THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course Number:	SW 382R	Instructor:	David L. Evans, MA
Unique Number:	59030	E-Mail:	david.evans@sbcglobal.net
Semester:	Spring 2020	Phone:	512-694-2186
Meeting Time:	Monday's 5:30-8:30	Office:	3.104A
Room Number:	SSW 2.118	Office Hours:	Mondays 5:00-5:30 (By Appointment)

Social Policy Analysis and Social Problems

I.   COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course critically examines, from both historical and current perspectives, the overall structure of the American social welfare system with a focus on the disproportionate social, economic and political problems of vulnerable populations. The course also considers the parallel historical development of the profession of social work, including the ways in which it responded to social problems across key periods of social welfare policy development.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

1. Understand the dominant historical themes that have shaped social welfare policy in the United States;

2. Understand the economic and political constraints and opportunities in the development of social welfare problems and policies;

3. Understand the relationship between the history of the social work profession and the development of social welfare policy;

4. Apply social work values to critically analyze social problems;

5. Gain knowledge and skills as a background for analyzing major policies that form the foundation of social welfare and analyze organizational, local, state, national and international issues in social welfare policy and social service delivery;

6. Understand social welfare policy arenas impacting service delivery, social work practice, and attainment of individual and social well-being;

7. Understand how social policies differentially affect diverse populations in American society;

8. Gain knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of social workers in the policy process, including advocacy, leadership, research, and community organizing, with the goal of promoting and advocating for social and economic justice through both organizational and social change.

EPAS Competencies

The Steve Hicks School of Social Work has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1952. In order to maintain our accreditation status, the UT SHSSW engages in ongoing curriculum assessment to demonstrate compliance with CSWE's Education Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS).

Using a common evaluation instrument, this course measures the implementation of knowledge, skills, values, and/or cognitive and affective processes to assess the following competencies:

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice
Outcome 5.1: Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services
Outcome 5.2: Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services
Outcome 5.3: Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice

III. TEACHING METHODS
Social workers need to be able to articulate ideas clearly and persuasively. To enhance the development of this skill, this course will require a high level of class participation by students. A variety of teaching methods will be used including weekly readings, instructor lectures, video presentations, small group discussions, and guest speakers on topics related to social welfare policy. As professional advocates, social workers must be able to
articulate ideas clearly and persuasively. Therefore, your active participation is encouraged in creating an exciting and meaningful learning experience for all of us throughout the term.

IV. TEXTS

DiNitto, D. M., & Johnson, D. H. (2016) *Social Welfare: Politics and Public Policy.* Boston: Pearson. 8^t Edition

V.   COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will also be encouraged to read one additional text from a list of optional books, as well as articles provided by the instructor.

Final grades for the course will be determined by the following:

Class Participation	5% (5 points)
Quizzes (4 Total)	40% (40 points)
Op-Ed	10% (10 points)
Policy Analysis Paper	40% (30 points)
Summary of Discussion	5% (5 points)

Note: There will be no mid-term or final exam given in this course.

Course Evaluation:

At the end of the term, students will have the opportunity to evaluate the course and the instructor using the official Course Instructor Survey of the School of Social Work at UT- Austin. Of course, constructive feedback on the class is welcome throughout the duration of the term.

Course Assignments

Class Participation (5 points): All students begin with 5 points at the beginning of the semester. Students who miss classes or who do not participate in discussions will lose 2 points per class (including portions of class). Quizzes (40 points or 10 points each): Students will be given (4) quizzes throughout the semester. The quizzes will ask basic questions taken from readings, so it is important that students read each week's assigned readings before class. Quizzes will be administered each time after covering 3 chapters during the term of the 12 chapter required text. Students will be allowed to drop the lowest quiz grade they receive and double the top score. No make-up quizzes will be given. All quiz answers can be found in the class required DiNitto text.

Op-Ed and Policy Analysis Paper (10 points and 40 points): are described in Section VIII.

A Summary Discussion (5 points) the last evening of the class will include articulation of 20 terms used throughout the semester.

