

**JOINT MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM  
North Carolina A&T State University  
University of North Carolina at Greensboro**

**Master Syllabus**

**SWK 512/SOWK 706 Social Welfare Policy and Analysis II**

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**I. Rationale**

This course presents policy analysis as another form of social work practice, with a repertoire of roles, functions and skills as in other practice concentrations such as interpersonal, community planning or management. The outcomes of social policy practice are visible in various forms of legislation. Such outcomes also appear as administrative, judicial directives, rulings and interpretations in the area of government. In the private sector, they are decisions that shape the big and small operations of social agencies. Advanced social work practitioners need the ability to analyze policies for a variety of reasons.

As professional practitioners, social work takes place primarily in formal organizations (e.g. social agencies). As practitioners in these organizations, social workers must be effective as both deliverers of service (professionals) and as employees (or agency). Effectiveness in both roles, or better put, effectiveness in blending both roles, requires an understanding of the commonalities and differences among the varied service delivery systems. For those involved in administration, the need for policy analysis skills in order to implement policies effectively and ways it might be improved is imperative in these times of limited resources. This course is designed to enhance students' knowledge and ability to work in the area of policy formulation, implementation, and analysis.

**II. Liberal Arts Perspective**

Drawing from the social sciences and humanities of liberal arts education, Social Welfare Policy and Analysis II is built upon the fields of economics, business, and political science. Economics and macroeconomics provide the foundation in exploring broad themes in the impact of theories such as social choice, econometrics, rational expectations, allocations and ethical aspects of social choice. Political science provides the foundation and premise that policy is politics. Particular attention is focus to the area of public policy and factors that maintain and shape public policy making. Material is also drawn from business and

management since a new organization or agency must be created to implement new policy or policy must be assigned to an existing organization to carry out its directives.

### **III. Linkage of this Course to Other Courses**

This course is taken during students second year, along with their field placement in their chosen area of practice. The course builds upon the practice course, Social Work Practice with Communities and Organizations wherein the student can analyze a policy relevant to their interest. Students utilize the analytic frameworks provides in the first social policy course to analyze their selected policy within its political, cultural, historical, and economic context.

### **IV. Professional Values and Ethics**

The National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics charges social workers to advocate change in policy and legislation. The emphasis of professional social work practice is to improve the conditions and means to ensure that all persons have access to benefits of society within a framework based on fairness, equity, and choice. It is the responsibility of social workers to advocate and shape ethical social policies and institutions to meet the needs of the public, while protecting the public from illegal and unethical practices. There is no agreement on how best to incorporate ethics into the examination of policy but examining the values underlying any policy is vital to understanding the social context of any policy. The best practitioners aware of policy intentions and outcomes make policy a part of their practice skills.

### **V. Diversity**

Cultural and personality development are related to life experiences. In money currencies, life experience is a function of access to money, of what one can afford to experience, of one's access to resources, opportunities and power. Social policy allows the beginning practitioner to examine and incorporate knowledge of racial, ethnic, and cultural groups; the barriers both apparent and hidden which limits each group access and participation in the common American community; and the conflicts that differences generate in American society. This course examines the tension between and among diverse religious, cultural, regional and ethnic groups to define the appropriate level of social and economic and physical adequacy for all citizens, sufficient to support a common group life, consciousness of kind, and the full, active participation of all members.

## **VI. Populations-at-Risk and Social and Economic Justice**

Students in the program have the opportunity to choose from one of the three areas of practice: Social Work With Families and Youth at Risk, Social Work In Health Care or Social Work In Mental Health. Particular attention will be focused on examining issues and commitment to social justice, equity, economic opportunity, empowerment and a better quality of life for those discriminated against on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, political orientation, sexual orientation, or locality [urban-rural] as we examine past and present policies, programs, services within these three areas of selected practice. From an examination of past or present policies, advanced social workers are challenged to be aware and engage in “policy-sensitive” practice and “policy-related practice” to advance the ethical principle of social justice.

