

Humboldt State University
Department of Social Work

Social Policy

SW 330

Fall, 2003
Tuesdays and Thursdays
12:30pm-1:50pm
Art 27

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Office Hours:
Tuesdays, 2:00pm-4:00pm

Course Description: An examination of the characteristics of social policy, its development, formation and implementation. An ecological perspective is used to analyze major social legislation and to develop strategies for improving policies and services.

Prerequisites: SW104: Introduction to Social Work and Social Work Institutions, completion of the U.S. History and Government component courses.

Learning Objectives:

Students will:

1. Identify an ecological perspective of social policy that assumes human well-being to rest upon interactive, supportive and reciprocal transactions among individuals, families, small groups, organizations and communities and their systems.
2. Apply social work ethics and democratic ideals as guides for social policy analysis, development and intervention.
3. Understand political, economic and social philosophies as formatives of social policy.
4. Understand social policy according to historical, analytical and dynamic perspectives.
5. Demonstrate the impact of social policy as it supports or opposes diversity based on ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, race, class and ability.
6. Develop an understanding of collaborative and organizational processes involved in social or political change.
7. Develop an understanding of advocacy with disadvantaged or disenfranchised groups focused on their strengths as sources of empowerment.
8. Develop an understanding of social welfare policies of other technologically advanced nations in comparison to our own and familiarity with the social, political and economic needs of less developed countries as members of the global community.
9. Develop an awareness of the special social policy needs of rural communities and their populations.
10. Develop an awareness of how research methodology is applied in the development and evaluation of social policy.
11. Participate in a social change process.

Texts

Day, Phyllis J. (2003). *A New History of Social Welfare, Fourth Edition*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

- Note: Chapters 1-5 are not assigned for specific dates, please read them at your leisure.

Secombe, Karen. (1999). *“So You Think I Drive a Cadillac?”: Welfare Recipients’ Perspectives on the System and its Reform*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Blackboard and The Internet

Pretty much all of the reading (except for the above books) is accessible through Blackboard. Some articles are directly available through Blackboard, while others will be websites linked through Blackboard. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader for some of the readings. You will need a multimedia player (RealPlayer, Windows Media Player, or Quicktime) for video. Bring headphones if you are going to listen to media files in the library. A helpful hint: if you use your mouse to “right-click” a document link it will open up in a new window rather than within Blackboard.

Blackboard is also a place to engage in discussions with each other outside of class (which is required for some assignments). To use Blackboard, go to blackboard.humboldt.edu and use your HSU email address (before the “@humboldt.edu” part) as your username and your social security number as your password (you can change this later).

When posting long text on Discussion Boards, consider writing and saving your piece in a word processing program and “cutting and pasting” it into Blackboard. This way you won’t accidentally lose something you’ve been working on.

Assignments

1. **Policies are Personal** – Share a bit about your personal connection with a specific social policy on the Blackboard Discussion Board. You’ll need to pick a policy, find out more about it, and reflect on how it has affected you. **Due September 4 [5 “units”]**.
2. **Health Care Policy Position Paper** – Read the 9 “Two-Page Summaries of the Final Options Papers,” of the State of California Health Care Options Project. Pick one to support and then review the *full report* for that proposal. Post a response on the Blackboard Discussion Board detailing reasons for your support. **Due October 7 [10 “units”]**.
3. **Policy and Your Placement** – What social policy(ies) influence(s) the work done at your volunteer/social agency/field placement? Find out and share the implications and influences on the Blackboard Discussion Board. *If you aren’t engaged in any such work, come see me for an alternative.* **Due October 23 [5 units]**.