VI. GRADING SCALE

The final course grade will be based on the following scale:

94.0 and Above	A
90.0 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	B
80.0 to 83.999	B-
77.0 to 79.999	C+
74.0 to 76.999	C
70.0 to 73.999	C-
67.0 to 69.999	D+
64.0 to 66.999	D
60.0 to 63.999	D-
Below 60	F

VII. CLASS POLICIES

Policies Specific to this Course

1. **Professional conduct**: Your attendance, attention, and participation are expected for all class sessions. Attendance includes arriving on time and remaining for the entire class session. Participation includes reading all assigned materials prior to the class session and engaging in class discussions and exercises. Lively class discussion is encouraged. Respectful communication is necessary to the learning environment. Attention includes turning off cell phone ringers and refraining from text messaging and other non-class activities. Students are also expected to observe professional codes of conduct with regard to confidentiality, dress, language, and other matters and exercise good judgment during class and while working with agencies, organizations, and other entities on assignments for this course.

2. **Submitting assignments**: (a) All written assignments should be typewritten in 12-point font with reasonable margins; (b) Assignment due dates are noted in the course calendar. **All** assignments are due at the start of the class period. Assignments turned in after the start of class will be considered late for that day unless **prior** arrangements have been made with the instructor. Except in the case of serious illness or emergency, **five points** will be deducted for each day if an assignment is late (weekend days included); (c) The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) is the style manual to be used unless another referencing style is more appropriate for the assignment. Appropriate referencing of citations (authors, titles, page numbers, etc.) is required. This includes giving due credit to others when indirect quotes (paraphrasing) and direct (verbatim) quotes are used. Short direct quotes (usually of 5 or more words but less than 40 words) must be placed in quotation marks. Long direct quotes (40 or more words) must be indented. Paraphrasing requires more than changing a word or two in a sentence. Failure to give due to credit to others will result in a **"0" for the assignment and/or an "F" for the course. Plagiarism is a form of scholastic dishonesty and will be addressed as such (also see item on scholastic dishonesty in section VI). If you do not know how to cite appropriately, please learn before you submit any assignments**.

3. **Scholastic dishonesty:** Scholastic dishonesty in any of its forms may result in a report to the Assistant Dean for Master's Programs in the School of Social Work, the Dean of the School of Social Work, the Dean of the Graduate School, and/or Student Judicial Services. Students may receive an "F" for

the course and other sanctions in accordance with UT Austin policies, including dismissal from the university. Also, see information on UT's scholastic dishonesty policy at http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/

4. **Course modifications:** Course modifications may need to be made for various reasons such as weather that may result in cancelled classes. There are always many policy-related events such as conferences and presentations taking place on campus and in Austin and others that can be accessed via social media. We may want to take advantage of some of them, and this may also require modifying the course schedule. Should any modifications be made to the course schedule related to activities, content, assignments, etc., students will be notified in class and/or by e-mail. Other course communications may also be done via e-mail (also see UT's policy on e-mail below in section VI). Students should check their e-mail frequently, and students who are absent from class should check on announcements made in class during their absence.

5. **Canvas**: The Canvas website may be used for various class functions such as posting course documents and grades.

VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HONOR CODE. The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND CIVILITY IN THE CLASSROOM. The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

UNANTICIPATED DISTRESS. Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at https://cmhc.utexas.edu/.

POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION. Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g. blogs) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to

minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including any information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in any way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

POLICY ON SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/.

USE OF COURSE MATERIALS. The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

DOCUMENTED DISABILITY STATEMENT. Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471- 6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). A student should present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed and followed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit: http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS. By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, examination, work assignment, or project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

TITLE IX REPORTING. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct on the basis of sex https://titleix.utexas.edu/. Faculty, field instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking, dating violence, or any other forms of sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at https://titleix.utexas.edu/.

CAMPUS CARRY POLICY. The University's policy on concealed fire arms may be found here: https://campuscarry.utexas.edu. You also may find this information by accessing the Quick Links menu on the School's website.

CLASSROOM CONFIDENTIALITY. Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.

USE OF E-MAIL FOR OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO STUDENTS. Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible for keeping the university informed about a change of e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php.

SAFETY. As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

BEHAVIOR CONCERNS ADVICE LINE (BCAL). If students have concerns about their behavioral health, or if they are concerned about the behavioral health of someone else, students may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns This service is provided through a partnership between the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY. Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

Assigned readings should be read or completed by the date listed. Students should be prepared to discuss them in class on that date. Supplemental readings and current topic papers will be handed out in class or posted in Canvas.

