

# **SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY AND SOCIAL PROGRAMS: A VALUES PERSPECTIVE**

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## **Sample Syllabus**

### ***Course Description:***

The purpose of this course is to help students understand what drives social welfare policy, the values and beliefs underlying social welfare policy, and how it impacts our lives. The course is designed to be theoretical and practical.

Fundamental concepts and theories of social welfare policy are examined. The competing values and beliefs that influence social welfare policy are discussed and analyzed. An overview of the history of social welfare policy in the United States is explored. Social welfare policies and programs are examined within the context of the social problems they address. The course also explores the strengths and weaknesses of current government interventions. Special focus is given to social welfare policies and programs designed to promote social and economic justice. The themes of poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of oppression are addressed. Students will also explore ways to conduct effective social welfare policy analysis.

### ***Course Objectives:***

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

1. Describe the historical events which shaped the development of social welfare policies and programs in the United States,
2. Identify the competing societal values and beliefs which influenced the development of social welfare policies and programs in the United States,
3. Identify the development of the social work profession and social work values and ethics,
4. Explain, discuss, and critically evaluate the structures, functions, and purposes of social welfare policies and programs,
5. Define and analyze the social forces that impact social and economic justice and the relationship of these social forces to the development of social welfare policies and programs,

6. Apply a systematic approach to analyze social welfare policies and programs,
7. Analyze how racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, and other forms of societal oppression impact on the social welfare policy arena,
8. Assess the impact of institutionalized forms of oppression,
9. Be familiar with the bureaucratic, political, and legislative processes which influence the delivery of social welfare services, and
10. Understand the impact of social welfare policies to effect change and social justice.

### **Course Outline**

- Week One:           INTRODUCTION - Overview of the course
- What is social welfare?  
Why study social welfare policy?  
Values and beliefs as the cornerstone of social welfare policy in America
- Read Chapter 1
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- Week Two            HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION
- Colonial Period - Elizabethan Poor Laws  
Industrialization  
Progressive Era - Settlements & Charity Organization Societies  
New Deal Era - Social Security Act  
Post WW II  
Social Reform - Anti-poverty programs  
1970s and 1980s  
Economic shifts of the 1990s  
The new century
- Read Chapter 2

Week Three            CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY

Ideologies of the social welfare system  
Theories of social welfare evolution  
Paradigms of the social welfare system

Read Chapter 3

Week Four            DELIVERY OF SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

The professionalization of social welfare services  
Public and private providers  
Forms of social welfare assistance  
Relevant values and beliefs

Read Chapter 4

Week Five            SOCIAL JUSTICE AND CIVIL RIGHTS

Barriers to social justice and civil rights  
The US Constitution  
History of voting rights  
Protection from discrimination and oppression  
Conflicting values and beliefs

Read Chapter 5

Week Six            ANALYZING SOCIAL WELFARE POLICIES

Dynamics of social welfare policy development  
Identifying social problems  
Analyzing key policy components  
Analyzing policy implementation  
Assessing outcomes of policy decisions  
Models for social welfare policy analysis  
    Sequential model  
    Critical theory model

Read Chapter 6

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| Week Seven  | <p>SOCIAL INSURANCE</p> <p>The Social Security Act<br/> Social Insurance<br/> Public Assistance<br/> The future<br/> Conflicting values and beliefs</p>  |
| Week Eight  | <p>MIDTERM EXAM</p>  |
| Week Nine   | <p>POVERTY AND ECONOMIC INEQUALITY</p> <p>Official definition of poverty - poverty line<br/> Absolute vs. relative poverty<br/> Contributing factors to poverty<br/> Antipoverty policies and programs<br/> Conflicting values and beliefs</p> <p>Read Chapter 8</p>         |
| Week Ten    | <p>THE IMPACT OF THE ECONOMY</p> <p>Importance of economics to social work<br/> Key economic concepts<br/> Major economic social welfare programs<br/> Federal budget<br/> Corporate America and the workforce<br/> Conflicting values and beliefs</p> <p>Read Chapter 9</p> |
| Week Eleven | <p>SOCIAL WELFARE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS<br/> AFFECTING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</p> <p>Read Chapter 10</p>  |
| Week Twelve | <p>HEALTH CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</p> <p>Read Chapter 11</p>  |

Week Thirteen      AGING AND SOCIAL WELFARE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Read Chapter 12

Week Fourteen      INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY

Read Chapter 13

Week Fifteen      THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY

Why is social welfare policy important to us?

The power of social welfare policy

Changing social welfare policy

Promoting social justice through social welfare policies

Read Chapter 14

**SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS:** Multiple choice, true-false, and essay questions for each chapter are provided in the Instructor's Manual for in-class testing. The following assignments can be used to supplement exams or in place of in-class testing. In addition, following each chapter of the book, exercises are listed which allow students to experientially apply the content of each chapter. These exercises can also be used as assignments for the course.