4. **Social Policy Analysis, Advocacy, and Action Project** – In small groups (or individually, if you prefer) you will choose a specific policy issue on which to take some action (create, revise, or eliminate). On September 2, the parts of this assignment will be explained in-depth. You will be asked to form groups at this time. By Thursday, September 4, you will need to have picked a *general* policy issue. I will help you refine this into a *specific* policy issue and refer you to relevant resources over the following few weeks.
- Pick a topic **by September 4**.
 - Pick pending legislation to track and support, oppose, or amend, key legislators and other stakeholders **by September 30 [5 “units”]**.
 - Find and summarize a selection of professional readings (at least 3) that will support your analysis and position **by October 30 [10 “units”]**.
 - Consult with at least three (3) people who will be directly affected by the policy issue. A summary of interviews will be due **by November 20 [10 “units”]**.
 - Subject your project to an ecosystemic analysis. This analysis is **due December 4 [10 “units”]**.
 - Synthesize all of this together into a written document that can be shared with key people. Include responses to objections you might encounter. You will need to make multiple copies (one for me, one for each person you are sending it to). **Due December 16 [20 “units”]**.

Some thoughts about this assignment:

- If you are working in a group, send written documents to me through email so I can make notes on them and send them back to everyone.
 - I will work with you to assist you and support you in this endeavor, both inside and outside of class.
 - If you choose to do a Grade Self-Assessment, hand one in for each section of this assignment when that part is due.
 - Each member of a group should do their own Grade Self-Assessment but give a grade to the entire group.
 - This assignment is worth **55 “units”** so take it very seriously. Social Policy is a 4 unit course *because of this assignment*.
 - A project like this looks much better on a resume than a grade does!!
5. **Textbook Reflections** – As a class we’ll need to come up with some way for you to demonstrate that you have read and considered content from assigned chapters of *A New History of Social Welfare*. **[10 “units”]**.
6. **Engagement** – How fully present are you in class? To what degree do you critically consider and offer self-reflections in relation to the issue of the class? What do you get out of the class and what do you put into it? **[15 “units”]**.

Grades and General Guidelines

I am interested in co-creating a course with you that allows us to explore learning without being limited by social constructions around grades. If you'd prefer that I evaluate your assignments and assign a grade, I will. However, I invite you to evaluate yourself in this regard. For each assignment you may turn in a "Grade Self-Assessment" document (which you can access under "Course Information" in Blackboard) within which you can reflect on your experience of the assignment and your assessment of the number of "units" you deserve.

- These have to be turned in *with* the relevant assignment.
- I will let you know whether I agree with you or if I have a different perspective. I might ask you to explore some areas further, revise your grade, or come have a conversation with me.
- Final grades for the course will be determined by the total number of "units" according to the following table:

96 – 100	=A	66 – 70	=C
91 – 95	=A-	61 – 65	=C-
86 – 90	=B+	56 – 60	=D+
81 – 85	=B	51 – 55	=D
76 – 80	=B-	≤ 50	=F
71 – 75	=C+		

I prefer to have all turned-in written assignments be *single-spaced*, with standard 12 point Times New Roman font, and standard margins (1" top and bottom, 1¼" left and right). This format saves paper and is easy for me to read. If you can do this, great. If not, so be it, but *account for this* when you write your paper. In the end, please concern yourself more with content than length...a little bit shorter or a little bit longer is just fine if that's what it takes to convey your thoughts. Written assignments can be emailed to me at rjs19@humboldt.edu if you'd like. Assignments are due **at the time class starts** on the date that they are due (of course!). Unless you make alternate arrangements with me you will need to consider the lateness of your assignment if you complete a Grade Self-Assessment, otherwise I will. Late assignments make things difficult for me as I have budgeted my time to address student work according to a specific schedule.

When you make reference in written documents to any ideas or "facts" that are not your own or "common knowledge" you've got to—I mean really got to—cite your sources. If you are not familiar with generally accepted approaches to citing sources, you can find some guidelines at the end of the *Social Work Student Handbook* and/or at <http://www.humboldt.edu/~swp/handbook.htm#Research>. It will not be sufficient to rely solely on websites for source material.