Date:	Topics:	Readings: (DiNitto & Johnson)	Assignment:

Week 1 1-27-2020	**Government** Leadership	*Overview of the Text -syllabus -class expectations -grading	Read Preface
Week 2 2-3-2020	**5 sectors** Technology	*Chapter One: -politics and policy -financing the welfare state -budgets	Topic Selection
Week 3 2-10-2020	**Logic Models** Passion	*Chapter Two: -analyzing -evaluation -implementation	Interview
Week 4 2-17-2020	**Block Grants** Professionalism	*Chapter Three: -history of us policy -federalism -privatization	Quiz 1
Week 5 2-24-2020	**Public Assistance** Mastery	*Chapter Four: -poverty -hunger -housing	Committee Hearing
Week 6 3-2-2020	**Legislative Process**	*Chapter Five -social security -social insurance -unemployment	Dialog/Debate
Week 7 3-9-2020	**Categorical Services** Discipline	*Chapter Six OP-ED due -disability -veterans -developmental disabilities	Quiz 2
Week 8 3-16-2020	**SPRING BREAK**	* No Class	
Week 9 3-23-2020	**Policy and Media** Collaboration	*Chapter Seven -AFDC -child support -TANF	

Week 10 3-30-2020	**Policy Institutes** Rational	*Chapter Eight -healthcare -ACA -ethics	Readings
Week 11 4-6-2020	**Homeless** Influence	*Chapter Nine -education -employment -living wage	Readings
Week 12 4-13-2020	**Integrated Care** Service	*Chapter Ten - social services -child welfare **-aging and BH**	**Quiz 3**
Week 13 4-20-2020	**Systems of Care** Change	*Chapter Eleven -gender -sexual assault -marriage	**Policy Paper Due**
Week 14 4-27-2020	**Value Based Pay**	*Chapter Twelve **-diversity** **-immigration** **-equity**	
Week 15 5-4-2020	**Models** Perspective	*Text Overview	Quiz 4

No final exam   **"Summary Discussion 20 Terms"**

X.   BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, J. E. (2010). *Public Policymaking: An introduction* (7th Ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Birkland, T. A. (2011). *Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policymaking* (3rd Ed.). Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.

Blau, J., & Abramowitz, M. (2014). *The dynamics of social welfare policy* (4rd Ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Bobo, K., & Kendall, J., & Max, S. (2010). *Organizing for social change: Midwest Academy manual for activists*(4th Ed.). Washington, DC: The Forum Press.

Brown, L.C., Langenegger, J. A., García, S. R., Lewis, T. A., & Biles, R. E. (2012). *Practicing Texas politics* (2011-2012 edition). Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Cummins, L. K., Byers, K. V., & Pedrick, L. (2011). *Policy practice for social workers: New strategies for a*

new era. Boston: Pearson.

Day, P. J., & Schiele, J. (2013). *A new history of social welfare* (7th Ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Dye, T. R. (2013). *Understanding public policy* (14th Ed.)*.* Boston: Pearson.

Hick, S., & McNutt, J. G. (2002). *Advocacy, activism, and the Internet: Community organization and social policy*. Chicago: Lyceum.

Hoefer, R. (2012). *Advocacy practice for social justice* (2nd Ed.). Chicago: Lyceum.

Jansson, B. S. (2014). *Becoming an effective policy advocate: From policy practice to social justice* (7th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.

Karger, H. J., & Stores, D. (2014). *American social welfare policy: A pluralist approach* (7th Ed.)*.* Boston: Pearson.

Popple, P. R., & Leighninger, L. (2015). *The policy-based profession: An introduction to social welfare policy analysis for social workers* (6th Ed). Boston: Pearson.

Ritter, J. A. (2013). *Social work policy practice: Changing our community, nation, and the world.* Boston: Pearson.

Rocha, C. J. (2007). *Essentials of social work policy practice*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Schneider, R. L., & Lester, L. (2001). *Social work advocacy: A new framework for action*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole/Wadsworth.

Segal, E. A. (2014). *Social welfare policy and social programs: A values perspective* (4th Ed.)*.* Belmont, CA: Cengage.

Smith, C. F. (2016). *Writing public policy: A practical guide to communicating in the policy-making process* (4th Ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Smucker, B. (1999). *The nonprofit lobbying guide* (2nd Ed.)*.* Washington, DC: Independent Sector. Available at: http://www.clpi.org/CLPI_Publications.aspx

Wilson, J. Q., & Dilulio, J. J. (2015). *American government: Institutions & policies*. (14th Ed.). Cengage Learning.

