PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

This course provides an overview of the historical and contemporary social services system and an exploration of the interconnectedness between social welfare policies, social services and micro and macro social work practice. The course covers three main topic areas. The first area focuses on understanding the social service delivery system, with an emphasis on services for diverse populations, including age, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, rural, and sexual orientation, and populations-at-risk experiencing discrimination, inequality, lack of economic opportunity and oppression in the United States. The services will be examined in terms of the problems addressed, the societal and social work values that define issues as “problems”, and the values and political perspectives that determine policy choices made to address problems. Social service delivery systems and policies from other countries will be examined. The second area focuses on understanding the legislative policy-making process. The third area focuses on learning how to analyze social welfare policy from a social work value base and perspective, with an emphasis on social and economic justice. Students will learn and apply a framework for analyzing social welfare policy to a specific policy issue of their choice. The policy analysis will also include examining the social problem and social policy from a rural community context and reviewing the research-based literature on the social problem and effectiveness of policy choices.

PLACE IN THE MSW CURRICULUM

SOWK 605 Social Welfare Policy and Services is a required course taken during the first semester of the foundation year in the MSW program in conjunction with SOWK 601 Foundations of Generalist Practice, SOWK 603 HBSE I, and SOWK 607 Professional Competence Seminar I. The course lays the foundation for the advanced social welfare policy course, SOWK 655 Social Welfare Policy Practice. While not a requirement, it is beneficial if students have completed an economics course and an American government course during their undergraduate education or some form of independent study in the aforementioned areas. The course will draw upon the values, ethics, and diversity content simultaneously being taught in Professional Competence Seminar I in the study of social welfare policy and services.

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION

The Social Welfare Policy and Services course contributes to the University mission related to promoting learning through effective teaching and scholarship. The course is also supportive of the College Mission to promote exploration, understanding, explanation and transformation of the social world through graduate teaching and learning.
MSW PROGRAM GOALS

This course supports the achievement of the MSW Program goals, specifically: 1) to prepare competent and effective graduates to be advanced generalist social work practitioners, 2) to prepare graduates who apply and promote at an advanced level the values, ethics, theory, and perspectives of the social work profession, and 3) to prepare graduates who promote at an advanced level social and economic justice in a diverse society.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1) Understand the historical development of social welfare policies and services in the United States (MSW 2.1, 3.2).

2) Understand the contemporary social service delivery system in the United States (MSW 2.1, 3.2).

3) Understand the social welfare policies which regulate the delivery of social welfare services in the United States in the areas of income maintenance, health care, mental health care, criminal justice, child welfare, housing and homelessness and food security (MSW 2.1, 3.2).

4) Understand the contemporary social service delivery system and social welfare policies that promote social and economic justice for populations-at-risk experiencing discrimination, inequality, lack of economic opportunity and oppression; advance human rights for all people, including within a rural community context, and affirm diversity of age, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, rural context, and sexual orientation (MSW 1.4, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2).

5) Critically examine the social and economic justice, and political factors and value systems that impact how social welfare problems are identified, defined, prioritized, and addressed through social welfare policy (MSW 1.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2).

6) Understand the governmental policy making process and how policy proposals are transformed into social welfare programs (MSW 3.2).

7) Learn and apply a framework for using research-based evidence to understand and analyze social welfare problems and policies from a rural community context and from a social work value base and perspective (MSW 1.1, 2.3, 3.2).

8) Understand the role of social workers in promoting social and economic justice for populations-at-risk experiencing discrimination, inequality, lack of economic opportunity and oppression (MSW 2.1, 2.3, 3.1).
REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

*Social Welfare System Paper: Historical Connection to Contemporary Social Services* (Designated Assessment Assignment for L. O. 2.1).

Students will research and write a paper focusing on one era in the history of the social welfare system in the U.S., political, social and economic factors influencing the era, role and activities of the social work profession, and connection to contemporary social service delivery and social work practice. Further details will be provided by the instructor. This assignment is worth 30 points (30% of the final grade).

*Social Welfare System Presentation*. Students will conduct a presentation on one era in the history of the social welfare system in the U.S. Further details will be provided by the instructor. This assignment is worth 10 points (10% of the final grade).

*Social Welfare Policy Analysis Paper* (Designated Assessment Assignment for L. O. 3.2).

Students will research, critically analyze, and write a policy analysis paper of a federal, state, or local public policy using the policy analysis framework provided in Karger and Stoesz, Chapter 2. *Social welfare policy research: A framework for policy analysis*. The analysis will include an examination of the degree to which the policy promotes the values of the social work profession, including social and economic justice and dignity and worth of the person. Further details will be provided by the instructor. This assignment is worth 45 points (45% of the final grade). Five points will be awarded for submitting a complete draft of the paper. The final version of the paper is worth 40 points.

