

POLS/SW 340: Social Policy
3 Semester Hours
Blackboard Course

Lewis-Clark State College
Social Sciences Division
POLS/SW 340.bchristenson.fa09

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Office Hours: Office Hours: Monday 9:00-11:30am, Wednesday 1:30-3:30pm, or by appointment.

Note: Last day to add class(es) or to drop without “W” grade on transcript is 9-4-2009. Last day to withdraw from class(es) or college for the semester is 10-30-2009. Last day to apply for graduation (Spring 2010- all degrees/certificates) is 10-01-09.

I. Course Description

This course explores the development, formulation, implementation and effects of social policy on institutions and society. Social policy formation, decision-making, analysis, and their intentional and unintentional effects on society are examined through the utilization of both historic and scientific public policy critical thinking analysis. Issues of identifying, evaluating, and reporting those effects are presented and discussed. A preview of present and future trends will be introduced and critically analyzed.

Prerequisites: **None: His/SW320 Recommended**

II. Introduction and Overview

The profession of **social work** and **political science** has always operated within the context of social policy- whether this policy stems from agency rules and guidelines, the decisions of boards, licensing regulations, governmental regulations and laws or court rulings. Students should have a grasp of how to analyze and evaluate the policies that will affect their work, the lives of their clients and the larger community. This course will focus on understanding of how policies have developed, whom they affect and how they affect those people, especially the disenfranchised, out-groups and those people needing empowerment.

III. Purpose of the Course in the Curriculum

This is the third course in the curriculum of social work which has as its focus, social welfare and the context through which social workers provide services. SW 140/240, Social Welfare and Social Services and SW 320, The History of Social Welfare are predecessor courses leading to this course. The previous courses have focused on types of social welfare services and how the policies have emerged from an historical perspective. This course is provides the opportunity for the student to explore current policies and evaluate how those policies impact individuals and groups in the community. A particular emphasis is placed on understanding the rationale for social welfare policies and the political process by which policies are made. **This course is cross-**

listed with political science and meets 3 credits of the required political science, history, and social science emphasis. Please consult your major advisor for specific social sciences degree requirements and the placement of this course in your degree major.

PROGRAM GOALS & COURSE OBJECTIVES: (Social Work Majors)

This course addresses the follow Goals:

- 1) To provide learning experiences and opportunities in a variety of settings that develop generalist practice social work knowledge and skills needed to achieve BSW career objectives and meet client needs.

- 2) To educate students on the ethical foundation of social work as stated in the NASW Code of Ethics where self reflection of one's own values and the understanding of how they influence relationships are emphasized.

- 3) To teach generalist practice social work knowledge and skills that prepare students to enhance human well-being and alleviate poverty, oppression, and other forms of social injustice through an understanding of social work history, social welfare policy analysis and development, advocacy, resource development, and other social or political actions that promote social and economic justice

- 4) Relying on a liberal arts foundation, teach generalist practice social work knowledge and skills that prepare students to enhance the social functioning and interactions of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities by involving them in accomplishing goals, developing resources, and preventing and alleviating distress.

Course Objectives: (All Majors)

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Obtain awareness of the social, political and economic context of social work generalist and professional human service practice evidenced through exams, papers, presentations and class discussions.

2. Understanding of the role of policy at all levels of social work generalist practice and professional human service practice.

3. Understanding of the ethical dilemmas integral to public policy.

4. Understanding of the structural factors that create adversity for specific out-groups in American society.

5. Understanding how to study policy dimensions systematically to determine who is affected, how they are affected and what needs are not met by given policies.

6. Understand and analyze how policy affects individual and community needs.

7. Knowledge of at least one area of direct generalist social work practice and professional human service practice from a policy practice and policy advocacy perspective.
8. Understanding ways to take action, through policy practice, on behalf of outgroups who have been oppressed and discriminated against.

