Contemporary Social Policy
SWRK 711

University of Pennsylvania
School of Social Policy & Practice
SPRING 2019
Class 711-Section 01
Caster A-17
Wednesday 12:00 to 2:30 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

SWRK 711: Contemporary Social Policy introduces students to the analysis of contemporary social welfare policy. The course focuses on four elements of the process through which social policies are developed:

➢ **Framing the Policy Issue**: The role of ideology and values in the definition of social problems
➢ **The Legislative Process**
➢ **Advocacy and Lobbying**
➢ **Implementation and Evalua**tion: The challenges involved in implementing and evaluating social policies.

Several social welfare policy areas are used to illustrate these aspects of the policy process. As part of the course, students will select a policy of interest, and analyze that policy using analysis frameworks and the components of the policy analysis process examined in the course.

The Course Outline provides scaffolding for the course including weekly topics and core-reading assignments, I may also add required and suggested readings depending on current events. Students have the opportunity to select and analyze a policy of interest using policy analysis frameworks and the components of the policy analysis process examined in the course.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES:

Students will develop competencies in the following key areas:

➢ Know how social welfare policies are developed and implemented, including administrative, legislative, and judicial policies;

➤ Be able to identify and assess how **values and ideology** shape the development of social welfare policies;

➤ Be able to examine social policies and understand the **manifest and latent consequences** of social policies in terms of **class, race, sex/gender, disability status, national origin, sexual orientation, and religion;**

➤ Be capable of outlining the legislative policy development process, including the discovery and definition of social problems, **agenda setting** and policy formulation, the role of party politics in legislative decision-making, and the differentiation between federal and state responsibilities for social policies;

➤ Acquire an understanding of the skills involved in **lobbying and advocating** for client groups and how lobbying organizations, including public interest groups and professional/industry/trade associations, can influence the policy development process;

➤ Be capable of **advocating** for a specific policy change or innovation;

➤ Know how social welfare policies are **implemented and administered**, including the regulatory, contracting, and oversight roles of administrative agencies;

➤ Understand the role of **policy analysis and evaluation** in the policy development and feedback process and the use of empirical evidence in those processes;

➤ Be capable of demonstrating how specific proposals traverse the policy development process as regards to several contemporary social welfare policy issues;

➤ Know the connection between the **social work profession's values and ethics** and the policy process;

➤ Be prepared to acquire the **research skills** necessary to identify and analyze social policy proposals and legislation.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students are required to prepare for class by reading all of the assigned materials in advance. Class attendance is required. Students are expected to participate actively in classroom discussions and to raise issues that emerge from the readings. Successful completion of the three policy assignments is required. Assignments may be submitted on Canvas or as Word email attachments before the beginning of class on the date due. Written assignments constitute 90% of the grade, and class participation is 10% of the grade.

ASSIGNMENTS:

There will be three assignments that will provide students with opportunities for reflection and integration of class readings and other material from field and practice. The assignments are due on the dates indicated. *Credit will not be given* for late papers unless **prior arrangements** are made with the instructor. **Papers shall be submitted on Canvas or as Word**

Document attachments and prepared using Times New Roman 12-point font, with pages numbered. All papers should integrate the theory and practice concepts from the readings and employ appropriate APA citation and reference format.

Assignment #1:   Opinion-Editorial (20%)

Students should review several editorials on the "Op-Ed" pages (these are the pages opposite the editorial pages of a newspaper—newspaper editorials are typically unsigned and written by the editorial board of the newspaper. Op-Eds are signed and are either prepared by staff members of the newspaper or are submitted by interested authors) from the mainstream press (*NY Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, etc.) and develop an editorial of their own, on a topic of their choosing. Editorials must be 600-750 words in length and no longer. Editorials should take a position on a particular policy issue, and make a persuasive argument, supported with facts and/or moral or political reasoning.   **Sample Op-Eds will be posted on the Canvas cite**.