*D2L On-line Activities & Discussion*: Two class sessions will be conducted on-line using D2L. Students will respond to a series of discussion questions pertaining to the required reading and
other assigned activities following the guidelines presented by the instructor. This assignment is worth 10 points (10% of the final grade).

In-class Discussion Questions and Participation. Students are required to read all required readings prior to class and actively and meaningfully participate in all in-class discussions and activities. For each in-class session, students are required to post 3 discussion questions on D2L based upon the required readings by each Friday at noon. Additional information will be provided in class. This component of the course is worth 5 points (5% of the final grade).

Pop quizzes may be given if students are not coming prepared to actively participate in class.

TEACHING METHODS

In order to achieve the course objectives, a multi-modal approach to teaching will be used, including but not limited to lecture, large and small group discussion, in-class exercises, on-line discussion, viewing educational videos, guest speakers, and computer lab instruction on how to access government information and documents via the Internet.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING

A total of 100 points can be earned in this course. Points will be accumulated through the following assignments: 1) Social Welfare System Paper (30 points), 2) Social Welfare System Presentation (10 points), 3) Social Welfare Policy Analysis Paper (45 points), 4) D2L On-line Discussion and Activities (10 points), and 5) In-Class Discussion Questions and Participation (5 points).

Students will be evaluated in accordance with the following system of letter grades: A, B, C, D, and F.

A – 90% to 100% of possible points represents work of definitely superior quality
B – 80% to 89% of possible points represents a level of performance that is above average
C – 70% to 79% of possible points represents a below-average performance
D – 60% to 69% of possible points represents unacceptable performance
F – 59% or below represents unacceptable performance

A grade of “incomplete” will only be awarded under rare circumstances. Students must meet with the instructor to request an “incomplete” by the 14th week of the semester. The request must include a plan with a timeline for completing and having evaluated all coursework prior to the first day of the subsequent semester.

COURSE, DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

NOTE: For complete policies please refer to the MSW Program Graduate Student Handbook as well as the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, College of Graduate Studies and Research, and Minnesota State University, Mankato policy documents for Graduate Students.

Minnesota State University, Mankato, SOWK 605, 2009-2010
Statement of Non-Discrimination Policy

The University and Department of Social Work is committed to providing equal education and employment opportunities to all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, veteran’s status. National origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, physical and mental disabilities, creed, status due to receipt of public assistance, or any other groups against which discrimination is prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Minnesota Statute Chapter 363, and other applicable state or federal laws or State University System policy. Complaints of discrimination are filed with the Office of Affirmative Action located at 112 Armstrong Hall.

ACCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

Access for Students with Disabilities Policy

In accordance with University Policy, the Department of Social Work is committed to ensuring equal educational opportunity and full participation for qualified persons with disabilities as is legally required under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 including section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. All students with a disability may request accommodation through the Office of Disability Services. Visit the Office of Disabilities Services at 132 Memorial Library or call 507-389-2825 (V/TTY). Student disability accommodations will be made by faculty based upon the advisement of the Office of Disability Services. To read the entire University Access for Students with Disabilities Policy go to http://www.mnsu.edu/acadafl/policies/AccessforStudentswithDisabilities.pdf.

Student Responsibilities Policy and Academic Honesty Policy

Students are expected to comply with the Student Responsibility Policy and Academic Honesty Policy stipulated in the MSW Program Graduate Student Handbook.

APA Style Writing Policy

Students are expected to comply with the stylistic guidelines of the American Psychological Association, sixth edition. The APA manual is available at the MSU Memorial Library (reference section, ready reference section, reserve collection, general collection and reference desk): call number BF76.7 .P83 2010. The reference for the APA manual is:


An on-line overview of the editorial style is at: http://www.apastyle.org/

Distraction and Technology Use Policy

Students are expected to comply with the Department’s Distraction and Technology Use Policy stipulated in the MSW Program Graduate Student Handbook. Violations of this policy will be
dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Students who are late for class or leave class early may have a reduction of participation points and/or may be recorded as absent (or partially absent). Students using electronic devices for non-educational purposes will be asked to turn off the equipment. In the case of repeated offences, students will be asked to leave the classroom and will be recorded as absent.