I. TEXTS AND REQUIRED READING

REQUIRED:

1. American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, D.C.: Author.
2. Karger, H.J. & Stoesz, D. (2010). *American social welfare policy: A pluralist approach* (6th ed.). New York: Allyn & Bacon.

II. TEACHING METHODS/CLASS CLIMATE

There will be times during this course when societal "isms" or prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory practices are examined. Because of our commitment to social and economic justice, we are open to hearing all views and all perspectives will be carefully examined. Students are expected to be respectful of the opinions of others while at the same time striving to attain the ideals of social justice.

Students in a professional program should conduct themselves as professionals in relation to the class session and assignments. It is not acceptable to be late for classes except in unusual circumstances. Frequent lateness or other unprofessional class conduct is likely to result in a lowered grade. Students are also evaluated on their personal and professional behavior or conduct in this class as described in the **BSW Handbook (Social Work Majors)** and **LCSC Student Handbook (All Majors)**. Please refer to the Handbook(s) for further clarification.

Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires that the university make reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities as defined in the act. Students with a disability seeking an academic accommodation must contact the Office of Disability Services at 792-2211. The Disability Services Coordinator will inform faculty of specific classroom and course accommodations consistent with ADA guidelines.

Shared Client and Agency Information: In the classroom, students and professors will occasionally discuss clients and agencies. In these discussions, it is expected that information about clients and agencies should be disguised or eliminated if clients could

be identified and that this information is to be held in confidence within the bounds of the Code of Ethics. You must disguise the identity of clients in written assignments including changing the name of the client.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING PROCEDURES

1. **Module Quizzes:** Students will take eight quizzes covering reading assignments and online Powerpoint lectures/ online classroom discussions. Exams will include but are not limited to multiple choice, short answers, and essays at the discretion of the instructor. Exams will be facilitated through the Blackboard online learning system.
2. **Blackboard Module Discussions**
Under the “Discussion” area of the Blackboard online learning environment, there will be eight (bi-weekly) discussions over the course of the semester as presented in the course outline. A minimum of a **two paragraph** posting and response is expected for each module, more is welcomed. You are expected to reference the text and/or research articles to support your viewpoints and posting. **Note: If you miss a discussion, you are not allowed to make it up. Students are expected to be an active and integral member within the discussion environment. Each discussion will be open for a two week period, and then will be locked on the Monday morning following the two week discussion time frame.**
3. **American Public Policy Analysis Group Project: Due at the end of Module 7 (See course calendar)** Each working group (**Identified by week 2 by the professor through group discussion activities**) will complete a policy analysis paper on a topic approved by the professor. The paper will require extensive shared research and group discussion. It should be a minimum of 20 pages long excluding references, and should not exceed 30 pages in length. The paper is to follow the outline below. Papers will be submitted through the Blackboard system. **A complete example will be provided through the course media library.**

A MODEL FOR POLICY ANALYSIS (based on Karger & Stoesz)

Policy analysis papers should include a detailed table of contents and four sections—historical background, description of the problem necessitating the policy, description of the policy and policy analysis. Papers should be no shorter than 20 pages of text and no longer than 30 pages. Format should follow the APA Publication Manual (5th ed.). **Sub-headings for each section are required. Papers not completed with sub-headings will be returned to the student group without a grade for revision.**

A. Historical background

What historical problems led to the creation of the policy? How important have these problems been historically? How was the problem handled previously? What is the historical background of the policy? When did the policy originate? How has the original policy changed over time? What is the legislative history of the policy—how have this issue or similar issues been discussed and debated in legislative bodies? What has been the fate of similar policies adopted in

the past? Does the National Association of Social Workers or another national organization have a policy statement on this issue? Include a critical review of the position in your discussion.

B. Description of the problem that necessitates the policy

What is the nature of the problem? How widespread is the problem? How many people are affected? Who is affected and how? (Include analysis of differential effects based on race, socioeconomic class, gender, religious, or regional differences.) What are the causes of the problem? How will the policy help address the problem?

