School of Social Work

University of Wisconsin-Madison

1350 University Avenue

Madison, WI 53706

SW606-001: Social Policy

Spring 2021

**Instructor Name and Title:**

Kiley McLean, MSW, MSEd

PhD Student

Lecturer

**Instructor Contact Information:**

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**Credits:** 2

**Office Hours:**

15 mins. before and after class

Wednesdays 12-1 pm and by appointment

**Class Time and Location:**

Tuesdays 1:20-3:15

Zoom

**Instructional Mode:** Remote Synchronous

**Canvas Course URL**: <https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/240780>

1. **Course Description**

This course provides an awareness of problems and concepts of the policy process in the U.S., exploring the political, economic, and institutional frameworks which structure public social welfare choices. A discussion and analysis of select current issues in social policy, including poverty, housing, discrimination, disability, mental health, and incarceration, will be integrated throughout the course. Students will learn to define, analyze, and advocate for social welfare policies that directly impact communities they intend to serve. We will focus on the ethical responsibilities and social justice charge inherent in the social work profession.

Attributes and Designations: This course counts toward the 50% graduate coursework requirement.

Requisites: graduate or professional standing.

How credit hours are met: This class meet synchronously for one two-hour class period each week over the spring semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (i.e., reading, writing, studying) for about four hours out of classroom each week. This syllabus includes additional information about meeting times and expectations for student work.

1. **Course Overview**

This required course is part of the Social Welfare Policies and Services sequence in the Generalist Practice Curriculum.

This course covers U.S. social welfare policy. Students will be introduced to alternative perspectives on social problem analysis and the scope and limitations of social policy and the policy making process. A major focus of this course is to help students develop an understanding of the issues of poverty, its definition, demographic scope, and alternative explanations for why it is relatively high and unevenly distributed. Students will also review major economic security programs in the US, with particular emphasis on the distinction between social insurance and welfare programs. While income support policy is the focus of much of the lecture content and assigned readings, other policies are also covered, and the student is exposed to another area of social policy in more depth through an individualized project.

1. **Learning Outcomes: Course Competency Descriptions and Dimensions**

Social Work Education is framed by a competency-based approach to curriculum design. At the conclusion of their education, social work students are expected to be competent in 9 core areas. Competency is achieved through mastery of course content as measured through course activities, readings, assignments, and behaviors learned in field experiences, and which are derived from social work knowledge, values, skills and cognitive affective processes. The objective of this course is to help students demonstrate understanding and mastery of the knowledge, values, skills and cognitive and affective processes relevant to the competencies described in Appendix A.

