

Columbia University School of Social Work

T6801: Social Welfare Policy Fall 2006

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Office hours: Wednesdays, 4:00-5:00pm
(or by appointment)

Section 6: Wed., 10-11:50am, Room 305
Section 8: Wed., 2-3:50pm, Room C05
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Required texts:

Books: The following required books can be purchased at the Columbia University Bookstore:

Axinn, June and Mark Stern. 2005. *Social Welfare: A History of the American Response to Need*. Sixth edition. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. (ISBN 0205386865)

Ehrenreich, Barbara. 2001. *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*. New York: Henry Holt and Company. (ISBN 0805063897)

Schiller, Bradley R. 2004. *The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination*. Ninth edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. (ISBN 0130385689)

Expectations:

1. *Class participation*. Students are expected to attend each class, to prepare for each class by doing the required reading, and to participate in class discussion.

2. *Assignments*. There will be four assignments: **two summary papers** of class readings (each worth 15% of the grade; see further instructions below); an **in-class midterm** consisting of multiple choice and essay questions on week 7 (35% of grade); and a **final in-class exam** consisting of multiple choice and essay questions on the last day of class (35% of grade).

Instructions for the Summary Paper Assignments: Students will be asked to select two of the class topics and then to write a brief paper summarizing and critiquing the key concepts for all of the required readings on the topic. The papers are due on the day the selected topic is discussed in class, and students should be prepared to discuss the topic in class. Each paper should summarize and critique the set of required readings. The summary should briefly state the author's purpose (what the author was trying to do) and highlight the key points made by the author. The critique should include a statement of the reading's strengths (what the author[s] did well, and why it is important) and the reading's weaknesses (what the author[s] did not do well or failed to do, and why it is important). The critique section can consider each reading on its

own or can compare the readings' strengths and weaknesses. The maximum length of the summary papers is 4 pages, double-spaced, in 12-pt sized type. *Late papers will not be accepted*

3. The professor adheres to University and School policies regarding accommodations for students with disabilities, religious holidays, incompletes, plagiarism, and student evaluation of the course and its instruction as stated in the *CUSSW Student Handbook* and *CUSSW Bulletin*.

Useful Websites:

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities – www.cbpp.org

Center for Law and Social Policy – www.clasp.org

Center for Research on Child Wellbeing (Princeton University) – <http://crcw.princeton.edu/>

Child Trends – www.childtrends.org

Clearinghouse on International Developments in Child, Youth & Family Policies – www.childpolicyintl.org

Economic Success Clearinghouse (formerly Welfare Information Network) – www.financeproject.org/irc/win.asp

Future of Children – www.futureofchildren.org

House Ways & Means Committee, *The Green Book* – www.gpoaccess.gov/wmprints/search.html

Institute for Research on Poverty – www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp

Luxembourg Income Study (cross-national research) – www.lisproject.org

MDRC (welfare experiments) – www.mdrc.org

National Center for Children in Poverty – www.nccp.org

National Poverty Center (University of Michigan) – www.npc.umich.edu

UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (children) – www.unicef-icdc.org

Urban Institute – www.urban.org

U.S. Census Bureau (population info and poverty statistics) – www.census.gov

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

Administration for Children and Families – www.acf.hhs.gov

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation – www.aspe.hhs.gov

T6801: SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY

Course Description, Objectives and Major Content Themes

Course Description

The policy foundation course is designed to meet a series of objectives. It is central to students' preparation as social workers and provides a critical context for education as social work practitioners as well as relevant policy background for subsequent field-of-practice courses. The overarching goals of this course are that students learn about the major social policies and programs that affect people's well-being or quality of life and various aspects of social service delivery; understand the ways in which direct social work practice enacts social policies and is shaped by them; and develop beginning expertise in understanding social policy content, policy actions of agencies, professional associations, and political bodies, and the skills needed to influence social policy.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of T6801, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the "social sector" in the U.S. (non-market transfers, goods, and services) through examination of the welfare state and the economic, social, and political context of the U.S.
2. Explain basic historical, intellectual and cross-national perspectives on current U.S. social policy issues.
3. Discuss how public policy affects the level and structure of resources available to meet the needs of clients.
4. Identify how social justice and social work practice fit within the policy context ("practice enacts policy").
5. Use the knowledge gained in objectives 1 through 4 to practice more effectively.

