UNIVERSITY *of* HOUSTON

GRADUATE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK   **WWW.SW.UH.EDU**

COURSE TITLE/SECTION: SOCW 8334 Social Welfare Policy Analysis

TIME: Tuesdays 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

FACULTY: Suzanne Pritzker, Ph.D.   **OFFICE HOURS**: Tuesdays 11:30-1:00 and
                                               by appointment, Room SW 415

E-mail: spritzker@uh.edu   **Phone:** 713-743-8114

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I.   Course

A.   Description

Examines issues and problems in social welfare policy, and the skills and training needed to formulate a policy hypothesis and disseminate the results of an empirical policy study.

B.   Purpose

The purpose of this course is to critically examine the history and the nature of American social policy, particularly in relation to social work. The course will include a critical analysis of the evolution and transformation of social policy and implications for current and future social work practice.

II.   Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following objectives:

1. Critically analyze the historical, philosophical, political, and economic principles of social welfare in the U.S.;
2. Demonstrate a knowledge of the conceptual relationships between social welfare, social policy, and professional social work practice;
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the complex and diverse cultural, racial, philosophical, and ideological issues that underlie social policy;
4. Demonstrate an appreciation and commitment to the ethical principles and

obligations that preserve a linkage between social work practice, practice research, and social policy; and

5. Integrate the knowledge of comparative social policy into the processes of need identification, policy formulation, methods of authorization, implementation, and evaluation.

IV. Course Content

This course will include the following topical (content) areas:
1. Examination of the merits and barriers to evidence-based policy-making;
2. Frameworks and methods for critically analyzing social policies;
3. Linkages between social work research, social work practice, and social policy
4. Dissemination of policy research findings

V. Course Structure

The class format will primarily be a seminar-style class. Discussions and interactive lectures are the primary formats, with students expected to be active participants. In-class exercises and peer presentations will play a role in classroom instruction. Students are expected to complete all readings as assigned, as they are a major source of learning in this course.

The professor reserves the right to alter readings, course topics, and assignments as needed during the course of the semester to better accommodate learning goals and time constraints.

VI. Textbooks

Readings are required as noted in the syllabus, and as assigned during the course of the semester. Required articles and book chapters are available on Blackboard or will be distributed to students by the professor. They are to be read in preparation for the class for which they are assigned.

Suggested readings listed on the syllabus are not required, but are provided as resources to students interested in further readings on a given topic.

Students are also encouraged to read at least one daily newspaper, preferably reflecting diverse political viewpoints. The following are suggested: The Houston Chronicle, The Washington Post, The New York Times, and The Wall Street Journal. International sources, such as BBC News, are also encouraged.

Please note that assigned readings have been purposefully selected to strengthen students' skills and critical thinking regarding social policy analysis, as well as to encourage healthy classroom debate; it is not expected that students (or the

professor) will agree with all perspectives presented.

VII. Course Requirements

The final grade for this course will be based on the following assignments:

1) **Active Class Participation – 10 points**

2) **Current Policy in the News Discussion – 15
   points (DUE DATE: Sessions selected
   during Session 1)**

3) **Current Policy Oral Presentation – 30 points
   (DUE DATE: 10/7-10/21, as selected during Session 1)**

4) **Policy Analysis Paper – 45 points (5 for proposal, 40 for
   paper) (DUE DATES:**
   - **Proposal, due Tuesday, 9/23**
   - **Draft, due one week prior to your scheduled paper feedback
     date (paper feedback dates: 11/18-12/2)**
   - **Final Paper, due Tuesday, 12/9)**

Details about these assignments are provided at the end of this syllabus. All
assignments are due by the dates specified above. **All assignments due on
class meeting days are due before the start of the class session that day.**
Late submissions will be accepted for all assignments; however, *the grade value
will be reduced by 10% for each day late*, including turning in an assignment
after the time deadline on the day it is due.

