

Course Syllabus

SOC 6340/POEC 7340: DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICIES

Spring 2007

Wednesday 4:00-6:45pm

GR 3.606

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Office Hours: Tuesday 3:00-5:00pm and by appointment.

Course Description

The goal of this course is to familiarize students with the basic dimensions of social policy in the United States, and with the main ongoing problems, issues, and debates. Social policy refers to any government program or policy that uses collective resources, e.g. tax revenues, to improve the quality of life of a subset of the population experiencing some form of distress. Examples include programs to supplement income for the poor, aged, or disabled, programs to provide access to medical care for those who lack it, and programs to stabilize families and prevent child abuse.

Discussions of social policies often arouse strong passions. People have deeply-held moral, ethical, political and religious views about such issues as poverty, health care, and other aspects of social policy. As a result, arguments about social policies are often carried out on a high level of abstraction, with little attention to the data on what the problems are, what has been tried, and whether past policies have been effective. On the other hand, much of the academic literature has had the opposite problem: issues are analyzed from a bland, technocratic point of view, avoiding any direct discussion of values, politics, or morality.

This course will attempt to integrate both types of analysis to get the benefits of each. Thus, we will look carefully at the data, talk about the microeconomic bases of policy, and read about program evaluations. But we will also argue among ourselves about what the goals of social policy should be and about their political and moral justifications. There are no right answers to the types of questions we will be discussing. In the process of exploring our disagreements, I hope that we will be forced to critically examine our own assumptions, to look carefully at the data, and to take seriously the value choices implicit in social policy choices.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

- Students will become familiar with the conceptual and operational definitions of poverty, inequality, equity, and related concepts.
- Students will become familiar with the major social programs in the United States, including an understanding of the historical origins of the programs, operational details of the programs, and the current controversies and reform efforts.
- Students will learn to analyze proposed policies with respect to effectiveness, political feasibility, sustainability, horizontal equity, and vertical equity.

WebCT. Readings, assignments, and important messages will be posted on the course web site on WebCT. Important: unless you intend to check your WebCT mailbox regularly, set up mail forwarding. To do this, go to the “Mail” page, choose “Message Settings,” enter the email address you monitor most frequently, and check the box to have messages forwarded.

Course Requirements and Grading

Students are expected to read all assigned readings before class and to participate actively in class discussion. Students are responsible for a number of written assignments. These are a problem analysis, a book review, an annotated bibliography, and a final paper. There will also be a cumulative final exam.

Grading:

Problem Analysis	10%
Book Review	10%
Annotated Bibliography	10%
Final Paper	25%
Final Exam	25%
Class Participation	20%

Texts and Readings.

The following texts are required:

Sheldon Danziger and Robert Haveman, *Understanding Poverty*. New York: Russell Sage, 2001.

Michael B. Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America*. New York: Basic Books, 1996.

Mark Rank, *One Nation, Underprivileged: Why American Poverty Affects Us All*.
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

In addition, you will write a book review of another book of your choosing from a list I will provide. Other assigned readings will be available in PDF form in WebCT or Xeroxed. A number of readings are drawn from the 2004 Green Book, available online (a link to the Green Book will be posted on WebCT).

Course & Instructor Policies

Scholastic Dishonesty. Please be advised that scholastic dishonesty will not be tolerated during the class. That means that you may neither give nor receive assistance from any person during a quiz or examination. Further, in written work, you may not plagiarize, which is defined as using the words or ideas of another person or organization without appropriate attribution. I will follow the standard University procedures in cases of suspected academic dishonesty. For a first offense, I will recommend at a minimum a grade of zero on the assignment in question. For a second offense, I recommend expulsion from the University.

Attendance. Much of the value of the class comes from participation in class discussion, whether or not it was in the readings or lecture notes. Missing class could adversely affect your class participation score, unless you have obtained prior approval. You are also responsible for any announcements made in class. For most students, attendance is simply essential to learning the material. If you do need to miss a class, be sure to consult with a fellow student to learn what transpired.

Late Assignments. Unless you obtain prior approval, late assignments are penalized at the rate of one grade point per week. All assignments must be turned in via the WebCT drop box by 4pm on day the assignment is due.

