



COURSE TITLE/SECTION: SOCW 7367 – Advanced Social Policy Analysis

TIME/PLACE: Mondays, 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM, SW 107B

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I. Course

A. Description

Provides knowledge of comparative social welfare systems and policies, the impact of policy on clients and communities, and the skills of policy analysis.

B. Purpose

This course is the required advanced social welfare policy course. The course examines alternative models of policy development and applies them to current issues in social welfare. It emphasizes frameworks for policy research and secondary analysis of governmental data. It provides knowledge of social welfare systems and policies, the impact of policy on clients and communities, and the skills of policy analysis as a means to achieving social and economic justice for oppressed groups. A comparative perspective is included.

II. Course Objectives

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

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the policy process at the federal, state, and local levels;
2. Delineate skills in initiating, formulating, implementing, and evaluating social policy; and
3. Demonstrate critical thinking and writing skills in assessing problems, developing policy solutions, and analyzing current social welfare policies.

III. Course Content

This course will include the following topical (content) areas:

1. Overview of social policy;
2. Fields of policy practice; and

3. Frameworks for policy development and analysis.

IV. Course Structure

Class formats will vary from session to session, depending on session content. Interactive lectures and discussion will be the primary format; however, in-class exercises, guest speakers, and peer presentations may play a role in class instruction.

The professors reserve 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.

V. Reading Material

Readings are required as noted in the syllabus, and as assigned during the course of the semester. Assigned readings will be available via the online links provided in this syllabus, on Blackboard, or distributed to students by the professors.

Please note that readings have been purposefully selected to strengthen students' critical thinking and encourage healthy classroom debate; it is not expected that students (or the professors) will agree with all perspectives presented.

In order to stay abreast of current issues, students should read at least one daily newspaper, preferably reflecting diverse political viewpoints. The following are suggested: The Texas Tribune, Houston Chronicle, The Washington Post, The New York Times, or The Wall Street Journal. Students are expected to share articles that complement our class discussions.

VI. Course Requirements

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

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| 1) Attendance and Class Participation | 20% |
| 2) Written Assignments (3 total) | |
| Social Problem Policy Paper
(DUE DATE: 10/7) | 20% |
| White Paper
(DUE DATE: 10/28) | 15% |
| Policy Process Paper (final)
(DUE DATE: 12/18 by 5:00 PM) | 25% |

3) Policy Practice Presentation
(Presentations on 12/2)

20%

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 at the start of the class session that day.** Late submissions will be accepted under special circumstances; 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.

VII. 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%

VIII. 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 instructors but, for non-academic reasons beyond their control, have not completed a relatively small part of all requirements. Students are responsible for informing the instructors immediately of the reasons for not submitting an assignment on time or not taking an examination. Students must contact the instructors 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 instructors may require a time period of less than one year to fulfill course requirements, and the grade may be changed by the instructors at any time to reflect work complete in the course. The grade of "I" may not be changed to a grade of "W".

IX. 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 instructors), with credit given to the authors whose ideas you have used. If you are using direct quotes from a specific author(s), you must set the quote in quotation marks or 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 clearly 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.

X. Course Schedule and Assignments

Session 1. August 26
Barillas & Ortiz

Course Overview: What is social policy? Part I

Class Discussion

September 2

Labor Day – No Class

Session 2. September 9
Barillas

What is social policy? Part II
Defining social problems

Chambers, D.E. (2000). Analyzing the social problem background of social policies and social programs. In *Social Policy and Programs: A Method for the Practical Public Policy Analyst* (pp. 7-30). New York: Macmillan.

Stone, D. (1997). Symbols. In *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making* (pp. 138-162). New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Jansson, B. (2008). Understanding the ecology of policy in governmental, electoral, community, and agency settings (Chapter 4). In *Becoming an Effective Policy Advocate* (5th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole/Thomson Learning.

[Read only pp. 101-125, NOT the entire chapter]

Wood, B. and Doan, A. (2003). The Politics of Problem Definition: Applying and Testing Threshold Models. *American Journal of Political Science*. 47(4): 640-653. (can skip section on “Graphical Representation of Theory.”)

