

Humboldt State University
Department of Social Work
Master of Social Work Program

Social Welfare Policy and Services

SW 530

Spring, 2007
Mondays
2:00pm-4:50pm
Founders Hall 235

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Office Hours:
Mondays, 11:30am-1:30pm
Tuesdays, 11:00am-1:00pm

Course Description

This course examines economic, historical, political, and socio-cultural aspects of social welfare policy. Values and ideologies that shape social welfare policy, programs and services are discussed. Roles of federal, state, and tribal governments in policy formation, advocacy and program response are discussed. Various frameworks to analyze social welfare policy, programs and services are presented. Particular attention is paid to the problems faced by women, Native Americans and other cultural groups, and the response of the social welfare system to these problems. Roles of policy-makers and processes of social change are examined. The roles of social workers as facilitators of positive social change are introduced. Analysis is made of the impact of social welfare policy decisions on the disenfranchisement and oppression of some groups.

Prerequisites: Graduate admission and acceptance to the MSW Program.

Course Objectives:

After completion of the course students will be able to:

1. demonstrate a solid grasp of the philosophical and historical underpinnings of social welfare policy, including an understanding of the historical cycles.
2. articulate the historical and current policies and programs in the delivery of social services, including American Indian federal policies and regulations.
3. understand the impact of social work philosophy in the formulation and implementation of social policy as it maximizes the health and well-being of all people, and strengthens tribal governance and social services.

4. understand the values and beliefs underlying the intent and administrative practices of social and economic policies and regulations.
5. evaluate specific social policies, formulate alternatives and understand how social work skills are applied to affect change for social and economic justice.
6. comprehend the relationship of social policy to social issues and social work practice.
7. understand the need for ethnic, gender, class, and cultural competence in the design and implementation of social and economic policy problem-solving efforts.
8. understand the relationship of international, national, regional, tribal, state, and local policies and the effects that globalization has on the health and well-being of all people.
9. use the Internet and other modern technology as a research tool and a source for policy information and social change.

Required Reading

Neysmith, S., Bezanson, K., O'Connell, A. (2005). *Telling Tales: Living the Effects of Public Policy*. Halifax: Fernwood.

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

All other readings are accessible through Moodle and can easily be located under the date on which the reading is due. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader for many readings.

Moodle is also a place to engage in discussions with each other if that interests you. There are four Forums available in Moodle. These are places to post messages, ask questions, raise concerns, make announcements, etc., *that relate to the topic of the forum*. There is one for making announcements, one for ideas related to the course, one for the "Policies Are Personal" activity, and one for the "Policy and Your Placement" activity. Participating in forum conversations is not required (except for the ones associated with a graded activity), but sure is a great way to extend what happens inside of class into larger contexts of your life.

Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

There are three graded activities that, together with your engagement in the course, will make up your grade.

Activity #1: Policies Are Personal (10 "units")

Share a bit about your personal connection with a *specific social policy* (Federal, State, or Tribal) on the relevant Moodle Forum. You'll need to pick a policy, find out more about it, and reflect on how it has affected you. This should only be *about 1 page*. **Due February 5.**

Activity #2: Policy and Your Placement (10 “units”)

What *specific social policy(ies)* influence(s) the work done at your field placement (Federal, State, or Tribal)? Find out more and share the implications and influences on the relevant Moodle Forum. This should be *about 1 page*. **Due March 26.**

Activity #3: Hearing Testimony Project or Policy Analysis Paper (65 “units”)

Option 1: In small groups (or individually if you prefer, but this will be *a lot* of work for only one person) prepare an analysis of proposed California social policy legislation and submit hearing testimony in writing or in person. In addition, you will offer “mock” testimony on the second-to-last day of class.