A good way to get final papers back, if appropriate, is by coming by my office *after grades are turned in* or by providing me with a self-addressed envelope (the University will pay the postage).

Classes

Week 1: Introduction to Course / Policy Philosophy

So what's this class all about anyway? Why should we care about how policies are developed and the effects of those policies? What ideas strongly influence policy development in the United States and how have these ideas opened up possibilities for socially just policies or limited such progress?

August 26

August 28

- Complete "The Political Compass" (*If you haven't figured out Blackboard yet, here's the web address: www.politicalcompass.org*)
 - Note: print out your graph and bring it to class
- Read SW330: Social Policy Syllabus
- Read *The Declaration of Independence, The Constitution, The Bill of Rights* [Amendments 1-10 to *The Constitution*], and Amendments 11-27 to *The Constitution* (*If you haven't figured out Blackboard yet, here's the web address: www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/charters_of_freedom/charters_of_freedom.html*)

Week 2: Structures, Institutions, and Systems

What do we mean when we talk about "The Government"? Who is "The System"? How do these institutions operate in our day-to-day lives and for what purposes? This week we will talk about federal, state, and local governments. We will also begin planning the Social Policy Project for the course.

September 2

- Read Etzioni, A. (1996). "The Responsive Community: A Communitarian Perspective." *American Sociological Review*. February. pp. 1-11. (*If you haven't figured out Blackboard yet, here's the web address: www.gwu.edu/~ccps/etzioni/A241.html*)

September 4

- Assignment #1 (Policies are Personal) due
- Assignment #4A (Social Policy Project Topic) due
- Read *New History*, Chapters 6-7.

Week 3: The Legislative Process / Politics

This week we will explore the formal and informal ways in which policymakers work within historical and legal limits to enact legislation. We will also begin examining the fundamental assumptions that influence policymaking in the United States

September 9**September 11**

- Read *New History*, Chapters 8-9.

Week 4: Budget Processes / Tax (Economic) Policy

Do budgets drive policies or do policies drive budgets? This big question might not be able to be answered, but it certainly cannot be considered unless one has a basic understanding of the policy implications of budget allocation and appropriation. This week also finds us looking at how money is spent and how this relates to social policy.

September 16

- Complete “The National Budget Simulation” [*Long Version*]
 - Note: print out your augmented budget and bring it to class
- Optional: “Tough Times, Tough Choices: Balancing A State Budget”
- Read Coven, M., and Kogan, R. (March 7, 2003). “Introduction to the Federal Budget Process.” *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*.
- Read “Dollars and Democracy: An Advocate's Guide to the California State Budget Process.” *California Budget Project*. (March, 1999).

September 18

- Read “Budget and Management Highlights.” *United States White House Office of Management and Budget Fiscal Year 2004 Budget*. (February 3, 2003). pp-3-7.
- Read Greenstein, R., Kogan, R., and Friedman, J. (June 1, 2003). “New Tax Cut Law Uses Gimmicks To Mask Costs; Ultimate Price Tag Likely To Be \$800 Billion to \$1 Trillion.” *Center for Budget and Policy Priorities*.
- Read “Building the Canada We Want: The Budget in Brief 2003.” *Department of Finance Canada*. (2003).

Week 5: Policy Discourses

Like everything that operates within the realm of culture, policy development, analysis, advocacy, and enactment takes place within well-defined discursive spaces. What is possible within these spaces and what is marginalized? Who benefits from these boundaries and why? Additionally, as a political turn of events has resulted in a special election, we will talk about the ballot initiatives that California voters will decide.

September 23

- Read Finn, J., and Jacobson, M. (2003). "Connecting Historical, Political, Cultural, and Practice Contexts: The Social Construction of Child Abuse," in *Just Practice: A Social Justice Approach to Social Work*. Peosta, IA: Eddie Bowers Publishing. pp.52-56.
- Read "Proposition 53: California Twenty-First Century Infrastructure Investment Fund." *State of California Legislative Analyst's Office*. (August 11, 2003).
- Read "Proposition 53: Should California Earmark General Fund Revenues for Infrastructure?" *California Budget Project*. (August, 2003).
- Read *New History*, Chapter 10.

