

## PPPE 6340/SOC 6340 Domestic Social Policy

Fall 2016  
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Tuesday 7 – 9:45 p.m.  
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Domestic Social Policy examines governmental and nongovernmental programs, policies, and institutions dealing with individuals and families who do not function self-sufficiently within the American market economy. Beneficiaries of such programs include children and youth, the elderly, families headed by unemployed or under-employed parents, and people with physical and mental disabilities. By the end of the course, students should understand 1) the historical and political economy context for American domestic social policy; 2) the nature, causes, and consequences of poverty in the U.S.; and 3) the context, implications, and current policy debates in several key social policy areas.

We will begin with a conceptual and historical overview of how social policy in the United States reflects political economy, culture, demographic trends, and social and political institutions. We will continue with an examination of poverty, including its various definitions and differing views on its causes and consequences, and the range of public policy responses to poverty in the United States. The remainder of the course will examine a series of current American social policy reform issues on topics including cash assistance (welfare); education; health care; housing, homelessness, and urban development; and retirement. The class will be run as a seminar, with an emphasis on group discussion of assigned readings and current issues in social policy.

Course requirements include: weekly essays on assigned course readings (40% of the total course grade); a policy brief comparing positions of the major political candidates on an issue in domestic social policy (20%); and a policy analysis research paper (40%). Each student will be responsible for submitting a brief essay each week summarizing that week's assigned reading. The comparative analysis will have students summarize and compare the domestic social policy positions of the two major presidential candidates in the 2016 election. The policy analysis research paper will involve analyzing a significant domestic policy issue to be selected in consultation with the instructor. (The paper may focus on the domestic policy of a nation other than the United States.) Guidelines for the assignments will be distributed in class and posted on eLearning. Each student also will be expected to give a class presentation on her/his policy analysis paper during the last few weeks of class.

Required readings include four required texts and some web-based material on current social policy issues to be posted on eLearning. The books are:

- Maria Cancian and Sheldon Danziger (eds), *Changing Poverty, Changing Policies*, Russell Sage Foundation, 2009. ISBN 9780871543103.
- Mitchell Duneier, *Ghetto: The Invention of a Place and the History of an Idea*. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2016. ISBN 9780374161804.
- Sharon Hays, *Flat Broke with Children: Women in the Age of Welfare Reform*, Oxford University Press, 2004. ISBN 9780195176018.
- Isabel V. Sawhill, *Generation Unbound: Drifting Into Sex and Marriage*, Brookings Institution Press, 2014. ISBN 9780815726357.

Course Outline (subject to revisions announced in class)

August 23	Introduction to the Course
August 30	Historical Overview of Social Policy Reading: Scotch, “Social Policy 1945-1968” (eLearning)
September 6	Poverty Definitions and Policy Responses Reading: Cancian & Danziger, chapters 1, 2, 14
September 13	Structural and Demographic Trends Reading: Cancian & Danziger, chapters 3, 4, 5
September 20	Mobility Reading: Cancian & Danziger chapters 6, 7
September 27	Marriage and Social Policy Reading: Sawhill, all
October 4	Cash Assistance and Family Policies TOPIC STATEMENT DUE Reading: Cancian & Danziger, chapter 8, 9
October 11	Family, Gender, and Work Reading: Hays, all
October 18	Education and Poverty ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE Reading: Cancian & Danziger chapter 10
October 25	Health, Health Care, and Poverty Reading: Cancian & Danziger, chapter 12
November 1	Urban Policy Reading: Duneier, all
November 8	Domestic Social Policy in the 2016 Presidential Election/Student Presentations COMPARATIVE POLICY BRIEFS DUE
November 15	Housing and Homelessness/ Student Presentations Reading: Gladwell, “Million Dollar Murray” (eLearning)
November 22	Fall Break – No Class Meeting
November 29	Social Security/Student Presentations Reading: eLearning TBA
December 6	Medicare/Student Presentations Reading: eLearning TBA

**University Policies**

Information on university policies related to this and other UT Dallas classes may be found at <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>.