Due Date: Week 5 (February 20, 2019)

Assignment #2: A 360-degree Examination of a Social Policy (40%)

 The "Deep Dive" assignment provides a 360- degree examination of a single social policy issue. In the 360-degree view, we examine a Federal Law or Bill pertaining to the policy, the views of a liberal and conservative policy think tank, analysis by an advocacy organization—preferably one that reflects social work and social work values, and finally, an empirical or theoretical examination of the issue (i.e. published scholarship).

For your written assignment you will:

1. Select a social policy issue (one that you have a significant interest or investment in, or one that you wish to learn more about).
2. Identify the most recent piece of Federal legislation enacted (or pending) that deals with your policy issue.
3. Examine the tracking of the legislation and the process by which it became a law

(Congress.gov)—

1. Who introduced the bill in the House and Senate
2. To What Committee and, if applicable, Subcommittee was the bill assigned
3. When was the bill signed into law, or
4. What is the current status of the bill
5. Identify a policy brief published by:
    1. A Liberal Think Tank
    2. A Conservative Think Tank
    3. A Professional Organization related to social work
6. Locate a research article (empirical and/or theoretical) that deals with your policy issue.

Having carried our steps 1-5 and read all of the materials, prepare a 10 page, double-spaced brief that provides a 360-degree analysis of your policy issue. Among the questions you should address are:

1. How well does the law address the social issue/social problem?
2. Does the policy appear to be "evidenced-based" or value driven?
3. Which values appear to drive the policy?
4. Compare and contrast how liberals, conservatives, and the professional community frame the policy issue and evaluate the existing policy approach.

Due Date : Class 9 (March 27, 2019)

Assignment #3:   Congressional Testimony (30%)

Written testimony must be no more than ten pages double- spaced. The oral testimony must be no more than five minutes.

Using the 360 degree Policy Analysis you prepared and submitted on March 26, 2019, prepare oral and written testimony on your issue.   You may use material from your 360 analysis in your written testimony.   Your written and oral testimony should take a position on your policy issue and discuss how the Federal policy approach could be revised, changed, or altered to improve the impact of the policy.

Be sure to include changes that you think will make the legislation more cost effective or more equitable, ensure equity, and provide accessibility. Identify yourself as either a clinical or macro social worker. Your position must be informed by theory or empirical evidence. If you are proposing new funding, identify how the cost of the legislation could be paid for.

Week 14 –May 1, 2019 Written testimony to be handed in and graded.

COURSE READINGS: A schedule of course readings for SWRK 711 Section 01 class is presented in this Course Outline. You are also required to consult the Canvas website for this course and to read a daily newspaper or on-line policy website such as *Slate*, *Politico,* or other relevant site.

REQUIRED WEBSITE:
You may access the Canvas website https.www.canvass.upenn.edu for free as a student in this course. All the course readings may be accessed through this Canvas website. Additional information relevant to this course may also be found on this website.

Please note that a number of these readings are available either through the University of Pennsylvania's web-based, library database or otherwise directly through the Internet at the (*url*) address noted in the Syllabus. For assistance in accessing these materials, contact your fellow students, your course instructor, or Van Pelt Library's Reference Desk at (215) 898-8211. Also note that some readings may be distributed in class.

Students who have difficulties using the Canvas site might consider downloading the readings to a portable media (CD, USB flash drive) and arranging to have them printed at a copy center of their choice. Alternatively, students may download and read the readings on an Ipad or similar tablet device.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Code of Academic Integrity:

> **Students are expected to conduct themselves consistent with the University of Pennsylvania's Code of Academic Integrity, which presents standards regarding plagiarism, multiple submissions and other actions. Students are expected to be familiar with the Code, which can be found at:**
> **http://www.upul.upenn.edu/osl/acdint.html**

Course Readings (available at Penn Bookstore).