Benchmarks:

1. Select California state legislation to focus on **by February 12.**
 - I will give you a list of options early in the semester.
 - You can propose to focus on a federal, tribal, or local policy if you’d like, but you’ll need to talk with me about it first.
2. Identify key legislators and other stakeholders **by February 26.**
 - This should be *about 1-2 pages*.
3. Find and summarize a selection of professional readings (at least 5) that will support your analysis and position **by March 19.**
 - This should be *at least 4 pages*.
 - The research articles should be from different sources and are to be read by the entire group and summarized by the entire group, not assembled by people individually.
4. Identify and describe the local impact the state policy will have **by April 9.**
 - This should be *about 1 page*.
5. Identify and respond to the “politics” that complicate the issue **by April 9.**
 - This should be *about 2 pages*.
6. Consult with at least 3 people who will be directly affected by the policy issue and summarize the salient and persuasive parts of the interviews **by April 9.**
 - These should be *about 1 page each*.
 - Every group member needs to conduct at least one “constituent interview” with a minimum of 3 “constituent interviews” per group.
7. Synthesize all of this together into a 2-3 *page* letter and submit the letter to the key legislators you’ve identified. Alternatively, you can offer your testimony in person at a legislative committee or subcommittee hearing. **Due April 23.**
8. Prepare a 20 minute presentation that educates the class about your issue and policy, providing the background needed for the class to understand the issue and the policy, and develop a *2 or so page fact sheet* that explains the issue and the position you have taken on the issue to be used for public testimony or to write an informed letter to an elected official. At the end of your presentation you will offer 3 minutes of testimony to the class. **Due April 23.**
 - Make a copy of your fact sheet for each member of the class. Include the names and addresses of those politicians who should be targeted concerning the issue.
 - The fact sheet should present evidence to support your position and provide information upon which a legislator or candidate could base a decision. The key

to a useful policy brief is accuracy and brevity. Be clear about the issue/policy being presented. Define the issue in the beginning and present only necessary background information. Use common language and avoid slang or jargon. Be objective and when using values, use data and facts to support your position.

Some notes, thoughts, ideas, and tips:

- Groups larger than 4 people will not work, as they tend to be a bit unwieldy.
- Send written documents to me through email so I can make notes on them and send them back to everyone.
- Do a very good job proof-reading for spelling, grammar, logic, and citations.
- Adopt a collaborative rather than hostile stance.
- I am really happy to work with you to assist you and support you in this endeavor, both inside and outside of class.
- If your work includes affecting policy change, please consider entering the Influencing State Policy Contest, a national award to MSW students who have made an impact on state policy. Details about this can be found on the ISP web site (<http://www.statepolicy.org/contest/index.html>). The award is \$1,000 for the winner!

Option 2: Write a well-researched paper of *12-13 pages* (not including appendixes) that provides an analysis of an area of social policy. Your paper must include the following:

- A personal context for understanding how the policy affects people's lives.
- Relevant theories for understanding the design and impact of the policy.
- Historical antecedents to the policy at tribal, federal, and/or state levels.
- The current state of the policy.
- The complexities presented by the specific policy.
- Real, specific recommendations for improving the outcomes of the policy.

Benchmarks:

1. A brief proposal is **due February 12**.
2. A complete Bibliography is **due March 5**.
 - Your Bibliography must include a minimum of 12 sources, no more than 4 of which can be websites.
3. An outline is **due April 9**.
4. Finished paper is **due April 30**.

Engagement (15 “units”)

“Engagement” refers to how present you are during the time we spend together. It relates to attendance and punctuality, certainly, but even more it requires your critical reflection on the material, mindfulness of your own life experiences in relation to the life experiences of your comrades, your willingness to speak when it might be uncomfortable to do so, and the presence of mind to remain silent when it might allow for the creation of new possibilities for someone else.

Final grades for the course will be determined by the total number of “units” according to the following table:

95 – 100	= A	84 – 87	= B
92 – 94	= A-	80 – 83	= B-
88 – 91	= B+		

In the Humboldt State University MSW Program, students must receive a grade of B- or higher in order to satisfactorily progress in the graduate program. If you receive a grade below a B- you will be required to retake the course.

