

**The University of Texas at Austin  
School of Social Work**

**Social Policy Analysis & Social Problems**

<b>Course Number:</b>	SW 382R	<b>Instructor: Teaching Assistant:</b>	Miguel Ferguson Elisa Vinson Borah (232-0612)
<b>Unique Number:</b>	96625	<b>Office Number:</b>	3.122b
<b>Semester:</b>	Summer 2007	<b>Contact Info.:</b>	232-5914 <a href="mailto:miguelf@mail.utexas.edu">miguelf@mail.utexas.edu</a> elisa_vinson@hotmail.com
<b>Meeting Time/Place:</b>	2.132 Tues & Thurs 1:30-4:00	<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tues & Thurs: Noon-1:00, or by appt.

<b>I.</b>	<b>Course Description</b>
	<p><u>Standardized Course Description:</u> 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 (for example, the New Deal, the War on Poverty, urban renewal, the contemporary period of welfare reform). This is the first of a two-course policy sequence in the MSSW program.</p>

<b>II.</b>	<b>Standardized Course Objectives</b>
	<p>Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand the dominant historical themes that have shaped social welfare policy in the United States;</li> <li>2. Understand the economic and political constraints and opportunities in the development of social welfare problems and policies;</li> <li>3. Understand the relationship between the history of the social work profession and the development of social welfare policy;</li> <li>4. Apply social work values to critically analyze social problems;</li> <li>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</li> </ol>

	<p>social welfare policy and social service delivery;</p> <p>6. Understand social welfare policy arenas impacting service delivery, social work practice, and attainment of individual and social well-being;</p> <p>7. Understand how social policies differentially affect diverse populations in American society;</p> <p>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.</p>
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<b>III.</b>	<b>Teaching Methods</b>
	The method of the course is founded upon student participation. As professional advocates, it is essential for credentialed social workers to be able to articulate ideas clearly and persuasively. All students are encouraged to participate through discussion in class, via e-mail, or with the instructor and teaching assistant during office hours. The format will include lectures, films, guest presentations, and class exercises.

<b>IV.</b>	<b>Required Readings</b>
	This course does not use a textbook. Rather, course readings are drawn from an extensive assortment of articles, book chapters, essays, and electronic media sources.

<b>V.</b>	<b>Course Requirements</b>	
	1. Class Participation:	15%
	2. Quizzes:	20%
	3. Policy Briefs:	20%
	4. Book Review:	20%
	5. Policy Briefing:	25%

<b>Class Participation</b>
<p>Students will be graded on the quality (not necessarily the quantity!) of their contribution to the collective learning objectives of the class. This includes participation in class, email discussions or electronically shared information, office visits with the instructor, and activities that relate to course material undertaken outside of class. At the end of the semester students will provide a written assessment of their participation, to include a numeric grade (based on 100 points). The instructor will use this information before assigning the final participation grade.</p> <p><b>Please note that more than one absence will automatically result in a participation grade at least one grade below an “A” (and be sequentially reduced for each</b></p>

subsequent absence).

### Quizzes

There will be two quizzes given during the session. The quizzes will cover the current week's readings and lecture material from the previous week. The quizzes may be given on any given Tuesday class session. Scoring of the quizzes will be discussed in class.

### Policy Briefs

The Texas legislature has just completed its 80<sup>th</sup> regular session. Each student is required to prepare informative one-page briefings on each of two bills: one that was passed by the legislature and one that was not passed (but that you think should have been passed). The briefings should cover the following points:

- 1) Pertinent information. (e.g. the number of the bill, the sponsor, house or senate affiliation, relevant history, etc.)
- 2) Importance. Why is the bill important/significant?
- 3) Objectives. Succinctly summarize what the bill intends/intended to accomplish
- 4) Costs/benefits. Describe the potential benefits and costs/limits of the legislation (focus on specific populations if this is relevant)
- 5) Social work values. Using the values and ethics that guide the profession, conclude the briefing with a brief argument why social workers should either support or oppose the bill in question.

Information on legislative bills can be found at: <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/>

To limit the briefing to one page per legislative bill, use concise language and choose your words wisely. The briefings may use single spacing and 11-point font (to clarify, there should be two pages, total). **The briefings are due June 21.**

### Book Review

Students must review **one** book from the following list. Reviews should be 5-7 pages, 12-point font and 1.5 spaced. The grade for the reviews will be based on how clearly you demonstrate your understanding of the book, the depth and vigor of the analysis, and how you respond to the following:

- a) What main points are presented?
- b) How effectively and in what ways does the book cover the subject of social policy, poverty, and politics? What are the primary strengths and weaknesses?
- c) How well and in what ways does the book relate to the other course readings and information that has been discussed in class? Use 2-3 specific examples.
- d) Connect a theme from the book to one or more policy initiatives being touted by a current presidential candidate. How well do the candidates' proposals mesh with specific arguments or ideas contained in the book?
- e) Would you recommend the book? Why/why not?