1. **Course Content**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week/Date | Topics | Readings |
| Week 1  Jan 26 | **Introduction to the Course**   * Review syllabus, course goals, class expectations * Introduction to US social welfare policy * Implications of SW professional values and Code of Ethics for policy practice | * Choose a source for staying up to date on politics, policy, and current events. This could be reading a newspaper of your choice each day, subscribing for push notifications from a news app, or subscribing to a brief daily summary. * Determining Fake News: * Take this quiz: <https://www.pewresearch.org/quiz/news-statements-quiz/> * Then read: 4 Tips for Spotting a Fake News Story <https://blog.dce.harvard.edu/summer/4-tips-spotting-fake-news-story> |
| Week 2  Feb 2 | **Overview of the Policy-Making Process and the Federal Budget** | * Social Policy Crash Course <https://www.youtube.com/watch/mlxLX8Fto_A> * Wisconsin State Government <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/Pages/faq.aspx> * Play “Lawcraft” Available at: <https://www.icivics.org/games> * Birkland, T. A. (2010). Introducing the policy process. In An introduction to the policy process (pp. 3-11) (3rd ed.). Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe. * Introduction to the Federal Budget Process: <https://www.cbpp.org/research/policy-basics-introduction-to-the-federal-budget-process> |
| Week 3  Feb 9 | **Measuring Social Problems**   * Overview of measuring social problems with a focus on poverty | **DF:**   * Chapter 1 “Socioeconomic structure, human need, and mutual responsibility” * Chapter 8 “The welfare society and its clients” * Brookings OP-ED: Behind the Numbers, Millions Seeking a Path Out of Poverty: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2018/09/12/behind-the-numbers-millions-seeking-a-path-out-of-poverty/> * Elliot, Andrea. (2013) Invisible Child, Girl in the Shadows: Dasani’s Homeless Life, New York Times. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2013/invisible-child/#/?chapt=1> * Blank, R. (2011) The supplemental poverty measure: A new tool for understanding US Poverty. *Pathways, 10-14.*   **Read Executive Summary ONLY:**   * Rector, R & Sheffield, R (2011). Understanding poverty in the United States: Surprising facts about America’s poor. *Heritage Foundation Backgrounder. 2607.* |
| Week 4  Feb 16 | **Frameworks for Understanding US Social Welfare Policy, Part 1**   * How do values and beliefs shape social welfare policy? * How do government structures shape social welfare policy? * How do the origins and history of the social welfare state influence current policies?   **Guest Speaker: Leah Rolando, MSW** | **DF:**   * Chapter 2 “Social values and social welfare” * Chapter 4 “Social values and social welfare: The American Experience I” * Chapter 5 “Social values and social welfare: Two paths: The American Experience II” * Take a political ideology quiz at <http://www.gotoquiz.com/politics/political-spectrum-quiz.html> or <https://www.politicalcompass.org/test> * Listen to *The Who We Are: Chronical of Racism in America Podcast: Episode 4: Broken Bootstraps* [*https://thewhoweareproject.org/podcast*](https://thewhoweareproject.org/podcast) * Besharov, J.D. (2008). *Social Welfare Conservatism.* American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.   Optional reading:   * Hirsi, I (2018). *Trump administration’s ‘public charge’ provision has roots in colonial US.* Public Radio International. <https://www.pri.org/stories/2018-12-19/trump-administration-s-public-charge-provision-has-roots-colonial-us> |
| Week 5  Feb 23 | **Frameworks for Understanding US Social Welfare Policy, Part 2**   * Describing and analyzing social policy: Who is eligible? What is the form of the benefit? What is the level of administration? How is the program financed? * Criteria for evaluating social welfare policy * Advantages and disadvantages of means-tested vs. non-means-tested programs; cash vs in-kind programs; direct spending vs tax expenditure programs   **Guest Speaker: Alexa Nobis, MSW** | **DF:**   * Chapter 6 “Concepts for social welfare” * Chapter 7: “Examining a social welfare program within the context of social justice: structural components, alternative program characteristics, and evaluation” * Listen to PBS Podcast: *BUSTED #2: Who Deserves to Be Poor?* [*https://www.pbs.org/wnet/chasing-the-dream/stories/who-deserves-to-be-poor/*](https://www.pbs.org/wnet/chasing-the-dream/stories/who-deserves-to-be-poor/) * Devereux, S (2016). Is targeting ethical? *Global Social Policy,* 16(2), 166-181.   Optional reading:   * Greenstein, R. (2016). *Commentary: Merging safety net programs could increase poverty, not reduce it.* Washington, DC: Center on Budget and Poverty Priorities. * Lower-Basch, E. (2008). *Tax Credits and public benefits: Complementary approaches to supporting low-income families.* Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy. |
| Week 6  March 2 | **US Social Welfare Policies and Inequality**   * Inequality by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity * How do U.S. social policies contribute to inequality?   **Guest Speaker: Isabel Anadon** | * Listen to “America’s Racist Economy” by the Economic Policy Institute <https://www.epi.org/multimedia/americas-racist-economy/> * Coates, Ta-Nehisi. (2013). The Case for Reparations. The Atlantic. Retrieved from: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/> * Washington Post: Redlining was Banned 50 Years Ago. It’s Still Hurting Minorities Today. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2018/03/28/redlining-was-banned-50-years-ago-its-still-hurting-minorities-today/> * Explore LGBTQ Movement Advancement Project Equality Maps: <https://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/non_discrimination_laws> * Pedraza, F.I., & Zhu. L. (2015). The “chilling effect” of America’s new immigration enforcement regime.   Optional Background Readings:  \*These two chapters offer historical policy reviews to properly contextualize the differential impact of policy across race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity. This may be repetitive for some; read if this is new.   * Barusch, A.S. (2009). People of color. In *Foundations of Social Policy* (4th ed.) (pp 258-290). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. * Barusch, A.S. (2009). Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered. In Foundations of Social Policy (4th ed.) (pp 291-313). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. * Frank, N. (2017). The very foundations of our society are in danger (ch. 5, p. 102-125). *Awakening: How Gays and Lesbians brought marriage equality to America.* Belknap Press of Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Mass. |
| Week 7  March 9 | **Current Trends and US Policy in a Global Context**   * Current trends in US social welfare policy * How does US compare to other countries in terms of poverty, inequality, and social policy? | * Moffit, R.A., & Pauley, G. (2018). *Trends in the distribution of social safety net support after the Great Recession and the social safety net.* Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality. * Grusky, D.B., Mattingly, M.J. & Varner, C. (2016). State of the Union: The Poverty & Inequality Report, Exec Summary. Pathways, 3-9. * Kenworthy, L. (2011). How rich countries lift up the poor. *Pathways*, 28-32. * Global Inequality: How the U.S. Compares. *Pew Research Fact Sheet.*  <http://pewrsr.ch/1bSbQln> |
