Course Syllabus

SW 530 Introduction to Social Welfare Policy and Services
Fall 2002

Section 01  - Room 2752 SSWB - Monday  1-4
Section 06  - Room 2816 SSWB - Tuesday 11-2

Instructor:  Karen M. Staller, PhD, JD
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Office Hours:  Monday 4:15-5:15   &  Tuesday  2:15-3:15
Or (more importantly) By Appointment

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“The moral test of a society is how it treats those in the dawn of life – its children; those in the twilight –
the elderly; and those in the shadow of life – the sick, the needy and the handicapped”
- Hubert Humphrey, 1977

“If you are poor your main problem isn’t lack of money,
it’s all the people who know what’s best for you.”
- Kay McDonald, NY County Family Court

I. Course Description

This course surveys the history of social welfare and the social work profession, a broad array of
U.S. social welfare services, and the evolution of social work values and ethics. Emphasis is
placed on major fields of social work service such as: income maintenance, health care, mental
health, child welfare, corrections, and services to the elderly. Analytic frameworks with regard to
social welfare policies and services will be presented. These frameworks will identify strengths
and weaknesses in the current social welfare system with respect to multiculturalism and
diversity; social justice and social change; behavioral and social science theory and research; and social work-relevant promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation programs and services.

II. Course Content

There are four main content areas for the course.

1. The philosophic and practical basis for social welfare provisions, including consideration of the respective roles and relationships of:
   - the individual
   - the family
   - the community, groups, educational settings, churches, workplaces, and the nonprofit sector
   - the government at various geographic levels.

2. The history of the social work profession:
   - from the altruistic philanthropist to the development of professional practice
   - the emergence of distinct methods of practice in their historical context
   - the influence of religious values, ethics, and social and political climates on the profession’s development
   - the emergence of specific policies and programs within their historical, social and political contexts.

3. A critical analysis of current social welfare policies, procedures, and programs, nationally and cross-nationally with attention to:
   - the strengths and weaknesses of various policies, programs and procedures
   - evolving population needs
   - the ways in which current policies and programs address promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation issues, and social justice/social change perspectives.

4. Descriptions and analyses using recent social science theory/research knowledge of major areas of social welfare provision and patterns of their delivery, including, but not limited to:
   - services for families, children, adolescents, adults, and the aging (including income maintenance, foster case, protective services, and school social work)
   - mental and physical health services including those targeted toward promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation
   - community service programs
   - correctional services and criminal justice.

III. Course Objectives

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

- Describe the historical basis for the current U.S. social welfare system, including the history and role of the social work profession.
• Describe and critically analyze current social welfare policies, procedures and programs including the role of behavioral and social science research and theory in their evolution.

• Discuss the strengths and limitations of the current U.S. social welfare system in terms of the functions of provision of basic needs, protection of the vulnerable, prevention, promotion, treatment, rehabilitation, protection of society, and provision of social control. This discussion will incorporate state, national, and cross-national analyses.

• Describe and critically analyze major fields of social welfare service provision from a multicultural perspective, including but not limited to income security, health and mental health services, child welfare, social work practice in school settings, services to the elderly, and correctional systems.

• Discuss and critically analyze current debates, trends and ethical issues in each specific field of service presented in the course, including the implications for social work practice and promoting social justice and social change.

IV. Relationship SW530 to School’s Four Curricular Themes

• Multiculturalism and Diversity. Specific field of service is critically analyzed from multicultural, historical, or cross-national perspectives.

• Social Justice and Social Change. The course critically analyzes current trends and ethical issues and their implications for promoting social justice and social change.

• Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation. The course gives attention to the ways in which current policies and programs address promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.

• Behavioral and Social Science Research. Analytic frameworks drawn from behavioral and social science literature and research are presented for each field of service.

V. Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values

The historical overview in this course includes an analysis of the value base of the profession. Ethical responsibilities of social workers within fields of service will be reviewed. Differences among codes of ethics for several social work professional organizations will also be explored.

VI. Textbooks and News Media Requirements

Required Textbooks


3. Course Pak available at Excel on South University.

4. Other material as noted in syllabus, distributed in class and on reserve in the library.

Required texts may be purchased at Ulrich’s, Michigan Book and Supply and Michigan Union Bookstore.

Required Media

1. The New York Times (or Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, etc.) The NYT is available online at http://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 4 showings of the NewsHour per evening (6pm; 6:30 pm; 7pm and again around midnight. Check your local listings). The NewsHour is online at http://www.pbs.org/newshour.

Recommended Media

1. Local Newspaper (Ann Arbor News, Detroit);
2. CNN News and Policy discussions;
3. “All Things Considered” or “Morning Edition” on National Public Radio. This can be accessed locally via WKAR-FM (90.5) or WUOM-FM (91.7).
5. West Wing (Wednesday 10-11 pm)

VI. Written Assignments and Grading

1. Assignment 1 – Analysis of a Social Policy -- 30% of final grade
2. Assignment 2: Group Project -- 30% of final grade (including two critiques worth 5%).
3. Final Exam -40% of final grade
4. The Instructor reserves the right to distribute “pop” quizzes on current events or assigned readings. They should be considered a measure of your own comprehension of course material and will count in the final grade only in the case of “borderline” grades.

