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. Delineate skills in initiating, formulating, implementing and evaluating social welfare policies and programs;
2. Demonstrate knowledge of cross-cultural comparative perspectives of social welfare systems and several models of social policy and program analysis;
3. Describe how political and legislative processes influence social welfare policy and program development;
4. Discuss how social work professionals can affect the formulation, implementation and modification of social policies and service delivery systems;
5. Demonstrate an understanding of how social welfare policy formulation and program development may exclude oppressed groups from participation, and how full participation can be insured;
6. Demonstrate an understanding of how social welfare policy analysis may be used to advance or hinder the pursuit of social and economic justice;
7. Demonstrate the successful application of secondary data sources in the analysis of social welfare policies and services; and
8. Demonstrate critical thinking skills in assessing social need, developing potential social welfare policies and program options, and evaluating current social welfare policies.

III. Course Content

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

1. Overview of social policy;
2. Governmental social insurance and income maintenance programs;
3. Fields of policy practice;
4. Alternative welfare programs;
5. The use and application of data sources to analyze policies; and
6. Assessing need, developing policies and program options, and evaluating current policies.

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. 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.*

V. Textbooks

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

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 professor) 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
Houston Chronicle, The Washington Post, The New York Times, and The Wall Street Journal. International sources, such as BBC News, are also encouraged. Students are encouraged to share articles that complement our class discussions either by bringing them to class or posting them to Blackboard for online discussion.

VI. Course Requirements

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

1. **Class Attendance and Participation** 15%
2. **Library exercise** 5%
   (DUE: Friday, 3/8 at 5:00 pm)
3. **Written Assignments (3 total)**
   - **Paper 1: Social Problem Identification** 20%
     (DUE: Monday, 2/18, by midnight)
   - **Paper 2: Op-ed Critique** 15%
     (DUE: Monday, 4/1, by midnight)
   - **Paper 3: Comparative Analysis (final)** 25%
     (DUE: Monday, 4/29, by midnight)
4. **Social Problem Presentation** 20%
   (Students will be randomly assigned starting in week 10)
5. **Extra Credit TBD**

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 except In-Class Writing; 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. If the weekly in-class writing assignment is missed due to absence or lateness, it cannot be made up at a later date or time.

VII. Evaluation and Grading

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

\[
\begin{align*}
A &= 96-100\% \text{ of the points} \\
A- &= 92-95.9\% \ \\
B+ &= 88-91.9\% \\
B &= 84-87.9\% \\
B- &= 80-83.9\% \\
C+ &= 76-79.9\% \\
C &= 72-75.9\% \\
C- &= 68-71.9\% \\
D &= 64-67.9\% \\
F &= \text{Below 64}\%
\end{align*}
\]
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 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.

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 instructor), 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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/14</td>
<td>Course Overview</td>
<td>Course syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1/21</td>
<td>NO CLASS (MLK Holiday)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>2/18</td>
<td>Week 6 Date 6 Topic 6</td>
<td>Frameworks for social policy analysis (cont.)</td>
<td>[Review previous week’s readings]</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>2/25</td>
<td>Week 7 Date 7 Topic 7</td>
<td>Library session w/ Irene Ke (Social Work Librarian)</td>
<td>Class will meet at the MD Anderson Library, room 10F in the basement</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>3/11</td>
<td>Week 9 Date 9 Topic 9</td>
<td>NO CLASS (Spring Break)</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>4/22</td>
<td>Presentations, Course wrap-up</td>
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<td><strong>Social problem presentations</strong> (remaining 8 students will be randomly selected)</td>
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<td>4/29</td>
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<td><strong>Paper #3: Comparative Analysis</strong> (due Monday, 4/29 by midnight)</td>
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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. Scheduled office hours are indicated on page 1 of this syllabus and are posted outside of my office door (#402). Other times may be arranged by appointment – please contact me by email (dtkao@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 me in advance. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to contact fellow students to obtain missed information.

Blackboard. The course information and readings are posted on the Blackboard site for this course. Please use Blackboard for submitting assignments and following course announcements. Students are encouraged to post and discuss links or articles relevant to course content on the discussion board in order to strengthen the course learning environment.

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).