Gelles, R.J. (2011). *The third lie: Why government programs don't work and a blueprint for change.* **Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.**

Kingdon, J.W. (2003). *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies* **(2nd. Edition). New York: Longman.**

COURSE OUTLINE

I. Introduction to Contemporary Social Policy Issues

Week 1—January 23, 2019

Course Overview and Introduction

- ➢ **Instructor Introduction**

- ➢ **Student Introductions**

- ➢ **Review class objectives and assignments**

- ➢ **Consider ways of conceptualizing contemporary social policy and framing policy analysis**

- ➢ **Think critically about evidence, research, argument, and ideology**

CORE READINGS:

Kingdon, (2003). Chapter 1 (pp. 1-20).

Canvas:

Gilbert, N., & Terrell, P. (2012). A framework for social welfare policy analysis.   In N. Gilbert & P. Terrell (Eds.). *Dimensions of social welfare policy* (8th ed. pp.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Week 2— January 30, 2019

II. Framing the policy issue: The role of ideology and values in the definition of social problems

Framing the Policy Issue: Inequality and Disadvantage

- ➢ **What is government's responsibility with regards to poverty and disadvantage?**

- ➢ **What is the prevailing policy approach to addressing poverty and inequality?**

CORE READINGS:

Gelles, R.J. (2011).   Chapter 1: "There Ought to be a Law!" in *The third lie: Why*

government programs don't work and a blueprint for change. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press. Pp. 11-20; and Chapter 4

Kingdon, Chapters 4 and 5

Canvas:

Piven, Francis Fox. (2012), "The New American Poor Law," in Leo Panitch, Greg Albo, Vivek Chibber, (Eds.) *Socialist Register: The Crisis and the Left*. Pontypool, Wales: Merlin Press / New York: Monthly Review Press, 2011, pp. 108-124.

**Piven, Francis Fox. (2012), "A Proud, Angry Poor," *The Nation*, January 2.
http://www.thenation.com/article/165158/proud-angry-poor**

Murray, C. (2008). Guaranteed income as a replacement for the welfare state. *Basic Income Studies*, *3*, 1-12.

Week 3—February 6, 2019

Social Security and Insecurity

➢ **Know the myths and realities of Social Security, Medicare, TANF, & Medicaid, and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)**

➢ **How do concepts of "deserving" and "undeserving" poor impact setting the social policy agenda? What values and ideologies influence agenda setting and legislation?**

➢ **What alternatives are there to current social policies that deal with poverty and inequality?**

CORE READINGS:

Gelles, R.J. (2011). Chapter 3: "Programs that Work" in *The third lie: Why government programs don't work and a blueprint for change.* Pp. 41-56. Walnut Creek, CA.: Left Coast Press.

Canvas:

Jerit, J., & Barabas, J. (2006). Bankrupt Rhetoric How Misleading Information Affects Knowledge about Social Security. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *70*, 278-303.

**Segal, E.A. (2010). "Analyzing and Researching Social Welfare Policies,"
[Chapter 6], *Social Welfare Policy and Social Programs: A Values Perspective.*
Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, Centage Learning (2nd edition), pp. 125-150.**

__Week 4—February 13, 2019__

NB: The first half of the class we be devoted to how to use Library resources (with special attention to Bill Tracking—see Assignment #2). Presentation by Anne Larrivee Coordinator of Digital Outreach Services.

Inequality: The Economy and Social Mobility

- ➢ **Unemployment/Jobless**

- ➢ **Inequality**

- ➢ **Budget Deal and Debt Ceiling**

- ➢ **Appropriations**

CORE READINGS

Canvas:

Gale, W. (2017) "Who would pay for the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act?" The Brookings Institution. https://www.brookings.edu/research/who-would-pay-for-the-tax-cuts-and-jobs-act/ (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Mathur, A. (2017) "Plenty to like about GOP tax plan—with one big caveat." American Enterprise Institute. http://www.aei.org/publication/plenty-to-like-about-gop-tax-plan-with-one-big-caveat/ (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Sawhill, I & Pulliam, C. (2018) "The middle class needs a tax cut, Trump didn't give it to them" https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2018/10/16/the-middle-class-needs-a-tax-cut-trump-didnt-give-it-to-them/.

Pethokoukis, James (2018). What's really happening with the Trump tax cuts."

http://www.aei.org/publication/whats-really-happening-with-the-trump-tax-cuts/.