Major content themes

The major content themes of T6801 include:

1. **The social work profession:** history, mission, philosophy, and methods.
2. **Overview of the "social sector" in the U.S.:** concepts and definitions, human service systems, composition of and trends in public social expenditures, selected historical trends and comparisons, selected cross-national trends and comparisons, and criteria for assessing outcomes.
3. **Targets of social policy:** social problems (e.g. poverty and inequality, domestic violence, homelessness) and populations at risk (e.g. the aged, children, women, people of color, gay men, lesbians, persons who are disabled).

4. **Organization and structure of social policies** (including federalism, public and private sector roles).

5. **Major social policies and programs.**

Income transfer/income maintenance: the social insurance programs (OASDI, UI), public assistance, food stamps, tax benefits, employer fringe benefits.

Health policy and programs: Medicare, Medicaid, maternal and child health, private health insurance.

The personal social services of particular interest to social work: categorical and non-categorical services for the aged, children and their families, the disabled, etc.

Introductory overview of three other systems: employment, housing and education.

T6801: Social Welfare Policy

Topical Course Outline

9/6 1. Course overview and introduction to social welfare policy

Overview of the course and assignments; the relevance of social welfare policy for social work practice; and the historical role of the social work profession in policy development, advocacy and implementation.

9/13 2. The current social welfare system

Definition and goals of social welfare policy; capitalism, socialism and welfare states; overview of the size and composition of the American social welfare system; major programs; expenditures; beneficiaries; cash versus in-kind benefits; federalism with state and local variation; universal versus targeted approaches (means-testing); comparison to other Western nations.

U.S. SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY – HISTORY AND CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES

9/20 3. History of U.S. social welfare policy I (through the New Deal)

Poor relief; the growth and transformation of the poorhouse; the Progressive era; changing perspectives on children; the role of social workers; family preservation versus placement; the establishment of “mother’s pensions;” the Great Depression and the New Deal; emergency relief and public works; the role of social workers; the Social Security Act and the establishment of Aid to Dependent Children, Unemployment Insurance and Social Security.

9/27 4. History of U.S. social welfare policy II (through the Reagan Administration)

The War on Poverty, including the growth in AFDC, expansion of Food Stamps, introduction of health insurance coverage and other categorical programs (such as Head Start); subsequent expansion of social services (e.g. Title XX); the welfare rights movement and the war on welfare; the Family Support Act; and state demonstrations.

10/4 5. Social, economic and demographic trends in the U.S.

Recent trends that affect poverty, inequality and the need for public assistance.

10/11 6. Definition of poverty and trends in poverty

The definition and measurement of poverty; the official U.S. poverty line and alternative definitions; the treatment of cash and non-cash transfers; recent overall poverty trends and by race/ethnicity, age and family type.

10/18 7. IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAM

SPECIAL TOPICS IN SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY

10/25 8. The Clinton welfare reform bill and its aftermath (including TANF & food stamps)

Clinton's pledge to "end welfare as we know it;" first version of Clinton reform and its architects; the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) and its critics; consequences of 1996 law for welfare participation rates, employment, poverty, family formation, and child wellbeing; key perspectives on U.S. welfare policy.

11/1 9. Welfare reform (cont.)/The working poor

Definition of the working poor; trends; key issues (child care, transportation, EITC); types of available assistance.

11/8 10. The underclass, concentrated urban ("ghetto") poverty, and housing/homelessness

Defining the underclass and "ghetto" poverty; trends; hypotheses about the development of the underclass; policy options; issues related to housing and homelessness.

11/15 11. Single mothers, child support, and current perspectives on family formation, marriage and "fragile families"

Effects of family structure on children; policy issues and options related to single mothers, including child support enforcement; public policy efforts to alter—or redress the consequences of—changing family demography; unmarried parents and their children; marriage education/promotion programs.

11/22 12. Child welfare, child protection, and promoting child wellbeing

Trends in child abuse and neglect, foster care; child protection and child welfare policies; child and family services; what children need, and interventions to promote child wellbeing.

11/29 13. Health care structure and reform

Trends and policy issues related to providing health care for the children, working-age adults and the elderly.

