

**Indiana University
School of Social Work**

S530: Social Policy and Services

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Summer II 1998

Course Description:

This course examines the processes that influence the development of social policy and social services. Included are legislative and political processes, models of policy analysis, service delivery and policy implementation. Effects of these on people are considered from global, political, economic, and social policy perspectives.

The prerequisite for this course is *S500 Social Welfare and the Social Work Profession*. This course is developed around the general proposition that social workers utilize knowledge and skills to carry out roles and functions critical for practice. Such knowledge and skills include the application of social policy analysis, the legislative process, the role and impact of politics and political choice on the quality of life of people and the effect of economic-social policy decisions and judicial actions on social services. The course also focuses on assessing the impact of social policy and social service delivery systems on oppressed groups and populations at risk.

Course Objectives

In this course, students are expected to demonstrate achievement of the following objectives:

1. Distinguish the common attributes of all service delivery systems, such as organizations, decision making processes, need-demand factors, and provider-consumer relationships;
2. Understand the impact of the variability of social policy on social service delivery systems;
3. Understand the differential benefits of the major service delivery systems for people of color, women, gay and lesbian people as well as other populations at risk; and the factors influencing such differential benefits;
4. Understand the dilemmas and trade-offs involved in the major issues related to service delivery, such as integration, normalization, managed care and privatization;

5. Understand the nature of power and control in the political and legislative process, and information management by lobbying forces and other groups involved in these processes;
6. Understand the pros and cons of various positions regarding current professional, political and social issues related to social policy and services; and income maintenance;
7. An ability to identify the relationship between social work values and beliefs and current policy issues;
8. Examine and understand research and program evaluation outcomes, and to apply appropriate methods in advocating for special population groups, significant social issues and political or legislative goals;
9. Understand and use policy analysis skills in evaluating policy;
10. Understand and appreciate societal inter-dependency from a national and comparative global perspective;
11. Examine and understand the effects of socio-economic indicators on social policy, politics and social service delivery systems.

Required Textbook

Karger, H.J. & Stoesz, D. (1998). *American Social Welfare Policy - A Pluralist Approach*. New York: Longman.

Course Policies:

1. Except in extreme cases, (illness, accidents, death in the family)grades will be dropped one level (includes plus and minus grades) per week for late work.
2. Class attendance and promptness is expected. You are responsible for all material covered if you miss a class for any reason.
3. There will be no make-up exams.
4. Academic dishonesty (including plagiarism and cheating on exams) is inconsistent with ethical conduct in social work classes. In cases of academic dishonesty university guidelines will be followed. Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will fail the course. Failure of a required social work course will result in automatic dismissal from the social work program. A student's right to appeal such dismissal is outlined in materials distributed at student orientation meetings. To avoid plagiarism, **credit sources whenever you use someone else's language or ideas. References must appear in the body of a paper using APA format. Including references in a list at the end of the paper only is insufficient. The APA manual is sold at the campus bookstore and is on reserve in the reference section of the library.**

5. All written material must be typed , double-spaced in APA style and carefully proofread. Papers **Must** be stapled. Papers must include a Bibliography (list of References at the end) as well as in-text references. Papers received without student mailbox numbers on the title page will not be returned.
6. Learning to air differences, with honesty, consideration and intelligence is an integral part of professional education. Students must respect the opinions and feelings of other students, the instructor and guest speakers, even though they differ from their own. One way that respect is shown is by listening attentively when others have the floor. A pattern of disrespectful behavior (whispering, giggling, passing notes, sleeping) will result in a reduction of points from a student’s final grade.
7. According to IUSSW policy, students must earn at least a “C” to pass this course.
8. A formal evaluation of the course and its instructor will be completed at the end of the course.
9. Students with special needs related to performance in this course should inform the instructor withing the first three(3) weeks of classes.

GRADING

Midterm Exam	35% (Negotiable)
Paper	40%
Letter Writing	25%
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Total	100%

SCALE

A= 94-100; A- =90-93; B+= 87-89; B=83-86; B-= 80-82; C+= 75-79; C= 70-74; D=65 -69; Below 65 = F.

Criteria for Grading Papers

I. Presentation and Appearance

- A. Correct grammar (noun-verb agreement, sentence structure, proper verb tense, etc.)
- B. Professional presentation (typed, proofread, neat, bound or stapled, etc.)
- C. Correct usage of APA style

II. Organization

- A. Clear structure and format
- B. Logical sequencing and continuity of ideas
- C. Clarity of expression and conciseness

III. Content

- A. Use of current social work literature and other relevant sources
- B. Evidence of critical thinking
- C. Analysis of material
- D. Incorporation of social work values and ethics
- E. Depth of understanding
- F. Criteria outlined in assignments

Assignments

PAPER - CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING.

