

**Valdosta State University, Division of Social Work
SOWK 6400 A Spring 2014
3 Credit Hours**

SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY, PROBLEMS, AND SERVICES

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Class: Mondays 5 -8 PM, Pine Hall 113

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

History of the social work profession and current patterns of the provision of social services. Policy formulation process, policy analysis, and change.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the philosophical and historical foundation of American social welfare, and examines social welfare policy and services within the context of diversity issues and discrimination. This course covers the development of the social work profession and explores contemporary social problems and policy issues, and the political and organizational processes used to influence policy and analysis of current social welfare policies

PREREQUISITE

Admission to the program.

RELATION TO OTHER COURSES IN THE MSW CURRICULUM

This course is the foundation policy class of the MSW program. Offered during the second semester, the course is taken coterminously and linked horizontally with HBSE II, Generalist Practice II, Practicum II, Practicum Seminar II, and SW with Groups. The course focuses on the history, mission and philosophy of the social work profession, history and current patterns of provision of welfare services, the role of social policy in improving people's well-being, social problems and social policy analysis. This course builds on the undergraduate liberal arts base of history, biology, sociology, psychology and the arts. This course provides the base for the concentration policy course, SOWK 7400, and the concentration courses SOWK 7830 (Social Work Practice in Mental Health), SOWK 7850 (Social Work Practice in Schools), SOWK 7750 (Social Work Practice in Child and Family Settings), SOWK 7800 (Social Work in Health Settings), SOWK 7320 (Social Work Advanced Practice in Organizations and Communities), and SOWK 7500 (Social Work Advanced Research and Program Evaluation).

REQUIRED TEXTS:

DeParle, J. (2004). *American Dream: Three women, ten kids and a nation's drive to end welfare*. New York: Viking.

Karger, H.J. & Stoesz, D. (2014) *American social welfare policy: A Pluralist Approach*, 7th edition. Boston: Pearson, Allyn & Bacon.

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

Blazeview will be used as a tool for course enhancement. Your documents will reside in the Blazeview course site, where you will find all handouts, and links to Internet sites. You also will receive emails, grades, and announcements through the Blazeview shell. I encourage you to access the online course materials in Blazeview at least three per week.

VSU TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Valdosta State provides free technical support for students. If you need technical assistance call the Help Desk (229-245-4357) or visit the Blazeview web site. You may also contact your instructor for assistance.

COURSE OUTCOMES

This course is organized by outcomes that will provide focus, consistency, and clear evaluation criteria. Skills and knowledge that support achievement of the course outcomes will receive the majority of class time. These course outcomes are derived from the MSW program objectives, and will help you build toward achievement of those objectives. Lessons, materials, methods and assignments are organized toward your achievement of the objectives and toward what you as a student will be able to do differently, as a direct result of participating in the course:

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

6400-CO1. Explain the relevance of social welfare policy and policy analysis to past and current professional social work.
6400-CO2. Describe how historical events and trends have influenced past and current social work practice
6400-CO3. Describe selected federal and state policies designed to address social conditions.
6400-CO4. Identify the dynamics of social change as they apply to social work practice.
6400-CO5. Identify the intent of selected policy analysis frameworks and their appropriateness for policy analysis in a variety of settings
6400-CO6. Utilize policy analysis frameworks that reflect the values and ethics of the social work profession
6400-CO7. Analyze agency policies within the context of values and ethics of the social work profession.
6400-CO8. Analyze state and federal policies within the context of the values and ethics of the social work profession.
6400-CO9. Analyze how agency, policies challenge and perpetuate mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.
6400-CO10. Analyze how state and federal policies challenge and perpetuate mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.
6400-CO11. Articulate international trends such as globalization and its reciprocal effects on social justice .

6400-CO12. Develop a proposal for a policy intervention to challenge mechanisms of oppression and discrimination in an agency.
6400-CO13. Develop a proposal for a policy intervention to challenge mechanisms of oppression and discrimination in state and federal policies.
6400-CO14. Employ policy interventions at multi levels to advance social justice.

COURSE POLICIES PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO THIS COURSE (*Social Work Department and VSU policies are listed at the end of the Course Schedule*).

Submission of Assignments, Discussions, Journals and Quizzes

- Your written work should show thoroughness, accuracy and professionalism. All work should be carefully proofread and corrected. All policy analyses must be word processed, double spaced with numbered pages, and should use standard margins (one inch from the top, bottom, and sides). Points will be deducted for not following these guidelines. A grading rubric and guidelines for all written work will be available in class and over blazeview.
- Late policy analyses will lose one full letter grade (10%) for every 24-hour period they are late (including weekends & holidays). For analyses less than 24 hours late 5% of the assignment grade will be deducted.
- Discussions, journals, quizzes, and the Discussion Rubric Team and Self Evaluation form will not be accepted after their deadline and you will receive 0 points on the assignment or quiz.
- *Penalties for late assignments, analyses, discussions, forms, journals and quizzes may be lessened with bona fide medical or legal documentation. Please contact the instructor ASAP if you find yourself in this situation.*
- Analyses, discussions and other submissions are usually graded in the order that they are submitted by the student.