III. The Legislative Process

**Week 5—February209, 2019**

Assignment #1 Due February 20, 2019

Federal: How Laws are Made in the United States

> ➢ **Video: I'm Just a Bill https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyeJ55o3El0**

> ➢ **Process of how the laws are made**

> ➢ **Politics of how the laws are made**

> ➢ **Rules about how the laws are made**

> ➢ **Balance of power**

CORE READINGS:

Kingdon, Chapter 2

Canvas:

Sullivan, John L. (2007) "How Our Laws Are Made" US Govt. Printing Office, Washington DC.
http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CDOC-110hdoc49/pdf/CDOC-110hdoc49.pdfhttp://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CDOC-110hdoc49/pdf/CDOC-110hdoc49.pdf

**Week 6— February 27, 2019**

Federalism and Federal Legislation: The Families First Prevention and Services Act. Public Law # 115-123.

> ➢ **Role of Block Grants in federal, state, and local decision-making process.**

> ➢ **How hearings are organized. How constituents, advocacy groups & ideologies come together to create a piece of legislation.**

CORE READINGS:

Online:

https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-

bill/253/text?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22family+first+prevention+services+act%22%5D%7D&r=1

https://chronicleofsocialchange.org/child-welfare-2/family-first-roller-coaster-continues-one-minute-next/23188

https://cssp.org/about-us/connect/press-room/keeping-families-together-family-first-prevention-services-act-ffpsa-aligns-financing-with-child-wellbeing/

https://www.cwla.org/family-first-prevention-services-act/

https://chronicleofsocialchange.org/analysis/family-first-prevention-services-act-mixed-bag-reform

https://chronicleofsocialchange.org/analysis/foster-care-and-americas-compact-vulnerable-people

Canvas:

Gelles, R. (2017). Out of harm's way: Creating an effective child welfare system. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 5

Gerken, Heather K. (2012). "Our Federalism(s)" Yale Law School Faculty Scholarship Series 1-1-2012
http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4833&context=fss_papers

Spring Break: March 1 to March 10, 2019

IV. Advocacy & Lobbying

Week 7—March 13 2019

Advocacy and the Social Work Profession

- ➢ **What are the most relevant policy areas for social work advocacy efforts**

- ➢ **What are the major social justice and social welfare policy issues of this decade?**

- ➢ **What role does advocacy play in the major pieces of federal and state legislation?**

- ➢ **Who are the major players and stakeholders – advocates, advocacy organizations, think tanks, and corresponding government organizations in areas that concern social workers?**

➢ **Know the difference between taking an** *advocacy position* **and the type of information used to support a claim compared to taking a** *policy analyst position* **and the type of information used to support that type of claim. Know what drives each position to its conclusion.**

CORE READINGS:

Kingdon, Chapter 3

Canvas:

Andrew, Kenneth T. & Edwards, Bob (2004). Advocacy organizations in the U.S. political process. *Annual Review of Sociology, 30***, 479-506.**

Week 8—March 20, 2019

Advocacy and Lobbying: Experts and Advocates: Ideologies and Experts: Child Welfare Ideological Positions

➢ **What are the core ideologies surrounding the policy issue?**

➢ **Who are the key spokespersons, organizations, and stakeholders who articulate the ideological positions?**

➢ **How are the issues framed using the core ideologies?**

CORE READINGS:

Canvas:

Gelles, R. (2017) Out of harm's way: Creating and effective child welfare system. Chapter 4.

