.census.gov), the General Accounting Office (www.gao.gov), the U.S. Senate (www.senate.gov), the U.S. House of Representatives (www.house.gov), the Department of Health and Human Services (www.dhhs.gov) and the Administration for Children and Families (www.acf.dhhs.gov) provide information and statistics. Policy organizations, such as the Brookings Institute (www.brook.edu), the Rand Corporation (www.rand.org), and the Urban Institute (www.urban.org) provide substantial amounts of data and analysis on-line. There are
also large sites that combine materials from many organizations such as the Electronic Policy Network (www.epn.org) and Handsnet (www.handsnet.org), and Citizens for Tax Justice (www.ctj.org). The Library of Congress houses the Thomas site (http://thomas.loc.gov) that provides on-line copies of all proposed legislation. Religious groups such as the World Council of Churches (www.worldcouncilofchurches.org) and the United States Catholic Bishops (www.uscatholicbishops.org) and Catholic Charities U.S.A. (www.ccusa.org) are active in the policy advocacy community and make their positions available through their websites. Students are expected to consult the above sources regularly on topics of relevance to the course and to their particular policy interests.

D. Classical Social Policy Texts


D. Course Assignments

1. **Required readings** are to be read in preparation for the class for which they are assigned. Recommended readings are intended to supplement the class content and may be particularly helpful for class assignments. At times, students will be asked to provide class briefings on particular readings.

2. By the 2nd **class session**, each student is required to present a learning plan for the course. It should include: 1) a self assessment of their current knowledge and experience on the state-of-the-art in social policy analysis (see self-assessment tool); 2) a short discussion of your particular areas of interest with respect to the course content; 3) a statement of your personal learning goals for the course; and, 4) a preliminary (non-binding) identification of the policy you intend to analyze for your final assignment. The purpose of developing this preliminary plan is to aid the student and instructor in articulating reasonable course expectations and in locating appropriate resources that will be needed throughout the course to accomplish the students’ learning goals.

3. A **mid-term take home examination** will be distributed following **Class 7** focusing on the student’s understanding of the content covered in the syllabus to that point in the course. It will consist of short answer definitions of terms, brief essays, and a critical analysis of selected aspects of a contemporary social policy germane to the interests of the social work profession. Students are expected to return the exam to the instructor within one week, unless an alternate date is negotiated in advance.

4. A final **policy analysis paper** on an area germane to the interests of the student and the social work professional using a systematic framework for policy
analysis (see guidelines for policy analysis paper) will be due at the beginning of Class 12. This major analytic work will be accompanied by an Executive Summary that will be shared with the class in the final seminar sessions.

E. CLASS EXPECTATIONS

Scholastic Expectations:

Please refer to NCSSS Announcements, or appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements, including scholastic and behavioral requirements. All written work should demonstrate communication ability consistent with graduate level performance, reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format, and be carefully proofread by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

Academic Honesty:

Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy and Appropriate Program Handbooks.

Accommodations:

Students with physical, learning, psychological or other challenges wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented such a disability to DSS that requires accommodations of an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.

E. Grading

1. The University graduate grading system will be applied (see the NCSSS Bulletin). The grade for the course will be based on the extent to which the student meets the course educational objectives as demonstrated by class participation, use of theoretical and empirical content, and completion of required assignments.

   Attendance and participation  20%
   Mid-term Examination  20%
   Seminar Briefings  20%
   Scholarly Policy Analysis Paper  40%

2. It is expected that students will demonstrate communication skills consistent with the NCSSS graduate education standards. All written work should reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format and should be carefully
proof read by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

G. **Course and Instructor Evaluation:**

NCSSS requires student evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, an evaluation form will be distributed to each student. Evaluations are returned to the faculty after grades have been submitted. Additional informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to special requests. These evaluations will serve as a basis for ongoing course revisions.

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

**Class 1**  
**Social Policy and Social Well-Being**  
Course Overview and Class Planning  
The nature of social policy—as a philosophical concept, process, product, and framework for action  
Constitutional foundations of social policy

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Reading**


**Class 2, 3, 4**  

*Policy Self Assessment Indicator and Initial Learning Plan due Class 2.*

European Antecedents  
Colonial America through the Civil War  
The Progressive Era  
Depression and the New Deal  
The Great Society Period  
War on the Welfare State
The Current Situation

(Drawing from the work of Trattner and from Midgely and other relevant sources, students will prepare briefings for class presentation on the above historical periods. See class handout, “Framework for Analyzing the Development of American Social Welfare Policy.”)

Required Readings


Read Selectively


Recommended Readings


Class 5, 6, 7

The Policy Process and Social Change: Competing Philosophical and Theoretical Perspectives

Overview and critique of key political philosophies
Rationality and the use of the Behavioral and Social Sciences
Alternate Theories of the Social Policy Process
Students will prepare briefings for class presentation on selected theories of the policy process.