C. Description of the policy

Based on your study of the problem (or need), your critique of past societal policy/program response, and your own criteria for choice, describe clearly and defend your own proposal for a policy response to the issue. Include an explanation of how your proposal is different from or better than past or current policy responses. This should not be simply your hotly argued "opinion". Refer to research and political arguments that demonstrate that your proposal would better meet certain social goals and values, and/or be more "palatable" to the American public.

How is the policy intended to work? On what scientific theory and knowledge is the policy based? What resources or opportunities is the policy expected to provide—e.g., power, cash, economic opportunity, in-kind services, status redistribution, goods and services, etc.? Who will be covered by the policy and how—e.g., universal versus selective entitlement, means-testing, etc.? How will the policy be implemented, including means for coordination? What are the expected short- and long-term goals and outcomes of the policy? Under what auspices will the policy be administered—e.g., public/private-not-for-profit/private-for-profit, local/state/federal government? How will the policy be funded in the short- and long-term? What agencies or organizations will be responsible for overseeing, evaluating and coordinating the policy? What formal and informal criteria will be used to determine the effectiveness of the policy and its appropriateness? How long is the policy projected to exist—is it a "sunset law"? What recommendation for a new or amended position would you propose for consideration by national organizations?

D. Policy analysis

This section should go beyond description and engage in systematic, critical analysis in light of both values and ethical preferences and practical/technical concerns.

- Are the goals of the policy legal? Are the goals just and democratic? Do the goals contribute to greater social equality? Do the goals positively affect the redistribution of income, resources, rights, entitlements, opportunities and status? Does the policy represent the continuation of or a departure from the status quo? Is the policy intended to foster real social change or merely to placate a potentially insurgent group?
- What social vision, if any, does the policy represent? Are the goals of the policy consistent with the values of professional social work—e.g., social justice, dignity and worth of the person, self-determination, client rights, respect for cultural and social diversity, etc.?
- What are the hidden ideological suppositions hidden within the policy? How do dominant American values manifest themselves in relationship to this issue? How do competing or

minority social values come into play in response to this issue?

- How is the target population viewed in the context of the policy? How would the issue be defined or manifested differently if society looked at individual and family strengths, rather than focusing on deficits or deviance from social norms? Does the policy seem to ignore, impede, or strengthen the social functions of families? Do the goals contribute to a better quality of life for the target population? Will the goals adversely affect the quality of life of the target group? Does the policy contribute to positive social relations between the target population and the overall society?
- What does research say about effectiveness of reaching *stated goals* and the *actual outcomes* of past or current policy approaches?
- Is the policy politically feasible? Economically feasible? Administratively feasible? (Refer to discussion in Karger & Stoesz, Chapter 2.)

NOTE: Throughout your discussion you may wish to use tables, graphs, and other visual aids to help display statistical dimensions of the policy issue you are analyzing. This will help you develop your ability to display statistical data in a useful form for lawmakers and others in the policy education process. Be sure to explain the implications or meaning of such visual aids in the text of your paper. (Consult APA Manual for proper style for Tables & Figures.)

The report must be in APA style format, double spaced, twelve font Times New Romans, 1 inch margins. A minimum of ten article reviews, government reports, documents, public policy briefs, and book citations are required. At a minimum, one book is required for the project. Newspapers, internet sites such as Wikipedia, and non “peer” reviewed reference material will not be accepted for assignments and will be returned to the student group without a grade. Additionally, extensive quotes are not allowed for this assignment. You can quote, periodically, to keep the spirit of the original work, but use them sparingly. Therefore, all work should be paraphrased and cited appropriately. **Hint:** There are excellent books available in the library on many of the topics presented for policy analysis. If you are not familiar with APA (American Psychological Association), 5th Edition writing style, the writing lab in Spaulding Hall can help you as well as through the guidance and direction of the professor. Students can access non-circulating reference copies through the LCSC library system. You can also access tutorials on Dr. Christenson’s website at <http://www.lcsc.edu/bchristenson>

