University of Texas at El Paso Master of Social Work Program
SOWK Course #5357
Social Welfare Policy I
(August 21, 2014 – subject to change)

Instructor: Eva M. Moya, PhD, LMSW
Office: HSNB 437
Phone: (915) 747-8493

Office Hours: M/Th. 12-2:00 pm and by appointment
Meeting Times: M 6:00-8:50 pm
Meeting Classroom: HHSN206

E-Mail: emmoya@utep.edu

I. Course Description
This is the first of two courses that traces the history of social welfare and within it, the evolving role of social work and social welfare. The course also considers the historical development of the profession, including how social work has responded to social problems during key periods of social welfare policy development.

Course objectives: By the end of this course you will (1) practice an orientation perspective that will start you on the road to being a policy advocate; (2) identify an array of policies that share health and human services and the well-being of vulnerable populations as well as the public interest; (3) distinguish between policy practice and policy advocacy; (4) identify specific barriers to policy advocacy; (5) articulate different ideologies; (6) obtain the knowledge, skills and competencies that you need to apply social work values; and (7) critically analyze social policies, problems and how these impact Social Work practice.

The emphasis of this course will be on understanding and articulating the dominant historical themes that have shaped social welfare policy in the United States as well as the economic, social and political constraints and opportunities in the development and implementation of social welfare programs and policies.

II. Student Competencies

Upon completion of this course, you will:

- Develop an understanding of the prevailing historical themes and social problems that have shaped social welfare policy in the United States and acquire knowledge about the changing definitions of social programs (EP 2.1.1, EP 2.1.5, EP 2.1.8)
- Comprehend the relationship between the history of the social work profession and the development of social welfare policy and to demonstrate knowledge of the history of the social work profession and the American social welfare system (EP 2.1.1, EP 2.1.9)
- Apply social work values to critically analyze social problems and policies (EP 2.1.2)
- Comprehend social welfare research as it explains social policy, service delivery, social work practice, and attainment of individual and social well-being (EP 2.1.6, EP 2.1.9)
- Appreciate how social policies differentially affect diverse populations in American society and demonstrate knowledge of how factors such as race/ethnicity, sex, gender, age
and sexual orientation affect the helping relationship, especially with vulnerable populations (EP 2.1.4, EP 2.1.5)

- Be familiar with the roles and responsibilities of social workers in the policy process, including advocacy, leadership, research, and community organizing, with the goal of promoting and advocating for social and economic justice through both organizational and social change (EP 2.1.1, EP 2.1.5)
- Be able to apply the NASW Code of Ethics in relation to social policy (EP 2.1.2)
- Describe and analyze major issues and trends in areas of social work practice, such as health, immigration, child welfare, gerontology, substance abuse, and domestic violence (EP 2.1.9)
- Critically analyze how social services enhance the individual and social well being of people, promote social and economic justice and alleviate critical social problems (EP 2.1.5)
- Recognize the unique policy and program context of the U.S. - Mexico Border and gain familiarity with major policy issues affecting the region including health care, border health, immigration policy, and international trade policy (EP 2.1.4, EP 2.1.9)

III. Required Textbooks and Readings

6. Additional handouts and reading assignments for this course will be placed on Blackboard as PDF or Word files.

**Recommended Text**


IV. Course Assignments and Grading Procedures

There are **four course** assignments:

1. Attend all class sessions, participate in the class discussions and debates and lead a topic discussion assigned by the instructor based on Reisch (2013) or other designated readings.

2. Reflect on policy action project. Students will be asked to identify a single and tangible policy action that they will be responsible for tackling during the semester. You are expected to read and utilize articles on topics related to the policy action and to write a 6 page paper on how you engaged in policy practice and advocacy, the outcomes and a critique on the implications for social work policy and advocacy practice. You will also do a presentation in class.

3. There will be a mid-term, and a final exam.
4. Write a 12-page paper on a recent and relevant social policy issue and propose policy practice and advocacy strategies to address. The instructor will provide you policy paper topics. You will present a synopsis of your research policy findings to the class.

**Instructions for completing assignments and grading**

Grades will be weighted as follows: midterm exam 25%; final exam 25%, policy paper and presentation 25%, policy service-learning activity project and presentation 10% and attendance and class participation 15%. Papers and other assignments are due in class on the assigned date.

**Attendance and Participation – 15%**

If you do not attend, for whatever reason, you cannot participate; therefore, 10 points will be deducted from your grade for every session you are absent, and 5 point will be deducted for every session that you are significantly late or depart early from class if this is a pattern. Participation is based on attendance, participation in class discussions, and debates (**75 points**) and an assigned student lead presentation(s) on Reisch (2013) or other designated readings—instructions will be provided in class (**75 points**). **Total (150)**

**Policy Action and Service Project – 10%**

Select a policy practice action or project you are interested in working with. Examples of policy practice activities or actions will be discussed in class (i.e., University Outreach Celebration event to promote public education September 25 and October 3rd, 2014). You will submit your proposal for approval. You will document the process you used to influence the policy and the outcome. Your document should include a critique on the implications for social work policy and advocacy practice (**100 points**). A presentation of your policy project will take place in the classroom.

