

SW 523 – Social Welfare Policy and Services – Call# 06190
Spring 08 – Morton 216 – M & W 4:10 – 6:00
David A. Walters, LISW, Morton 524 (office)
597-1728 waltersd@ohio.edu
Office hours – M & W 1:00 – 2:00 and Thur 3:00 – 4:00
Or by appointment

Course summary: This course emphasizes the interrelationship among conceptualization, policy options, and their impact on social work practice and clients. Theories and analytic frameworks are used to analyze the development, operation, impact, and strategies for change in today's social welfare policies and services. Responding to contemporary policy development in the United States and Appalachia, this course focus on the social problems and policies that impact rural communities, with a special emphasis on rural poverty and its impact on rural families. Students will learn how to define a policy issue, describe current policies and programs, and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of a policy choice. In addition, the barriers to policy change or implementation will be explored. Finally, ethical questions, oppression, and concern for social justice will be examined.

Learning objectives/outcomes: (Dept goals & objectives noted in parentheses)

By the end of the course, students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of:

1. the biological, psychological, social, economic, political, environmental, and philosophical perspective of social work (A1, A3, B5)
2. how personal, professional (social work), and societal values, ethics, ideologies, and empirical perspectives influence social policy. (A1,A4, B5)
3. the roles and impact of science and politics on the conceptualization of social problems such as poverty, health care, mental health, criminal justice, child welfare, aging, housing, and food policy in rural communities. (A4, A6, B5)
4. philosophical and scientific thinking skills needed to analyze the development and effects of social welfare policy on social problems in rural society. (A3, A8, B5)
5. basic social policy practice strategies, methods, and techniques. (A5, A7, A8, B5)
6. the levels of policy formation and implementation (local, state, federal) and knowledge of how the ethical, political, and scientific dimensions of policy influence the delivery of social of welfare services at the state and local level, and the subsequent influence on people (A5, A6, B5)
7. patterns of discrimination as they are reflected in social policies and program delivery, and the assessment of how the structure of current policies impact oppressed and disadvantaged people living in rural communities. (A1, A2, A3, A5)
8. the person-in-environment, the intervention in environment, and the strengths perspective (A1, A2, A3,B1)

Class attendance: You are expected to attend all classes. In case of an unavoidable absence I will follow the University policy on student absences. As will be noted later in the syllabus, class attendance is part of your grade for class participation.

Grading standards: 100-94 (A), 93-90 (A-), 89-87(B+), 86-83 (B), 82-79 (B-), 78-76 (C+), 75-72 (C), 71-68 (C-), 67-64 (D+), 63-60 (D), 59-58 (D-), 58-below (F)

Academic integrity: Academic Misconduct is a Code A violation of the Ohio University Code of Student Conduct. Academic misconduct refers to dishonesty or deception in fulfilling academic requirements. It includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, un-permitted collaboration, forged attendance (when attendance is required), fabrication(e.g. use of invented information or falsification of research or other findings), using advantages not approved by the instructor (e.g., unauthorized review of a copy of an exam ahead of time), knowingly permitting another student to plagiarize or cheat from one's work, or submitting same assignment in different courses without consent of the instructor. If found to be involved in academic misconduct, students may receive a grade penalty and/or a referral to the university judiciaries which may subject the student to the full range of sanctions (reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion from the university). Furthermore, as academic misconduct is also a violation of the National Association of Social Work Workers' Code of Ethics, social work majors who violate academic integrity may be referred to NASW's Committee on Inquiry, which can potentially result in being denied the right to obtain a license to practice social work.

Students with special needs: In order to obtain the rights of a student with special needs those needs must be recognized by the Office for Institutional Equity prior to the beginning of the quarter, and special needs arranged for in advance. Furthermore, students whose disabilities prevent them from performing at least 80% of coursework or attending at least 80% of courses are warned that they may not qualify for employment under the ADA.

Intellectual property rights: The lectures, classroom activities and all materials associated with this class and developed by the instructor are copyrighted in the name of David A. Walters, LISW on 12-08-07. Course content may not be recorded or shared with anyone not enrolled in the program except by instructor permission for purposes of Institutional Equity.