4. **Policy Group Powerpoint Presentation Project: Due at the end of Module 7**

Students will complete a group project identifying a social policy approved by the instructor and the problem which the policy was intended to impact using policy analysis skills presented in the text and in classroom lectures following the outline provided in class. No more than six students can be in any given group. The group will report and create a class **PowerPoint** presentation and present their report and findings to the class at the end of the semester following their group policy analysis paper **in the final module discussion**. An anonymous student evaluation will be completed for each group presentation by all students present to provide feedback to the student regarding their presentation. A formal grading process will be presented prior to group presentations

outlining the criteria the instructor will be using to evaluate and grade the group presentations.

Grades based on:	# points	Course Objectives
American Public Policy Analysis Paper	100 points	1-2-5-6-7-8
Blackboard Module Discussions (10 ea.)	70 points	1-8
Policy group project/presentations	80 points	1-2-5-6-7-8
Quizzes: (8 at 10 points each)	80 points	1-8
Total Possible Points	330 points	

Grading Scale :

297-330	A
264-296	B
263-231	C
198-262	D
197 & Below	F

Deadline for Submission of Class Assignments

1. Assignments must be submitted to the instructor during class sessions unless otherwise instructed or arranged. Faxing class assignments is NOT permitted.
2. Tests and assignments are due on the dates listed on the syllabus or as scheduled by the instructor of this course. Late papers and tests will not be accepted. On the rare occasion of a medical, personal, or family emergency, the student may write a letter of explanation requesting permission to hand in a late paper. Discretion of late paper acceptance is entirely up to the instructor. Grade will automatically be reduced by 10% per day.
3. In the event a quiz or test is missed, to make up the work, the student must contact the instructor and request permission to make up the work assigned by the instructor. Makeup work is due within 7 days of the test, or the student will receive a failing grade for the test.

**** Note: Extra-Credit: This credit, if earned, will only count towards your final grade if all assignments have been completed and turned in on time and a satisfactory class attendance record has been maintained.**

Policy Regarding GPA (Social Work Majors)

All social work students must achieve at least a C in all required social work courses and maintain a 2.7 Grade Point Average (GPA) overall.

Policy Regarding Course Incompletes

Students are expected to complete all work before the final session of the class. Incompletes are not granted automatically. A grade of "I" may be assigned only in cases of illness, accident, or other catastrophic occurrence beyond the student's control. It is

the responsibility of the student to request, in writing, an Incomplete prior to the end of the term and to complete, with the instructor, the University required, *Petition for Incomplete Grade*. All work must be completed by the deadline specified by the instructor, which must be on or before the last day of the fourth week of classes in the next term, excluding summer session. Students who do not complete the *Petition for Incomplete Grade*, or who fail to complete the required work, will be assigned a grade of “F”.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Part of the mission of Lewis-Clark State College is to educate students to be ethical. Students share with the faculty the responsibility for academic honesty and integrity. The University expects its students to do their own academic work. In addition, it expects active participation and equitable contributions of students involved in group assignments. Violation of the Academic Integrity Statement, in whole or part, could result in an “F” grade for the course. The following acts of academic dishonesty are not acceptable:

- **Cheating**: using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise (e.g., an exam).
- **Fabrication**: unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise (e.g., a paper reference).
- **Plagiarism**: representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise (e.g., failing to cite references appropriately or taking verbatim from another source).
- **Facilitating academic dishonesty**: helping or attempting to help another to commit academic dishonesty (e.g., allowing another to copy from your test or use your work).

**** In addition to action by the professor, all incidents will be reported to Student Affairs.**

Professional Writing Standards

All printed work submitted to this professor should be prepared at a college standard of professional editing in accordance with the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th Ed.). Therefore, allow sufficient preparation time for proofreading and correction of typos, misspellings, and grammatical errors.