**(a) Analysis of a social welfare issue**

Analyze (2 double-spaced typed pages) a social welfare issue based on a problem or concern presented in a recent newspaper or news magazine article. The paper should discuss the problem, extent of the problem, implications for social welfare policy and services, and the relationship to social work. Include the article (or a copy) with the paper.

**(b) Book Critique**

Analyze the social welfare policy issues presented in a current book which presents the impact of social welfare policies and programs on people's day-to-day lives. Possible book choices include:

*Families on the Fault Line*, by Lillian B. Rubin (1994)

*Nickel and Dimed*, by Barbara Ehrenreich (2001)

*Working Poor*, by David K. Shipler (2004)

*American Dream*, by Jason DeParle (2004)

*Bait and Switch*, by Barbara Ehrenreich (2005)

Develop a 3-4 page paper which addresses:

- What social problems are identified in the book?
- What are the major social welfare policy issues related to the content of the book?
- What social values are critical?
- What are the implications for future social welfare policy and social work practice?

### (c) Policy Paper

Your paper (10-12 typed pages, double-spaced) must be an analysis of a topic presented in class, or a related topic. The paper should demonstrate outside research and sources. Discussion should include the relevance of the topic in respect to social welfare policy. Describe the impact, values and beliefs, and extent of the effect on society. How does this issue relate to social work, and your ideas and suggestions for possible future action.

To help structure your paper, the following suggestions can be used as a guide:

Identify the problem and the way it is defined.

Identify the causes to which the problem is attributed.

What are the values and beliefs that make the events of concern defined as a social problem?

Why is or is not this concern being raised as a problem at this time in history?

Is this a “new” problem?

What ideologies, theories, or paradigms of the social welfare system are relevant? Why?

Who is now defining this issue as a social problem and how is that different from the past? What conditions are different? How is society different?

Who has power in regard to this issue?

What social welfare policies and programs are relevant to the problem? Is there a role for social work? If so, what is the role of social work?

Is the problem adequately addressed by present social welfare policies and programs? Is there more or less which should be done?

What are your suggested changes or approaches to the problem?

Cite all references used (any consistent and clear format is acceptable, although APA style is recommended). The paper must include a reference list at the end. Include current and up-to-date sources.

**(d) Program Analysis**

Develop a 2 page paper (typed and double-spaced) which describes the appropriate social welfare programs which are relevant for **one** of the following case examples. Include discussion of eligibility, benefits, and the adequacy of the available services.

SMITH FAMILY

Single-parent family headed by Jane Smith, 24 years old. There are two children, William is 4 years old, and Sally is 2 years old. Jane is currently unemployed, did not work long enough to be covered by Unemployment Insurance, has exhausted all of her savings, and receives no alimony or child support. The family is temporarily staying at a Salvation Army family shelter, but must leave at the end of the month. For what services might the Smith family be eligible? What do you recommend?

**OR**

ALBERT JONES

Mr. Jones is 65 years old and planning to retire next month. He has worked for 40 years at two different places of employment. His earnings have always been enough to support his family. His children are adults and on their own, he currently lives with his wife Sarah who is 63 years old. Sarah never worked full-time, and only worked for a few years before they had children. While Mr. Jones has some savings, and his house is fully paid for, he is concerned about being cared for in retirement. What services are available for Albert and Sarah Jones? What do you recommend?

**(e) Social Welfare Policy Letter**

Choose a social welfare issue discussed in class. Prepare a letter to an elected official regarding your chosen social welfare issue. You are not required to actually send the letter, however it must demonstrate the appropriate format and content.



Social welfare policy and underlying values -- Historical foundations of social welfare in America -- Conceptual foundations of social welfare policy -- Analyzing and researching social welfare policies -- The delivery of social welfare services -- Critical concerns that affect all arenas of social welfare. Social justice and civil rights -- Poverty and economic inequality -- Economics, employment, budgets, and taxes -- Key social welfare policies and programs.Â United States social welfare policies and international comparisons -- Policy practice and the impact of social welfare policy. Series TitleÂ Add tags for "Social welfare policy and social programs : a values perspective". Be the first. Similar Items. Historical development of social welfare policies and programs in Hong Kong Theories and values of welfare Contemporary theoretical perspectives Welfare state in crisis Cash and care Paying for welfare in a mixed economy Privatization Understanding poverty and income maintenance programs Understanding poverty and employment policies Welfare vs. workfare Professionalism, managerialism, and multidisciplinary approach Quality movement in welfare services Collaboration and changing practices Welfare.Â Social policy and social programs: a Method for the practical public policy analyst. Needham Heights, Mass.: Allyn & Bacon. Gender and Welfare State Regimes is an organizing concept that focuses a country's traditional social welfare policies in terms of how it influences employment and general social structure. Gender in terms of the welfare state regime varies based on how a nation perceives and acts on the value of gender. Within gender and welfare state regimes there are three central perspectives. The first perspective is the liberal welfare state, which is utilized in the United Kingdom and Ireland. This regime