**Session 3. September 16
Ortiz**

Value debates in social welfare policy: Social welfare in social, political, economic, cultural context

Housing first

Beyond Shelter (2012). Housing First: Ending family homelessness. *Beyond Shelter Initiatives*. Accessed from: http://www.beyondshelter.org/aaa_initiatives/ending_homelessness.shtml

Graves, F. & Sayfan, H. (2007, June 24). First things first: ‘Housing First,’ a radical new approach to ending chronic homelessness, is gaining ground in Boston. *The Boston Globe*. Accessed from: http://www.boston.com/news/globe/ideas/articles/2007/06/24/first_things_first/

Blankinship, D.G. (2009, Mar. 31). Study: Housing homeless, letting them drink saves \$4M a year. *The Seattle Times*. Accessed from: http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/localnews/2008957119_webalcoholics01m.html

Schram, K. (2002, Oct. 15). ‘Dumb’, And ‘REALLY Dumb’. *KOMO News*. Accessed from: <http://www.komonews.com/news/archive/4073056.html>

Optional Video:

No Losers. Accessed from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETGd2EP4z70>

Housing as a human rights issue

Housing Rights for All: Promoting and Defending Housing Rights in the United States. *National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty*. Read only pages 16-20. Accessed from: <http://www.nlchp.org/content/pubs/2009HumanRightsForumManual1.pdf>

Food Stamps

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (2013). *Policy Basics: Introduction to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)*. Washington, D.C.: The

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Accessed from:
<http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=2226>

Scharrer, G. (2010, Jan. 12). Official: Texas has worst-ranked food stamp program. *Houston Chronicle*. Accessed from: <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/metropolitan/6811169.html>

Lebzelter, R. (2008, Oct. 12). Taxpayers pick up tab for junk food. *Star Beacon*. Accessed from:
<http://starbeacon.com/letters/x343691581/Taxpayers-pick-up-tab-for-junk-food>

Abortion

Ramsey, R. (2013, July 15). The Policy and Politics of the Abortion Debate.” *Texas Tribune*. Accessed from:
<http://www.texastribune.org/2013/07/15/prompted-adults-kids-hold-darndest-signs/>

Immigration

Basic Facts About In-State Tuition for Undocumented Immigrant Students. *National Immigration Law Center*. Accessed from:
<http://www.nilc.org/basic-facts-instate.html>

Session 4. September 23 Barillas

Frameworks for policy analysis

Iverson, T. 2005. *Capitalism, Democracy and Welfare*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, MA. Read chapter 4 only.

True, James, Jones, B., and Baumgartner, F. “Punctuated-Equilibrium Theory: Explaining Stability and Change in American Policymaking”

Nowlin, M. 2011. “Theories of the Policy Process: State of the Research and Emerging Trends.” *The Policy Studies Journal*. 39(1): 41-60.

Session 5. September 30 Barillas

Policy implementation

Hacker, J. 2002. *The Divided Welfare State: The Battle Over Public and Private Social Benefits in the United States*. Read the following pages: 28-62.

Kogan, R. 2013. Center for Budget and Policy Priorities. *Sequestration by the Numbers*. Available at: <http://www.cbpp.org/files/3-22-13bud.pdf>

McDonell, L.M. & Elmore, R.F. (1987). Getting the job done: Alternative policy instruments. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 9, 2, 133-152.

Soss, J., Schram, S., Vartanian, T.O., & 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.

Farrell, M., Rich, S., Turner, L., Seith, D., & Bloom, D. (2008). *Welfare time limits: An update on state policies, implementation, and effects on families*. New York: MDRC. [Read the Executive Summary, pp. ES-1 to ES-10]

**Session 6. October 7
Ortiz**

***SOCIAL PROBLEM POLICY PAPER DUE**

Understanding policy impacts

Guest Speaker(s) TBA

Jaffe, P.G., Crooks, C.V., & Wolfe, D.A. (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. Accessed from: <http://www.vawlearningnetwork.net/sites/default/files/Jaffe%20Crooks%20Wolfe-law%20change.pdf>

Newhouse, J.P. (2010). Assessing health reform's impact on four key groups of Americans. *Health Affairs*, 29(9), 1714-1724. Accessed at: <http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/early/2010/07/22/hlthaff.2010.0595.full>

Devins, C. & Kauffman, S. (2012, June 18). Laws of Unintended Consequence: A Warning To Policymakers. *NPR*. Accessed from: <http://www.npr.org/blogs/13.7/2012/06/18/155278557/laws-of-unintended-consequence-a-warning-to-policy-makers>

**Session 7. October 14
Barillas**

Understanding Policy at the State & Local Level

Texas State Budget 101. Available at:
www.senate.state.tx.us/src/pdf/Budget_101_2011.pdf

Texas Legislative Council (2013). *Guide to Texas Legislative Information*. Read Section 1 *About the legislative process in Texas*. Accessed at:
www.tlc.state.tx.us/pubslegref/gtli.pdf.

Rose, S. (1999). Social workers as municipal legislators: Potholes, garbage, and social activism, *Journal of Community Practice*, 6(4), 1-15.