| Week 8  March 16 | * **Movie Viewing: 13th on Netflix (Director: Ava DuVernay)** | * Travis, J., Western, B., & Redburn, F. S. (2014). The growth of incarceration in the United States: Exploring causes and consequences.   + Please Read Pages 37-42, 56-59, 101-103, 260-273 * Weissman, M., Ananthakrishnan, V., & Schiraldi, V. (2019). *Moving Beyond Youth Prisons: Lessons from New York City’s Implementation of Close to Home.* * Youth Collaboratory Podcast: What If...? Season 1, Episode 1 <https://www.youthcollaboratory.org/toolkit/podcast> |
| Week 9  March 23 | **Policies and programs for those who are not yet elders, Part 1.**   * Overview, analysis of, and current issues in: unemployment insurance, minimum wage, child support, family leave policies, workers’ compensation * Differential impact of these policies on vulnerable groups   **Guest Speaker: Durrell Washington, MSW** | **DF, selections from:**   * Chapter 10 “Social welfare programs: Sustaining the quality of life,” p.248-262 & 264-266 * Chapter 15 “Toward the general welfare and social justice” p.353-360 * Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (2018). [*Policy Basics: Unemployment Insurance*](https://www.cbpp.org/research/economy/policy-basics-unemployment-insurance)*.* Washington, DC: CBPP. * Vox: The Coronavirus Unemployment Insurance Plan, Explained <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2020/3/24/21188470/coronavirus-unemployment-benefits-senate-stimulus> * Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (2018). [*Policy Basics: The Minimum Wage*](https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/PolicyBasics_MinimumWage.pdf)*.* Washington, DC: CBPP. * Watch Vox Video: What the US gets wrong about minimum wage <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_M3vTvm2cfM&list=LLnOZ5Ez47q6o2MVhAsxjzrg&index=692> * Watch *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver: Paid Family Leave* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIhKAQX5izw&list=LLsNinBEWScrVdHM\_\_jSOqUw&index=179*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIhKAQX5izw&list=LLsNinBEWScrVdHM__jSOqUw&index=179) |
| Week 10  March 30 | **Policies and programs for those who are not yet elders, Part 2.**   * Overview, analysis of, and current issues in: TANF, SNAP, EITC, and housing policies * Alternative policy approaches for providing income support * Differential impact of these policies on vulnerable groups   **Guest Speaker: Nicki McVinua, MSW** | **DF, selections from:**   * Chapter 9 “Current welfare programs: Economic security,” pages 207-219 * Chapter 10 “Social welfare programs: Sustaining the quality of life,” pages 240-248 * Shapiro, I., Greenstein, R., Trisi, D. & DaSilva, B. (2016, March 3). *It pays to work: Work incentives and the safety net.* Washington DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. * Curtis, M.A., Garlington, S. & Schottenfeld, LS (2013). Alcohol, drug, and criminal history restrictions in public housing. * Listen to *The Ezra Klein Podcast Episode with Rep. Barbara Lee: What it Would Take to End Child Poverty in America* [*https://www.vox.com/podcasts/2020/8/20/21377024/great-rebuild-kids-economic-mobilization-child-poverty-child-care-basic-income*](https://www.vox.com/podcasts/2020/8/20/21377024/great-rebuild-kids-economic-mobilization-child-poverty-child-care-basic-income) |
| Week 11  April 6 | **Policies and programs in health and mental health**   * Overview, analysis of, and current issues in Medicaid and Medicare programs * Differential impact of these policies on vulnerable groups   **Guest Speaker: Jay Botsford** | **DF, selections from:**   * Chapter 10, “Social welfare programs: Sustaining the quality of life”, p 221-240, 262-264. * Altman, D., & Frist, W. H. (2015). Medicare and Medicaid at 50 years: perspectives of beneficiaries, health care professionals and institutions, and policy makers. *Jama*, *314*(4), 384-395. * Kaiser Family Foundation. (2018). *Proposed changers to “public charge” policies for immigrants: Implications for health coverage.* San Francisco, CA: Author. * Thomas, KC, Shartzer, A, Kurth, NK & Hall, J.P. (2018). Impact of ACA health reforms for people with mental health conditions. *Psychiatric Services*, (69)2, 231-234. * Poverty and Race Research Action Council. *Health Care and Indigenous Peoples in the United States.* [*https://prrac.org/health-care-and-indigenous-peoples-in-the-united-states-2/#:~:text=The%20United%20States%20has%20a,facility%20construction%2C%20modernizing%20and%20maintenance*](https://prrac.org/health-care-and-indigenous-peoples-in-the-united-states-2/#:~:text=The%20United%20States%20has%20a,facility%20construction%2C%20modernizing%20and%20maintenance)*.* * *Outreach and Enrollment for LGBT Individuals: Promising Practices from the Field*. <https://aspe.hhs.gov/basic-report/outreach-and-enrollment-lgbt-individuals-promising-practices-field> * CNN: What ‘Medicare for All’ Means, Politically and Practically <https://www.cnn.com/2019/02/25/health/what-does-medicare-for-all-mean/index.html>   Optional reading:   * *Opting Out of Medicaid Expansion: The Health and Financial Impacts.* Dickman, Himmelstein, McCormick, and Woolhandler (2014). Health Affairs Blog. Available at: <https://www.healthaffairs.org/do/10.1377/hblog20140130.036694/full/> |
| Week 12  April 13 | **Policies and programs for those who are elders and those with disabilities**  **Guest Speaker: Atthawoot Sangkharat** | **DF, selections from:**   * Chapter 10, “Social welfare programs: Sustaining the quality of life”, p 186-198. * Browse *Tuesdays with Liz* Videos on Topics of Interest to You: <https://www.aucd.org/template/page.cfm?id=967> * Edwards, K.A., Turner, A. & Hertel-Fernandez, A (2016). *Social Security’s finances: If it ain’t broke, don’t break it.* Chapter 3 only of A Young Person’s Guide to Social Security, 3rd edition. Economic Policy Institute and National Academy of Social Insurance. * Munnell, A. H., & Echstruth, A.D. (2018). Modernizing Social Security: Caregiver credits. (Number 18-15). Center for Retirement Research at Boston College. * Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (2020). CARES Act Includes Essential Measures to Respond to Public Health, Economic Crises, But More will be Needed. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/economy/cares-act-includes-essential-measures-to-respond-to-public-health-economic-crises> |
| Week 13  April 20 | **Protest Movements, Civil Unrest, and Policy** | * *A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement* (Garza). Available at: <http://www.thefeministwire.com/2014/10/blacklivesmatter-2/> * *Watch Last Week Tonight with John Oliver: Police* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wf4cea5oObY*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wf4cea5oObY) * The Washington Post: Protests Shape Policy by Shaping Protesters <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/12/11/protests-shape-policy-by-shaping-protesters/> * The Current State of Civic Engagement in America <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2009/09/01/the-current-state-of-civic-engagement-in-america/> * NPR: How To Run For Office <https://www.npr.org/2019/10/15/770332855/how-to-run-for-office> |
| Week 14  April 27 | **Class Presentations, Course Evaluations, and Wrap-Up** | * The Atlantic: Why Your Voice Matters <https://www.stanforddaily.com/2017/10/31/why-your-voice-matters/> * Vox OP-ED: “For Democracy to survive, It requires Civic Engagement” <https://www.vox.com/polyarchy/2017/1/31/14458966/democracy-requires-civic-engagement> |