Class participation- Class participation can be difficult to operationalize; yet there are components of class participation that may be reflected in professional social work practice. In the Social Work Department when we comment on these behaviors we often look at trends or patterns. The Professional Standards of Conduct and Behavior expected of MSW students (VSU, SW Student Handbook, 71-74) gives precise guidelines for professional behavior. In this class there are no points for class participation. However, points from your final grade will be deducted for violations of expected MSW student standards and indicators of concern as outlined in these professional standards. If a student violates these standards in this class, the student will first be informed by email in the course shell. If the behavior continues after the first email, the instructor will meet with the student to discuss these behaviors and points will be deducted from the final grade. The Professional Standards of Conduct and Behavior expected of MSW students applies in the face to face and online classrooms and at NASW Social Work Lobby Day.

ASSIGNMENTS

You will demonstrate your achievement of course outcomes through your submitted projects and assignments:

1. **Quizzes-** In this course there are 10 online multiple choice quizzes worth a total of **100 points**. These quizzes are for mastery and may be taken up to four times before the due date. However, the quizzes will **not** be available after the due date. *Students will earn the highest grade they make on their quiz attempts.*

2. **Online Discussions-** Throughout the course there will be three graded online discussions. The first is the *Early memories discussion (15 points)*; the second is the *Field and program assessment discussion (25 points)*, and third are the *Chapter 8 discussion questions (25 points)*. Students who attend NASW Student Lobby Day and report to the class on this experience and what they learned may do this for 25 points rather than participating in the Chapter 8 discussion questions. See specific instructions in course shell for how online discussions will be graded.

3. **Journal entries-** Students must complete at least four journal entries (10 points each for a total of **40 points**) during the semester, but students may only journal once per week. (students can't catch up at the end by journaling more). For each journal entry reflect on content from the course, readings, assignments and other course activities such as discussions or quizzes. You are welcome to make comments about the process and organization of the course. Apply, analyze, synthesize and evaluation content and process from the course, if applicable. Have you seen this content in your practice? Discuss what you learned in the course, questions you may have about the policy analyses, other assignments or the course, and suggestions you have for the instructor for course organization, delivery of content, making the course better or anything else. The journal is just between you and the instructor. This is a place to ask the instructor questions or make comments that you don't want to put on the public discussion boards or ask in class.

4. **Historical analysis** —Many people, events and periods have influenced the development of social work practice. This historical analysis will be done in small student groups of two to three. Students will earn a group grade (**125 points**) and an individual grade (**70 points**). This assignment will consist of an oral presentation and a written analysis. (See historical analysis rubric for group and individual requirements)

5. **Agency policy analysis** (200 points) your agency policy analysis will consist of **two** parts. Rubrics and instructions will be provided for both sections. For the **first** part you will interview your field instructor, someone recommended to you by your field instructor or another professional who is considered an *expert* on agency, state, federal and other policies that affect the work and clients in your setting. The first part of this analysis is **100 points**.

For the **second** part you will interview someone who is a client, consumer or applicant of social welfare policies, preferably in an agency. For this assignment you will analyze the effects of

policy from your perspective, an *expert's* perspective and a client, consumer or applicant perspective. The second part of this analysis carries **100 points**.

6. For this policy analysis you have a choice of (a) or (b). Both are due on the same date and time.

a. **State/Federal policy intervention assignment-** review current Georgia and federal policies and laws, issues, and policy **proposals**. You will select one for your analysis and from your analysis you will draft a letter to your legislator, a news source, a professional organization and/or a special interest group about the issues and your recommendations. You may also present your analysis and recommendations to your class, legislators, news sources, professional organizations and special interest groups. You must work on this assignment individually. A rubric and instructions will be provided for this assignment **(200 points)**.

Or

b. **DeParle analysis** – Read Jason DeParle’s *American Dream: Three women, ten kids and a nation’s drive to end welfare* and select a social problem or area for analysis, and develop a proposal for a policy to address this problem. You must work on this assignment individually. A rubric and instructions will be provided for this assignment. **(200 points)**

ASSESSMENT and ASSESSMENT ISSUES

GRADING SCALE

- A** 720-800 points (90% or above)
- B** 640-719 points (80% to less than 90%)
- C** 560-639 points (70% to less than 80%) -a “C” involves one deficiency point-See Student Handbook.
- D** 480-559 points (60% to less than 70%) -a “D” involves two deficiency points-See Student Handbook, p. 21)
- F** Less than 480 points-less than 60%- an “F” involves three deficiency points and you must retake the course-See Student Handbook, p. 21)

I will inform your Advisor if your final grade falls below a “B.”