Required texts: There are three required texts for this course, as well as readings posted on Blackboard. Social Policy and Social Programs by Donald E. Chambers & Kenneth R. Wedel, Dynamics of Social Welfare Policy by Gardenia Harris, et al, The Careless Society by John Mcknight

Class content While I expect class discussion to relate to assigned readings, I usually do not lecture about the assigned readings. You may ask questions at the beginning of class. I want to use class time as a supplement to the readings. This is an opportunity to show relevant videos, invite speakers, and to explore some of the ideas in the readings in more depth. Class content may change due to the availability of resources and/or student input.

I will announce pending topics/events each week so that you can be prepared to participate. If I repeated all the topics in the texts in class we would explore each topic very superficially as the texts touch on a great number of ideas. While it is important to explore the content of social work, it is equally important to explore the process of thinking like a social worker.

Reading assignments: (Learning objectives noted in parentheses)

In addition to the following assignments I will be putting readings on BB and will announce these in class.

Week 1

Review the course syllabus

Review the NASW Code of Ethics (BB), (5)

Review Ideas for Critical Thinking (BB)

(2,4)

Week 2

Text Ch's 1 & 2

McKnight – Introduction, Professionalism

Harris – Ch's 1,2, 4

(2, 4, 6,)

Week 3

Text – Ch's 3, 4

Harris – Ch's 7, 9, 10

McKnight – Human Services Systems

(1, 4)

Week 4

Text – Ch 5

Harris – Ch 1

(4, 5)

Week 5

Text – Ch 6

Harris – Ch 8

(1, 2, 5, 7)

Week 6

Text – Ch 7

Harris – Ch 3

McKnight – Medicine

(3, 4)

Week 7

Text – Ch's 8, 9

(3, 4, 6,)

Week 8

Text – Ch 10

Harris – Ch 5

(3, 4, 6)

Week 9

McKnight – The Criminal Justice System

(1, 2, 7, 8)

Week 10

Rural Issues

BB selections to be announced

(1, 7, 8)

Final 6-12-08

Graded assignments:

1 – Class participation - 20 points

2 – Midterm paper – 30 points

3 – Policy Paper – 50 points

Class participation: Your relationship with your peers is very important. Social Work is an interactive profession. It is important that you come to class having done the assigned readings and participate in class discussions. This is an opportunity to ask questions and test ideas. As part of class participation I expect you to turn in your detailed study notes on the assigned texts and a brief summary of other readings for the week. This, along with a weekly question relevant to the assigned material, must be turned in each Mon. This can be turned in to me in class or deposited in the BB digital drop box. The weekly question should be posted on the discussion board in BB. The notes can be handwritten, but please make a copy – don't hand in your original notes. Your grade for class participation will depend on the above assignments, your attendance, and your participation in class discussion.

Midterm Paper – Due – 4-28-08)

Identify a pending bill or a recent Supreme Court Decision (Ohio or US) that impacts social policy. Write a summary of the bill or decision. Then prepare a position paper for one of the political parties or interest group (be sure to identify the group). Be sure to defend your position. See grading sheet for criteria for grading posted on BB under syllabus.

Policy Paper – Due 6-12-08

Using the policy analysis concepts in the Chambers text analyze a social problem and the policies attached to that policy. I want each student to select a different social problem/policy area. I will pass around a sign up sheet. Please review relevant legislation, court decisions, planning and budget documents, and professional literature evaluating the policy. Be sure that you address at least the following: 1 – Define the policy issue, 2- Identify potential winners and losers connected to the issue, 3- Identify relevant ethical/social justice issues, 4 – Give both right and left wing perspectives, 5 – Which perspective, or parts of each, do you support, 6 – Prepare a policy position statement, 7 – Include any other information from Chambers, or other appropriate sources that you deem relevant. Each of you will be required to present your paper in class during the last week of the quarter. Your paper will not have to be completed, but you should be far enough along to be able to discuss your work.