VIII. Evaluation and Grading

The following standard grading scale has been adopted for all courses taught in
the College:

A =	96-100% of the points	C+ = 76-79.9%
A- =	92-95.9%	C = 72-75.9%
B+=	88-91.9%	C- = 68-71.9%
B =	84-87.9%	D = 64-67.9%
B- =	80-83.9%	F = Below 64%

IX. Policy on grades of I (Incomplete)

The grade of "I" (Incomplete) is a conditional and temporary grade given when
students are either **(a)** passing a course or **(b)** still have a reasonable chance of
passing in the judgment of the instructor but, for non-academic reasons beyond

their control have not completed a relatively small part of all requirements. Students are responsible for informing the instructor immediately of the reasons for not submitting an assignment on time or not taking an examination. Students must contact the instructor of the course in which they receive an "I" grade to make arrangements to complete the course requirements. Students should not re-register for the same course in a following semester in order to complete the incomplete requirements.

The grade of "I" must be changed by fulfillment of course requirements within one year of the date awarded or it will be changed automatically to an "F" (or to a "U" [Unsatisfactory] in S/U graded courses). The instructor may require a time period of less than one year to fulfill course requirements and the grade may be changed by the instructor at any time to reflect work complete in the course. The grade of "I" may not be changed to a grade of W.

X.   Policy on academic dishonesty and plagiarism

Students are expected to demonstrate and maintain a professional standard of writing in all courses, do one's own work, give credit for the ideas of others, and provide proper citation of source materials. Any student who plagiarizes any part of a paper or assignment or engages in any form of academic dishonesty will receive an "I" for the class with a recommendation that a grade of F be assigned, subsequent to a College hearing, in accordance with the University policy on academic dishonesty. Other actions may also be recommended and/or taken by the College to suspend or expel a student who engages in academic dishonesty.

All papers and written assignments must be fully and properly referenced using APA style format (or as approved by the instructor), with credit given to the authors whose ideas you have used. If you are using direct quotes from a specific author (or authors), you <u>must </u>set the quote in quotation marks <u>or </u>use an indented quotation form. For all direct quotes, you must include the page number(s) in your text or references. Any time that you use more than four or five consecutive words taken from another author, you must <u>clearly </u>indicate that this is a direct quotation. Please consult the current APA manual for further information.

Academic dishonesty includes using any other person's work and representing it as your own. This includes (but is not limited to) using graded papers from students who have previously taken this course as the basis for your work. It also includes, but is not limited to submitting the same paper to more than one class. If you have any specific questions about plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please raise these questions in class or make an appointment to see instructor. This statement is consistent with the University Policy on Academic Dishonesty that can be found in your UH Student Handbook.

XI. Course Schedule and Assignments

Session 1. August 26   *Course overview*

Urban Institute. (2008). *Beyond ideology, politics, and guesswork: The case for evidence-based policy.* Washington, D.C. (pp. 1-7)

Session 2. September 2   *Models of policy analysis*

Ginsberg, L. & Miller-Cribbs, J. (2005). Understanding Social Problems, Policies, and Programs. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press. (Chapter 8: Analyzing social policies and models for policy analysis, pp. 241-286)

Bailey, B. & Davis, T. (2012). Mental health parity legislation: Implications for children and youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance. Social Work in Mental Health, 10, 1, 12-33.

Roverts, A., Miller, D., Hokenstad, M. (2012). Long term care insurance beyond the CLASS program. Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare, 39,3, 85-109.

Scherrer, J. (2012). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as policy and strategy for social work action in child welfare in the United States. *Social Work, 57*, 1, 11-22.

Session 3. September 9   *Linking research and policy: The case for and against evidence-based policy*

CLASS WILL MEET IN ROOM 106-R IN THE LIBRARY

Birnbaum, R. (2000). Policy scholars are from Venus; Policy makers are from Mars. Review of Higher Education, 23, 2, 119-132.

Stanhope, V. & Dunn, K. (2011). The curious case of Housing First: The limits of evidence based policy. International Journal of Law and Psychiatry, 34, 275-

282. Suggested reading

Bogenschneider, K. & Corbett, T. (2010). *Evidence-Based Policymaking: Insights from Policy-Minded Researchers and Research-Minded Policymakers.* New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group. (Chapter 1: Exploring the disconnect between research & policy, pp. 1- 24 and Table 5.2, p. 113)

Jonson-Reid, M. (2011). Disentangling system contact and services: A key pathway to evidence-based children's policy. *Children and Youth Services Review, 33*, 598-604.