Addendum: Class Assignment Instructions

Common Course Assignment for MSSW Foundation Policy Course
Opinion Editorial (Op-ed)
Each student will write an opinion editorial related to her/his major course assignment (policy analysis/policy brief). Opinion editorials, or "op-eds," are short commentary pieces. An op-ed is an excellent way to communicate your message and advocate directly to a broad audience. Op-eds appear each day in almost every newspaper and address current issues, express a viewpoint, and frequently offer policy or other solutions to social problems. If printed in newspapers, elected officials and other decision makers, opinion leaders, and a wide range of community members may read them.

Your op-ed should do the following as articulated in the Council on Social Work Education's 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), competency 5: "Engage in policy practice": (1) "Identify social policy [and/or a social problem] at the local, state, and [/or] federal level that impacts [human] well-being, service delivery, and access to social services."; (2) "Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to services [and/or otherwise affect human well-being], and (3) Demonstrate that you have "applied critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and [/or] environmental justice." Be sure to offer viable policy alternatives to improve human well-being and suggest actions that policymakers and/or members of the public should take.

Class time will be dedicated to teaching you how to write a traditional op-ed piece, and you will be provided resources to assist in the process. Examples will also be provided of editorials and commentaries in electronic formats. You may submit your editorial in traditional, written form or in video or another electronic format. If you chose to write a traditional op-ed, it should be 500 to 750 words, single spaced. If you chose an electronic

format, the number of words you use in written or spoken form should probably be similar and the op-ed should not exceed 3 or 4 minutes (depending on factors such as your use of graphics). Be sure your op-ed is based on solid evidence and sources and that you cite sources in a manner appropriate to an editorial.

Rubric for Opinion Editorial Assignment

Competency 5: Engage in policy practice	Exemplary	Proficient	Acceptable	Insufficient
Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services.	Op-ed clearly and thoroughly identifies how current policy/state of affairs impacts well-being, service delivery, and/or access using sufficient data, research, other reputable source(s), and own analysis	Op-ed sufficiently identifies how current policy/state of affairs impacts well-being and service delivery and/or access, though some aspect and related support from data, research, other reputable source(s), and own analysis may be lacking	Op-ed identifies some aspects of how current policy/state of affairs impacts well-being and service delivery and/or access, though other important aspects and sufficient support from data, research, other reputable source(s), and own analysis are lacking	Identification of how current policy/state of affairs impacts well-being and service delivery and/or access are not addressed or are inadequately addressed, and data, research, other reputable sources, and own analysis are clearly lacking in the op-ed
Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.	Op-ed clearly and thoroughly assesses how social welfare and economic policies impact service delivery and access using sufficient data, research, other reputable source(s), and own analysis	Op-ed sufficiently assesses how social welfare and economic policies impact service delivery and access, though some aspect of assessment, and support from data, research, other reputable source(s), and own analysis may be lacking	Op-ed assesses some aspects of how social welfare and economic policies impact service delivery and access, though other important aspects of assessment, and sufficient support from data, research, other reputable source(s), and own analysis are lacking	Assessment of how social welfare and economic policies impact service delivery and access are not assessed or are inadequately assessed and data, research, other reputable sources, and own analysis are clearly lacking in the op-ed
Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that	Op-ed demonstrates the use of critical	The op-ed demonstrates the use of critical	Op-ed demonstrates some aspect(s) of	Op-ed fails to demonstrate that critical thinking to

advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.	thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and/or environmental justice in ways that are clearly logical and likely to convince readers that the author has presented a valid case	thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and/or environmental justice in ways that are sufficiently logical and may persuade readers that the author has presented a valid case	critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and/or environmental justice, but the extent of this application and its logic may be insufficient to convince readers that the author has presented a valid case	analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and/or environmental justice has been applied in ways that are logical, and the op-ed is unlikely to convince readers that the author has presented a valid case

Policy Analysis and Op-Ed Project

The purposes of the policy analysis and Op-Ed project are to provide an opportunity to learn more about the policy making process and an important current issue of interest to the student; to develop skills in policy analysis, writing, and presenting that are critical to the profession of social work; and to learn more about different roles that social workers and others play in the policy process. **The Policy Analysis project is worth 40% of the final grade. The Op-Ed process is worth 10%.**

Select an issue on a social welfare topic of major concern (e.g. Health care, mental health, child welfare, substance abuse, etc.) Suggested topics will be discussed in class.
Students may meet with the instructor and/or teaching assistants to discuss topics and plans for the project. A major source of help in selecting a topic is the Texas Legislature Online.
 (http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/). Investigate the history of the issue and become familiar with proposals/bills and their purpose. Identify particular legislators, organizations, groups, committees, and individuals that worked to pass, amend, or defeat the bill, their positions on the issue, and the methods they used to influence the policy process.