1. **Reading Materials for the Course**

There is one required text for this course, which can be purchased online:

**Dolgoff, R. & Feldstein, D (2013). *Understanding social welfare: A search for social justice* (9th ed.). Boston: Pearson.**

The text is referred to as **DF** in the Weekly Class Descriptions (see section IV). Page numbers refer to the 9th edition. See Weekly Class Descriptions for the required readings for each class. With the exception of the textbook, required readings can be accessed on the course Canvas site:

Because the field of social policy is dynamic, and because my assessment of what each class needs depends on factors that I cannot predict in advance, the required readings may change somewhat no later than one week before the class session for which they are assigned; changes will be announced by email and on Canvas.

1. **Evaluation: Assignments, Grading and Methods**

**Assignment Due Dates and Points:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | **Percentage of Final Grade** | **Due Date** |
| 1. Online Quizzes | 15% | April 27 (Week 14) |
| 1. Social problem/policy paper | 20% | February 23rd by 11:59 p.m. (Week 5) |
| 1. Social policy analysis paper | 25% | March 16th by 11:59 pm (Week 8) |
| 1. Letter to the Editor (LTE) | 20% | April 6th by 11:59 pm (Week 11) |
| 1. Policy Brief/Infographic | 20% | April 30th, by 5:00 p.m. (Week 14) |

**Assignment Descriptions, Instructions and Grading Criteria:** <https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/240780>

**Online Quizzes**

There will be 8 mini online quizzes to complete on canvas throughout the semester. They will be posted after weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, and 11. They will be based on key information from the readings those weeks. You will be able to take the quizzes an unlimited number of times. The quizzes will remain open until the last day of class on April 27th. (Rationale: there is a body of knowledge on this topic that we believe social workers should know, and these quizzes are a way to encourage you to “nail down” the knowledge base as well as a way for me to evaluate what you have mastered and what we should continue to review in class.)