The reason for this expectation is that professionals are often judged based upon the quality of their written work. Carelessness in spelling and editing suggests that there will also be mistakes in the substance of the work. Therefore, written work, which has misspellings and other editing problems, will be graded down on this basis alone.

Note: If you need help with your writing skills, the Writing Center (792-2433) may be able to assist you in improving them. The efforts you make will help you with your

courses at LCSC as well as throughout your professional career because you will continue to be judged by other professionals on the basis of your written work.

* Recommended for 140/240/241. Required for all others.

I. TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE/SCHEDULE:

Note: See the course calendar for module dates

Module 1: Course Objective (CO#1-2-5) Note: This is for accreditation and evaluation purposes.

Topic: American Social Welfare Policy, Social Welfare Policy Research: A framework for policy analysis.

Read: Chapters 1-2

Activities/Assignments: Follow Module Directions/Blackboard class discussion/Quiz #1

Module 2: CO#1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8

Topic: Religion & Social Welfare Policy, Discrimination in American Society & Poverty in America

Read: Chapters 3-5

Activities/Assignment: Follow Module Directions/Blackboard class discussion/Quiz #2

Module 3: CO#1-3-4-6-7-8

Topic: The voluntary and for-profit social sectors, The making of government policy & Tax policy and income distribution

Read: Chapters 6-9

Activities/Assignment: Follow Module Directions/Blackboard class discussion/Quiz #3

Module 4: CO#1-3-4-6-7-8

Topic: Social Insurance Programs, Public Assistance Programs

The American Health Care System, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Policy

Read: Chapters 10-13

Activities/Assignment: Follow Module Directions/Blackboard class discussion/Quiz #4

Module 5: CO#1-3-4-6-7-8

Topic: Criminal Justice & Child Welfare Policy

Read: Chapters 14-15

Activities/Assignment: Follow Module Directions/Blackboard class discussion/Quiz #5

Module 6: CO#1-3-4-6-7-8

Topic: Housing Policies & The Politics of Food Policy and Rural Life

Read: Chapters 16-17

Activity: Class lecture, video, and group discussions

Activities/Assignment: Follow Module Directions/Blackboard class discussion/Quiz #6

Module 7-8: CO#1-3-4-6-7-8

Topic: The American Welfare State in International Perspective

Read: Chapter 18

Activities/Assignment: Follow Module Directions/Blackboard class discussion/Quiz #7 # 8

II. FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY

There is no final exam in this class.

III. BIBLIOGRAPHY

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, D.C.

Kirst-Ashman, K.K. & Hull, Jr. G. H. (2006). *Generalist practice with organizations and communities* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Homan, M. (2004). *Promoting Community Change: Making it happen in the real world* (3rd ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishers.

Kahn, Si (1991) *Organizing: A guide for grassroots leaders*. Washington, D.C.: NASW Press.

Popple, P. R., & Leighninger, L. (2004). *The policy based profession: An introduction to social welfare policy analysis for social workers*. Pearson: Allyn & Bacon.

Schneider, R.L. & Lester, L. (2001). *Social work advocacy: A new framework for action*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Internet References:

<http://www.lcsc.edu/bchristenson>

A direct link to Dr. Christenson's advocacy, social work practice, and social policy webpage

<http://www.lycos.com/>

A major search site ? from soup to nuts

Many advocacy organizations are developing web pages to provide information and position papers to stakeholders. Some examples are:

<http://www.sc.edu/swan/>

SWAN on the World Wide Web out of South Carolina ? a great way to get started on locating social welfare policy sites

[<http://pages.nyu.edu/>

World Wide Web Resource for Social Workers (WWRSW) site This site is relevant for social work policy faculty and students, because it currently contains approximately 2500 links to resources of potential utility for social workers, of which nearly 500 were to government related sites.