**Required Readings:**


**Read Selectively:**


**Recommended Readings**


**Mid-term Take Home Exam distributed at the end of Class 7.**

(To be returned to instructor within one week, unless otherwise negotiated.)
Comparison and Critique of Contemporary Approaches to Social Policy

(Mid-term take home exam due Class 8, unless an alternative date is negotiated in advance.)

Contributions and Critiques of selected social policy analytic models reflecting:
- The Institutional Approach
- Conservative Approaches
- Critical Social Policy
- Welfare Pluralism
- Feminist Approaches
- Multicultural Approaches
- The Social Development Perspective
- Environmental Policy

Students are expected to read selectively from Part III. in Midgely & Livermore and from the Classical Social Policy texts listed in Section D of this outline in order to lead a seminar discussion on the core elements and critiques of a selected policy model(s). See class handout entitled, “Core Elements of Social Policy Models.”

Required Readings


The Policy Process in Action

Actors and Institutions in the Policy/Planning Process
Classification of Policy Instruments
The Policy/Planning Cycle

Required Reading


SOCIAL WELFARE POLICIES APPLIED TO SELECTED SOCIAL ISSUES AND SERVICES

(Students are expected to: 1) read selectively from Part IV. of Midgley, & Livermore, M.L.,Eds. (2009). Handbook of social policy. Berkeley, Ca:
locate relevant supplemental material on one or more of the following areas; and 3) be prepared to discuss their area of interest.)

Child and Family Welfare
Income Maintenance and Support
Tax Policy
Employment Policy
Social Security
Social Policy and the Elderly
Social Policy and Health/Mental Health
Housing Policy
Social Policies for People with Disabilities
Education and Social Policy

(Policy Analysis Paper is due by the close of Class 12 unless an alternative due date is negotiated in advance.)

What are human rights?
Understanding the domestic and international impact of globalization
Human development in a global environment

Required Readings

Kahn, A. J. & Kamerman, S. B. “International Aspects of Social Policy.” In

of social work and the social work profession. Geneva, Switzerland:
Center for Human Rights, pp. 3-9; 20-47.

Recommended Reading

social policy, pp. 557-570.

Class 14 Student Policy Analysis Presentations and Class Evaluation

(Follow-up Policy Self Assessment Indicator due.)

Revised 8/12 apc
SOCIAL POLICY SELF-ASSESSMENT AND COURSE PLANNING GUIDE

Part A.

The following is a list of the objectives to be achieved in analyzing and critiquing social welfare policy models. Please circle your current level of competence with respect to each objective.

1. My awareness of historical and contemporary societal factors that foster as well as deter the social well-being of individuals, families, and communities is . . .

2. My understanding of the role of social policy as both an instrument of societal organization as well as an expression of the multiple and competing goals and social philosophies of a society is . . .

3. My knowledge of the influence of political, economic, legal, religious systems, the public media, emerging forms of social networking, and social science research on social policy formulation is . . .

4. My understanding of traditional and emerging conceptual frameworks for analyzing social policies is . . .

5. My working knowledge of the process of policy development is . . .

6. My critical understanding of the role of social services as part of the operational programming of social policies is . . .

7. My appreciation of the importance of human rights as a basis for social policy and world order is . . .

8. My grasp of the benefits as well as risks of American social welfare policies and programs on global development is . . .

9. My awareness of the importance of culturally sensitive social policies and programming is . . .
10. My sensitivity to the historical and contemporary impact of policy choices and social planning on people of color, women, children, seniors, and populations at risk is . . .

11. My ability to critique and compare the adequacy of social policy frameworks in terms of their descriptive and analytic power is . . .

12. My skill in selecting and applying alternative policy concepts and conceptual frameworks to the assessment of established and developing social welfare policies is . . .

13. My competence in locating and applying conceptual and empirical data from the social and behavioral sciences as well as from interdisciplinary contexts to policy analysis is . . .

Part B.

Please use the following as a guide for scoring your current self-assessment. Each type of objective addresses a different learning domain. Each domain is important in achieving a scholarly mastery of the content. Calculate your score as follows:

Items 1 thru 6 are Cognitive Objects – they focus on knowledge and understanding of the course content. My current score is _____

Items 7 thru 10 are Affective Objectives— they focus on attitudes and sensitivity to policy issues. My current score is _____

Items 11 thru 13 are Behavioral Objectives— they focus on skills and actions needed for policy analysis. My current score is _____

TOTAL _____

Part C.

Now that you have established a personal baseline self-assessment, use the following space or additional paper if necessary to formulate your initial goals for the course. I will . . .

1.

2.

3. (Feel free to formulate as many goals as may be consistent with your scholarly interests.)