**Policy Project: Multiple Assignments**

Students will select a policy topic on which to complete a set of four assignments: 1) social problem/social policy description paper; 2) social policy analysis paper; 3) letter to the editor; 4) policy brief/infographic. Examples of topics include: child-care and early education policies, policies for youth aging out of foster care; income support policies for people with disabilities, vaccine distribution policy, policing, healthcare policies for LGBTQ youth. The process for selecting the policy topic will be described in the first weeks of class. (Rationale: this allows you to focus your learning in a topic area in which you are interested; the building of these assignments requires you to take your knowledge about one area into more depth and then learn to advocate for its improvement.)

1. **Social problem & social policy description paper (2 pages).**

DUE: February 23rd by 11:59 p.m. (Week 5)

In this assignment, you will briefly describe the social problem underlying your policy topic and describe the current policies aimed at addressing this problem. Submit the assignment via Canvas. (Rationale: this provides an opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge of a social problem and social policies in written form; it gives you early feedback on whether you’re on track for the policy analysis paper; it ensures that you start your project in a timely way). **The paper has 2 parts:**

**In Part 1**, you will address the following questions to describe the social problem underlying your policy topic:

1. *What is the social problem underlying the issue? Why does this social problem exist?*
2. *How serious is it? What are the consequences of this problem?*
3. *How many people are affected?*

You are expected to use recent statistics and a minimum of two high-quality sources to address these questions. If recent statistics are not available, explain why. Part 1 should be no more than 1 page in length, with optional tables and figures not counting toward the page constraint (if you use tables and figures, you must discuss them in the text).

**In Part 2,** you will address the following questions to describe the current policy efforts that address the social problem:

1. *What are the current policies that address the problem?*
2. *How would you describe each policy in terms of the goals of the policy and the four questions for describing social policies: a) who gets it (who is eligible and who receives benefits)?; b) what do they get (type of benefit)?; c) how do they get it (what is the government’s role/how is it administered)?; d) who pays (what is the cost and how is it financed)?*
3. *Does/how does the policy have differential effects on vulnerable groups (for example, whether particular groups receive a different level or quality of benefits from the policy)?*

There may be multiple policies for addressing this social problem; if this is the case, focus on 2-3 policies and explain why you selected these. You are expected to use recent, high quality statistics when available (for example, number of people who receive benefits, amount of benefits, costs of the program) and a minimum of 2 high quality sources; if statistics are not available, explain this. For most topics, tables can be useful in answering these questions; these are optional and if included, should be discussed in the text. Part 2 should be no more than 1 page in length, with tables not counting toward the page limit. Note you are NOT asked to evaluate the current policy, only to describe it. This is intended to be a very structured and straightforward exercise.

Formatting requirements: Papers must be typed, double-spaced, with 1” margins, with Times New Roman, 12-point font. Include a title page with only the title of your assignment, your name, course name, instructor name, and date. (The title page does not count toward the page limit.) The title of your paper should be: “Fill-In-The-Topic: social problem and describing policy efforts to address this problem”. **This paper should not be more than 1-2 pages in length.**

Citations and a reference page using APA style are required. If you include a direct quote or a figure/table from a source, you must include the page number in your in-text citation (Author, year, page number).

Grading Criteria:

* Following the assignment instructions (followed format, page limits, etc.; sufficient and appropriate references, APA reference style, etc.)
* Demonstrates thorough understanding of social problem (seriousness of problem, number of people affected, use of current selected statistics)
* Demonstrates understanding of current policy or policies (description includes goals, eligibility, what clients actually receive, governmental role, and program costs; use of current selected statistics; description and NOT evaluation of policies)
* Writing (clarity, logic, and good organization)

1. **Social Policy Analysis Paper (3.5-6 pages)**

DUE: March 16th by 11:59 pm (Week 8).

Write a social policy analysis paper on your policy topic, in which you will consider the advantages/disadvantages of current policies and make recommendations for policy changes. (Rationale: this paper gives you the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to analyze social welfare policies; professional social workers are expected to gain the policy practice skills needed to identify, define, and analyze a social problem and the social welfare policy response.) This paper has 3 parts:

**Part 1:** This part should begin with an introductory paragraph (maximum ½ page) that briefly summarizes the social problem and current policies aimed at addressing the social problem (a summary of Paper 1). Then, discuss: What are the advantages and disadvantages of the current policies aimed at addressing the social problem? Do (and how do) these policies differentially affect vulnerable groups? You should pay particular attention to how the criteria for evaluating policies (e.g., social equity) that we’ve discussed in class apply to these policies. You should use a variety of sources and demonstrate an understanding of different perspectives on these policies. Use data/statistics if available, if not available, explain. Part 1 should be 1-2 pages in length (**2 pages maximum**), with tables and figures not counting in this page constraint.

