

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

Course Number: SW 382R
Unique Number: 60850
Meeting Time: Wednesday 2:30PM- 5:30PM
Classroom: SSW 2.118

Instructor's Name: Stacey Jordan, MSW
Semester: Spring 2023
Office Hours: By Appointment
E-mail: stacey.jordan@austin.utexas.edu

SOCIAL POLICY ANALYSIS AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

I. STANDARDIZED 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. STANDARDIZED 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

Teaching involves a partnership between the instructor and the student in a collaborative and passionate commitment to the mutual learning process. There will be ample opportunity to foster interaction and robust conversation highlighting the unique experiences, preferences, and strengths that each student brings to the classroom.

Each class will provide students with relevant content in the form of presentations, text, and instructional activities. The course will foster a safe and robust learning environment that allows students to share ideas and in-depth and critical analysis.

The field of social work requires a comprehensive understanding of the applicability of micro, mezzo, and macro approaches. The following methods will be used to highlight the field of social work through a mezzo and macro lens and overall structure of the American social welfare system through these primary teaching/learning approaches:

- Active learning: case studies, group projects
- Reflective learning: reflect on past learning, consider real-world implications
- Collaborative learning: discussion, simulations
- Problem-based learning: small group work to solve a societal problem

Canvas will serve as the learning platform for this course, including communication between students and the course instructor.

The course Canvas site can be accessed at <http://courses.utexas.edu> or the Social Work web page (requires Internet connection and computer UT EID and password).

The Help Desk available through the UT home page (www.utexas.edu/its/help) or at 475-9400 is available to assist students with Canvas-related questions.

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS, AND MATERIALS

Piven and Cloward (1993) *Regulating the poor: the functions of public welfare* 2nd. Edn. Vintage Books, a division of Random House, Inc.

Required reading and class assignments will be available through Canvas in advance, including academic articles, news articles, podcasts, and videos.

Students are required to review materials prior to each class.

Additional reading and video links will be assigned and available to you electronically via Canvas.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Active Learning Contract: Cooperative, Active, Student-Directed Learning (5 points)

The MSSW program is a concentrated and rigorous program. It requires a high level of commitment from you with regard to your professional learning.

Expectations: Active Learning

- Participate in an interactive educational process grounded in course readings. Content (e.g., readings and lecture material) and process (e.g., classroom experiences) as being interdependent and mutually enhancing.
- Active, cooperative learning is a requirement of this course. You will learn via listening, talking together, reading with a critical eye, and writing in response to what you read and experience.
- Raise questions, express your viewpoints, and engage in small and large group discussions and experiential exercises.
- Participate in a manner that includes respectfulness with regard to difference, interaction with peers and instructor.

In summary, the seminar process reflects an interdependent and reciprocal system of relationships among all the members of the learning community.

Criteria for Evaluation:

1. Evidence that you have reflected upon and integrated material learned via readings, assignments, and class.
2. Degree to which your communication is relevant.
3. Attendance, students are expected to attend all classes.
4. Arrival on time.
5. Adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics (posted on canvas).

Policy Talking Points (15 Points)

Choose a policy topic. Please note you will revisit this topic throughout the course. Write one page single space about a topic of interest. Talking points are facts or directives that drive the key message, short parts of a sentence that direct a public speaker about the main point or facts during an interview or speech. For example, if the idea is to talk about food scarcity, talking points could include “According to the USDA, more than 34 million people, including 9 million children experience food insecurity in the United States.”

Additional guidance will be provided during class and on Canvas.

Policy Presentation (20 Points):

Using your policy topic, prepare a 10-minute presentation. Generally, when presenting a policy topic to an audience, you are providing information in response to a request or making policy recommendations. Policymakers devise solutions evaluate, modify, and adopt informed suggestions. Policymakers appreciate proposals for action that are clear and offer actionable solutions.

Source: <https://mitcommlab.mit.edu/broad/commkit/policy-presentation/>

Additional guidance will be provided during class and on Canvas.

Op-Ed (20 Points)

Using your policy topic develop and submit an Opinion Editorial related to problems, issues, programs, policies and other material covered in class. An op-ed is an opinion piece that makes a clear argument about a topic. Op-eds should not exceed 800 words. When writing an op-ed ask yourself: What is the two- or three-sentence takeaway from this piece? Or what might the headline on this piece be? (Tip: Try writing your column as a tweet or a short email. Then incorporate that near the top of your piece.)

Source: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/op-ed-writing-guide-washington-post-examples/>

Additional guidance will be provided during class and on Canvas.

Discussion Questions (20 Points)

You will be responsible for completing discussion questions that align with the assigned reading. *Additional guidance will be provided during class and on Canvas.*

Final Project: Policy Brief (25 Points)

Using your policy topic write a 5 page, single spaced, policy brief providing policy advice. Policy briefs are a key tool to present research and recommendations to a non-specialized

audience. They serve as a vehicle for providing evidence-based policy advice to help readers make informed decisions. A strong policy brief distills research findings in plain language and draws clear links to policy initiatives.