September 25

- Read "Proposition 54: Classification by Race, Ethnicity, Color, or National Origin." *State of California Legislative Analyst's Office*. (August 11, 2003).
- Read "What Would Proposition 54 Mean for the State's Ability to Collect and Use Data?" *California Budget Project*. (August, 2003).
- Read "Rallying the Armies of Compassion." *United States White House*. (January, 2001).
- Read "NASW Priorities on Faith-Based Human Services Initiatives." *National Association of Social Workers*. (January, 2002).

Week 6: Poverty and “Welfare”

The so-called “welfare” system epitomizes social policy in America. Where did these ideas come from, how have they changed over time, and how have policies changed in relation to broader changes in American society? The Settlement House and Charitable Organization Societies movements as well as the enormous expansion of social support programs during the 1930s will begin our exploration. We will then move on to the significant expansions that took place during the Presidency of Lyndon Johnson. A decade and a half later we will see social welfare programs gutted by Ronald Reagan’s socially conservative administration. Then, sixty years of AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children), arguably the most well-known part of America’s social welfare program spectrum, comes to an end in 1996 with “the end of welfare as we know it”. What circumstances surrounded this dramatic shift, how does TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) compare to what came before, and what will it look like when it is re-authorized?

September 30

- Assignment #4B (Social Policy Project Legislation, Legislators, Stakeholders) due
- Read “*So You Think I Drive a Cadillac?*.” pp.1-47 (Chapters 1-2).

October 2

- Read “Working Toward Independence.” *United States White House*. (February, 2002).
- Read “Recommendations for the Reauthorization of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act.” *National Association of Social Workers*. (November 30, 2001).

Week 7: Health Care / Policymaking I

The United States is the only industrialized, democratic country in the world that does not guarantee health insurance to all its citizens. Many people are, however, covered by some sort of health insurance. How has this come about and what changes are on the horizon? Regarding policymaking, there are many ways to get social policy implemented. Some approaches work at the exclusion of others, and some require efforts on multiple fronts. This week we will examine processes of policy development, advocacy, and enactment.

October 7 [Note: Today is the California Special Election]

- Assignment #2 (Health Care Policy Position Paper) due
- Read “*So You Think I Drive a Cadillac?*.” pp.48-101 (Chapters 3-4).

October 9

- Read King, Jr., M.L. (April 16, 1963). “Letter from Birmingham Jail.”
- Read “The Legislative Process: A Citizen’s Guide to Participation.” *Senate Select Committee on Citizen Participation in Government*. (May, 2000) [I will hand this out]
- Read “A Citizen’s Guide to Lobbying.” [I will hand this out]
- Read “Standard 6,” of “NASW Code of Ethics.” *National Association of Social Workers*. (1999).

Week 8: Anti-Discrimination (Race/Ethnicity, Gender, Disability, Sexuality)

This week we see how the federal government was pushed to guarantee people's civil rights with regard to race/ethnicity, gender, and disability. We will also learn about the various attempts to guarantee these rights to people who consider themselves gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered.

October 14

- Read “*So You Think I Drive a Cadillac?*.” pp.102-150 (Chapters 5-6).

October 16

- Read Goodwin, D. “Ed Roberts: UC Berkeley Radical.” *IMPACT, Inc.*
- Read “A Progress Report on Fulfilling America’s Promise to Americans with Disabilities.” *United States White House.* (May, 2002).

Week 9: Mental Health

Views on mental illness and mental health have been central to the work of social workers since professionalization of the field, while *policies* specific to mental health are relatively recent. After an initial focus on institutionalization, services and supports for those involved in mental health systems have steadily become more community-based. What has this meant for individuals, families, and communities, and what does the current federal administration have planned?

