SWK 315.791  
Social Welfare Policy and Legislation  
Fall 2021  

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Office hours: by Appointment

Prerequisite: SWK 215, ECO 231  
Co-requisite: SWK 350

COURSE SYLLABUS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to provide you with an understanding of the ways by which social welfare services and programs are provided in the United States. The course will build upon your knowledge of both social welfare and social work history and philosophy, which was presented in SWK 215. Specifically, this course will closely examine social problems and issues, as well as the social welfare policies and services that are intended to address them. Special emphasis will be placed on the effects of social welfare policy on client groups, the availability of services, and the services delivered by generalist social workers. This course will also address issues related to diversity, oppression, and social and economic justice. An important component of SWK 315 is the discussion of the relationship between social welfare policy and generalist social work practice. This course is designated as writing enhanced.

REQUIRED TEXTS:


RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

II. CURRICULUM DESCRIPTION

The BSW program at SFASU features generalist social work practice, defined as follows:

Generalist practice serves diverse client systems utilizing an ecological systems approach focusing on persons, families, groups, organizations, and communities. It is not confined by a narrow cadre of theories; rather it is versatile enough to allow problems and situations, as well as strengths, capacities, and resources, to determine the practice approach. Generalist practice employs a problem-solving framework and a broad knowledge, value, and skill base which demands ethical practice and ongoing self-assessment.

Briefly, generalist social work practice:
- Is multi-level to include individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- Is multi-theory, allowing for the free selection of theories as appropriate
- Utilizes a problem identification and solving focus that follows a problem-solving framework
- Utilizes multiple interventions at multiple levels, as appropriate
- Addresses the complexity of individual, family, group, organizational, and community system interactions
- Requires an integration of awareness, competence, and professional response to issues of values, ethics, diversity, culture, social justice, and populations-at-risk

III. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (CSWE CORE COMPETENCIES)

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-informed Practice
Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice
Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
IV. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (CSWE COMPONENT BEHAVIORS)

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

Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context

Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication

Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences

Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies

Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels

Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice

Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery

Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services

Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services

Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice

Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies

Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies
V. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

The primary instructional model for this course is collaborative learning. Specifically, the class will cover course content, course objectives, and methods of classroom assessment. The course will incorporate the following instructional strategies: lecture, class discussion, group exercises, online activities, assigned readings and individual projects. You are encouraged to actively participate in activities, ask questions, and contribute comments for discussion. You are also encouraged to offer input regarding instructional strategies and assignments. Most importantly, you are expected to be an active learner and to ask for clarification when you have questions. In order to be successful in the class, it is important that you attend regularly, read the assigned material, and come to class prepared to discuss what you have read. You will be expected to not only know the material presented, but to be able to apply it in experiential activities. Lectures will not duplicate the reading material except to clarify or to expand upon it, as well as connect it to material covered in prerequisite courses. The goal of this approach is to develop a safe learning environment that addresses a variety of learning styles, promotes critical thinking, and fosters creativity.

COVID-19 MASK POLICY Masks (cloth face coverings) must be worn over the nose and mouth at all times in this class and appropriate physical distancing must be observed. Students not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be asked to leave the class. All incidents of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students who are reported for multiple infractions of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing may be subject to disciplinary actions. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html

VI. COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS (per SFA Office of Instructional Technology)

This course will utilize Desire 2 Learn to support the delivery of course content. For help with Desire 2 Learn go to https://d2l.sfasu.edu/ and click on D2L Student Support and Tutorials. You will need basic skills regarding the use of a word processor and web browser. You must have access to a computer that meets the university’s minimum computer system requirements. For specific details go to http://sfaonline.sfasu.edu/gettingstarted.html; Computers are available to you through a number of labs across campus; see www.sfasu.edu or the instructor for details.

VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

week 1 Introduction to course and review of schedule – think about policy for papers
Readings: get the book
Discuss assignments and expectations for APA style

Readings: Text, chapters 1 & 2
Lecture and discussion of Social Welfare Policy Research, and Discrimination in American Society. **TOPIC FOR PAPER A APPROVED**

Readings: Text, Chapters 3 & 4

Library Research Day! Class will meet in the Steen Library at 4p. Edward Kowalski will lead the class in how to use Steenfind and other databases from the library to assist in research. After his presentation, we will retain the room until the end of the class for our own research purposes. **MAKE SURE TO BRING IN A DRAFT OF YOUR PAPER A OUTLINE.**

Lecture and discussion of Poverty in America, brief review for exam and review of expectations of paper A.