**Part 2:** In the second part, you will first describe one or two proposed policies in your topic area. Briefly describe the proposed policies based on the 4 “big” questions (to the extent that information is available, if not, explain).

* *who gets it (who is eligible and who receives benefits)?; what do they get (type of benefit)?; how do they get it (what is the government’s role/how is it administered)?; who pays (what is the cost and how is it financed)?*

Then, compare the proposed policy (or policies) to the current policies, discussing to what extent the proposed policies address any disadvantages of the current policies. You should again evaluate these policies through a social equity lens, as well as consider the trade-offs of different policy approaches. Use a variety of high-quality sources and selected data/statistics if available (if not available, explain). This second part should be 2-3 pages in length (**3 pages maximum**) with tables and figures not counting towards the page limit.

**Part 3:** The final part of this assignment is for you to provide your recommendation for which policy approach you believe is best for addressing the social problem. You will address whether and why you think we should keep the current policies—as they are, or with some changes—or adopt one of the proposed policies. Provide thoughtful and realistic recommendations and justify your stance. Your recommendations should stem logically from your analysis in Parts 1 and 2. (Do not introduce new policies or analysis in this section.) This part should be ½ to 1 page in length (**1 page max**).

Formatting requirements: Papers must be typed, double-spaced, with 1” margins, with Times New Roman, 12-point font. Include a title page with only the title of your assignment (choose whatever title you would like), your name, course name, instructor name, and date. (The title page does not count toward the page limit.) The maximum page limit, including all 3 parts of the assignment, is 6 pages. Include all tables and figures in an appendix, at the end of your paper; these do not count toward the page limit. Citations and a reference page using APA style are required. If you include a direct quote or a figure/table from a source, you must include the page number in your in-text citation (Author, year, page number).

Grading Criteria:

* Following the assignment instruction (followed format, page limits, etc.; sufficient and appropriate references; APA reference style; etc.).
* Demonstrates thorough understanding of advantages and disadvantages of current policies (how criteria for evaluating policy apply; considers different perspectives; uses a variety of sources).
* Demonstrates thorough understanding of advantages and disadvantages of proposed policy or policies (good, brief description of proposed policies; how criteria for evaluating policy apply; discusses trade-offs to different policy approaches; uses variety of high quality sources).
* Provides thoughtful and realistic recommendations and justification for recommendations (recommendations are consistent with policy analysis).
* Writing (clarity, logic, and good organization).

**3. Letter to the Editor (150-250 words)**

DUE: April 6th by 11:59 pm (Week 11)

Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper of your choice on your policy topic. Instructions on how to write a Letter to the Editor will be covered in class and examples will be uploaded into canvas. The purpose of this assignment is to succinctly and convincingly argue for support of or action on your policy to a broader audience. Students will share their letters with one another and submit to the newspaper of their choice.

Formatting Requirements: Papers must be typed, double-spaced, with 1” margins, with Times New Roman, 12-point font. Your letter to the editor should not exceed 250 words as is customary for most newspapers. Statistics are to be cited through hyperlink.

Grading Criteria:

* Following the assignment instruction (followed format, word limits, etc.; sufficient and appropriate references)
* Demonstrates thorough understanding of the social problem or policy (seriousness of situation, accurate statistics)
* Writing is succinct, factual, and convincing on chosen topic.
* Writing (clarity, logic, and good organization).

**4. Policy Brief/Infographic (1 page)**

DUE: April 30th, by 5:00 p.m. (Week 14)

The goal of this assignment is for each student to produce a polished piece of policy writing that will be an important product in its own right and also useful for the student as a work sample in applying for jobs or further study. A policy brief is not the same as a lengthy policy analysis. You can assume the reader will know of the issue and is involved in trying to solve the specific problem. A policy brief is for an active public audience- policy makers, legislators, any elected official. Policy briefs are for busy people with many responsibilities, little time to waste, and for whom the problem or policy of interest to you is only one of many they are trying to address. Your goal is to synthesize the key information on your topic, present it cogently and carefully, and provide a well-researched and convincing set of recommendations. Policy briefs must be easy to understand including necessary background information, written clearly without technical jargon, and lay out actions for the decision-maker to select. A policy infographic/brief is typically handed to an elected official in the hopes they use it to inform their vote. Further instructions on how to create a policy brief will be given in class and examples will be uploaded into canvas.

**During the last day of class, students will present their policy brief/infographic to the class for feedback.** This will be an opportunity for you to convince your classmates on a policy topic with which they have less familiarity. Students will have the opportunity to edit their piece after receiving feedback, prior to final submission.

Formatting Requirements: Policy briefs should not exceed one page.