Books:

1. One Nation, Underprivileged: Why American Poverty Affects Us All  
(Mark Rank)
2. Reason: Why Liberals Will Win the Battle For America (Robert Reich)

**The book review is due July 10 (or earlier, if you prefer!)**

**Policy Briefing**

Working in groups of two, students will give a 20-25 minute “pitch” to high-ranking members of the \_\_\_\_\_ Party. These party officials are intent on developing a strategy to invigorate their party membership and votes for party candidates in the 2008 Presidential elections. You have been asked to present two or three public policies to support or political actions that \_\_\_\_\_ Party should take to develop their voter base, advance their political interests at the **national** or **state** level, and meet the needs of the \_\_\_\_\_ Party’s constituents over this period of time. The political parties can be real or imagined, but the policies you select should resonate with a significant voting bloc that the party desires to attract or maintain. Briefings will be given on July 19<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>.

**More information about this assignment will be given during the third week of class.**

**Grades**

Grades will be determined as follows:

- |              |             |             |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| 100 - 94 =A  | 93 - 90 =A- |             |
| 89 - 87 =B+  | 86 - 84 =B  | 83 - 80 =B- |
| 79 - 77 = C+ | 76 - 74 =C  | 73 - 70 =C- |

VI.	The University of Texas and School of Social Work Policies
	<b><u>A. Students with Disabilities or Special Learning Considerations</u></b>  Please let me know if you have a learning and/or other disability and if you require special accommodations.  The UT-Austin provides, upon request, appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Any student with documented disabilities (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

	<p><b><u>B. Safety</u></b></p> <p>As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in/observing agency settings and/or in 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 also notify instructors regarding any safety concerns.</p> <p><b><u>C. Confidentiality</u></b></p> <p>Personal disclosure is not an expectation or a requirement in this course. However, it might be appropriate for students to talk about personal information as it relates to learning about a particular topic. Students are expected to adhere to all professional standards of confidentiality during the semester.</p>
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VII.	Additional Course Policies
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Try to live a conscious life.</li> <li>2. Attend class regularly.</li> <li>2. Turn assignments in on the due dates.</li> <li>3. Participate fully in class discussions and other in-class activities. Sharing differences of opinion and ideas with other students, the instructor, and guest speakers is encouraged and will be respected.</li> <li>4. Present written and oral presentations professionally.</li> <li>5. Use APA Style for referencing. The <i>Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association</i> is the standard style manual used by the School of Social Work.</li> </ol>

### Course Schedule

Date	Description	Readings
May 31	Introduction	No readings assigned
June 5 & 7	Social welfare history The Great Depression The War on Poverty	<b>Katz</b> , “Introduction” <b>Klosterman</b> , “Speaking truth...” <b>McElvaine</b> , “Reactions to Hoover” <b>Kiester</b> , <i>The GI Bill...</i> <b>Matusow</b> , “War on Poverty I”

June 12 & 14	The color of social policy Poverty in America Economic inequality in America	<b>Jensen</b> , <i>The morally lazy white middle class</i> <b>Moynihan</b> , “Tangle of pathology” <b>CPPP</b> , “Poverty on the rise” <b>Christopher</b> , “Poverty line 40 years later” <b>Sherman</b> , “African American and Latino Families” <b>Shapiro</b> , “New IRS data..” <b>Karger et al</b> – Debate #1, #2 & #8
June 19 & 21	Welfare reform policies Low wage work Corporate welfare  <b>*Legislative Briefings due*</b> (June 21)	<b>Dodson</b> , “When there is no time or money” <b>Lichtenwalter</b> , “Examining transportation” <b>Boyer</b> , “How corporations came to have...” <b>Brouwer</b> , “Buying the temple” <b>Karger et al</b> – Debate #6, #12 & #14
June 26 & 28	Conservative & electoral politics Demographic changes in aging Social Security and its reform	<b>Singer</b> , “What should a billionaire give?” <b>Wolcott</b> , “Red state Babylon” <b>Roberts</b> , “How we’re aging” <b>Cauthen</b> , <i>Whose security?</i> <b>Karger et al</b> – Debate #3
July 3 & 5	*** 4 <sup>th</sup> of July holiday – No Class ***	
July 10 & 12	Comparative perspectives on policy Foreign Policy Globalization and its discontents  <b>*Book Review Due*</b> (July 10)	<b>Kaiser</b> , “In Finland’s footsteps” <b>Christopher et al</b> , <i>The gender gap...</i> <b>Heymann</b> , “Work, family, and equity index” <b>Grant</b> , “Expecting better” <b>Heymann</b> , “Can working families ever win?” <b>Johnson</b> , <i>Sorrows of empire</i>