Readings: Text, Chapter 5

**Exam 1**, based upon chapters 1-5 in text. After the exam ends at 5:15, students will be put into groups for the development of delivered course content re. chapters 11-16, to be presented in class during weeks 11-13. **PAPER A DUE IN DROPBOX IN D2L BEFORE 11:59p**

**APA and writing lab day at the library.** Class will meet in the library to review the tenets of writing and style from our very own SFASU writing lab. Lecture and discussion of the voluntary sector today, and privatization of human service corporations. Group work on presentations.

Readings: Text, Chapters 6 & 7

Lecture and Discussion of the making of governmental policy, and tax policy and income distribution.

Readings: Text, Chapters 8 & 9.

Lecture and Discussion of Social insurance programs, and the American welfare state from an international perspective. Class discussion and review of expectations for Paper B. **MAKE SURE TO BRING IN A DRAFT OF YOUR PAPER B OUTLINE.**

Readings: Chapters 10 & 18.

Exam 2, based upon content from lectures, discussions, and text chapters 6-10, & 18. After the exam at 5:15, students will be able to work on group presentations. **PAPER B DUE IN DROPBOX IN D2L BEFORE 11:59p**

In-class group presentations on Public Assistance Programs
In-class group presentations on The American Health Care System
Readings: Chapters 11 & 12, plus TBA

In-class group presentations on Mental Health and Substance Abuse Policy
In-class group presentations on Criminal Justice
Readings: Chapters 13 & 14, plus TBA
In-class group presentations on Child Welfare Policy
In-class group presentations
Readings: Chapters 15 & 16, plus TBA

Thanksgiving Break; no class. Be safe

Dead Week. Student-lead review of chapters 11-16

FINAL EXAM (EXAM III) 12/9/2, 4p in-class. The Exam will cover the content of Chapters 11-17 in the Text.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Class Attendance and Participation: In order for the class to discuss the readings, it is essential for you to read assigned material before coming to class, to attend class regularly, and to participate in class discussion. You are responsible for all material covered in class and assigned in the syllabus, whether or not you have attended class.

Cell Phones/Pagers/Electronic Devices: Because such devices are disruptive to the classroom environment, I ask that you refrain from using them during class. I also ask that you either place such devices on silent mode or turn them off during class. Repeated interruptions may result in a deduction of points from the final average.

B. Readings: The course outline provides a list of required weekly readings. Since lectures and class discussions are designed to answer questions about the material and expand upon the basic concepts, you are expected to complete the assigned readings prior to class. Furthermore, you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the information, as evidenced by active participation in class discussion. For example, you should present well-formulated questions and comments that demonstrate prior preparation.

C. Exams: Three major application exams will be given during the semester. Exam I will cover Chapters 1-5 in the text, and address Social Policy and the American Welfare State, Social Welfare Policy Research, Religion and Social Welfare Policy, Discrimination, and Poverty in America. Exam II will cover the content of Chapters 6-10 in the text, and Chapter 18, and address The Voluntary Sector Today, Privatization and Human Service Corporations, and The Making of Government Policy, Tax Policy and Income Distribution, Social Insurance Programs, and The American Welfare State in International Perspectives. Exam III (Final Exam) will cover the content addressed in Chapters 11-17 of the text, and include Public Assistance Programs, The American Health Care System, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Policy, Criminal Justice, Child Welfare Policy, Housing Policies, and The Politics of Food Policy and Rural Life. All material provided on the topics, including all assigned readings,
discussions, lectures, discussion questions/responses (online), and guest presentations are subject to examination. The exams will consist primarily of essay questions and may contain matching, true/false, and/or multiple-choice questions.

You are expected to take all exams at the scheduled time. Permission to miss any exam will be based on the policy for excused absences as stated in the SFASU General Bulletin (available online at [http://www.sfasu.edu/73.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/73.asp)). Missing an exam without either prior permission or an excused absence will result in a grade of "0" on that exam. I will schedule make-up exams.

D. **Presentations:** Students will be divided into 6 groups, and will be tasked with crafting a presentation to the rest of the class relating to one of Chapters 11-17 during weeks 11-13 of class. Each group will be allowed class time in advance of the presentations to prepare; students are expected to spend time outside of class to prepare, as well. Each presentation is to last approximately 30 minutes, and should present content via presentation, and also have some supplementary visual/ activity/ movie/ discussion/ interaction component that will further emphasize the deliverables of your assigned chapter. The total time allocated for this is to be no less than 45 minutes per group total. This content will be provided to the professor and uploaded into D2L for further all-class review. Feel free to be creative and collaborative with the members of your group. Additionally, groups will be expected to deliver a 7-10 minute review/ synopsis of their presentations during Dead Week in preparation for the Final Exam (Exam III). This assignment is worth 50 points.

E. **Attendance and Participation:** As this is class is so fast-moving, attendance and active participation is required for each scheduled class period. Active preparation is required between classes as a function of keeping up with readings and assignments. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. I do accept University-approved excuses for absences and tardiness, or for those instances that accompany documentation. All other excuses will not be accepted.