Grading Criteria:

* Following the assignment instruction (page limit; sufficient and appropriate references)
* Demonstrates thorough understanding of the social problem or policy (seriousness of situation, accurate statistics)
* Key information is presented succinctly, factually, and convincingly on chosen topic.
* Writing and formatting (creativity, clarity, logic, and good organization).

Grading Scale: Final grades will be assigned with the following grading scale for graduate courses:

A 94-100 Outstanding; surpasses expectations in all areas

AB 88-93 Surpasses expectations in many areas

B 82-87 Meets expectations in all areas

BC 76-81 Meets expectations in some areas, below in others

C 70-75 Below expectations in most areas, not acceptable graduate work

D 64-69 Below expectations in all areas

F <64 Fails to meet minimal expectations in all areas, not acceptable work

1. **Course Policies**

**Expectations:**

Students are expected to…

* Attend class each session, actively participating in the in-class exercises and discussions. If you cannot attend class, you are responsible for knowing what occurred and getting any handouts.
* Read critically (and think about) all required readings before coming to class. Many students find it useful to take notes.
* Complete all assignments by the due dates and times.
* Be respectful of the instructor and other class members—a diversity of views and opinions may be articulated during discussions.
* Conduct yourselves as professionals during class and during interactions with the instructor outside of class. This includes such conduct as:
  + Turning off (or silencing) your electronics during class.
  + Refrain from taking calls, texting, and using social media or from using the internet for anything other than directed class work.
  + Write email correspondence to the instructor and other students in a manner that would be considered professional, respectful, and timely.
* Use laptops and other electronic devices only for taking notes. Taking handwritten notes is recommended and has been associated with better learning outcomes compared to taking notes on laptops (see the 2014 article “The Pen is Mightier than the Keyboard” by Mueller and Oppenheimer: <http://pss.sagepub.com/content/25/6/1159>)

The instructor is expected to…

* Co-create a classroom environment that facilitates learning.
* Assure that course objectives are being met.
* Hold regular office hours.
* Be available to address student questions through emailed correspondence.
* Give reasonable guidance on preparing for the exams and assignments.
* Provide prompt feedback on evaluation materials for the course.

Grading questions and late assignment policy:

* Any requests for extensions on assignments must be made and approved in advance of the due date. Late assignments without prior approval will be penalized and may not be accepted.
* If there is something about an assignment that is unclear to you, it is your job to bring this to the instructor’s attention with sufficient time for clarification.
* Your grade on written assignments will be based on 1) the extent to which you respond to the assignment objective, 2) the quality of your writing (to include grammar and spelling, organization and clarity), and 3) your ability to demonstrate critical thinking.
* You may appeal a grade on a particular exam or assignment, but you must do so in writing, support your position with substantive arguments (addressing each of the three points above), and do so within 1 week of when the assignment or exam is returned.
* I expect written portions of all assignments to be typed, spell-checked, proofed for grammatical errors, and well-organized. Points will be deducted from your grade for sloppy work. If you need assistance with your writing, the Campus Writing Center is available as a free resource to all students.

Disability Accommodations

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12),

and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably

accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with

disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students requiring accommodation, as

approved by the McBurney Center, are expected to provide the instructor with a copy of their Faculty

Notification Letter by the second week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has

been incurred or recognized. For more information, please contact the McBurney Center at

mcburney@odos.wisc.edu; Phone at 608-263-2741; Text messaging at 608-225- 7956; or by FAX at

608-265-2998, 711 (Via relay); Address is 702 W. Johnson St, #2104, Madison, WI 53706. The

instructor will work either directly with the student or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including

instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

Student Wellness

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning. These might include strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol/drug problems, racism, feeling down, and/or loss of motivation. University Health Services (UHS) can help with these or other issues you may be experiencing. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling (608-265-5600) or visiting www.uhs.wisc.edu. Help is always available.

Other student support services and programs include:

• Multicultural Student Center https://msc.wisc.edu/

• Gender and Sexuality Campus Center https://lgbt.wisc.edu/

• Dean of Students Office https://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/

Below are resources for reporting and responding to incidences of bias and hate on campus.

• Report incidences of bias or hate online: <https://students.wisc.edu/doso/services/bias-reporting-process>

• UW-Madison Police Department: <http://uwpd.wisc.edu>

• Office of Equity and Diversity: [www.oed.wisc.edu/](http://www.oed.wisc.edu/)

You may also report incidents in-person to the Dean of Students Office, 70 Bascom Hall, during normal business hours. Reportable incidents include crimes such as vandalism or physical assault, as well as non-academic misconduct, slurs, and intimidation. Anyone who files a report will have the opportunity to meet with the Bias Response and Advocacy Coordinator, so that we can meet their needs and ensure their safety.

