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SW 310.01: Social Welfare Policies and Services

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Social Work 310
Social Welfare Policies & Services
Fall 2003
LA 244, 9:10 am to 10:00 am

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Office hours M, W - 10:30 – 11:50

Social work is a profession that requires an understanding of how public policies are made and the ability to influence the political decision-making process. The field has a responsibility to promote social justice and shape public policy by being politically active and by mobilizing disenfranchised populations to influence decisions that impact their lives. This is a challenging prospect given our limited political clout and the power of special interest groups.

In this course we will examine the process by which public policies are formulated and their resulting impact on various segments of American society. We will explore the role of non-governmental agencies, interest and advocacy groups and governmental agencies in resolving social problems. We also will see how different groups and individuals influence the policy-making process, both in terms of the issues that are addressed and the parameters established to deal with such issues. As we shall see, no political process is neutral in its impacts; some groups tend to benefit far more than others regarding how policies are developed and how they are implemented.

To facilitate an understanding of the political process we will review and critically analyze major social policies that impact citizens. Specific domestic policy areas will include welfare reform, child welfare, chemical dependency, and mental health/health care. We will also focus our inquiry on policies crafted to address the needs of such marginalized groups as women and children, Native people, elderly, and mentally ill.

Because a democracy is not a spectator sport and engaged citizens are active participants in their communities, you are expected to actively contribute to building knowledge in this course. While I will share with you my perspectives, knowledge, and experiences in policy-related areas, I expect you to offer your observations and knowledge to the class. Although the classroom will be highly interactive and somewhat “laid back,” it will be academically challenging.

Social Work 310 is the department's *designated writing course* and you will be expected to present clear, concise, and well-organized written documents that adhere to APA guidelines. You will also be required to critique current programs as they address the needs of marginalized and traditionally oppressed populations while examining strategies to provide effective, culturally sensitive programs. Similarly, you will need to demonstrate an understanding of the values that shape policy and critically analyze how the policies affect citizens marginalized from the political decision-making process.

The class will be conducted as a seminar. Therefore, it is imperative that students come to class prepared to discuss reading assignments. I will provide material as needed, but for the most part the class will be an opportunity for us to reflect upon and analyze questions about social problems and community change through civic participation and policy development. Students will be encouraged to bring their experiences as they relate to topic themes.

ASSIGNED READINGS & BOOKS

Kessler, D. (2001). *A Question of intent: A great american battle with a deadly industry*. New York: Public Affairs.

Schlosser, E. (2001). *Fast food nation: The dark side of the all-american meal*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Additional Readings – Mansfield Library ERES. System: ERES password is SW310

The Newspaper to include:

- A local source such as the Missoulian, Great Falls Tribune, Billings Gazette, etc
- A national source such as The New York Times, Washington Post, etc

RECOMMENDED BOOK

Publication manual of the american psychological association (2001). Washington: American Psychological Association.

ASSIGNMENTS

A. Quizzes --There will be a quiz every other Friday beginning September 12. Each quiz will cover designated chapters in the assigned books, library readings, and class discussions. A breakdown of the book chapters and quiz dates are outlined below. Make-up quizzes are only allowed if your absence is excused **before** the date and time of the quiz.

Fast Food Nation: **September 12** - Introduction, Chs 1, 2, 3 & 4; E-res readings 1&2;
 September 26 – Chs 5, 6, 7, & 8; E-res readings 3;
 October 10 - Chs 9, 10, & epilogue;

Question of Intent: **October 24** – Veritas, Part I; E-res reading 4;
 November 7 – Part II;
 November 21– Part III;
 December 5 - Part IV;

B. Papers -- You are required to complete **three** short policy analysis papers. The papers should not exceed five pages and must contain a minimum of three sources. Although we will discuss the papers in class, each must include: 1) Historical overview of a current or proposed social policy (e.g., The Patriot Act, North American Free Trade Agreement, Welfare Reform, Health Care, The Indian Child Welfare Act, etc) at the federal, state or local level; 2) A detailed description of the social problem that necessitated the development of the policy; 3) A description of the policy; 4) An analysis of the policy. Further instructions will be given in class.

You must correctly cite your sources (e.g., journal & newspaper readings, Web sites) giving credit to the authors whose work you refer to. Use the APA publication manual on reserve at the library. Due Dates – **October 1, October 22, November 12**

C. Proposal -- Prepare a program proposal that advances a solution to one of the social problems you wrote about in your short papers. Your paper will include: 1) an introduction; 2) a problem statement; 3) Program goals and objectives; 4) Methods; 5) Evaluation; 6) A plan for future funding; and 7) a budget. Paper Length: 7-8 Pages. Further instructions will be given in class. **Due Date –December 12.**

POLICY FOR LATE PAPERS

All papers are to be turned in during class on the assigned day. Each day a paper is late; one (1) point will be deducted from the final grade for that paper.

POINTS

Attendance & Class Participation	65
Quizzes	35
Short papers	150
Final Paper	100
TOTAL	350

GRADING

A	350-315
B	314-280
C	279-245
D	244-210
F	209 and below

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 Sep. 3	<p>Introductions, Developing Classroom Policies, Social Policy Analysis Framework.</p> <p>September 5, Class discussion of ERES reading #2.</p>
Week 2 Sep. 8	<p>Research Resources, Social Policy and its Importance to Social Work; History; Social Policy Analysis;</p> <p>September 10: Class will meet in the Mansfield Library computer classroom on level two.</p> <p>September 9: Class discussion of ERES reading #1.</p> <p>September 12: Quiz One</p>
Week 3 Sep. 15	<p>How Policy is Made; The Political Process – Lobbying, Special Interests, Propaganda and Persuasion</p> <p>September 15: Guest Speaker Morgan Voth</p>
Week 4 Sep. 22	<p>Writing and APA Style; Policy as Intervention</p> <p>September 26: Quiz Two</p>
Week 5 Sep. 29	<p>Various levels of Policy Practice; APA and Writing; Discussion of Papers</p> <p>October 1: Paper One Due</p>
Week 6 Oct. 6	<p>Modern Welfare State: Basis of Social Allocations</p> <p>October 8: Class discussion of ERES reading #3</p> <p>October 10: Quiz Three</p>

Week 7 Oct. 13	Service Delivery System Choices: The Voluntary Sector and Privatization of Services October 15: Class discussion of ERES reading #4- Part 1 October 17: Class discussion of ERES reading #4 Part 2
Week 8 Oct. 20	Indian Child Welfare Act October 22: Paper Two Due October 24: Quiz Four
Week 9 Oct. 27	Child Welfare Policies
Week 10 Nov. 3	U.S. Patriot Act November 7: Quiz Five
Week 11 Nov. 10	Public Assistance Programs; Grant Writing & Program Proposals November 12: Paper Three Due
Week 12 Nov. 17	Grant Writing & Program Proposals November 21: Quiz Six
Week 13 Nov. 24	Grant Writing & Program Proposals (continued) November 26 & 28: Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class
Week 14 Dec. 1	Social Security, Health Care and Mental Health Policy December 5: Quiz 7
Week 15 Dec. 8	North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA); Discussion of Papers December 12: Proposal Due
Week 16 Dec. 15	No Final Examination – No Class