SW 150 Section 1
College of Health and Human Services
Division of Social Work

SW 150: Welfare in America

Lecture: Mon., Wed. & Fri. 11:00 am - 11:50 am; 1016 Mariposa Hall
Office Hours: Mondays & Fridays 9:30 am - 11:00 am; 4017 Mariposa Hall
Office: (916) 278-7177
E-mail: bankhead@csus.edu

I. Course Description
This course provides students with an overview of the history, purpose, structure and costs of contemporary American social welfare policy and programs. The role of Social Work in policy development will be examined with attention given to the social, political and economic conditions which set the stage for development and evolution of American social welfare policy. Students will analyze current welfare policies and examine their implications for social work practice. Equity building policies focusing on poverty, child welfare, mental health, disability, gender and race will offer core areas of substantive inquiry. The policy interests of students will direct the analysis process.

II. Objectives
Through attendance, journaling, completion of readings, assignments, and active participation, students will:

a. Be familiar with various social policies;
b. Develop an awareness of the complex historical, political, social, economic and cultural factors that shape the process and outcomes of policy decision-making;
c. Understand the implications of social policies on social work practice with families, low-income and oppressed communities;

III. Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

a. Demonstrate knowledge of the process, concepts and vocabulary of social policy;
b. Demonstrate an understanding of the complex forces and systems involved in the policy-making process;
c. Recognize the relationship between political ideology, policies and social welfare programs and practice;
d. Understand methods of advocacy for policies that promote the well-being of oppressed and vulnerable communities.

IV. Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Reaction Journal</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Group Poster Presentation</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Midterm Exam</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Advocacy Paper</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Final Exam</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>37.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
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V. Teaching/Learning Modalities

This class will be taught with an emphasis on discussion. Students will be asked to share their own experiences, knowledge and opinions within the frameworks and concepts presented in class. The instructor will be a guide to, and participant in, the learning process. There will be a mid-term evaluation of the instructor so that feedback can be incorporated into the last half of the class.

VI. Attendance Policy

Whether excused or unexcused, students may have up to 3 absences without any impact on their grade. If additional classes are missed, the following deduction in points will occur based on the number of classes missed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes Missed</th>
<th>Deduction in Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>-20</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>-30</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>-50</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 or more</td>
<td>-150</td>
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VII. Grading Structure

This course has a total of 200 possible points during the semester which includes 200 regular points and 10 extra credit points. The grading breakdown will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>200-186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>185-180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>179-174</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>173-166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>165-160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>159-154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>153-146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>145-140</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>139-134</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>133-126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>125-120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>119 or below</td>
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</tbody>
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VIII. Students with Disabilities

All reasonable accommodations will be made for students with disabilities. Students who have a learning or physical disability certified by the office for Services for Students with Disabilities should present verification of the disability and request for specific accommodations as soon as possible and no later than week three of the semester.

IX. Required Texts & Readings


X. Topical Outline

SECTION I: SOCIAL POLICY: HISTORY & MODELS

Week 1: Introductions, Overview & Definitions
9/06

Review course objectives & syllabus; complete introductions
Lecture - Why study policy advocacy? Defining social welfare policy & social work as a value based profession.
| Week 2: 9/11 | American Social Policy Making: Politics & Economics  
Chpt. 1 |
| Week 3: 9/18 | Developing the Reluctant Welfare State: Tax Policy  
Chpt. 2 |
Chpt. 9 |
| Week 5: 10/02 | Defining Poverty – Uncovering the Deserving Poor  
Chpt. 3 |
| Week 6: 10/09 | Social Insurance Programs  
Chpt. 4 |
| Week 7: 10/16 | Helping the Aging Blind & Disabled  
Chpt. 5 |

**MIDTERM EXAM: Wed., October 18th**

**SECTION II: SOCIAL POLICY IN PRACTICE**

| Week 8: 10/23 | Ending Welfare as We Knew It: AFDC to TANF  
Chpt. 6 |
| Week 9: 10/30 | Nutrition Policy: Hunger, Obesity and Food Stamps  
Chpt. 7 |
| Week 10: 11/06 | Health Care Policies  
Chpt. 8 |
| Week 11: 11/13 | Social Services for the Elderly & Mentally Ill  
Chpt. 10 |
Week 12: 11/20  There should be laws against that. What happens after a law is passed?

**AV: Walmart: The high cost of low price**

Chpt. 12

Week 13 11/27  Gender & Race Inequality

Chpt. 11

Week 14: 12/04  Gay Rights

Chpt. 11

Week 15: 12/11  Immigration Policy

Chpt. 11

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**Evaluation**

There are several methods of evaluation. Your attendance and participation maximize your experience of the class. Excessive absences reduce the possibility of receiving a passing grade. Please see attendance policy above. It is expected that all assignments will be completed on time. Out of respect for your colleagues, late assignments will lose 1 mark per day, unless arrangements are made **PRIOR** to due date.

All papers are expected to be of undergraduate student quality, which means concise, coherent, well-organized writing with citations for all data and other referenced ideas. Papers must follow APA (American Psychological Association) guidelines for references.

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**1. Reaction Journal (30 points)  December 6**

Students are expected to attend all classes and come to class with reading assignments completed and prepared for writing, reflection and discussion. Students will keep a policy reaction journal to track their internal responses to the subject matter over the course of the semester. Each week students will engage in group activities during a portion of the class time to reinforce or highlight a topic. Your active participation in thoughtful discussions will be evaluated along with your class attendance and journal entries. In at least 30 class sessions you will be asked to use the first 10 minutes of class to respond in your policy journal to a question relevant to the readings or discussion. Each student must read aloud to the class at least one journal entry during the semester. Journals will be collected at the end of the semester for grading. Students will receive one point per journal entry with a maximum of 30 possible points to be received.
2. Group Poster Presentation  (30 points)  
Week 4 – Week 14

With a predetermined group, prepare a three panel poster presentation on a specific policy issue of your choice. The policy you choose can be of any type at any level. Your poster will pose a policy question and answer it with pictures, facts, figures and text. Your group will advocate your position before the class, which will act as the policy body of your choice (city council, board of supervisors, state or federal legislative committee, school board etc.).

Presentations will be graded on visual impact, the breadth and depth of your analysis, the logic of your argument, use of any evidence to support your position, the organization of your presentation, and your ability to present your argument in the allotted time. Presentations will occur during a portion of Friday classes.

3. Social Policy Midterm Exam  (25 points)  October 18

Twenty-five question multiple choice exam focusing on social justice policy development, resource allocation and values as discussed in class and in the readings.

4. Advocacy Paper  (40 points)  November 29

Using your family as an example, explore the impact of at least 3 and not more than 5 types of social policy e.g. education, child welfare, immigration, housing, veterans, civil rights etc. The paper should analyze the impact of these policies on various aspects of family life such as social class, values, interpersonal relationships, finances, educational and housing choices. In response to your family’s experience, recommend changes to the policies you examined. The paper should be 5-8 double-spaced pages. The paper should use at least 5 academic references but should focus on your individual, intellectual and emotional response to your experience. References should be to researched facts and figures that explain the policy or places your family’s experience in a broader context. Papers will be graded on clarity, organization, analysis and recommendations for policy change, as well as your ability to be concise and use evidence to support your argument.

5. Final Exam    75 points  See schedule

Final Exam will include multiple choice questions, matching or fill-in-the-blank questions and at least one essay from content covered throughout the entire semester. In some cases students will be presented with social policy case vignettes and asked to consider the issues and challenges involved with each, identify their own values, offer values based solutions and defend those solutions in their essays.