Social Work 203

Social Welfare Programs and Policy

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Bulletin Description

Prereq: Social Work 101, Political Science 103, Sociology 101. Prereq or Coreq: English 125. Consideration of socio-economic conditions that have influenced the development of major contemporary social welfare institutions; emphasis on the interrelationships of social problems and policies, social welfare measures, and the values of contemporary society; introduction to social policy analysis.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Social Work 203 follows Social Work 101, which introduced the student to the social welfare arena, the profession of social work, and the profession's values, knowledge, and social action activities; and precedes Social Work 293, the first practice course.

The purpose of the social policy sequence is to contribute to the preparation of generalist social workers who: 1) are knowledgeable about social welfare programs and policies; 2) can apply this knowledge in social work interventions; and 3) can participate effectively in efforts to improve both policies and programs.

Social Work 203 is the first in a two-course sequence. It integrates content from several domains (philosophy, history, sociology, economics, political science and social work) into a coherent paradigm of the US social welfare system. The course focuses on three primary themes: the evolution of US social welfare policies and programs; the development of social work as a profession; and selected current social welfare programs.

In light of the Social Work Program and York College missions, special attention is given to programs and policies that are particularly relevant to oppressed groups, diverse cultures, urban settings and international perspectives. Programs and policies studied are drawn largely from these domains. In considering social work's dual focus both on individual human suffering and on social change to prevent this suffering, the courses stress the impact of social problems on individuals, issues related to the application of knowledge about social programs and policies to social work practice, and the ethical considerations crucial to the development and implementation of programs and policies. Finally, the courses in the social policy sequence stress the importance of using research-based knowledge in the development and implementation of social programs.
Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to:

1. demonstrate knowledge of the forces that shaped current US social welfare policies and programs
2. demonstrate knowledge of the forces that shaped the social work profession
3. demonstrate beginning knowledge of US social welfare policies
4. demonstrate beginning ability to analyze the relationship between social problems and social policies/programs
5. demonstrate knowledge of selected national social welfare programs, e.g., TANF, SSI, OASDI
6. demonstrate knowledge of one local social welfare program in an area of interest
7. recognize the global nature of many social welfare problems and the impact that human diversity has on how such problems are addressed
8. demonstrate knowledge of at least one social welfare program in one foreign country
9. demonstrate beginning professional communication skills (oral and written)
10. use print and electronic library resources to find information about domestic and foreign social welfare programs
11. use correct APA bibliographic style
12. be prepared to assume professional responsibility to advocate for policies and programs that are responsive to human needs, and to empower traditionally oppressed peoples to achieve mastery over their condition.

Course Requirements and Grading Policy

Please refer to the York College Bulletin for policies on academic integrity. The student is expected to attend, and be on time for all class sessions; more than one absence or lateness will result in a lowering of the grade.

Final written assignments and designated preliminary assignments must be submitted on time. The penalty for lateness in submission of preliminary assignments will be refusal of instructor to provide feedback; the penalty for lateness in submission of final assignment will be the reduction of grade by 1/2 grade for each day late.

There will be no make-ups given for quizzes or exams.
Required Reading


Supplemental Reading


* All readings are on reserve in the library

Criteria for evaluation

A comprehensive examination given near the end of the semester, which covers the entire semester's work, is administered sequence-wide. The final grade is determined by taking into account the student's grade on this exam, other exams and assignments the individual instructor deems necessary, as well as attendance and class participation.

15 points 3 Quizzes (5 points each)
10 points Homework Assignments
20 points Mid-Term Examination
25 points Final Examination
10 points Social Welfare Program (US) Assignment
10 points Social Welfare Program (Foreign) Assignment
10 points Assistance in moving class discussions forward; includes knowledgeable class participation, punctuality and attendance

Instructional Methods

• Lectures by instructor
• Presentations by students
• Class exercises and discussions
• Reading assignments
• Writing assignments with instructor feedback
• Quizzes/Exams
• Videos
• Attendance at social work conference and/or political rally and/or other relevant activity
• Internet use for research on social policies
COURSE OUTLINE

Note: Readings to have been completed by first date of topic, unless otherwise specified.