12/6 14. The elderly, Social Security and other social insurance programs

Growth in the elderly population; programs for the elderly, especially Social Security (structure, costs and trends); reform ideas and proposals; description of Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income programs.

12/13 15. IN-CLASS FINAL EXAM

T6801: Social Welfare Policy

Required Assigned Readings

(Readings with an asterisk [*] are from books to be purchased at the University bookstore. All other readings are available on-line via Library Reserves, E-journals, and/or by direct link.)

9/6 1. Course overview and introduction to social welfare policy

9/13 2. The current social welfare system

Ellwood, David T. 1988. "Values and the Helping Conundrums," Chapter 2 (pp. 14-44). In *Poor Support: Poverty in the American Family*. New York: Basic Books.

*Schiller, Bradley R. *The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination*, Chapters 12-13.

Smeeding, Timothy M. 2005. "Public Policy, Economic Inequality, and Poverty: The United States in Comparative Perspective." *Social Science Quarterly* 86(5):955-983.

U.S. SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY – HISTORY AND CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES

9/20 3/4. History of U.S. social welfare policy & 9/27

*Axinn, June and Mark Stern. 2005. *Social Welfare: A History of the American Response to Need*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. (ISBN 0205386865)

10/4 5. Social, economic and demographic trends in the U.S.

Blank, Rebecca M. 1997. "A Changing Economy," Chapter 2, pp. 52-82. *It Takes a Nation: A New Agenda for Fighting Poverty*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Casper, Lynne M. and Suzanne M. Bianchi. 2002. "Changing Families in a Changing Society," Chapter 1, pp. 1-38. *Continuity and Change in the American Family*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Hobbs, Frank and Nicole Stoops, U.S. Census Bureau. 2002. *Demographic Trends in the 20th Century*, Census 2000 Special Reports, Series CENSR-4. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Read highlights (pp. 1-3, 7, 49, 71, 115, 137) and skim rest. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/censr-4.pdf>

10/11 6. Definition of poverty and trends in poverty

Fischer, Gordon M. 1992. "The Development and History of the Poverty Thresholds." *Social Security Bulletin* 55(4):3-14.

Rector, Robert E. and Kirk A. Johnson. 2004. "Backgrounder: Understanding Poverty in America." No. 1713. Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation.
<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Welfare/BG1713.cfm>

*Schiller, Bradley R. *The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination*. Chapters 1-4.

U.S. Census Bureau. Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2005. <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/poverty.html>

10/18 7. IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAM

SPECIAL TOPICS IN SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY

10/25 8. The Clinton welfare reform bill and its aftermath (including TANF & food stamps)

Part of video in class – "Ending Welfare As We Know It"

Haskins, Ron. 2006. Testimony before the Committee on Ways and Means, Hearing to Review Outcomes of 1996 Welfare Reforms, July 19, 2006.
<http://waysandmeans.house.gov/hearings.asp?formmode=view&id=5147>

Jencks, Christopher, Scott Winship, and Joseph Swingle. 2006. "Welfare Redux." *The American Prospect*. Issue date: March 10. <http://www.prospect.org/web/printfriendly-view.wv?id=11187>

Rector, Robert. 2006. Testimony before the Committee on Ways and Means, Hearing to Review Outcomes of 1996 Welfare Reforms, July 19, 2006.
<http://waysandmeans.house.gov/hearings.asp?formmode=view&id=5151>

11/1 9. Welfare reform (cont.)/The working poor

Cauthen, Nancy K. 2006. "When Work Doesn't Pay: What Every Policymaker Should Know." National Center for Children in Poverty, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. http://www.nccp.org/media/wdp06_text.pdf

*Ehrenreich, Barbara. 2001. *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

*Schiller, Bradley R. *The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination*, Chapter 5, "The Working Poor."

11/8 10. The underclass, concentrated urban ("ghetto") poverty, and housing/homelessness

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. 2003. "Introduction to the Housing Voucher Program." <http://www.cbpp.org/5-15-03hous.pdf>

Jargowsky, Paul A. and Isabel Sawhill. 2006. "The Decline of the Underclass." Center on Children and Families, The Brookings Institution, Brief #36.
<http://www.brookings.org/es/research/projects/wrb/publications/pb/pb36.pdf>

Mincy, Ronald. 1994. "The Underclass: Concept, Controversy and Evidence." In *Confronting Poverty: Prescriptions for Change*, edited by Sheldon Danziger, Gary Sandefur, and Daniel Weinberg. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

*Schiller, Bradley R. *The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination*. Chapter 8, "The Underclass: Culture and Race."