Programs and delivery systems are legitimate only to the extent that their impact better the quality of life of their members. This course embodies the primary values of social and economic justice by the examination of a specific policy or legislation and how it enhances or limits individuals, groups, or communities in full participation or access to programs, services or practices to support and sustain individual’s, group, or a community’s social, physical, or economic well-being. Both personally and as professionals, social workers should be forces in the quest for social reform. Students examine strategies to influence policy development, deployment, and amendment or policy clarification.

## **VII. Course Objectives**

This course is designed to enhance students’ knowledge and ability to work in the area of policy formulations, implementation, and analysis. Students will examine in detail the historical development of policies or programs, and apply an analytical model to assess the programs development, service, and expected or unanticipated outcomes.

### Cognitive Objectives

1. Acquire an understanding of various models used to analyze social policy. (FYO#14; AGO#1, 8, and 20)
2. Examine the factors that influence the development, implementation, and evaluation of policy outcomes. (FYO # 14; AGO # 8)
3. Examine the role of values, power dynamics, interest groups, and history in the policy making process. (FYO # 13; AGO # 1 & 8)
4. Examine the organizational and resource barriers or constraints that impact the implementation of policy. (FYO # 13; AGO # 8)

5. Understand that policy formulation is a political process as it is practiced in a democratic society. (FYO # 13; AGO # 9; FYO #20)
6. Examines the role that professional social workers and its professional association has in the policy making process and the political and social skills to exercise its roles. (FYO # 6; AGO # 10)

### Experiential Objectives

1. Critically analyze the written goals of policy or program against the unwritten intent of a policy or program in the context of social work values. (FYO # 14; AGO # 8)
2. Effectively use government documents to track federal, state, and local legislation. (AGO # 8)
3. Demonstrate the ability to identify the economic, racial, political, and cultural factors that influence the selection of policy options and action taken. (FYO # 13; AGO # 8; FYO # 20)
4. Develop an understanding of effective lobbying actions. (FYO # 9, 17, & 17; AGO # 9)
5. Conduct group investigations and develop comprehensive written and oral reports to refine critical thinking, technology, writing and communication skills essential to being an effective social worker. (FYO # 10; AGO # 8)
6. Strategies to change institutional or program biases, stereotypical thinking, or other barriers. (AGO # 4, 5, 6, & 9)

### Affective Objectives

1. Develop an appreciation of role of values and value conflicts in the formulation of social welfare policy. (FYO # 13; AGO # 10)
2. Examine the role of the professional social workers to be an advocate in the policy making process and implementation, and evaluation process for those who are most economically and politically disadvantaged or disenfranchised. (FYO # 8; AGO # 8, 9, & 12)
3. Appreciate the importance of empirically-based analysis of social welfare policy in order

to formulate sound arguments in support of preferred policy alternatives. (FYO # 10; AGO # 9)

### **VIII. Course Content**

1. Social movements and Social Policy
  - Social movements and social justice
2. Social Planning and Social Policy
  - Why study social planning
  - Why study social policy
  - Why policy analysis
3. Framework(s) of policy and program analysis
  - Historical, socio-political context
  - Models for analyzing policy or program
  - Case approach to policy analysis
  - Tropman Model
  - Hobart Burch Framework
  - Gilbert, Specht & Terrell Model
  - Diana M. DiNitto on Policy Analysis
  - Rossi and Freeman Model
  - Donald Chambers Model
  - McInnis-Dittrich Model
4. Setting forth social policies
  - Official and unofficial participants
  - Lobbyists: the good, bad, and ugly
  - Role of legislative, administrative, judicial entities
  - Formulating and implementing policy or programs
5. Reformulating policies or programs
  - Private and public agencies
  - Policy making in the profession
  - National and state NASW policy making
  - Forecasting in the future

## **IX. Sample Assignments**

### Social Policy Paper

Students demonstrate their knowledge and skills through applying a model of policy analysis to major legislation. The major group assignment will be to analyze fully a major piece of legislation from each of the three areas of practice: families and youth at risk, social work in health care, social work in mental health. Based on student enrollment, the minimum number of groups will be three up to a maximum of six, whereby two groups representing each of the areas of practice will examine two policies.