Also, identify groups that might have remained neutral on the bill and why. *It may help to approach this project, particularly the policy brief, as if you were working as a staff member of a legislative committee, an aide for a state legislator, or a policy analyst for a governmental or private social welfare agency or another organization concerned about social welfare policy such as a think tank, a membership organization like the National Association of Social Workers, or an advocacy group such as a human services coalition. In any case, prepare the policy brief to thoroughly familiarize your "employer" or others, such as an organization's constituents or a broader public audience, about the issue and the bill(s) and help them decide what modifications, if any, are needed and why.*

1. The 6-8-page policy brief should be organized in a manner that is relevant to the issue you have chosen and written in the third person. We will discuss how to write a policy brief in class and study examples of policy briefs. Below are broad topics and points you should cover in your brief to the extent they are important to the bill(s) you selected:

(a)   A brief introduction to topic stating its/their importance (positive or negative) for social welfare policy in Texas or the nation. Also, include in the introduction a brief statement of the brief's purpose (what you intend to accomplish in it or what you want the reader to learn from it).

(b)   A description of the problem/issue that necessitated or preceded the bill(s). What is the nature of the problem? How widespread is it? How many people are affected? Who (everyone? The poor? particular age groups?) is affected and how? What are the problem's known or suspected causes? How is the bill(s) intended to address the problem?

(c)   The historical background, including historical antecedents. How much attention has this problem/issue received historically? How has the problem/issue been handled previously? How has the policy response changed over time? What is the bill(s) or existing policy's legislative history? What are other state, federal, nations', or international policies regarding the problem/issue?

(d)   What resources or opportunities is the policy expected to provide (e.g., economic opportunity, cash, in-kind services, redistribution of goods and services, empowerment, status, preventive services, education, other)? Who will be covered by the policy and how (e.g., selective entitlement, universal entitlement, means testing, other)? How will the policy be implemented? What are the policy's intended short- and long-term goals and intended outcomes? Under what administrative auspices will the policy be further developed and implemented? What funding is needed? What provisions are made, if any, for overseeing, evaluating, and coordinating policy implementation to ensure and/or determine its effectiveness? What criteria will be used to determine the policy's outcomes and effectiveness? How long is the policy expected to exist (i.e., is there a specific requirement for review and continuation)?

(e)   Identification of individuals and groups concerned about the policy issue and their positions on the issue. **Be sure to Interview concerned individuals and groups** (e.g., elected officials, legislative assistants, and members of citizens' or advocacy groups, human service providers, consumer group members) and, if possible attend meetings of organizations, agencies, and committees where the issue is being discussed. Incorporate information gleaned from these activities in the analysis section of your brief (see point f below) and cite them correctly in the reference section. You may wish to do more than simply list the individuals and groups concerned and their positions and instead weave them into your analysis.

(f)   An analysis of the policy. The points covered in items f, g, and h are the **heart of the policy brief** and should comprise at least half the paper. Your analysis should reflect information addressed in the model(s) of policy analysis studied in this class or found in other sources. Address issues such as the value premises or ideological assumptions that underlie the bill. On what knowledge base or scientific grounding, if any, does the proposed change rest? Is there empirical evidence that the change may achieve its intended result(s)? Are the goals just, democratic, and attainable? Is the proposed policy change expected to contribute to a better quality of life for the target population by promoting social and economic justice, self-determination, self-realization, civil liberties or rights, empowerment, or other benefits, or might the bill(s) adversely affect the quality of life of the target or other groups?