October 21

- View or Listen to “President Says U.S. Must Make Commitment to Mental Health Care.” *United States White House.* (April 29, 2002).
- Read “*So You Think I Drive a Cadillac?*.” pp.151-221 (Chapters 7-9).

October 23

- ❖ Guest: Lance Morton, Deputy Director, Mental Health Branch, Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services
- Assignment #3 (Policy and Your Placement) due
- Read “Promoting, Preserving, and Restoring Children’s Mental Health.” *New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, Subcommittee on Children and Family.* (February 5, 2003).

Week 10: Education / Criminal Justice

The largest publicly funded social program in the United States is the elementary and secondary school system. The development of a “free and appropriate” education has not been without its dilemmas and controversies. Especially relevant is the support and resources devoted to students with “special needs.” This week we will also talk a bit about important issues relating to the criminal justice system, with specific emphasis on the role of domestic violence prevention.

October 28

- ❖ Guest: Sharyn Swartz, Special Needs Coordinator, Northcoast Children’s Services
- Read *New History*, Chapter 11.

October 30

- ❖ Guest: Sheri Johnson, Project Director, Domestic Violence Prevention Project, Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Branch
- Assignment #4C (Social Policy Project Summary of Professional Readings) due
- Read Males, M., and Macallair, D. (January, 2000). “The Color of Justice: An Analysis of Juvenile Adult Court Transfers in California.” *Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice*.

Week 11: Child and Adult/Dependent Protection

Aside from financial assistance, social work is arguably most associated with the child welfare/foster care system. Relatively speaking, a national response to child abuse is a recent development. This week we will explore the events and issues surrounding protection, safety, and support for children as well as adults who have difficulty protecting themselves.

November 4**November 6**

- ❖ Guest: Peter LaVallee, Director, Redwood Community Action Agency, Youth Service Bureau / Mayor of Eureka
- Read *New History*, Chapter 12.

Week 12: The Environment

Traditional conversations about “social policy” might not include a discussion of policies that appear to be primarily about the environment. An ecological perspective on people’s lives and relationships *necessitates* such exploration. This week we will watch a video about one of the most important civil works projects in human history and examine its implications for people’s lives in California, the nation, and the world.

November 11**November 13**

- ❖ Guest: John Woolley, District 3 Supervisor, Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
- Read Lee, J. (March 2, 2003). “A Call for Softer, Greener Language,” *New York Times*.
- Read *New History*, Chapter 13.

Week 13: Native American Sovereignty

In this week we will look at the effects of state and federal policy on Native American people. We will explore how those policies that might not be considered “social” policy through dominant discourses based on objectivity, competition, and individualism, are indeed social policies when considered in broader, relational contexts.

November 18

- ❖ Guest: Shaunna McCovey, Faculty, Humboldt State University Department of Social Work

November 20

- Assignment #4D (Social Policy Project Constituency Interviews) due

November 25, 27 – NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)**Week 14: Policymaking II**

This week we will be joined by two people who have been involved in policy development, advocacy, and action from the grassroots to the legislative level. They will tell us their secrets for changing the world.

December 2

- ❖ Guest: Patty Berg, District 1 Assembly Member, California State Assembly

December 4

- ❖ Guest: Paul Cienfuegos, Chair, Committee on Democracy and Corporations, City of Arcata
- Assignment #4E (Social Policy Project Ecosystemic Analysis) due

Week 15: Globalization / Close

In what ways does spreading the American concept of a competitive, free market economy have broad implications for social life, interactions, and relationships? The week will end with some class reflections on the course.

December 9

- Read “Ignite a New Era of Global Economic Growth through Free Markets and Free Trade,” Chapter VI (pp. 17-20), of “The National Security Strategy of the United States of America.” *United States White House*. (September, 2002).

December 11

[December 16] – Assignment #4F (Social Policy Project Synthesis) due