11/15 11. Single mothers, child support, and current perspectives on family formation, marriage and "fragile families"

Part of video in class – PBS Frontline: "The Vanishing Father"

Garfinkel, Irwin, Daniel R. Meyer and Sara S. McLanahan. 1998. "A Brief History of Child Support Policies in the United States," Chapter 1. In *Fathers under Fire: The Revolution in Child Support Enforcement*, edited by Irwin Garfinkel, Sara S. McLanahan, Daniel R. Meyer and Judith A. Seltzer. New York: Russell Sage.

Kane, Andrea and Daniel T. Lichter. 2006. "Reduced Unwed Childbearing: The Missing Link in Efforts to Promote Marriage." Center on Children and Families, The Brookings Institution, Brief #37.
<http://www.brookings.edu/es/research/projects/wrb/publications/pb/pb37.pdf>

McLanahan, Sara, Elisabeth Donahue, and Ron Haskins. 2005. "Introducing the Issue," in volume on 'Marriage and Child Wellbeing,' *The Future of Children* 15(2):3-12.
http://www.futureofchildren.org/usr_doc/01_foc_15-2_fall05_intro.pdf

Parke, Mary. 2003. "Are Married Parents Really Better for Children? What Research Says about the Effects of Family Structure on Child Well-Being." Brief # 03-24. Washington, D.C.: Center for Law and Social Policy.
http://www.clasp.org/publications/marriage_brief3_annotated.pdf

*Schiller, Bradley R. *The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination*. Chapter 7, "Family Size and Structure."

Explore the website for the Healthy Marriage Initiative, Administration for Children and Families, Dept. of Health and Human Services: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/>

11/22 12. Child welfare, child protection, and promoting child wellbeing

Child Welfare League of America. 2006. "Child Abuse and Neglect," National Data Analysis System Issue Brief.
http://ndas.cwla.org/include/pdf/ChildAbuseNeglect_Final_IB.pdf

Heckman, James J. 2006. "Skill Formation and the Economics of Investing in Disadvantaged Children." *Science* 32: 1900-1902.

Vandivere, Sharon, Rosemary Chalk, and Kristin Anderson Moore. 2003. "Children in Foster Homes: How Are They Faring?" Child Trends Research Brief, #2003-23. Washington, DC: Child Trends. <http://www.childtrends.org/files/FosterHomesRB.pdf>

Waldfogel, Jane. 2006. "Children and Parents," Chapter 1 (pp. 12-35). *What Children Need*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

11/29 13. Health care structure and reform

AARP Public Policy Institute Report. 2005 "Medicare at 40: Past Accomplishments and Future Challenges." http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/health/medicare_40.pdf

Berkman, Barbara. 1996. "The Emerging Health Care World: Implications for Social Work Practice and Education." *Social Work* 41(5):541-551.

Friedman, Milton. 2001. "How to Cure Health Care." *The Public Interest* 142:3-30.

Mann, Cindy, Diane Rowland and Rachel Garfield. 2003. "Historical Overview of Children's Health Care Coverage." *The Future of Children* 13(1):31-53. http://www.futureofchildren.org/usr_doc/tfoc13-1c.pdf

Mullahy, John and Barbara Wolfe. 2002. "Health Policies for the Non-Elderly Poor," pp. 278-313. In *Understanding Poverty*, edited by Sheldon Danziger and Robert H. Haveman. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

12/6 14. The elderly, Social Security and other social insurance programs

Century Foundation. 2005. *Social Security Reform: A Century Foundation Guide to the Issues*. New York: Century Foundation Press. <http://www.tcf.org/Publications/RetirementSecurity/SocialSecurityBasicsRev2005.pdf>

*Review Schiller, Chapter 13.

Siems, Thomas F. 2001. "Reengineering Social Security in the New Economy." Cato Project on Social Security Privatization, No. 22. Cato Institute: Washington, D.C. <http://www.socialsecurity.org/pubs/ssps/ssp22.pdf>

12/13 15. IN-CLASS FINAL EXAM

Revised: September 5, 2006