**Exams - 50%**

There will be two exams on the required readings, lectures, and any additional handouts. Quizzes will be done in class. There will be one midterm exam and a final one. The exams will be based on reading and discussion materials and will not be comprehensive (**250 points each**).

**Policy Paper and Presentation- 25%**

Imagine you are working with a policy or decision maker at the local, county or state level who believes that our locality or an agency is not doing enough to address social inequalities and injustices. You have been asked to write a 12-page paper on a recent and relevant social policy issue and propose policy practice and advocacy strategies to address. The professor will provide the class with a list of topics from which you will chose one. The policy practice assignment should: (1) provide an overview of the specific policy issue, (2) present an explanation of why this situation exists, and (3) suggest strategies at the policy, community, organizational and/or individual level that could be implemented. The strategy you propose should target those risk factors as well as the determinants that contribute to the inequalities. Provide support for your
policy brief based on class readings, the extant of the literature (peer-review sources), personal experience and observation. The policy paper should be 12 pages, 1.5-space typed pages, font size 12 and using APA Style.

Students will be asked to give a 15-20 minute presentation based on their policy paper (assignment 4). Your presentation should introduce the topic, describe what strategies are need to address the inequality you selected and why. You may include PowerPoint slides, or other forms of presentations (250 points).

Grading is based on the following scale:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>900-1000</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>800-890</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>700-790</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>600-690</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-590</td>
<td>F</td>
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V. Class Policies

**Late assignments:**

Any assignment that is not turned at the beginning of the class period on the day it is due will be considered late. If for some reason assignments are turned in late, the following policy applies to the grade for the assignment:

1. Up to 12 hours late 10% reduction on a 10 point scale (a 10 is now a 9)
2. 12-24 hours late 50% reduction
3. More than 24 hours – you will receive no points.

**Missed tests:**

There will be two assessments (exams) on assigned readings. Missing all or part of any one exam will results in zero points for that test. There are no opportunities to retake a test or take it at a different time without permission from the instructor.

**Attendance and the Drop Deadline:**

Any student missing more than three (unexcused) class sessions risks being withdrawn from the class with a grade of W if the absences occur prior the first eight (8) weeks of class. A grade of F will be assigned if the total of unexcused class sessions missed exceeds three (3) after the first eight (8) weeks of the course. Students wishing to drop a course and receive a grade of W must do so prior to the deadline set by the University. Any dropping of a course after that time will result in an automatic grade of F. This is in accordance with the University policy. Any student who anticipates problems adhering to the course attendance policy should arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible.

**Confidentiality:**

Information shared in class about agencies and clients is considered to be covered by the NASW Code of Ethics regarding the sharing of information for supervisory purposes. Agencies are aware that information is shared in class for this purpose. However, discussion outside of class
with individuals not in this class or with other class members in settings where you cannot assure that no one else may overhear the conversation is considered a breach of confidentiality and will result in recommendation against remaining in the social work program.

**Cell Phones and Pagers:**

Please be considerate of classmates by turning off your phones/beepers while in the classroom. If it is imperative that you remain available by phone/cell, then please turn it to vibrate. To take an emergency phone call, please leave the class room. **Cell phones and pagers must be turned off during quizzes and exams.**

**Disabilities:**

The University of Texas at El Paso is committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 93112- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

UTEP is dedicated to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities so they have equal access and opportunity to complete their education. University policy states that the student is responsible for informing the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) of their disability, and for requesting accommodations within two weeks of the start of each semester. The DSSO determines whether students need accommodation, and assists the instructor in providing accommodation.

If you have or suspect a disability and need accommodations, you should contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148 voice or TTY. You can also email the office at cass@utep.edu or go to room 106, Union Building East. For additional information, visit the CASS website at [www.utep.edu/cass/](http://www.utep.edu/cass/).

**Classroom Behavior:**

Students are expected to treat all other in the classroom with respect. This includes paying attention during class activities and discussions, not holding side conversations or engaging in any activities that disturb other members of the classroom (e.g., texting, emailing). The culture of the learning environment is one of challenging ideas not individuals. Personal attacks will not be tolerated.

UTEP expects students to maintain standards of personal integrity that are in harmony with the educational goals of the institution; to observe national, state, and local laws and University regulations; and to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Any disruptive behavior that interrupts faculty’s ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, and/or inhibits students’ ability to learn could lead to deductions in participation points, removal from the classroom and reporting the behavior to the Dean of Students.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

*It is the philosophy of the University of Texas at El Paso that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons*
involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures.

Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. All alleged acts of scholastic dishonesty should be reported to the Dean of Students for disposition, or proceed with disciplinary action in a manner which provides the accused student his or her rights of due process.