Pro and Con Paper

When it comes to issues we feel passionately about, most of us embrace the facts and opinions which support our beliefs and ignore those that oppose them. For example, many social workers hate managed care and believe it hurts the profession and clients. Yet by operating Medicaid as a managed care system, hospitals in Indiana are now competing for the low-income patients they once rejected. This assignment is aimed at increasing student understanding of multiple perspectives of a controversial social problem, policy or issue affecting social work practice. The issue should take the form of a “Yes or No” question - i.e. “Should social work support gay/lesbian marriages - yes or no”? The paper must include the following sections:

1. The introduction to the paper should contain a general discussion of the issue and a brief summary of opposing arguments. 1-2 pages
2. This section should present the Yes side of the argument. Identify what groups in society, if any support this side. Is there a political ideology inherent to this stance? Present empirical data in support of this argument. Discuss what societal values are reflected by this argument. Discuss the goodness of fit between this stance and social work values and ethics. 2-3 pages
3. This section should present the No side of the argument following the same steps used in the Yes section. 2-3 pages
4. In the concluding section of this paper students should discuss their position on this issue before beginning this assignment. Discuss whether your position was altered as a result of this assignment - if so how? What values underlay your position? What evidence supports your position? Is your position congruent with social work values and ethics? 1-2 pages.

Students are required to use a minimum of four (last 7 years) recent academic journal articles for this paper. Information from the Internet can be used only when the source is a clearly identified legitimate source. So info from AI's Web Page, for example, should not be included. Students are encouraged to conduct a telephone or in-person interview with someone in a position of influence who can speak knowledgeably about either side of the issue. Papers must be typed, double

spaced, with APA style references. A bibliography must be included.

Consumer Guide Paper

Create a “consumer friendly” handbook about a major policy or program affecting an at-risk population in Indiana. Hoosier Healthwise, SSI, Family Reunification are examples of appropriate programs upon which this handbook could be based. This handbook should contain information that will give the reader an insiders view of a program. The handbook should not contain illegal or unethical suggestions. The handbooks should use the following format:

1. The introduction should give a general description of the program, including a brief history, identification of the program’s target population, and a discussion of programmatic goals and of the programs success in meeting these goals. Discuss how the program is funded, and administered. Discuss major benefits and flaws of this program. This section can be written in typical term paper style. It should be referenced APA style. This section allows the instructor to evaluate your general understanding of the program. 2 -3 pages

The following sections should be written in a consumer friendly style, however sources of information must still be referenced. The rest of the handbook should cover the following points:

- a. what does a consumer need to know in order to access this program?
what are the best access points? For example, is it easier for a family to find shelter at Holy Family or the Salvation Army?
- b. what are some major official and unofficial rules of this program?
- c. how can a consumer maximize benefits and get around barriers in this program? Example - hospitals and nursing homes have patient advocates to help consumers negotiate their system.
- d. what are the costs (monetary, time, psychological, etc.) of using this program?
- e. are there behavioral, psychological, political, or social tips for using this program? Example - being pushy might work for Social Security, but not when applying for SSI.

Students are encouraged to be creative. Pictures, maps, brochures, etc. can be included in the handbook. The handbook must be 6-8 typed pages in length, excluding the bibliography. Pictures, etc will be not counted as typed pages. Students are encouraged to conduct a telephone interview with anyone in a position to present an accurate picture of an insiders view of a program. A minimum of three articles from academic journals must be used to support this project. Students are free to base this project on a program or policy with which they are already familiar. **Due Date: July 28, 1998**

Letter Writing Assignment

This assignment consists of writing two separate letters to a local, state or federal legislator, or to any individual, organization or group with a major influence on a policy issue relevant to social work. Letters should argue for or against a policy, program or position. Letters cannot be based solely on personal opinion. They must include persuasive documentation from current social work research, (including practice and program evaluation studies) and/or anecdotal testimony from practice situations. Material read for this or other classes may be used to support these letters. Remember emotional appeals alone are not likely to be effective. In preparing your letters you must think about the perspective of the person/organization to whom you are writing. Letters will be graded on documentation of the argument, and realism and effectiveness of appeal as well as language, editing, etc. Make two copies of each letter. One copy must be submitted for grading while the other is mailed by the student to the appropriate party. Having a letter published or responded to immediately will be considered favorably in grading. Students should share any response to their letters in class. **Due Date: July 1,1998**

Exams

The format and content of exams will be discussed during class sessions.

DUE DATES SUMMARY

Letters Project	July 14, 1998
Midterm Exam	To be Announced
Policy Paper	July 28,1998

Course Outline

<u>Session</u>	<u>Topics/Readings</u>
1	Introduction to the Course Read Chapter 1
2	<i>Zeitgeist</i> , Competing Ideologies and the Legislative Process Read Chapter 9
3	Analyzing Policy, Oppression and Affecting Change Read Chapters 2 & 4
4	Poverty and Public Assistance Programs Read Chapters 5 & 11
5	Social Insurance Programs Read Chapter 10

- 6 Health Care - Managed Care or Mangled Care?
Read Chapter 12
- 7 Mental Health and Substance Abuse Policy
Read Chapter 13
- 8 Child Welfare Policy
Read Chapter 15
- 9 Criminal Justice
Read Chapter 14

Additional readings may be assigned during the course of the semester.