I prefer to have all written activities 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 activities can be emailed to me as attachments at swartz@humboldt.edu if you’d like. Unless you make alternate arrangements with me I will consider the lateness of your activity in generating the number of “units” you will receive for the activity. Late activities make things difficult for me as I have budgeted my time to address student work according to a specific schedule. I cannot, therefore, guarantee that a late paper will be reviewed with enough time for you to make revisions.

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 on Moodle listed as “APA Citation Guidelines.”

Please contact me as soon as you can to let me know if there are disability-related issues that may come up in the course of this class that I can accommodate. A link to the HSU Student Disability Resource Center is on Moodle. Folks there can be reached at (707)826-4678.

HSU Policies

You are expected to adhere to all of Humboldt State University’s Policies, especially:

- Academic Honesty
- Nondiscrimination Policy
- Rights and Responsibilities for a Campus Community

These can be located at the beginning of your course catalog and can also be found on Moodle.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
January 22	Introductions, Structures, Institutions, and Systems	
January 29	Political Philosophies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The White House. (January, 2001). <i>Rallying the Armies of Compassion</i>. • National Association of Social Workers. (January, 2002). <i>NASW Priorities on Faith-Based Human Services Initiatives</i>. • <i>Telling Tales</i>, Chapter 1
February 5 **Activity #1: Policies Are Personal due**	Political Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coven, M., & Kogan, R. (March 7, 2003). "Introduction to the Federal Budget Process." Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. • California Budget Project. (March, 1999). <i>Dollars and Democracy: An Advocate's Guide to the California State Budget Process</i>. <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #cccccc; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Complete "The Political Compass" (www.politicalcompass.org), print out your graph, and bring it to class.</p> </div>
February 12 **Activity #3: Project focus or Paper proposal due**	Economic Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The White House. (2006). "Overview of the President's 2007 Budget." In Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2007. 2-5. • National Priorities Project. (February, 2006). <i>The President's Budget: Impact on California</i>. • Greenstein, R., Kogan, R., & 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. • Maag, E. (November, 2006). "Analyzing Recent State Tax Policy Choices Affecting Low-Income Working Families: The Recession and Beyond." The Urban Institute. Brief 3. • <i>Telling Tales</i>, Chapter 2 <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #cccccc; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Complete "The National Budget Simulation" [Long Version] which is on Moodle, print your augmented budget, and bring it to class</p> </div>
	Guest <i>Wes Chesbro, Former California State Senator and Chair of the Senate Budget Committee</i>	
February 19	Individual/Family Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The White House (February, 2002). <i>Working Toward Independence</i>. • National Association of Social Workers. (November 30, 2001). <i>Recommendations for the Reauthorization of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act</i>. • Lower-Basch, E., Ganzglass, E., Minoff, E., Parrott, S., & Schott, L. (2006). "Analysis of New Interim Final TANF Rules." Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. [Browse] • Parrott, S., & Sherman, A. (August 17, 2006). "TANF at 10: Program Results are More Mixed than Often Understood." Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
February 26 **Activity #3: Project stakeholders due**	Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Budget Project. (February, 2005). <i>Lasting Returns: Investing in Health Coverage for California's Children</i>. [Only read Chapters 2-3] Krauskopf, L. (January 7, 2007). "Drugs nearing approval for mysterious pain condition." <i>Reuters</i>. <i>Telling Tales</i>, Chapters 3-4.
<p><i>Guest</i> Dot Campbell, Outreach Coordinator, Community Health</p>		
March 5 **Activity #3: Paper bibliography due**	Policymaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> King, Jr., M.L. (April 16, 1963). "Letter from Birmingham Jail." Senate Select Committee on Citizen Participation in Government. (May, 2000). <i>The Legislative Process: A Citizen's Guide to Participation</i>. [I will hand this out] Unknown (date unknown). <i>A Citizen's Guide to Lobbying</i>. [I will hand this out] National Association of Social Workers. (1999). "Ethical Standard 6: Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Broader Society." In <i>NASW Code of Ethics</i>. <i>Telling Tales</i>, Chapters 5, 7
<p><i>Guest</i> Cheryl Seidner, Chairwoman, Wiyot Tribal Council</p>		
March 12	No Class (Spring Break)	
March 19 **Activity #3: Project readings due**	Civil Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tanner, L. (January 4, 2007). "Surgery on girl raises ethical questions." <i>Associated Press</i>. Goodwin, D. (date unknown). "Ed Roberts: UC Berkeley Radical." <i>IMPACT, Inc</i>. The White House. (May, 2002). <i>A Progress Report on Fulfilling America's Promise to Americans with Disabilities</i>.
March 26 **Activity #2: Policy and Your Placement due**	Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The White House. (April 29, 2002). "President Says U.S. Must Make Commitment to Mental Health Care." [You can either watch or listen to this] New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, Subcommittee on Children and Family. (February 5, 2003). "Promoting, Preserving, and Restoring Children's Mental Health."
April 2	Criminal Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vagins, D., McCurdy, J. (October, 2006). "Cracks in the System: Twenty Years of the Unjust Federal Crack Cocaine Law." American Civil Liberties Union. [Only read pp. 1-7] Office of National Drug Control Policy. (November 30, 2006). <i>Pushing Back Against Meth: A Progress Report on the Fight Against Methamphetamine in the United States</i>. [Please just read pages 2, 4, & 9] <i>Telling Tales</i>, Chapter 6. Clear, T. & Karp, D. (2000). Toward the Ideal of Community Justice. <i>NIJ Journal</i>, October, 20-29