(g)   Your conclusions. Based on your objective analysis, what conclusions have you reached about the proposed policy? Are the goals politically feasible--i.e., is there sufficient legislative support? Is public sentiment favorable toward the goals? Are the goals of the proposed policy economically feasible--i.e., is sufficient funding available to implement the policy and is it likely that funding will be continued as needed in the future? Are the goals administratively feasible--i.e., are there responsible administrative agencies capable of effectively implementing the policy to achieve its stated goals? Might alternative policies better achieve the goals? Is the policy important enough to justify the expenditure of scarce resources?

(h)   Your recommendations. What are your recommendations regarding the proposed policy? Who do you recommend lead the change?

At least 12 references and two interviews correctly cited in APA format and noted in the text of the brief. Include both theoretical and empirical scholarly references and be careful about dubious sources of information (e.g., unsubstantiated references from unknown sources on the Internet). You

may ALSO include references from the popular literature (newspapers, magazines) but these do not substitute for the minimum of 12 scholarly references. *THE POLICY BRIEF SHOULD PROVIDE A BALANCED, UNBIASED, CRITICA EVALUATION OF THE BILL(S), PRESENTING ACCURATELY AND FAIRLY EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE AS WELL AS PROPONENTS AND OPPONENTS' POSITIONS. NO MATTER HOW STRONGLY YOU FEEL ABOUT THE POLICY ISSUE(S) and BILL(S), YOU ARE PRESENTING AN OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS TO HELP OTHERS MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS!*

Opinion/Editorial Letter:

Your editorial and letter to the editor or an elected official should be based on your research on the policy brief AND your position on the proposal. In preparing to write an editorial, study the op-ed page of newspapers such as the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, Wall Street Journal, *Houston Chronicle*, *Austin American-Statesman*, or your hometown paper and read the paper's instructions for submitting an editorial. Generally, they are about 700 to 750 words. If you decide to submit your editorial to a newspaper and it gets published prior to the end of the semester, you will receive 5 extra points toward your final grade. Instructions on writing an editorial and letters to the editor and legislators will be provided.

Criteria for Evaluating Legislative Analysis and Action Projects: (points for policy paper included)

1. **Completeness and thoroughness**: How fully has the topic or issue been addressed? Has the topic or issue been sufficiently researched using scholarly and other resources, interviews, and other means in order to gain differing perspectives and full knowledge of the issue? Has the theoretical and empirical literature on the subject been incorporated in the project? Does the work leave the reader with the impression that major questions have been considered, or are important issues left unaddressed? Has the work been carefully proofread? (10 points maximum)
2. **Organization and clarity**: Is the policy brief or other product well written and organized in a logical manner? Are there appropriate transitions between sentences, paragraphs, and sections? Are the sentence structure and grammar of appropriate quality? Have descriptive headings and subheadings been used to improve organization of the policy brief? Are issues addressed in a way that someone unfamiliar with them can understand as well as someone knowledgeable about them? Is the editorial and letter to the editor or legislator presented appropriately for that medium? (10 points maximum)
3. **Referencing**: Are there a sufficient number of (at least 12) appropriate references? Has referencing been done according to American Psychological Association (APA) or other appropriate referencing style? Are the references well integrated in the text? Are short direct quotations noted in quotation marks; are longer direct quotations indented; are page numbers or paragraph numbers for nonpaginated electronic sources indicated for all direct quotations? Are indirect quotes paraphrased sufficiently? (10 points maximum)
4. **Originality and Creativity**: Does the work demonstrate a thorough understanding of the issues, varying viewpoints that have been compared and contrasted, and political considerations that will likely influence the legislation? Does the work demonstrate that the writer's or writers' analytical skills have been used in a way that suggests more than a restatement of what others have said about this issue, and have points been suggested that others have not addressed? Is the work written and formatted in a way that will gain the intended audiences' interest and attention? (10 points maximum)

XI. Online Policy and Other Sites
Administration on Aging: aoa.gov
Administration for Children and Families: acf.gov Agency for
Health Care Research and Quality: ahrq.gov Bureau of Labor
Statistics: bls.gov
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities: cbpp.org Centers
for Disease Control: cdc.gov

Center for Law and Social Policy: clasp.org
Center for Mental Health Services: mentalhealth.gov. Center for