By utilizing one of the models of policy analysis these guiding questions will be answered: how the particular policy or program came into being; its historical and socio-political context; the major piece of legislation or court decision(s) and how it shaped the policy or program; and the actual impact of the policy or program on people it was designed to serve. A second component to this assignment for all groups is to study how the new welfare reform bill will impact the delivery of services through these state and local program which have been developed based on the federal legislation.

To fully appreciate the tension existing between the intent of policy versus the reality of the outcome or program, as a part of the group assignment, each group must conduct an interview with two recipients, two social workers, and two administrators. Group members will be directed to develop a common list of questions to be used by each student. One question which must be included is one related to what area(s) of the current policy (a) should be changed and (b) the basis of this decision, (c) how can this be done or strategies to undertake its revision or removal. Each interview will be written and submitted by each student to the instructor.

Each group will be responsible for preparing an audio-visual or display for the class, presenting their project to the class for discussion, comment and critique. Each group will turn in a final paper which fully analyses their selected policy.

## **X. Texts**

Wineburg, R. (2001). *A Limited Partnership: The Politics of Religion, Welfare, and Social Services*. New York: Columbia University Press.

## **XI. Recommended/ Readings**

Barker, R. L. (2001). *The social work dictionary*, Silver Spring, MD: NASW Press.

Burch, H. A. (1991). *The why's of social policy: Perspectives on policy preferences*. New York: Praeger.

- Chambers, D. (1992). Social policy and social program: A method for the practical public policy analyst (2nd. ed.). New York: MacMillian.
- DiNitto, D. M. (1991). Social welfare: Politics and public policy (3rd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
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- Fellin, P. (1996). Mental health and mental illness: Policies, Program, and services. Itasca, ILL: Peacock.
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- Gambrill, E., & Stein, T. (1994). Controversial issues in child welfare. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
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- Ginsberg, L. (1990). Introduction. In Minahan, A., et al. (Eds.). Encyclopedia of Social Work: 1990 Supplement, 18th ed., 1-11. Silver Springs, MD: NASW Press.
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- Hefferman, W. J. (1992). Social welfare policy: A research and action strategy. New York: Longman.
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- Jansson, B. S. (1990). Social welfare policy: From theory to practice. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
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- Kirk, S., & Therrien, M. (1975). Community mental health myths and the fate of former hospitalized patients. Psychiatry, 38,3, 209-217.
- Lasswell, H. D. (1958). Politics: Who gets what, when, how. New York: Meridian.
- Lindsey, D., (1994). The welfare of children. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mizrachi, T. (1993). Managed care and managed competition: A primer for Social Work. Health and Social Work, 18,2,86-91.
- Mechanic, D. (1989). Mental health and social policy (3rd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- McInnis-Dittrich, K. (1994). Integrating social welfare policy and social work practice. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Pierce, D. (1984). Policy for the social work practitioner. New York: Longman.
- Rice, D. (1992). The analytic approach to social welfare policy education. (Unpublished paper for Social Work 841, Fall semester 1992, College of Social Work, University of South Carolina).
- Rose, S. J., & Keigher, S. M. Managing mental health: Whose responsibility? Health and Social Work, 18,2,86-91.
- Rossi, P. H., & Freeman, H. E. (1989). Evaluation: A systematic approach (4th ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Sheehan, S. (1982). Is there no place on earth for me? New York: Vintage Books.
- Snowden, L. (1993). Emerging trends in organizing and financing human services: Unexamined consequences for ethnic minority populations. American Journal of Community Psychology, 21, 1, 1-13.