Wexler, R. (2017) Family First Act Institutionalizes Institutions, Sets Up Preservation to Fail. *The Chronicle of Social Change* **June 20, 2016. https://chronicleofsocialchange.org/opinion/family-first-institutionalizes-institutions-sets-prevention-fail/19342.**

Roberts, D.E. (2003), Child welfare and civil rights. *University of Illinois Law Review***, 171-182.**

Goldberg, M. (2015) Has Child Protective Services Gone too Far? *The Nation.* **https://www.thenation.com/article/has-child-protective-services-gone-too-**
V. Implementation and Evaluation

Assignment #2 Due March 27, 2019

Week 9—March 27, 2019

Policy Implementation—The Role of Evidence and Data

> ➢ **What is the role of evidence in the implementation of social policies**

> ➢ **What programs work and how do we know that?**

> ➢ **What is the role of research in evaluation?**

CORE READINGS:

Gelles: Chapter 2 and 7

Kingdon: Chapter 6, 7, and 8

Canvas:

Olds, David L., JoAnn Robinson, Ruth O'Brien, Dennis W. Luckey, Lisa M Pettitt, Charles R. Henderson, Rosanna K. Ng, Karen L. Sheff, Jon Korfmacher, Susan Hiatt, and Ayelet Talmi. 2002. "Home Visiting by Paraprofessionals and by Nurses: A Randomized, Controlled Trial." *Pediatrics, 110*, **486-496.**

Paulsell, Diane, Sarah Avellar, Emily Sama Martin, and Patricia Del Grosso. 2010. *Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness Review: Executive Summary.* **Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research.**

Overview of Policy Evaluation and Implementation: Part II: When you can't reject the Null Hypothesis

Week 10: April 3, 2019

Overview of Policy Evaluation and Implementation: Part II: When you can't reject the Null **Hypothesis**

> ➢ **How do we evaluate the impact of social policies?**

> ➢ **What are the limitations on program and policy evaluation?**

> ➢ **Understand how local context influences policy implementation.**

> ➢ **How do we assess whether the program meets federal and state guidelines**

CORE READINGS:

Gelles, R.J. (2011). "The Emperor's Wardrobe Consultant" in *The Third Lie: Why Government Programs Don't Work and a Blueprint for Change. Pp. 123-129.*

Canvas:

Haskins, Ron & Greg Margolis. (2015) "Show Me The Evidence." Brookings Institute Press. Washington, D.C. pp. 213-239.

Moynihan, D. P. (1997). *Miles to go: A personal history of social policy.* **Boston: Harvard University Press. (available used on Amazon)**

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VI. Policy and Politics

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Week 11: April 10, 2019

Health Care

  ➢ **Healthcare Politics**

  ➢ **Obama's Signature Policy**

  ➢ **Role of the States in implementing federal policy**

Core Readings:

Kingdon: Epilogue: Health care reform in the Clinton and Obama Administration

Online:

Antos, J. & Capretta, J. (2017). "Suggestions for a bipartisan approach on health care." https://www.aei.org/publication/suggestions-for-a-bipartisan-approach-on-health-care/ (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site..

Congressional Budget Office. *Estimates of H.R. 1628, American Health Care Act of 2017.* **Washington, DC: Congressional Budget Office: https://www.cbo.gov/publication/52939 (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site..**

Galea, S. (2017). "Is the U.S. Ready for a Single-Payer Health Care System? Khimm, S. (2017). "'Medicare for All' Isn't Sounding So Crazy Anymore." https://hbr.org/2017/07/is-the-u-s-ready-for-a-single-payer-health-care-system (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site..

Medicaid and CHIP Enrollment Highlights. Medicaid.gov website. Rivlin, A. (2016). "Progress on health care will take hard work and bipartisan cooperation." [https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/program-information/medicaid-and-chip-enrollment-data/report-highlights/index.html (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/program-information/medicaid-and-chip-enrollment-data/report-highlights/index.html).

Rosenbaum, S. (2017). Hardy Perennials and Hothouse Flowers: What Can We Learn from "Repeal and Replace." [https://www.milbank.org/quarterly/articles/hardy-perennials-hothouse-flowers-can-learn-repeal-replace/ (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](https://www.milbank.org/quarterly/articles/hardy-perennials-hothouse-flowers-can-learn-repeal-replace/)

Week 12—April 17, 2019

Week 12 WILL BE A TOPIC OR TOPICS SELECTED BY THE CLASS.

Week 13—April 24, 2019

In class presentations

Week 14: May 1, 2019

In class presentations

Final Written Congressional Testimony Due April 30, 2019