Substance Abuse Prevention: samhsa.goc/csap Center for
Substance Abuse Treatment: samhsa.gov/csat Children's Defense
Fund: childrensdefence.org Congressional Budget Office: cbo.gov
Department of Health and Human Services: hhs.gov
Executive Office of the President: whitehouse.gov Food and
Drug Administration: fda.gov
Health Care Financing Administration: hcfa.gov
Health Resources and Services Administration: hrsa.gov Indian
Health Services: HIS.GOV
Knowledge Exchange Network: hen@mentalhealth.org
Legislation (Current bills): http://thomas.loc.gov/
Legislation (previous laws): http://thomas.loc.gov/home/bdquery/html
Legislation (copies of historical laws): http://lcweb2.loc.gov/const/mdbquery.html
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill: nami.org
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors: nashpd.org National
Center for Children in Poverty: http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp National
Institute of Health: nih.gov
National Institute of Drug Abuse: nida.nih.gov/NIDAhome1.html National
Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism: niaaa.nih.gov/ National
Institute of Mental Health: nimh.nih.gov/home.cfm
Office of Managed Care: mentalhealth.org/cmhs/managed care
Office of National Drug Control Policy: (1) whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/ (2)
whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/policy/papers
Rand Drug Abuse Policy Research Center: rand.org/centers/dprc Robert
Wood   Johnson   Substance   Abuse   Policy   Research   Center:
Phs.bgsm.edu/sshp/rwj/rwj.htm
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: samhsa.gov Texas
Health and Human Services Commission: hhsc.state.tx.us
Texas Legislation On-line: http://www.capitol.state.tx.us The
Brookings Institution: brook.edu
The Electronic Policy Network: epn.org The
Urban Institute: urban.org
U.S. Census Bureau: census.gov
Welfare Information Network: welfareinfo.org

NASMHPD's Mental Health Glossary

Federal Web Sites

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) (link is external)

- Mentalhealth.gov (link is external)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (link is external)
    - Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) (link is external)
    - SAMHSA's Disaster Technical Assistance Center (DTAC) (link is external)

National Strategy for Suicide Prevention
(link is external)Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention (link is external)
Adminstration for Children and Families (ACF)
(link is external)Administration for Community Living (ACL) (link is external)

- Administration on Aging (AoA) (link is external)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (link is external)
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) (link is external)
Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) (link is external)
National Institutes of Health (NIH) (link is external)

- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) (link is external)
- National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) (link is external)
- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) (link is external)
- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) (link is external)

U.S. Department of Justice (DoJ) (link is external)

- Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) (link is external)
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) (link is external)

U.S. Department of Education (link is external)

- Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (link is external)

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) (link is external)
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) (link is external)

- Make the Connection (link is external)
- National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (NCPTSD) (link is external)

U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) (link is external)
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Home Page (link is external)
Office of the Surgeon General (link is external)
President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health (link is external)

State Mental Health Agencies

- Alabama Department of Mental Health (link is external)
- Alaska Division of Behavioral Health (link is external)
- American Samoa Department of Human and Social Services (link is external)
- Arizona Department of Behavioral Health Services (link is external)
- Arkansas Division of Mental Health Services (link is external)
- California Mental Health Services Division (MHSD) (link is external)
- Colorado, Office of Behavioral Health (link is external)
- Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (link is external)
- Delaware Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (link is external)
- District of Columbia, Department of Behavioral Health (link is external)
- Florida Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (link is external)
- Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (link is external)
- Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services (link is external)
- Hawaii Mental Health Division (link is external)
- Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (link is external)
- Illinois Office of Mental Health (link is external)
- Indiana Mental Health Services (link is external)
- Iowa Division of Mental Health and Disability Services (link is external)
- Kansas Behavioral Health Services (link is external)

- Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health and Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (link is external)
- Louisiana Office of Behavioral Health (link is external)
- Maine Department of Health and Human Services (link is external)
- Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (link is external)
- Massachusetts Department of Mental Health (link is external)
- Michigan Department of Community Health (link is external)
- Minnesota Department of Human Services (link is external)
- Mississippi Department of Mental Health (link is external)
- Missouri Department of Mental Health (link is external)
- Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (link is external)
- Nebraska Division of Behavioral Health (link is external)
- Nevada, Division of Public and Behavioral Health (link is external)
- New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (link is external)
- New Jersey Division of Mental Health Services (link is external)
- New Mexico Behavioral Health Services Division (link is external)
- New York State Office of Mental Health (link is external)
- North Carolina Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services (link is external)
- North Dakota Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (link is external)
- Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (link is external)
- Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (link is external)
- Oregon Addictions and Mental Health Services (link is external)
- Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare (link is external)
- Puerto Rico Mental Health and Anti-Addiction Service (link is external) (Spanish only)
- Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals (link is external)
- South Carolina Department of Mental Health (link is external)
- South Dakota Department of Human Services (link is external)
- Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities (link is external)
- Texas Department of State Health Services (link is external)
- Utah Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (link is external)
- Vermont Department of Health (link is external)
- Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (link is external)
- Virgin Islands Department of Health (link is external)
- Washington Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (link is external)
- Wisconsin Department of Health Services (link is external)
- West Virginia Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities (link is external)
- Wyoming Behavioral Health Division (link is external)