**Session 8. October 21
Ortiz**

Understanding Policy at the Federal Level

Guest Speaker:

***Freddy Warner
Systems Executive
Public Policy & Government Relations
Memorial Hermann Hospital System***

Sullivan, J.V. (2007). *How our laws are made* (100th Congress, House of Representatives, Document 110-49). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. [Look at pp. 1-8; 35-36, and 50-52]. Accessed at:
<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CDOC-110hdoc49/pdf/CDOC-110hdoc49.pdf>

Video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Otbml6WlQP0>

**Session 9. October 28
Ortiz**

***WHITE PAPER DUE**

Health policies

Guest Speaker(s) TBA

Jennings, B. 1995. Commodity or Public Work? “Two Perspectives on Health Care.” Accessed from:
<http://www.cpn.org/topics/health/commodity.html>

Dam, M. (2013, Mar. 8). Beats a night in the drunk tank. *Houston Chronicle*. Accessed from:
<http://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/Beats-a->

[night-in-the-drunk-tank-4337907.php](#)

Buck, J. 2011. "Under the Affordable Care Act: The Looming Expansion and Transformation of Public Substance Abuse Treatment." *Health Affairs*. 30(8): 1402-1410. Accessed from: <http://www.iccmhc.org/files/SDOC0111.pdf>

Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law (2004). *Get It Together: How to Integrate Physical and Mental Health Care for People with Serious Mental Disorders*. Read Executive Summary Only. Accessed at: <http://www.bazelon.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=FamA0HBviIA=>

Garcia, A. and McClelland, C. (2011 Jan. 2). Harris County jail not the place to treat mental illness. *Houston Chronicle*. Accessed from: <http://www.chron.com/opinion/outlook/article/Harris-County-jail-not-the-place-to-treat-mental-1689586.php>

Kever, J. and Ackerman, T. 2012 Feb. 6). Medicaid changes challenge hospitals to do things differently. *Houston Chronicle*. Accessed from: <http://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/article/Medicaid-changes-challenge-hospitals-to-do-things-3084792.php>

**Session 10. November 4
Ortiz**

Poverty and public assistance policies

Center for Public Policy Priorities (2011). *Poverty 101*. Austin, TX: Center for Public Policy Priorities. Accessed at: http://library.cppp.org/files/8/2011_11_Poverty101.pdf

Rank, M. (2006). Toward a New Understanding of American Poverty. *Washington University Journal of Law & Policy*, 20, 17-51. Accessed at: <http://law.wustl.edu/Journal/20/p17Rankbookpage.pdf>

**Session 11. November 11
Barillas**

Child welfare policy

Government Accountability Office. 2013. "States Use Flexible Federal Funds But Struggle to Meet Service Needs." Available at: www.gao.gov/assets/660/651667.pdf

Moye, J. & Rinker. (2002). It's a hard knock life. *Harvard Journal on Legislation*, 39, 375-394.

Barillas, K. 2013. CPS & Court Process – Review chart

Deviney, F. 2012. “Are Subsidized Guardianships Making a Positive Difference for Kids: Early Evidence from the Field.”

http://library.cppp.org/files/4/CW_2012_08_PP_Guardianships.pdf.

Burstain, J. 2011. “Recent Federal Report on Child Maltreatment Probably Reflect Budget Cuts, Rather than Less Child Abuse.” Available at:

http://library.cppp.org/files/4/2011_12_14_Claim_Declines_Child_Abuse.pdf.

Cross, T., Mathews, B., Tonmyr, L., Scott, D., Ouimet, C. 2012. Child Welfare Policy and Practice on Children’s Exposure to Domestic Violence. Available at:

<http://eprints.qut.edu.au/49566/1/49566.pdf>.

**Session 12. November 18
Barillas & Ortiz**

Roles of media, lobbyists, advocates, and other outside influences in policy making

Shannon, K. (2013, Mar. 7). Former legislators kicking off new careers as lobbyists. *The Dallas Morning News*.

Accessed from:

<http://www.dallasnews.com/news/politics/state-politics/20130307-former-legislators-kicking-off-new-careers-as-texas-lobbyists.ece>

Ramsey, R. (2013, May 22). An expensive celebration, courtesy of the lobby. *The Texas Tribune*. Accessed from:

<http://www.texastribune.org/2013/05/22/expensive-night-out-courtesy-lobby/>

Farnsworth, S., Lawlor, A., Soroka, S., & Young, L. (2012). Mass Media and Policymaking. In Araral, E., Fritzen, S., Howlett, M., Ramesh, M., & Xun, Wu, *Routledge Handbook of the Policy Process*. Routledge.