Code of Ethics, Professional Conduct & Plagiarism

BSW and incoming MSW students read and signed electronic forms of the NASW Code of Ethics, the

School of Social Work Plagiarism Policy and the School’s Principles of Professional Conduct. In doing

so, they agreed that while in the BSW or MSW Program they would honor the NASW Code of Ethics

and Principles of Professional Conduct, as well as adhere to the Plagiarism Policy and that should

they not do so, sanctions would be imposed. BSW and MSW students are expected to adhere to

these policies in the classroom, in the field and in the preparation of course assignments.

While adherence to the social work code of ethics is required only of social workers and social work

students, issues of academic misconduct affect all students and are considered extremely serious.

Academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, and misrepresentation or fabrication of

assignments, can result in course failure as well as disciplinary actions. It is your responsibility to

ensure that all documents and material used to inform your assignments are appropriately cited.

Students found to have plagiarized, intentionally or not, will be disciplined according to University and School policies. The Writing Center has a helpful guide to the different between plagiarism and paraphrasing – see <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_paraphrase.html>. The School’s plagiarism policy is posted at Learn@UW.

Writing Resources

The Writing Center at UW-Madison, 6171 Helen C. White Hall, 600 N. Park St., (608) 263-1992, has a wealth of resources for students. The website address is: [www.writing.wisc.edu](http://www.writing.wisc.edu). Students can expect a response on their paper within 48 hours. (Times may vary depending on the Center’s work load/time of the semester.) The website also has information about free writing workshops and instructional materials on effective writing, APA style, etc.

APPENDIX A

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| Competencies and Description | Course Content Related to Dimensions that Comprise the Competency\* | Location in the Syllabus |
| **2.1.3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice** Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably, and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. | Lecture and discussion related to SW professional values, SW Code of Ethics, and implications for policy practice, (K, V) | Week 1 |
| Readings, lecture, and discussion on theories of human need, social values, social justice, and structural barriers (K, V) | Weeks 2 & 3 |
| Readings, lecture, in-class activities and discussion on features of and types of policies and programs for eliminating structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and with adequate protections for all groups in society. (K, V, S, C & AP) | Weeks 4, 5, 6 |
| Lecture and discussion on differential impact of social policies and programs on vulnerable groups (K, V) | Weeks 8, 9, 10, 11 |
| Assignment: Online Quizzes (K, V, S, C & AP) | pg. 9 |
|  |  |
| Assignment: Social Problem and Policy Description Paper (K, V, S, C & AP) | pg. 9 |
| Assignment: In-Class Presentation (K, V, S, C & AP) | pg. 12 |
| Assignment: Social Policy Analysis Paper (K, V, S, C & AP)  Assignment Letter to the Editor and Policy Brief: (K, V, S, C & AP) | pg. 11  p. 12 |
| **2.1.5. Engage in Policy Practice**  Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation,  analysis, implementation, and evaluation. | Lecture, reading and discussion related to the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in social welfare policy development. (K, V) | Weeks  3-5, 8-11 |
| Lecture, reading, and discussion on the various influences that affect social welfare policy: |  |
| * historical, social, cultural, and economic (K, V) | Weeks 2-5 |
| * environmental and global factors (K, V) | Week 6 |
| * organizational factors (K, V) | Week 4 |
| Lecture, readings, and discussion on policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation. (K, V) | Weeks 3-6, 8-11 |
| Assignment: Online Quizzes (K, V, S, C & AP) | pg. 9 |
| Assignment: Social Problem and Policy Description Paper (K, V, S, C & AP) | pg. 9 |
| Assignment: In-Class Presentation (K, V, S, C & AP) | pg. 12 |
| Assignment: Social Policy Analysis Paper (K, V, S, C & AP)  Assignment Letter to the Editor and Policy Brief: (K, V, S, C & AP) | pg. 11  pg. 12 |
| **Competencies and Description** | **Course Content Related to Dimensions that Comprise the Competency\*** | **Location in the Syllabus** |
| **2.1.9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities** Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. | Lecture, readings, and discussion on criteria for evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. (K, V) | Week 4 |
| Lecture and discussion on applying criteria for evaluating process and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. (K, V, S) | Weeks 8-11 |
| Assignment: Online Quizzes (K, V, S, C & AP) | pg. 9 |
|  |  |
| Assignment: Social Problem and Policy Description Paper (K, V, S, C & AP) | pg. 9 |
| Assignment: In-Class Presentation (K, V, S, C & AP) | pg. 12 |
| Assignment: Social Policy Analysis Paper (K, V, S, C & AP)  Assignment Letter to the Editor and Policy Brief: (K, V, S, C & AP) | pg. 11  pg. 12 |