F. **Assignments:** You are responsible for completing assignments in accordance with the specific guidelines identified in the assignment description (in the syllabus). Assignments A, B, & C are to be typewritten (by typewriter or word processor) in 12 pt. font with double spacing and standard margins. All assignments are to be in APA format per the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Failure to meet these guidelines will result in loss of points. See the descriptions of Assignments A, B & C for guidelines.

Late assignments will result in 10% of the total possible points being deducted from the total points earned for each day the assignment is late, with 10% deducted immediately following the date/time the assignment is due. The only exception is an excused absence as defined by the SFASU General Bulletin.
GRADING:

- Exams: 3 @ 100 pts. each = 300
- Presentation = 50
- Attendance & Participation = 30
- Assignment A = 50
- Assignment B = 50
- Assignment C = 100
- Total = 580

GRADING SCALE:

- A: 519 - 580
- B: 461 - 518
- C: 403 - 460
- D: 345 - 402
- F: 0 - 344

VIII. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (SFASU Policy A-9.1)

Honesty and representing one’s knowledge and abilities appropriately are important ethical principles of the social work profession. All violations of the Academic Integrity Policy will be addressed in accordance with SFASU Policy A-9.1 (SFASU Policy A-9.1 can be found at the web address below). All incidents will result in a grade of “0”. Given the limited number of graded assignments in this course, a “0” could have serious consequences for the student’s academic standing.

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been
purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Acceptable Student Behavior
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

IX. STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS AND DISABILITIES
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.
Assignment A: Annotated Bibliography
(EPAS 2.1.8, PB 8.1, 8.2)

Before beginning this assignment, you need to choose a long-standing social issue or problem relevant to generalist social work practice. Your topic must be approved by the instructor prior to beginning your assignment. I will approve your topics in class on 9/12/19. Once your topic has been approved, you will develop an annotated bibliography that addresses the following aspects of the social issue:

Description of the Problem
1) Problem definition/description
2) History of the problem
3) Etiology of the problem (causes and related factors)
4) Impact of the problem on diverse client systems
5) Competing points of view of the problem (what societal values, political ideologies, and social and economic conditions have impacted the framing of the problem?)

Description of Attempts to Resolve the Problem
1) Historically, what attempts (policies and programs) have been made to resolve the problem? What degree of success was achieved?
2) Currently, what attempts (policies and programs) are being made to resolve the problem? What degree of success has been achieved?

Implications for Generalist Social Work Practice
1) Historically, how were social workers involved in resolving the social problem (at a policy level)?
2) Currently, how are social workers involved in resolving the social problem (at a policy level)?
3) What are the implications for the delivery of generalist social work practice interventions?
The annotated bibliography must consist of at least 10 references, 8 of which must be articles from professional peer reviewed journals in social work or closely related disciplines. The remaining resources can be drawn from professional peer reviewed journals, books, and reliable internet resources. Of the 8 journal articles,

1) At least four articles from a *professional peer reviewed journal* that inform the description of the problem

2) At least two articles from a *professional peer reviewed journal* that inform the description of attempts to resolve the problem

3) At least two articles from a *professional peer reviewed journal* that inform the implications for generalist social work practice.

Each entry reference is to be in APA format and followed by two paragraphs that briefly describe the source’s contents (first paragraph) and importance to the chosen topic (second paragraph). *The paragraphs must summarize the information in your own words and should not contain direct quotes.* Please be specific and exacting in your language; please avoid vagueness or explaining in generalities. The entries (references) are to be in alphabetical order. For example:


The author reports the results of an exploratory qualitative study that investigated the application of “traditional” administrative functions and process to collaboration among organizations (as defined by Mattessich & Monsey, 1992). The study employed semi-structured interviews with 12 social workers employed as administrators in human service organizations located in Southern California. Data analysis resulted in the following themes: 1) relationship building, 2) participatory planning, 3) coordinating and sharing of tasks, 4) collective decision-making, 5) problem solving/conflict resolution, and 6) facilitative leadership. The author provides an informative discussion of the themes and their implications for administrative involvement in collaborative efforts. The findings and conclusions are consistent with the literature on collaboration, as well as leadership and administration.

This article is important to my topic because…


Summary of the source’s contents (first paragraph) and a clear statement about its importance to the chosen topic (second paragraph).

The assignment will be evaluated based on its adherence to the above guidelines, as well as the following criteria: 1) demonstration of critical thinking skills, 2) ability to organize and clearly present the information, 3) writing skills (such as grammar and punctuation), and 4) adherence to APA guidelines.
You need to submit the assignment to the appropriate D2L dropbox by 4 pm on the due date for the assignment. The assignment will be considered late until it has been submitted to the D2L dropbox. **Assignments will not be accepted via email within or outside of D2L.**

The assignment is worth a total of 50 points and will be evaluated based on its adherence to the above guidelines.