Taylor, J. (2011). *Legislative History Research: A Basic Guide.* Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service.
www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41865.pdf

Session 4. September 16   *Defining policy problems 1*

Stone, D. (2002). Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making, 3rd ed. New York: W.W. Norton and Company. (Chapter 6: Symbols, pp. 137-162; Chapter 7:
Numbers, pp. 163-187)

Burstein, P. & Britcher, M. (1997). Problem definition and public policy: Congressional committees confront work, family, and gender 1945-1990. Social Forces, 76, 1, 135-
168.

Supreme Court of the United States. (2005). Roper v. Simmons. 542 U.S. 551.

Session 5. September 23   *Defining policy problems 2*

BRING COPIES OF POLICY ANALYSIS PROPOSAL TO CLASS TUESDAY, 9/23

Session 6. September 30   *Philosophical, political, and economic concepts and debates in U.S. social welfare policy*

DiNitto, D. (2008). An Overview of American Social

Policy. In Midgley, J. & Livermore, M., The Handbook of Social Policy, pp. 21-37. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Thyer, B. A. (2010). Social justice: A conservative perspective, Journal of Comparative Social Welfare, 26, 2, 261 – 274.

Suggested reading
Rank, M. & Hirschl, T. (2002). Welfare use as a life course event: Toward an understanding of the U.S. safety net.
Social Work, 47, 3, 237-248.

Session 7. October 7   *Current Policy Presentations: Public assistance*

Session 8. October 14   *Current Policy Presentations: Social insurance*

Session 9. October 21   *Current Policy Presentations/ Assembling evidence*

Drake, E., Aos, S., & Miller, M. (2009). Evidence-based public policy options to reduce crime and criminal justice costs: Implications in Washington State. Victims and Offenders, 4, 170-196.

Meyers, M., Glaser, B. & MacDonald, K. (1998). On the front lines of welfare delivery: Are workers implementing policy reforms? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management,17,* 1, 1-22.

May, H. (2004). Making statistics more meaningful for policy research and program evaluation. *American Journal of Evaluation, 25*, 4, 525-540.

Yanow, D. (2007). Qualitative-interpretive methods in policy research. In F. Fischer, G. Miller, & M. Sidney, (Eds.). *Handbook of public policy analysis: Theory, politics, and methods.* (pp. 405-415). New York: CRC Press.

Suggested reading
Gilbert, N. (2012). A comparative study of child welfare systems: Abstract orientations and concrete results.
Children and Youth Services Revew, 34, 532-536.

Mitchel, J. (2007). The use (and misuse) of surveys in policy analysis. In F. Fischer, G. Miller, & M. Sidney, (Eds.). Handbook of public policy analysis: Theory, politics, and methods. (pp. 393-402). New York: CRC Press.

Session 10. October 28   *Exploring policy alternatives, developing policy implications 1*

McDonnell, L. & Elmore, R. (1987). Getting the job done: Alternative policy instruments. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 9*, 133-152.

Suggested reading
Soss, J., Schram, S., Vartanian, T., O'Brien, E. (2001). Setting the terms of relief: Explaining state policy choices in the devolution revolution. *American Journal of Political Science, 45*, 2, 378-395.

Session 11. November 4   *Exploring policy alternatives, developing policy implications 2*

Caldwell, M., Ziemke, M., & Vitacco, M. (2008). An examination of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act as applied to juveniles: Evaluating the ability to predict sexual recidivism. Psychology, Public Policy, and Law, 14, 89-114.

Clark, T., Sparks, M., Mcdonald, T, & Dickerson, J. (2011). Post-Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement: Policy   and Practice Implications for Social Workers. Health & Social Work, 36, 3, 217-224.

Moodie-Dyer, A. (2011). A policy analysis of child care subsidies: Increasing quality, access, and affordability. Children & Schools, 33, 1, 37-45.

Session 12. November 11   *Disseminating policy research findings*

Bogenschneider, K. & Corbett, T. (2010). *Evidence-Based Policymaking: Insights from Policy-Minded Researchers and Research-Minded Policymakers.* New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor and Francis

Group. (Chapter 9: Communicating with policymakers, pp. 193-226).

Gonyea, J. & Hooyman, N. (2005). Reducing poverty among older women: Social Security reform and gender equity. Families in Society, 86, 3, 338-34
Musso, et al. (2000). Tradecraft: Professional writing as problem solving. Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 19, 4, 635-646.