Available at:

<http://www.snsoroka.com/files/Media&Policymaking.pdf>

Casey, J. (2011). Understanding advocacy: A primer on the policy making role of non profit organizations. New York: Baruch College, University of New York. Available at:

http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/spa/researchcenters/nonprofits/trategy/documents/Casey_UnderstandingAdvocacyaPrimer

[onthePolicyMakingRoleofNonoprofitOrganizations.pdf](#)

Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility: Media and Public Policy. Available at: <http://www.cmfr-phil.org/flagship-programs/other-programs/special-programs/media-and-public-policy/>

Jones, S. & Brown, K. 2011. "The Assange Effect: Wikileaks, The Espionage Act and the Fourth Estate. Available at: [http://lskslaw.com/documents/WikiArticle\(00444815\).PDF](http://lskslaw.com/documents/WikiArticle(00444815).PDF)

November 25

NO CLASS

**Session 13. December 2
Barillas & Ortiz**

**LAST CLASS: POLICY PRACTICE
PRESENTATIONS**

December 18

POLICY PROCESS PAPER DUE BY 5:00PM

XI. 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.

XII. Addenda:

Consultation. The instructors will not hold regular office hours. Individual meetings may be arranged by appointment by contacting the instructors directly via email. Students may also consult with the instructors re course content and/or assignments or other concerns via email.

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 instructors in advance. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to contact fellow students to obtain missed information.

Blackboard. Course information is posted on Blackboard. Links to readings and videos available online are provided in this syllabus, while readings not available online are posted on Blackboard. Please use Blackboard for submitting assignments, unless otherwise instructed by the professors, 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 professors (e.g. for class presentations).

Course Assignments

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

1) ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

Participation and preparedness – 20%

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 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 and the professors.

Your participation will be assessed using the following criteria:

- supporting flow of discussion (sharing appropriate and relevant content, reading and integrating weekly readings, integrating relevant field experiences, sharing relevant articles, and furthering classroom discussion of session topics);
- active listening; and
- being respectful in comments and action (including regular attendance and arriving on time).

2) WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Social Problem Policy Paper—20% (DUE: 10/7)

Each student is expected to identify a social issue/problem of interest or concern to him/ her. This issue/problem will serve as the basis for additional assignments throughout the semester. In no more than 5 double-spaced pages, your paper must:

- a) provide a clear definition of the issue/problem;
- b) discuss the scope and magnitude of the issue/problem;
- c) discuss what causes this issue/problem to exist;
- d) describe how specific individuals, groups, communities, etc. may be affected positively or negatively by this issue/problem;
- e) explain why this issue/problem is worthy of policy attention;
and
- f) identify an existing policy that needs change or develop a new policy idea that would address this issue/problem that you think you would like to study over the course of the semester.

White Paper—15% (DUE: 10/28)

Using one of the models provided by the instructors, develop a one pager from your Policy Paper. The intention of this exercise is to teach students how to develop materials to communicate their issues, as well as proposed policy solutions, to decision-makers in a succinct yet informative manner.

FINAL: Policy Process Paper— 25% (DUE: 12/18 by 5:00 PM)

Each student should use the issue and information from his/her Policy Paper to take an issue through the federal state, or local policy process (the student determines which is the appropriate avenue). In no more than 10 double-spaced pages, the student should demonstrate his/her knowledge of the policy process and the complex nature of taking an issue from problem identification to policy development, adoption, and implementation as well as advocacy efforts that would be necessary to move the issue through the policy process.

All written assignments will be graded on the following criteria:

1. Adherence to the required elements of the assignment.
2. Quality of analysis and the depth of understanding of the topic.
3. Logical and well-organized presentation of your arguments, and conclusions that are clearly drawn from your arguments.
4. Appropriate use of references, using sources beyond those provided by the instructor. Be careful about using Internet sources; it is your responsibility to ensure the source you cite is credible.
5. Appropriate grammar and spelling, and evidence that the assignment has been proofread.

In all written assignments, students are expected to follow the guidelines of the 6th edition of the APA Publication Manual. Each assignment is expected to be double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1” margins. Page numbers must be indicated.

3) POLICY PRACTICE PRESENTATION—20%

Presentations will be made on the last day of class, December 2. Each student will have a maximum of 5 minutes to present on the issue/problem of interest or concern that the student has chosen for the semester. This presentation will be a culmination of the student’s research into the subject as well as his/her development of a proposed policy solution to the issue/problem of interest or concern.

The presentation should include, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:

- A thorough explanation of the issue/problem of interest or concern;
- A thorough explanation of the student’s proposed policy solution/intervention; and
- An effective argument as to why the proposed policy solution/intervention will be successful and should be supported.

This exercise is meant to help prepare the student to take a complex issue from the point of identification of a problem to the point of developing and advocating/lobbying for policy solutions as professional social workers. In order to facilitate social policy changes in real-life settings, students should be prepared to efficiently and effectively state their cases and present themselves as subject matter experts who are able to proactively assist and collaborate with policy-makers.