July 17 & 19	Normative perspectives on policy For the common good: frameworks for evaluating effective social policy Student Policy Briefings	<b>Hawkins</b> , <i>From self-sufficiency to...</i> <b>Boyer</b> , “ <i>From a corporate world...</i> ” <b>Wright</b> , “ <i>Two redistributive proposals</i> ” <b>Maynard</b> , “ <i>Evidence-based decision-making</i> ”
July 24	Student Policy Briefings	No readings assigned

## References

**Week 1 (May 31):** No readings assigned

**Week 2 (June 5 & 7):**

Katz, W. L. (2001). Introduction. In W. L. Katz & L. R. Lehman (Eds.), *The Cruel Years: American Voices at the Dawn of the 20th Century* (pp. xii-xliv). New York: Apex Publishing.

Klosterman, E., & Stratton, D. (2006). Speaking truth to power: Jane Addams' values base for peacemaking. *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, 21(2), 158-168.

McElvaine, R. S. (1983). Reactions to Hoover and Economic Breakdown. In R. McElvaine (Ed.), *Down and Out in the Great Depression: Letters from the Forgotten Man* (pp. Chapter 1). Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press.

Kiester, E. (1994). The G.I. Bill may be the best deal ever made by Uncle Sam. *Smithsonian*, 25(8), 128-137.

Matusow, A. (1984). War on Poverty I: The Failure of the Welfare State, ch. 8 in *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s*. Harper & Row, N.Y.

**Week 3 (June 12 & 14):**

Jensen, R. (1999). The Morally Lazy White Middle Class, in *By The Color of Our Skin: The Illusion of Integration and the Reality of Race* (pp. 54-55): Plume.

Moynihan, D. P. (1965). *The Tangle of Pathology*. Chapter 4 in *The Negro Family: The Case For National Action*. Available: <http://www.dol.gov/asp/programs/history/moynchapter4.htm> [2006, August 8].

Center on Public Policy Priorities, National Report: Poverty on the Rise in Texas. <http://www.cppp.org/files/10/Texas%20press%20releaseFINAL.pdf> [retrieved May 17, 2007].

Christopher, K. (2005). The Poverty Line Forty Years Later: Alternative Poverty Measures and Women's Lives. *Race, Gender & Class*, 12(2), 34-53.

Sherman, A. (2006). *African American and Latino Families Face High Rates of Hardship*. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities [2006, November 21].

Shapiro, I. (2005). New IRS Data Show Income Inequality is Again on the Rise. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. [October 17].

#### **Week 4 (June 19 & 21):**

Dodson, L. B., E. (2005). When there is no time or money: Work, family, and community lives of low-income families. In J. B. Heymann, C. (Ed.), *Unfinished Work: Building Equality and Democracy in an Era of Working Families*. New York: The New Press.

Lichtenwaller, S. K., G., & Sales, E. (2006). Examining transportation and employment outcomes: Evidence for moving beyond the bus pass. *Journal of Poverty*, 10(1), 93-115.

Boyer, W. H. (2003). How Corporations Came to Have So Much Power, in *Myth America: Democracy vs. Capitalism* (Chapter 2). New York: The Apex Press.

Brouwer, S. (2004). Buying the Temple, in *Robbing Us Blind: The Return of the Bush Gang and the Mugging of America* (Chapter 6). Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press.

#### **Week 5 (June 26 & 28):**

Singer, P. (2006, December 17). What should a billionaire give - and what should you? *New York Times*.

Wolcott, J. (2006, November). Red State Babylon. *Vanity Fair*.

Roberts, S. (2004). How We're Aging, in *Who We Are Now: The Changing face of America in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Ch. 4). New York, NY: Henry Holt

Cauthen, N. (2005). *Whose Security? What Social Security Means to Children and Families*. New York: National Center for Children in Poverty.

#### **Week 6 (July 3 & 5): No class – 4<sup>th</sup> of July Holiday**



**Week 7 (July 10 & 12):**

Kaiser, R. (2005, August 7). In Finland's Footsteps. *Washington Post*, pp. B-01.