Roff, S. (2001). Analyzing end-of-life care legislation: A social work perspective. Social Work in Health Care, 33, 1, 51-68.

Suggested Reading
Jaffe, P., Crooks, C., Wolfe, D. (2003). Legal and policy responses to children exposed to domestic violence: The need to evaluate intended and unintended consequences. Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 6, 3, 205-213.

POLICY ANALYSIS PAPER DRAFTS DUE

Session 13. November 18   *Student policy analysis paper feedback session 1*

Assigned papers written by classmates

POLICY ANALYSIS PAPER DRAFT DISCUSSIONS (3)

Session 14. November 25   *Student policy analysis paper feedback session 2*

Assigned papers written by classmates

POLICY ANALYSIS PAPER DRAFT DISCUSSIONS (3)

Session 15. December 2   *Course wrap up/ Student policy analysis paper feedback session 3*

POLICY ANALYSIS PAPER DRAFT DISCUSSIONS (2)

December 9   **REVISED POLICY ANALYSIS PAPER DUE**

XII. Americans with Disabilities Statement:

Whenever possible, and in accordance with 504/ADA guidelines, the University of Houston will attempt to provide reasonable academic accommodations to students who request and require them. Please call 713-743-5400 for more assistance. Instructors may not provide accommodations without supporting documentation from the UH Center for Students with Disabilities.

XIII. Addenda:

Consultation. Scheduled office hours are indicated on page 1 of this syllabus and are posted outside of my office door (#415). Other times may be arranged by appointment – please contact me by email (spritzker@uh.edu) to schedule alternative appointment times. I encourage students to meet with me to discuss assignment topics, questions related to course content, or other topics that arise as a result of course content, assignments, and discussions.

Course expectations. Regular, on-time attendance is expected; absences will be reflected in your class participation grade. If you cannot attend class, you are expected to inform the professor in advance. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to contact fellow students to obtain missed information. As a seminar course, active participation in classroom discussions is required. Furthermore, all written work should demonstrate communication ability consistent with doctoral level performance.

Blackboard. The course information and various required readings are posted on the Blackboard site for this course. Please use Blackboard for submitting assignments and following course announcements.

Electronic Devices. You are expected to conduct yourself as a professional in this class. Distractions should be kept to a minimum, meaning that cell phones should be turned off before class, and no laptops should be utilized during class sessions, except as otherwise permitted by the professor (e.g. for class presentations).

Course Assignments

The final grade for this course will be based on the following assignments:

1) Active Class Participation – 10 points.

As a seminar class, active class participation is expected, and is necessary for optimal student learning. We learn from each other; thus, students are expected to come prepared to discuss the weekly readings, as well as broader themes and/or current policy issues and events that arise around each session's topic. Debate and discussion of different perspectives is expected; however, students are expected to demonstrate respectful conduct towards one another.

Your participation will be assessed using the following criteria:
- supporting flow of discussion (sharing appropriate and relevant content, reading and integrating weekly readings, and furthering classroom discussion of session topics);
- active listening;
- providing constructive feedback on draft policy analysis papers and proposals to your classmates; and
- being respectful in comments and action (including regular attendance and arriving on time).

2) Current Policy in the News Discussion – 15 points.

Each student will select one class session over the course of the semester to bring in newspaper or newsmagazine articles or *brief* video clips about a current social policy issue in the news.
Each student is responsible for:
a) clearly presenting the issue,
b) explaining the issue's potential impact for social work research and on professional social work practice, and
c) facilitating class discussion of links between the policy issue in the article/clip and course content and readings, using a specified policy analysis framework discussed during Session 2 as a guide.
Each presenter is responsible for keeping the presentation and discussion to approximately 20 minutes in length. Discussion will be cut off at 30 minutes.

(DUE: Session selected during Session 1)

3) Current Policy Oral Presentation – 30 points.

Each student will select one of the following policies for an oral classroom presentation:
1) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
2) Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (TANF)
3) Medicaid/State Children's Health Insurance Program

4) Supplemental Security Income
5) Medicare
6) Social Security
7) Unemployment Insurance
8) Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
9) Earned Income Tax Credit

Policies will be selected during Session 1–each policy may only be presented on by one student.