**SOWK 605 COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week 1**
Topic: Introduction to the course
Delivery method: In-class
Video: Unnatural Causes – Not Just a Paycheck (Social Welfare System comparison – U.S. and Sweden)

Required Readings
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 1: *Social Policy and the American Welfare State*
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 18: *The American Welfare State in an International Perspective*

Recommended Readings from *The Encyclopedia of Social Work*:  
- Social Services  
- International Social Work and Social Welfare - Europe

**Week 2**
Delivery Method: In-class
Required Readings

Recommended Readings from *The Encyclopedia of Social Work*:
- Political Ideology and Social Welfare  
- Progressive Social Work  
- Social Work Profession: History

Recommended Readings from *Social Work Speaks*

**Week 3**  
Topic: Delivering Social Services: Private vs. Public, For-Profit vs. Non Profit, Secular vs. Non-Secular  
Delivery Method: In-class  
Required Readings  
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 3: *Religion and Social Welfare Policy*  
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 6: *The Voluntary Sector*  
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 7: *Privatization and Human Service Corporations*  
Recommended Readings from *The Encyclopedia of Social Work*:  
- Social Services  
- Faith-Based Agencies and Social Work  
- Contracting out of Social Services  
- Privatization

**Week 4**  
Topic: Connecting History to the Contemporary Social Welfare System and Services  
Delivery Method: In-class  
Assignment Due: Social Welfare System Presentation (Part One) (Dropbox)  
Required Reading  
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 14: *Criminal Justice*  
Recommended Readings from the Encyclopedia of Social Work:  
- Distinctive Dates in Social Welfare History  
- Social Policy History

**Week 5**  
Topic: Connecting History to the Contemporary Social Welfare System and Services  
Delivery Method: In-class  
Assignment Due: Social Welfare System Presentation (Part Two) (Dropbox) and Social Welfare System Paper (Dropbox)  
Required Readings:  
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 15: *Child Welfare Policy*

**Week 6**  
Topic Tax Policy, Income and Wealth Distribution  
Delivery Method: On-line  
Assignment Due: D2L Activities and Discussion Postings (5 points)  
Required Readings  

Minnesota State University, Mankato, SOWK 605, 2009-2010
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 9: *Tax Policy and Income Distribution*

Required Readings from *The Encyclopedia of Social Work*:
- Income Distribution
- Economics and Social Welfare

**Week 7**
Topic: Making & Analyzing Public Policy
Delivery Method: In-class
Required Readings
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 8: *The Making of Governmental Policy*

Recommended Readings from *The Encyclopedia of Social Work*:
- Political Process
- Social Problems

**Week 8**
Topic: Researching your policy analysis paper
Delivery Method: Decision of Location Pending
Required Readings
Karger & Stoesz, Child 15: *Housing Policy*

**Week 9: October 23**
Topic: Researching your policy analysis paper
Delivery Method: On-line
Assignment Due: None
Required Readings - None

**Week 10: October 30**
Topic: Diversity, Discrimination & Social Justice
Delivery Method: In-class
Video: Unnatural Causes – In Sickness and in Wealth (Classism and Racism on health)
Required Readings
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 4: *Discrimination in American Society*

Recommended Readings from *The Encyclopedia of Social Work*:
- Civil Rights
- Social Justice

Minnesota State University, Mankato, SOWK 605, 2009-2010
Recommended Readings from *Social Work Speaks*

**Week 11**

Topic: Understanding Poverty and Economic Mobility in America from a Comparative Perspective
Delivery Method: On-line class session
Assignment Due: D2L Activities and Discussion Postings

Required Readings
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 5: Poverty in America
Recommended Readings from *The Encyclopedia of Social Work*:
- Income Security
- Poverty

Recommended Readings from Social Work Speaks

**Week 12**

Topic: Public Assistance Programs and Benefits
Delivery Method: In-class

Required Readings

Minnesota State University, Mankato, SOWK 605, 2009-2010
Social Worker, 50(2), 175-186.


Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 11: Public Assistance Programs


Recommended Readings from The Encyclopedia of Social Work:

- Employment and Unemployment
- Supplemental Security Income
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Recommended Reading from Social Work Speaks


Week 13

Topic: Social Insurance Programs and Benefits
Delivery Method: In-class
Assignment Due: Draft Policy Analysis Paper

Required Readings


Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 10: Social Insurance Programs

Recommended Readings from The Encyclopedia of Social Work:

- Social Security Program
- Workers Compensation

Week 14

Thanksgiving Break – No class

Week 15

Topic: Health Care
Delivery Method: In-class
Video: World Class Health Care: Why Isn’t the U.S. the Best (comparison with Canada)

Required Readings


Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 12: The American Health Care System

Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 13: Mental Health and Substance Abuse Policy

Recommended Readings from *The Encyclopedia of Social Work*:
- Health Care Financing
- Health Care Reform

Recommended Readings from *Social Work Speaks*

**Week 16**

Topic: Introduction to Policy Practice in the Rural Context

Delivery Method: On-Line

Assignment Due: Policy Analysis Paper

Required Readings
Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 17, *The Politics of Food Policy and Rural Life*

**SUPPLEMENTAL BIBLIOGRAPHY**


Minnesota State University, Mankato, SOWK 605, 2009-2010