Assignment 1 – Analysis of a social policy. (See separate handout). This exercise is designed to give students the opportunity to conduct the kind of policy analysis that might be expected of them in practice.

Assignment 2 – Group Project. (See separate handout). This group project is flexibly designed to allow students to explore social issues or problems in historical context. In addition students will be asked to write thoughtful written critiques of classmates’ work.

Assignment 3 – Final Take-home Exam. - The final is a take-home exam in essay question format. Questions will be inspired by current news accounts from The New York Times and other news sources. The exam is NOT a current events quiz but rather will involve placing current events in political, cultural and/or historical context in light of material covered, (and
emphasized), in class and/or in reading assignments. It is comprehensive. There are copies of old final exams on reserve in the library. However, in reviewing old exams remember that the “text” of this course is dictated, to some extent, by current public discourse course on social policy issues.

Before you begin working on class assignments, please read the section in your Student Guide to the Master’s in Social Work Degree Program 2001-2002 titled Writing Term Papers and Research Papers at the University of Michigan by Professor Sherrie A. Kossoudji (pp. 54 – 67). For further assistance with writing, you may go to the Writing Workshop, 1139 Angell Hall, (734) 764-0429.

The criteria for each grade are as follows:

A or A-  Mastery of subject content, demonstration of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in completion of assignment. The difference between A and A- is based on the degree to which these skills is demonstrated.

B+  Mastery of subject content beyond expected competency, but has not demonstrated additional critical analysis, creativity or complexity in the completion of the assignment.

B  Mastery of subject content at level of expected competency – meets course expectations

B-  Less than adequate competency, but demonstrates student learning and potential for mastery of subject content.

C or C-  Demonstrates a minimal understanding of subject content. Significant areas needing improvement to meet course requirements.

F  Student has failed to demonstrate minimal understanding of subject content.

Four Notes on Grading:

1. Class attendance and class participation are considered essential for this course. Therefore you are expected to attend, to be prepared, and to make reasonable contributions. It is your responsibility to get materials, handouts, or class notes from one of your classmates if you are unable to be in class.

2. I grade all papers anonymously. With each paper and exam submission, include a title page without your name on it, and provide a separate duplicate title page with your name. Only after I have read and graded all the papers, will I determine which paper belongs to whom.

3. It is best not to assume you will receive an “A” in this course. The instructor grades on a relative, not absolute, grading scale. In short, your work will be evaluated as it compares to that of your classmates and not on some allegedly objective external scale. Since virtually all of you were “A” students as undergraduates there will be a natural and necessary redistribution at the graduate level.

4. In general, I do accept challenges to grades. However, challenges must be in writing (not verbal); must be specific, and must be based on substantive arguments (or mathematical errors) not on nebulous reference to “fairness.” The instructor reserves the right to re-read, and re-grade, the work in its entirety in the case of the challenge. The grade may be adjusted up or down.

Academic Misconduct: Please acquaint yourself with University of Michigan, UM School of Social Work, and NASW policies on scholarly integrity. All academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and misrepresentation, will be treated seriously. You will find a
discussion of plagiarism on page 50 of your Student Guide to the Master’s in Social Work Degree Program 2001-2002. Note that using Web resources increases the risk of “accidental plagiarism.” Do not let that happen.

VII. Schedule of Classes & Assignments

(RR) = Reserve Reading under the name Reisch; (RS) = Reserve Reading under the name Staller; (HO) = Instructor Handouts; (CP) = Course Pak

CLASS 1 - Course Expectations and Introduction to Social Policy

Tuesday September 3rd

Course overview, assignments, grading, expectations etc.

What is social welfare policy? Why should social workers care? Race, gender, class, age, sexual orientation – equitable distribution, social justice and social policy.

In Class: Policy Definition Exercise

Required Reading:

Axin and Stern, Introduction
DiNitto, Chapters 1 & 12


Recommended Reading:


CLASS 2 - Constitutional Overview and Social Welfare Expenditures/Paying for a Civilized Society

Tuesday September 10th

Size of budget. Funding priorities. Funding channels (federal, state, local). Allocation of public funds (six systems). Role of public and private sector.