The presentation should be presented as if you are an instructor teaching the rest of the class about this policy. Your job is to educate the class about the policy and provoke critical analysis about the policy. You may use any presentation format that you believe would be effective in a classroom teaching setting. Your presentation (including class discussion) should be limited to 45 minutes. Presentations should include the following:
   a) a description of the social problem the policy was designed to address, in the views of its creators (and amenders, as relevant),
   b) an _unbiased_ description of the policy and presentation of key elements,
   c) presentation of modern philosophical, political, and economic debates surrounding the policy, and value conflicts underlying these debates,
   d) stimulation of a discussion about the future trajectory of the policy and potential impacts on social work practice and on vulnerable populations, and responses to questions about the policy from your fellow students, and
   e) distribution of a brief bibliography of useful resources on the policy, including empirical analyses and resources from reputable think tanks or policy research institutes.

(DUE: 10/7-10/21, as selected during Session 1)

4) Policy Analysis Paper – 45 points total (5 for proposal, 40 for paper).

Students are responsible for writing an approximately 15 page in-depth social welfare policy analysis on a policy issue of interest and relevance to your own research area of interest. Your goal should be to develop a paper of publishable quality. _Therefore, paper length may vary as specified in the author guidelines of a target journal of your choice._

This paper may take several forms to be selected by the student in conjunction with the instructor, including, but not limited to: an analysis of a specific policy; a comparative analysis of multiple policies (e.g., across states or countries); or an analysis of specific policy implications stemming from a specific body of empirical research.

You are expected to conduct library research, and to examine research literature and data (e.g., prior empirical studies that have been conducted, secondary data analysis, formal program evaluations, social indicators) to inform your analysis. You may use

primary sources of data, as time permits; however, if you do seek to submit your paper for publication consideration, you must ensure your data adheres to all relevant university human subject requirements.

At a minimum, your paper should include:
   a) An introduction to your analysis, including the policy(ies) you are analyzing and why you believe it is of importance to social work or a specific area of practice. Specify the specific analysis framework or specific analysis criteria you have selected to analyze your policy(ies).
   b) A literature review, including background and description of your policy(ies), and evaluation of empirical literature informing this policy area.
   c) An in-depth analysis of your policy(ies) using the framework or criteria you have identified. This analysis should be based on current research in your area, relevant historical, legislative, judicial, or regulatory information, and any additional research you conduct.
   d) A discussion of implications for both research and policy based on your analysis.

This assignment will be completed in three parts:

1) ***Proposal***:   The proposal should consist of a preliminary draft outline of your paper, and a brief (approximately 500 words, plus references) written discussion of your chosen topic. The following points should be addressed:
   a) the specific policy or set of policies to be used in your analysis
   b) the framework(s)/criteria to be applied
   c) an initial review of relevant literature
   d) any additional sources of data to be used in your analysis

   (DUE: TUESDAY, 9/23; Copies must be brought for the professor and all students in the course)

2) ***Draft***:   You are expected to present a solid draft of your paper to your classmates and the professor, and to read and provide feedback on the paper drafts provided to you by your fellow students. During in-class sessions, the class will be expected to provide constructive feedback to strengthen each student's policy analysis.

   (DUE: TUESDAY, 11/11; Copies must be brought or e-mailed to the professor and all students in the course the week prior to your discussion date)

3) ***Final Paper***:   Based on the feedback provided during the in-class sessions, you are expected to revise your paper, in order to strengthen it as much as possible. This revised policy analysis will be submitted to the professor for evaluation.
   (DUE TUESDAY, 12/9)

Your draft and final paper are expected to follow the guidelines of the 6th edition of the APA Publication Manual. They are expected to be double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1" margins, with page numbers indicated. Your final paper will be assessed based on: adherence to the required elements of the assignment; the quality of analysis and the depth of understanding of the topic; logical and well-organized presentation of arguments, and conclusions clearly drawn from your arguments. In addition, your analysis must be supported with reputable sources, and must be appropriately cited. Appropriate grammar and spelling are expected.

Assignment Due Dates
(Enter your own assignment due dates after
Session 1)

Assignment	Course Due Dates	Your Due Date
Current Policy in the News Discussion 1	Session selected by student	
Current Policy Oral Presentation	Sessions 7 (10/7) – 9 (10/21)	
Policy Analysis Paper – Proposal	9/23	9/23
Policy Analysis Paper – Draft	11/11	
Policy Analysis Paper - Final	12/9	12/9