<http://www.ssc.wise.edu/irp/>

Institute for Research on Poverty, a national, university-based center for research into the causes and consequences of poverty and social inequality in the U.S

<http://now.org>

National Organization of Women links to many resources that support gender issues

<http://pages.nyu.edu/~gh5/gh?w3?f.htm>

W3RSW ? major organizer of access to relevant data for social workers. Very extensive and comprehensive

<http://www.house.gov/>

U.S. House of Representatives - summaries of floor and committee action for last 3 legislative days, schedule for the week, directory of e-mail address, links to member and congressional member organizational pages

<http://web.lexis?nexis.com/cis>

CIS Congressional Compass - Home Page - annotated links to Web sites about the American political process ? congressional sites, political parties, news and other organizations. University sites

<http://thomas.Inc.gov/>

THOMAS ? U.S. Congress on the Internet ?includes a number of databases of congressional bills via the Library of Congress, general information about the legislative process and links to her congressional sites as well as executive, judicial, and state/local

<http://www.senate.gov>

U.S. Senate ? links to

committee and member homepages, a directory of e-mail addresses, daily calendar of business, and general information about the Senate and the Legislative process.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/>

Welcome to the White House ?lets you search documents, listen to speeches, view photos and send a message to the President

<http://www.ehnr.state.nc.us/EHNR/files/usa.htm>

Provides you with a map of US which links to each state's governmental homepage with a click on the state

<http://www.cas.psu.edu/>

Government and Political Places. Based in PA but access to other states and governments

<http://www.DHHS.GOV/>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/>

Takes you directly to the Administration for Children and Families

<http://samhsa.gov/>

U.S. Department of education Links to all offices from special education to vocational

<http://leweb.loc.gov/homepage/lehp.html>

Library of Congress Home Page

<http://www.cdc.gov/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Home Page

<http://www.census.gov/>

U.S. Census Bureau Home Page

<http://www.ustreas.gov/treasury/bureaus/irs/irs.html>

The Dept. of the Treasury. IRS

<http://www.epn.org/>

The Electronic Policy Network

Timely information and ideas about national policy and politics includes access to member organizations such as Center for Law and Social Policy

<http://rand.org/publications>

Rand Corporation site - takes you to their publications, many of which have social welfare policy topics

<http://tmn.com/cdf>

Children's Defense Fund links to many child and family advocacy sites

<http://igc.apc.org/handsnet>

Information sharing, cross-sector collaboration and advocacy among individuals and organizations on a broad range of issues

<http://www.bc.edu/bc.org/avp/gssw/state.htm>

National Committee for education students to Influence State Policy and Legislation

<http://www.mentalhealth.org/tacenter>

Center for Mental Health Services TA Centers

<http://www.vote?smart.org>

Project Vote Smart -Links to candidate, campaign and issue information sites, ratings by advocacy groups, and campaign financial reports

<http://www.statepolicy.org>

Social Work National committee for Educating Students to Influence State Policy and Legislation

<http://marauder.millersv.edu/~politics/>

Millersville University - Center for Politics and Public Affairs

<http://www.millersv.edu/~opinion/index.html>

Millersville University Center for Opinion Research

http://www.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/Public_Welfare/overview.html

Pennsylvania Dept. of Public Welfare

<http://howard.hbg.psu.edu/psdc/psdchome1.1.html>

Pennsylvania State Data Center

http://www.yahoo.com/social_services/social_work

Major search site - from nuts to soup - but extensions narrow it down

The Children's Defense Fund

(<http://www.childrensdefense.org>)

Greenpeace (<http://www.greenpeace.org>)

Other Government organizations such as:

The Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov>)

The General Accounting Office (<http://www.gao.gov>)

Policy organizations, such as:

The Brookings Institute (<http://www.brook.edu>)

The Urban Institute (<http://www.urban.org>) provides substantial amounts of data and analysis on-line.

Sites that combine materials from many organizations such as:

The Electronic Policy Network (<http://www.epn.org>)

Handsnet (<http://www.handsnet.org>).

The Library of Congress provides the Thomas site (<http://thomas.loc.gov>), which provides on-line copies of all proposed bills.