**In Class: Allocation Exercise**  
**Video:** The State Budget Squeeze (Jim Lehrer).

**Required Reading:**

Axin and Stern, Chapter 8  
DiNitto, Chapter 2 & 11  
Social Welfare Expenditures (HO)  
The Constitution of the United States particularly: Article 1 § 3; XIV Amendment § 4; XVI Amendment (HO)  
The Bill of Rights (Amendments 1-10) (HO)


**Recommended Reading:**


**CLASS 3- British Historical Roots, Social Welfare Values and Framework,**

**Tuesday September 17th**  
**Monday September 23rd**

Required Reading:

Axin and Stern, Chapter 1

- An Act to Relieve the Poor (1598) (CP)
- Act Amending the Poor Laws (1662) (CP)
- Settlement Law (1662) (CP)

CLASS 4– U. S. Social Welfare in Colonial America

Tuesday September 24th Monday September 30th


Videos segments: Making amends, issues of social justice, power, privilege, oppression and politics: Slave Restitution (Jim Lehrer); Zimbabwe: White farms to black farmers (Jim Lehrer) and/or The Michigan Admissions Case (Jim Lehrer).

Required Reading:

Axin and Stern, Chapter 2
DiNitto, Chapter 2 (review)

- Miscellaneous Colonial Town Records (1665) (CP)
- Franklin, Benjamin “Petition to Parliament” (1767 or 1768) (CP)
- Colonial Statutes: Act Imposing a Duty on Persons Convicted of Heinous Crimes and to Prevent Poor and Impotent Persons Being Imported (1790) (CP)
- Pauper and Convict Immigration: A Colonial Statute (1740) (CP)
- Peter Kaim, Comments of a Swedish Traveler (1748) (CP)

Recommended Reading:


CLASS 5– U. S. Social Welfare: From Independence to Civil War

Tuesday October 1st Monday October 7th


**Video:** Orphan Trains

**Required Reading:**

Axin and Stern, Chapter 3
Dix, Memorial to the Honorable The Senate and the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey (HO)

**Recommended Reading:**


**CLASS 6 – U.S. Social Welfare from Civil War to Progressive Era**

**Tuesday October 8th** (October 14-15 FALL BREAK) **Monday October 21st**

War and social policy: The U. S. Sanitary Commission & the Freedman’s Bureau; Reconstruction, Resegregation and social welfare. Rise of scientific charity and applied philanthropy.

**Required Reading:**

Axin and Stern, Chapter 4
DiNitto, Chapter 3
(Pierce, Veto Message (1854) –in Axin and Stern)
Johnson, Veto Message (1866) (HO)
Freedman Bureau Records, Alabama (HO)
- Mayhew, Henry (1860) Classifications of Workers and Non-Workers of Great Britain (CP)
- Thompson, Rev. R.E. (1879). Manual for Visitors among the Poor (COS) (CP)
- Lowell, J. (1890). Economic and Moral Effects of Public Outdoor Relief (CP)
- Paine, R. T. (1893) Pauperism in Great Cities: Its four chief causes (CP)
Recommended Reading:

- Alabama’s 6 State Constitutions: 1819; 1861; 1865; 1869;1875; and 1901 (on line at www.legislature.state.al.us./misc/history/constitutions)

CLASS 7 - U.S. Social Welfare in the Progressive Era

Tuesday October 22nd     Monday October 28th

Immigration, Urbanization and social welfare: The progressives and the slums. Settlement house movements—white and black: Jane Addams and Miss. Brown. Settlements as social services and social action. The raise of the social work profession. Feminism, Maternalism and social welfare before WW I.

Videos: The Heart of Basset Place: W. Gertrude Brown and the Wheatley House AND The Women of Hull House

Required Reading:

Axin and Stern, Chapter 3
DiNitto, Chapter 10


Recommended Reading:


CLASS 8 – U.S. Social Welfare from Progressive Era to Great Depression

Tuesday October 29th  Monday November 4th


Required Reading:

Axin and Stern, Chapter 5

CLASS 9– The Depression and the New Deal

Tuesday November 5th  Monday November 11th

Required Reading:

Axin and Stern, Chapter 6
DiNitto, Chapter 4


Recommended Reading:

CLASS 10 – War on Poverty and Its Aftermath

Tuesday November 12th


Videos:
The War on Poverty: Given a Chance & Segment on George Wallace Stand on the Schoolhouse Steps

Required Reading:
Axin and Stern, Chapter 7
DiNitto, Chapters 8-9
• Martin Luther King, I have a Dream. (CP)
• John F. Kennedy -Nationally Televised Speech (1963) (CP)
• George C. Wallace - The Civil Rights Movement: Fraud, Sham and Hoax (1964)
• Lyndon B. Johnson -Inaugural Address (1965) (CP)
• Lyndon B. Johnson - We Shall Overcome (1965) (CP)

Recommended Reading:

CLASS 11 – U. S. Social Welfare at the End of the 20th Century

Tuesday November 19th

Required Reading:

Axin and Stern, Chapter 8-9
DiNitto, Chapter 5-7
Contract with America (HO)


Recommended Reading:


CLASS 12 – Wrapping Up and Winding Down

Tuesday December 3rd
Monday December 10th

Looking ahead. One more look back & final review. Distribution of Final Exam