Please refer to the course schedule for the due date.

*DUE 9/27/19 before 11:59p in the Dropbox in D2L.*
Assignment B: Social Issues and Policies Analysis

Using the material from Assignment A, you will develop a paper that discusses the various aspects of a social issue and identifies historical and current attempts to address it. The paper should adhere to the following format:

**Introduction (2.5 pts)**
Introduce your topic and tell the audience what the paper will cover. Be sure that you clearly demonstrate the importance of the topic to generalist social work practice.

**Description of the Problem (12.5 pts)**
This section of the paper should cover the following in a narrative format:
1) Problem definition/description
2) History of the problem
3) Etiology of the problem (causes and related factors)
4) Impact of the problem on diverse client systems
5) Competing points of view of the problem (what societal values, political ideologies, and social and economic conditions have impacted the framing of the problem?)

**Description of Attempts to Resolve the Problem (12.5 pts)**
This section of the paper should cover the following in a narrative format:
1) Historically, what attempts (policies and programs) have been made to resolve the problem? What degree of success was achieved? What are the strengths and limitations of each of these attempts?
2) Currently, what attempts (policies and programs) are being made to resolve the problem? What degree of success has been achieved? What are the strengths and limitations of each of these attempts?

**Implications for Generalist Social Work Practice (7.5 pts)**
This section of the paper should cover the following in a narrative format:
1) Historically, how were social workers involved in resolving the social problem (at a policy
level)?

2) Currently, how are social workers involved in resolving the social problem (at a policy level)?

3) What are the implications for the delivery of generalist social work practice interventions? Be sure to talk about consistency/inconsistency with social work values and ethics!

**Recommendations (7.5 pts)**

This section of the paper should cover the following in a narrative format:

1) Based on your research, what would you change about the current approach(es) to resolving the social problem?

2) Based on your research, what would you keep the same?

**Conclusion (2.5 pts)**

Be sure to summarize the main points of your proposal. This is your chance to reiterate the points made in your paper and to make sure the audience understands their importance!

Five (5) points of the grade will be based on the following criteria: 1) demonstration of critical thinking skills, 2) ability to organize and clearly present the information, 3) writing skills (such as grammar and punctuation), and 4) adherence to APA guidelines.

Your paper must be at least 12 pages in length (5 points will be deducted from papers that do not meet the minimum length requirement). It should contain at least 10 references, 8 of which must be articles from professional peer reviewed journals from social work or closely related disciplines (up to 5 points may be deducted from papers that do not meet this requirement). The remainder of the resources can be drawn from professional peer reviewed journals, books, and reliable internet resources.

You need to submit the assignment to the appropriate D2L dropbox by 4 pm on the due date for the assignment. The assignment will be considered late until it has been submitted to the D2L dropbox. **Assignments will not be accepted via email within or outside of D2L.**

The assignment is worth a total of 50 points and will be evaluated based on its adherence to the above guidelines.

**Please refer to the course schedule for the due date.**

*DUE 11/1/19 before 11:59p in the Dropbox in D2L*
Assignment C: Revision of Assignment B

For this assignment you will revise Assignment B based on the feedback I provide you. This assignment is to follow the guidelines, format and expectations outlined in the description for Assignment B. Also, it should reflect incorporation of the feedback provided on Assignment B. The points for Assignment C will be allocated as follows:

- Introduction (5 pts)
- Description of the Problem (25 pts)
- Description of Attempts to Resolve the Problem (25 pts)
- Implications for Generalist Social Work Practice (15 pts)
- Recommendations (15 pts)
- Conclusion (5 pts)

Ten (10) points of the grade will be based on the following criteria: 1) demonstration of critical thinking skills, 2) ability to organize and clearly present the information, 3) writing skills (such as grammar and punctuation), and 4) adherence to APA guidelines.

Your paper must be at least 12 pages in length (10 points will be deducted from papers that do not meet the minimum length requirement). It should contain at least 10 references, 8 of which must be articles from professional peer reviewed journals from social work or closely related disciplines (up to 10 points may be deducted from papers that do not meet this requirement). The remainder of the resources can be drawn from professional peer reviewed journals, books, and reliable internet resources.

You need to submit the assignment to the appropriate D2L dropbox on the due date for the assignment. The assignment will be considered late until it has been submitted to the D2L dropbox. **Assignments will not be accepted via email within or outside of D2L.**

The assignment is worth a total of 100 points and will be evaluated based on its adherence to the above guidelines.

Please refer to the course schedule for the due date.

*Due 12/6/19 by 11:59p in the Dropbox in D2L*
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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**SUGGESTED READINGS**