SCHEDULE, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS		
Subject to Change!		
<i>Consult WebCT for Updated Version.</i>		
<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
		- Readings * <i>Assignments Due</i>
1	Jan. 10	Overview of the Course The Budget of the United States Overview of the Major Social Programs

2	Jan. 17	<p>Poverty and Inequality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Burtless and Smeeding, “The Level, Trend, and Composition of Poverty,” in Danziger and Haveman, <i>Understanding Poverty</i>, Ch. 1. - Cancian and Reed, “Changes in Family Structure: Implications for Poverty and Related Policy,” in Danziger and Haveman, <i>Understanding Poverty</i>, Ch. 2. - Robert E. Rector and Kirk A. Johnson, <i>Understanding Poverty in America</i> (WebCT) - Mark Robert Rank, <i>One Nation, Underprivileged</i>, Ch. 1-2
3	Jan. 24	<p>Perspectives on the Causes of Poverty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Freeman, “The Rising Tide Lifts...”, in Danziger and Haveman, <i>Understanding Poverty</i>, Ch. 3. - Corcoran, “Mobility, Persistence, and the Consequences of Poverty for Children,” in Danziger and Haveman, in Danziger and Haveman, <i>Understanding Poverty</i>, Ch 4. - Mark Rank, <i>One Nation, Underprivileged</i>, Ch. 3
4	Jan. 31	<p>Historical Origins of Social Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Michael B. Katz, <i>In the Shadow of the Poorhouse</i>, Ch. 1,2 and 4 * Problem Analysis Due
5	Feb. 7	<p>Crisis and Response: Social Policy Evolves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Michael B. Katz, <i>In the Shadow of the Poorhouse</i>, Ch. 7-9
6	Feb. 14	<p>Competing Contemporary Perspectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mark Robert Rank, <i>One Nation, Underprivileged</i>, Ch. 4-6 - Lawrence Mead, <i>The Logic of Workfare</i> (WebCT)
7	Feb. 21	<p>From AFDC to TANF: Welfare and Welfare Reform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - John Kara Scholz and Kara Levine, “The Evolution of Income Support Policy in Recent Decades,” in Danziger and Haveman, <i>Understanding Poverty</i>, Ch. 6. - LaDonna A. Pavetti, “Welfare Policy in Transition,” in Danziger and Haveman, <i>Understanding Poverty</i>, Ch. 7. * Book Review Due
8	Feb. 28	<p>Access to Health Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mullahy and Wolfe, “Health Policies for the Non-Elderly Poor,” in Danziger and Haveman, <i>Understanding Poverty</i>, Ch. 8.
	Mar. 7	SPRING BREAK
9	Mar. 14	<p>Child Welfare, Social Services, and Marriage Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green Book, Section 11 (WebCT). * Literature Review Due
10	Mar. 21	<p>Education, Training, and Human Capital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lynn Karoly, “Investing in the Future: Reducing Poverty through Human Capital Investments,” in Danziger and Haveman, Ch. 9. - Green Book, Section 9 and Section 15, “Food Stamp Program,” “School Lunch and Breakfast”, “Head Start” (WebCT).

11	Mar. 28	Segregation by Race and Class - John Yinger, "Housing Discrimination and Residential Segregation as Causes of Poverty," in Danziger and Haveman, Ch. 10 - Glenn Loury, "Politics, Race, and Poverty Research", in Danziger and Havenman, Ch. 13
12	Apr. 4	Housing and Community Development - Ronald F. Ferguson, "Community Revitalization, Jobs, and Well Being," in Danziger and Haveman, Ch. 12. * <i>Draft of Final Paper Due</i>
13	Apr. 11	Social Security and Disability - The Century Foundation, "Social Security Reform: The Basics" - Social Security Trustee's Report (Summary) - Skim Green Book, Section 1 (WebCT).
14	Apr. 18	Future Directions in Social Policy - Mark Robert Rank, <i>One Nation, Underprivileged</i> , Ch. 7-9 - Richard Dickens and David T. Ellwood, "Child Poverty in Britain and the United States," <i>The Economic Journal</i> (WebCT). * <i>Final Paper Due</i>
	Apr. 25	FINAL EXAM

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic

Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22
PO Box 830688
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.