Refer to [http://www.utep.edu/dos/academic.htm](http://www.utep.edu/dos/academic.htm) for further information. You must cite, reference, or quote information obtained from other sources so you give credit where credit is due. I will report any instances of plagiarism and dishonesty to the Dean of Students Office and the grade for the assignment will be an “F” or “zero”.

**VI. Course Outline**
A variety of learning methods are used including lectures, discussions, exercises, assignments, readings, and videos.

*The instructor reserves the right to modify this course as needed.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Assigned Readings</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Course Objectives &amp; Competencies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wk 1 8/25</td>
<td>Getting started, review syllabus, questions. Jansson, Ch 1</td>
<td>Class overview&lt;br&gt;Part 1: Setting the Context and Humanizing Policy Practice&lt;br&gt;Joining a tradition of social reform&lt;br&gt;Hands-on framework for reforming policies&lt;br&gt;Policy practice and policy advocacy&lt;br&gt;Challenges encountered in practice</td>
<td>CO: 1, 2, 3&lt;br&gt;EPAS: 2.1.2, 2.1.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wk 2 9/1</td>
<td>Labor Day - Holiday</td>
<td>Four rationales for participating in policy advocacy: Ethical, Analytical, Political and Electoral</td>
<td>CO: 1, 2, 5&lt;br&gt;EPAS: 2.1.2, 2.1.4, 2.1.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3 9/8</td>
<td>Jansson, Ch 2</td>
<td>Sara Belger Polk, MSW Student and Archer Program Fellow and Stephanie Acosta, Senator Jose Rodriguez Constituent Services</td>
<td>Submission: Policy Action proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4 9/15</td>
<td>Reisch, Ch 1-2</td>
<td>U.S. Social Policy in the New Century: Historical Overview</td>
<td>CO: 5,6,7 EPAS: 2.1.1-2.1.5 and 2.1.7-10.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 5 9/22</th>
<th>Reisch Ch 3-4</th>
<th>Political-Economy of Contemporary U.S. Policy</th>
<th>CO: 5, 6, 7 EPAS: 2.1.1-2.1.10</th>
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<tr>
<td>*Turn in the outline for policy paper</td>
<td>Social Policy and the racial regulation of people of color</td>
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<td>Student lead discussions</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 6 9/29</th>
<th>Reisch Ch 5</th>
<th>Women and Social Policy: Representation of women in politics, media</th>
<th>CO: 1, 5, 6, 7 EPAS: 2.1.1-2.1.10</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student lead discussions</td>
<td>Documentary: MISS Representation</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 7 10/6</th>
<th>Reisch Ch 6-7</th>
<th>Part II: Overview of themes and context</th>
<th>CO: 1, 6, 7 EPAS: 2.1.1-2.1.3; 2.1.5-, 2.1.6., 2.1.8-2.1.10.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student lead discussions</td>
<td>Policy Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review for 1st exam</td>
<td>Federal, state and district budget basics for Social Workers</td>
<td>Norma Favela, El Paso District Clerk</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 8 10/13</th>
<th>Student lead discussions</th>
<th>Policy Advocacy at the local, state and federal level.</th>
<th>CO: 1, 6, 7 EPAS: 2.1.1-2.1.10</th>
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<tr>
<td>1st exam</td>
<td>Guillermo Valenzuela, Community Affairs Officer, Aliviane, Inc.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 9 10/20</th>
<th>Reisch Ch 8-10</th>
<th>Key Areas of Social Policy Overview of themes/content of Part III: Social Security: past, present and future.</th>
<th>CO: 1, 2, 4 EPAS: 2.1.1-2.1.10</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student lead discussions</td>
<td>Poverty, unemployment, homelessness, mental illness Ray Tullius, Director The Opportunity Center</td>
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| Week 10 10/27 | Reisch Ch 11-12 |  |  |
| Week 11 11/3 | Reisch Ch 13  
Student lead discussions | Welfare and Welfare Reform  
*Maria Covernali*  
Executive Director  
*Familias Triunfadoras, Inc.* | CO: 1, 2, 4  
EPAS: 2.1.1-2.1.10 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week 12 11/10 | Reisch 14 | U.S.–Mexico Human Services  
Implementation of the Affordable Health Care Act of 2010  
*Bill Schlesinger*  
Executive Director  
Project VIDA | CO: 3, 5, 6, EPAS: 2.1.12.1.10 |
| Week 13 11/17 | *1st round policy presentations* | Policy paper presentations and discussion | CO: 3, 5, 6, EPAS: 2.1.2, 2.1.9 |
| Week 14 11/24 | *2nd round of presentations* | Policy paper presentations and discussion | CO: 3, 5, 6, EPAS: 2.1.2, 2.1.9 |
| Week 15 12/1 | *3rd round of presentations*  
*Review for 2nd exam* | Policy paper presentations and discussion | CO: 3, 5, 6, EPAS: 2.1.2, 2.1.9 |
| Week 16 12/8 | *Exam No. 2* | Bringing it all together | CO: 3, 5, 6,  
EPAS: 2.1.2, 2.1.9 |