Unit 1 Introduction (3 hours)

Overview of course

1. Relevance of social programs and policy to social work
2. Nature of the course

Unit 2 Basic Concepts (3 hours)

Readings: Course Syllabus
Handout: What is A Professional Journal?
Popple & Leighninger, chapters 1 and 2

A. Competing perspectives
B. Basic concepts
C. Social work as a profession

Unit 3 Philosophical issues in US Social Welfare (3 hours)

Reading: Popple & Leighninger, chapter 2

A. Public/private assistance
B. Religious/nonsectarian assistance
C. Selective/universal assistance
D. Residual/institutional assistance
E. Blaming the victim

Unit 4 Historical Themes and Major Events (9 hours)

Readings: Popple & Leighninger chapter 3 (p. 59-81) and 9
Coll Trattner, chapters 1-5

A. Judeo-Christian tradition
B. Feudal Era
C. Statute of Laborers
D. English Poor Laws; Government responsibility for the poor
E. Colonial years and the American Revolution
F. Early years of the Republic
G. Indoor/outdoor relief
H. Laissez-faire social welfare
I. Social Darwinism
Unit 4  B. Historical Themes and Major Events  (Continued)

J. Charity Organization Societies
K. Settlement Houses
L. New Deal; Social Security Act of 1935
M. War on Poverty
N. Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996
O. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Unit 5  Social Problems and the Need for Social Welfare (3 hours)

Readings:  Handout: NASW Code of Ethics
           Popple & Leighninger chapter 3 (p. 81-100)

A. Definition
B. Examples
C. Why social welfare is necessary
D. Research: need for, and use of, in social problems

Unit 6  Social Welfare Policies and Programs

A. Poverty  (6 hours)

Readings: Popple & Leighninger, chapters 7 and 8

1. The problem
   a. Definition: poverty line
   b. Extent, differential distribution
   c. Causes
   d. How and why it is a social problem
   e. Research in the poverty arena

2. Income Maintenance policies and programs
   a. Social Insurance
      1) Old Age Survivor's and Disability Insurance
      2) Unemployment Insurance
      3) Worker's Compensation
   b. Public Assistance
      1) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
      2) Supplemental Security Income
      3) General Assistance
   c. Research in Income Maintenance

MID-TERM EXAMINATION
Unit 6  Social Welfare Policies and Programs  

B.  Human Diversity, Racism & Discrimination  

Readings: Popple & Leighninger, chapter 5

1. The problem  
   a. Definitions  
   b. Extent  
   c. Causes  
   d. How and why it is a social problem

2. Strategies against discrimination  
   a. Civil Rights legislation  
   b. Educational initiatives  
   c. Class exercise and or video

3. Research in racism and discrimination

C. Child and Family Welfare  

Readings: Popple & Leighninger, chapter 10

1. Structure of us child welfare system  
   a. Supportive services  
   b. Supplementary services  
      1) Day care services  
      2) Protective services  
      a) Definition  
      b) History  
      c) Major causes requiring protective services, i.e., abuse/neglect  
      d) Permanency planning  
      e) Social workers' responsibility  
   c. Substitute Services  
      1) Foster family care  
      2) Institutional care

2. Major normative issues  
   a. Parens patriae versus parents' rights  
   b. Cultural norms versus child abuse

3. Research in child and family welfare
Unit 6  Social Welfare Policies and Programs (Continued)

D. Health Care (3 hours)

Readings: Popple & Leighninger, chapters 12 and 13

1. Medical health care system
   a. Uninsured, under insured
   b. Auspices of health care
   c. Major government programs
      1) Medicare
      2) Medicaid
   d. Health care for special groups
      1) Children
      2) Elderly

2. Mental health
   a. History in US
   b. Major programs and services

3. Social work and health care

4. Research in health care

E. Gerontology (3 hours)

Readings: Popple & Leighninger, chapter 15

1. Definitions

2. Demographics of aging

3. Economics of aging
   a. Sources of income for non-poor
   b. Sources of income for poor

4. Housing
   a. Independent housing
   b. Group housing

5. Health care

6. Ageism

7. Social policy: Older Americans Act

8. Research in gerontology
Unit 7  Social Welfare Programs Outside the US  (3 hours)

1. Overview of international social welfare
2. Student presentations

FINAL EXAMINATION
Bibliography


Kingsbridge Heights Community Center (n.d.). *Sexual abuse.* (Available from the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, 3101 Kingsbridge Terrace, Bronx, NY 10463).