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
April 9 **Activity #3: Project local impact, politics, constituent interviews or Paper outline due**	Civil Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Welfare League of America. (July, 2003). <i>Funding Sources for Child Welfare</i>. Center for Law and Social Policy. (September, 2006). <i>Child Welfare in California</i>. Hutson, R. (January, 2003). "A Vision for Eliminating Poverty and Family Violence: Transforming Child Welfare and TANF in El Paso County, Colorado." Center for Law and Social Policy. Roberts, P. (September, 2006). "Building Bridges Between the Healthy Marriage, Responsible Fatherhood, and Domestic Violence Movements: Issues, Concerns, and Recommendations." Center for Law and Social Policy. Child Welfare Services Stakeholders Group. (September, 2003). <i>CWS Redesign: The Future of California's Child Welfare Services. Final Report. Executive Summary</i>.
Guest <i>Peter LaVallee, Former Mayor of Eureka and Director, Redwood Community Action Agency, Youth Services Bureau</i>		
April 16	Environmental Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lee, J. (March 2, 2003). "A Call for Softer, Greener Language," <i>New York Times</i> President George W. Bush (March 29, 2002). <i>President's Statement on the Klamath River Basin</i>. Easthouse, K. (November 13, 2003). The Klamath Whistleblower: An in-depth interview. <i>North Coast Journal</i>.
April 23 **Activity #3: Project letter, presentation, and fact sheet due**	Presentations and Public Testimony	
April 30 **Activity #3: Paper due**	Globalization/ Conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The White House. (September, 2002). "Ignite a New Era of Global Economic Growth through Free Markets and Free Trade." Chapter VI in <i>The National Security Strategy of the United States of America</i>. [Pages 17-20]. The White House. (March, 2006). "Ignite a New Era of Global Economic Growth through Free Markets and Free Trade." Chapter VI in <i>The National Security Strategy of the United States of America</i>. [Pages 25-30]. Cobb, C., Halstead, T., & Rowe, J. (October, 1995). "If the GDP Is Up, Why Is America Down?" <i>The Atlantic Monthly</i>. 59-78.

The following texts are great reads—and I've got a whole slew of others on policies in general as well as specific social policies if you're interested:

- Midgley, J. (2005). *Women and the U.S. Budget: Where the Money Goes and What You Can Do About It*. Gabriola Island, BC, Canada: New Society Publishers.
- Shultz, J. (2002). *The Democracy Owners' Manual: A Practical Guide to Changing the World*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Zepezauer, M. (2004). *Take the Rich off Welfare*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press.