CMHS/ Other Federal Agency Research, Training and Technical Assistance Centers

- Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation (link is external)
- Center for Support of Mental Health Services in Isolated Rural Areas (link is external)
- The Evaluation Center at HSRI (link is external)
- National Center for American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research (link is external)
- National Consumer Supporter Technical Assistance Center (link is external)
- The National GAINS Center for People with Co-Occurring Disorders in the Justice System (link is external)
- National Empowerment Center (NEC) (link is external)
- National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) (link is external)
- National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse (link is external)

- National Alliance on Mental Illness (link is external)
- Homelessness Resource Center (link is external)
- National Research and Training Center on Psychiatric Disability (link is external)
- National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health at Georgetown University (link is external)
- Advocates for Human Potential, Inc. (link is external)
- Research and Training Center for Children's Mental Health (link is external)
- Portland Research and Training Center on Family Support and Children's Mental Health (link is external)
- SAMHSA's National Mental Health Information Center (link is external)
- Technical Assistance Partnership for Child and Family Mental Health (link is external)
- Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) (link is external)
- Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI) (link is external)

Other Mental Health Web Sites

- Alliance fo the Safe, Therapeutic and Appropriate Use of Residential Treatment (A START) (link is external)
- American Association of Community Psychiatrists (link is external)
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) (link is external)
- American Psychiatric Association (APA) (link is external)
- American Psychological Association (APA) (link is external)
- American Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA) (link is external)
- Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law (link is external)
- Center for Practice Innovations: Consumer and Family Portal (link is external)
- CHADD - Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (link is external)
- Criminal Justice / Mental Health Consensus Project (link is external)
- CrisisNOW (link is external)
- Coalition for Whole Health (link is external)
- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) (link is external)
- Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health (link is external)
- First Nations Behavioral Health Association (link is external)
- Gift from Within - PTSD Resources for Survivors and Caregivers (link is external)
- Mental Health America (formerly the National Mental Health Association) (link is external)
- Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG) (link is external)
- Nathan S. Kline Institute for Psychiatric Research (link is external)
- NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) (link is external)
- National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association (link is external)
- National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors (NACBHD) (link is external)
- National Association of Mental Health Planning and Advisory Councils (NAMHPAC) (link is external)
- NASMHPD Research Institute, Inc. (NRI) (link is external)
- National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging (link is external)
- National Coalition for Mental Health Consumer/Survivor Organizations (link is external)
- National Center for Youth Opportunity and Justice (link is external)
- National Council for Behavioral Health (National Council) (link is external)
- National Council on Aging (link is external)
- National Latino Behavioral Health Association (NLBHA) (link is external)
- National Leadership Council on African American Behavioral Health, Inc. (link is external)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK) (link is external)

- Network of Care for Mental Health (link is external)
- Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association and the Academy for Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Recovery (PRA-PRF, formerly USPRA and IAPSRS) (link is external)
- SMI Adviser (link is external)
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) (link is external)

Other Web Sites

- American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) (link is external)
- American Society of Anesthesiologists Pain Management and Anesthesia Resources (link is external)
- Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) (link is external)
- Campaign for Children's Health Care (link is external)
- Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) (link is external)
- Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) (link is external)
- Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) (link is external)
- Council of State Governments (CSG) (link is external)
- Reentry Policy Council (RPC) (link is external)
- Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) (link is external)
- Legal Action Center (link is external)
- National Alliance to End Homelessness (link is external)
- National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) (link is external)
- National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS) (link is external)
- National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) (link is external)
- National Association of Medicaid Directors (NAMD) (link is external)
- National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) (link is external)
- National Disability Rights Network (link is external)
- National Governors Association (NGA) (link is external)
- ParityTrack (link is external)
- courtsystem.org (link is external)