Christopher, K., Smeeding, T., & Phillips, K. (2002). The gender gap in poverty in modern nations: Single motherhood, the market, and the state. *Sociological Perspectives*, 45(3), 219-242.

Heymann, J. (2004). *The Work, Family, and Equity Index: Where Does the United States Stand Globally?* Boston: Project on Global Working Families.

Grant, J. (2005). *Expecting Better: A State-by-State Analysis of Parental Leave Programs*. Washington D.C.: National Partnership for Women and Families.

Heymann, J. (2002). Can working families ever win? In J. R. Cohen, J. (Ed.), *Can Working Families Ever Win?* Boston: Beacon Press.

Johnson, C. (2004). The Sorrows of Empire, *The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic* (pp. Chapter 10). New York: Metropolitan Books.

**Week 8 (July 17 & 19):**

Hawkins, R. (2005). From Self-Sufficiency to Personal and Family Sustainability: A New Paradigm for Social Policy. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 32(4), 77-92.

Boyer, W. H. (2003). From a Corporate World to a Democratic World, *Myth America: Democracy vs. Capitalism* (pp. Chapter 10). New York: The Apex Press.

Wright, E. O. (2006). Two redistributive proposals: Universal basic income and stakeholder grants. *Focus*, 24(2), 5-7.

Maynard, R. (2006). Evidence-Based Decision Making: What Will it Take for the Decision Makers to Care? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 25(2), 249-265.

**Week 9: Policy Briefings (No readings assigned)**

## **Government Agencies**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Youth – <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/>

ASPE – <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/hspincpov.htm>

NICHAHD National Children’s Study – <http://www.nationalchildrensstudy.gov>

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census – <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty.html>

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics – <http://www.bls.gov/>

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, PD&R Information Service – <http://www.huduser.org/>

## **Think Tanks and Advocacy Groups on Children’s Issues**

Alliance for Children and Families – <http://www.alliance1.org/>

Annie E. Casey Foundation – <http://www.aecf.org/>

Center for Law and Social Policy – <http://www.clasp.org/>

Chapin Hall Center for Children (Chicago) – <http://www.about.chapinhall.org/>

Child Care and Early Education Research Connection—<http://www.childcareresearch.org/>

Children’s Defense Fund – <http://www.childrensdefense.org>

Child Welfare League of America – <http://www.cwla.org/>

Child Trends – <http://www.childtrends.org/>

Institute for Child and Family Policy (Columbia) – <http://www.childpolicy.org/>

National Center for Children in Poverty (Columbia) – <http://www.nccp.org/>

## **Think Tanks and Advocacy Groups on Social Policy in General**

Brookings Institution – <http://www.brookings.edu/>

Center for Budget and Policy Priorities – <http://www.cbpp.org/>

Center for the Study of Social Policy – <http://www.cssp.org/>

Institute for Women’s Policy Research – <http://iwpr.org/>

Food Research and Action Center – <http://www.frac.org/>

Heritage Foundation – <http://www.heritage.org/welfare/>

Hudson Institute Welfare Policy Center – <http://wp.hudson.org/index.cfm>

National Law Center for Homelessness and Poverty – <http://www.nlchp.org/>

Urban Institute – <http://urban.org/>

(Texas) Center for Public Policy Priorities – <http://www.cppp.org/>

(Texas) Public Policy Foundation – <http://www.texaspolicy.com/>

### **University-based Research Centers**

National Poverty Center, University of Michigan – <http://www.npc.umich.edu/>

Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin –  
<http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp/>

Kentucky Center for Poverty Research, University of Kentucky –  
<http://www.ukcpr.org/Index1.html>

Rural Poverty Research Center, University of Missouri –  
<http://www.rprconline.org/>

Joint Center for Poverty Research, University of Chicago/Northwestern  
University – <http://www.jcpr.org/>

Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University –  
<http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/>

Center for the Study of Urban Poverty, University of California—Los Angeles  
<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/issr/csup/csup.html>

Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change, Case Western Reserve University –  
<http://povertycenter.cwru.edu>

Institute on Race and Poverty, University of Minnesota –  
<http://www1.umn.edu/irp/>

National Center for Children in Poverty, Columbia University –  
<http://www.nccp.org/>

Center on Hunger and Poverty, Brandeis University (Heller School) –  
<http://www.centeronhunger.org/>

Casey Journalism Center on Children and Families, University of Maryland –  
<http://www.casey.umd.edu>