Source: <https://www.idrc.ca/en/funding/resources-idrc-grantees/how-write-policy-brief>

Additional guidance will be provided during class and on Canvas.

Assignment	Due Date	Percentage of Grade
Assignment #1: Policy Talking Points	1/18/23	15%
Assignment #2: Policy Presentation	2/1/23	20%
Assignment #3: Op-Ed	2/15/23	20%
Assignment #4: Discussion Questions	4/12/23	20%
Assignment #5: Policy Brief	4/19/23	25%

VI. GRADES

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 60.0	F

VII. CLASS POLICIES

1. Social work students adhere to the Student Standards for Professional Conduct of the NASW Code of Ethics and assume responsibility for their conduct. Scholastic honesty and integrity are to be consistent social work values.
2. The instructor will comply with University guidelines regarding scholastic dishonesty, including plagiarism.
3. Social work practitioners respect others. Therefore, differences in values, opinions, and feelings of class members and guest speakers will be respected.

4. Punctuality and timeliness are important for social work practitioners. Class attendance is expected. Missing more than two classes will result in loss of a letter grade. Students can check the number of their absences listed on canvas, if the information is inaccurate it is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor before final grades are posted. The instructor should be notified in advance of any planned absence and as soon as possible in the case of an unforeseen, serious emergency.
5. Students are expected to be active in the learning process, to do the assigned readings and participate in the class activities and discussions.
6. Assignments should be turned in at the beginning of class on the date they are due, barring serious, unforeseen medical illness or family emergencies. Late assignments will not be accepted.
7. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association Sixth Edition (APA) is the style manual to be used by all students. The manual is available at the library or for purchase at the Co-op.

VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

COVID-19 RELATED INFORMATION. The University's policies and practices related to the pandemic may be accessed at: <https://protect.utexas.edu/>

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.

DISABILITY ACCOMODATION STATEMENT. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). You may refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/> . If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and how they apply in my class.

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 race, 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. This atmosphere includes working intentionally to recognize and dismantle racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism in the classroom. 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 and other forms of electronic communication 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 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY. Students who violate University rules on academic 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 academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

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.

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.

UNIVERSITY ELECTRONIC MAIL STUDENT NOTIFICATION. Electronic mail (email), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send email communications to all students, and the University will expect that email communications will be received and read in a timely manner. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <https://it.utexas.edu/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy>.

RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable period after the absence. A reasonable accommodation does not include substantial modification to academic standards, or adjustments of requirements essential to any program of instruction. Students and instructors who have questions or concerns about academic accommodations for religious observance or religious beliefs may contact the [Office for Inclusion and Equity](#). The University does not maintain a list of religious holy days.

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 campus carry may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>.

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 and COVID-19 ADVICE LINE (BCCAL). 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 and COVID-19 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 <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line>. The Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line has been expanded to support The University of Texas at Austin community during the COVID-19 pandemic. By calling 512-232-5050 - Option 2 for COVID-19, students, faculty and staff can be assisted in English and Spanish with COVID-19 support.

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

Complete reading assignment for each date before coming to class.

Class Day (Wednesday)	Topic (s)	Assignments
Jan 11	What is Social Policy?	
Jan 18	Perspectives on Social Welfare and Social Welfare Policy	Assignment #1: Policy Talking Points
Jan 25	Historical background of social welfare	Regulating the Poor – Chap One: Relief, Labor & Civil Disorder: an Overview
Feb 1	Current State of Social Welfare	Assignment #2: Policy Presentation
Feb 8	Models of Policy Development	Regulating the Poor – Chap Two: Economic Collapse, Mass Unemployment
Feb 15	Policymaking Process	Assignment #3: Op-Ed
Feb 22	Frameworks for Policy Analysis	Regulating the Poor – Chap Three: The New Deal & Relief
March 1	What is Social Justice	Regulating the Poor – Chap Four: Enforcing Low-Wage Work; Statutory Methods Regulating the Poor – Chap Five: Enforcing Low-Wage Work; Administrative Methods
March 8	Policy practice: Influencing the Course of Social Welfare Policy	
SPRING BREAK March 13- 18		
March 22	<i>WE WILL NOT MEET</i>	Assignment #4: Policy Assignment

March 29	Personal Impact of Policy that Shape Practice Interventions	Regulating the Poor – Chap Six: The Welfare Explosion of the 1960's Regulating the Poor – Chap Seven: Agricultural Modernization & Mass Unemployment
April 5	Community Organizing and Advocacy	Regulating the Poor – Chap Eight: Migration and the Rise o Disorder in the Cities Regulating the Poor – Chap Nine: The Great Society and Relief: Federal Intervention
April 12	Key Social Welfare Policies and Programs	Regulating the Poor – Chap Ten: The Great Society & Relief: Local Consequences
April 19	Building and Maintaining Policy Coalitions	Assignment #5: Policy Brief
April 26	Roles and responsibilities of Social Workers in the Policy Process	

X. Bibliography

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