Other information about grading in this course: ½ and ¼ points are not given on assignments, discussions, quizzes and other submissions. Your final grade should come to a whole number, and will not be rounded up or down. Extra credit is not given in this course.

Please Note: Students should be aware of various issues that may adversely affect their grades and even their participation in the program. These regulations arise from legal codes, The Georgia Board of Regents, Valdosta State University, or the Valdosta State University Social Work Department. All of them are listed in the Student Handbook at

<http://www.valdosta.edu/colleges/education/social-work/students/> IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO READ AND UNDERSTAND ALL OF THE STUDENT HANDBOOK. Remember the "STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING" signed by all students (see page 74).

Please contact me with any special needs or developing problems.

COURSE SCHEDULE SOWK 6400 A

This course is divided into four content and assignment modules (1) The Place of Policy in Social Work (2) The history of Social Work and Social Welfare Policy (3) Agency and Local Policy Analysis (4) State and Federal policy analysis

January 13, Pine Hall 113

Module 1: Unit 0: The Place of Policy in Social Work

- Getting started in the course, Introductions, Course overview
Syllabus, course outcomes, course shell and course rubrics
Student Engagement and Academic honesty
The Place of Policy in Social Work Practice
Where do you stand? Understanding our policy experiences and backgrounds.

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January 20 NO CLASS, MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR HOLIDAY

Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Activities due JANUARY 27 at 5 pm (Module 1; Unit 1).

Read Chapters 1 & 2 in Karger & Stoesz book; Read "Diffusion of Innovations" link in course shell (Module 1); Syllabus and Place of Policy Quiz due; Early Memories Discussion (Post and respond to at least two peers by Jan 27); Begin reading DeParle book.

January 27 Key points and discussion of "Chapter 1: *Social Policy and the American Welfare State*;" Chapter 2 "*Social welfare policy research: A framework for analysis*" & "Diffusions of Innovation." "Dangers of positive thinking in a dangerous world" Introduction to the DeParle book.

Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Activities due February 3 at 5 pm. (Module 1; Unit 2) Chapters 1, 2, and Innovations Quiz due; Complete the Program assessment; Part 1 *Field and program assessment discussion*; Read Chapters 3 & 8 in Karger & Stoesz book; In DeParle book read Chapters 1-3 and Notes (at the end of the book).

February 3 Key points and discussion, K&S Chapters 3 (*Religion & Social Welfare Policy*) & 8 (*The Making of Government Policy*), & DeParle readings; Introduction to Social Work Lobby Day, Story of Change, SW Speaks, *Legacies of Social Work Practice*

Module 2: The history of Social Work and Social Welfare Policy

Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Activities due February 10 at 5 pm. (Module 2, Unit 3) Chapters 3 & 8 Quiz; Part 2 *Field and program assessment discussion*; Read Social Work history lecture (in course shell); Read K&S: Chapters 4 & 5; Continue reading in DeParle book (After this week I will no longer remind you to read in the DeParle book, I hope you are hooked and reading the book now!)

February 10 – Continue *Legacies of Social Work Practice*; Jane Addams letter, *Social Diagnosis*; Key points and discussion, K&S Chapters 4 (*Discrimination in American Society*) & 5 (*Poverty in America*); Q&A Historical presentations; Preparing for SW Lobby Day

No face to face class on February 17. NASW LOBBY DAY IS IN ATLANTA, GA ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18. (Module 2, Unit 4) This week you may either attend NASW Lobby Day, and report to the class on your experience and what you learned. Or, you may complete *Chapter 8 discussion questions* in the course shell. (Both are 25 points)

Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Activities due February 24 at 5 pm (Module 2, Unit 5) Complete Chapter 8 discussion questions unless you are going to Lobby day and reporting to class on this activity; Chapter 4 & 5 Quiz due, **Written Historical Analyses Due** in course shell.

February 24–Lobby Day reports; Historical Analysis Presentations begin

Module 3: Agency and Local Policy Analysis

Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Activities due March 3 at 5 pm. (Module 3, Unit 6) Read K&S Chapters 6, 7 & 9; Read Harry Specht's *Social Work and the popular psychotherapies* & Mimi Abramovitz's *Everyone in still on welfare* (In course shell)

March 3–Continue Historical Presentations; Key Points and Discussion Chapters 6 (*The Voluntary Sector*) & 7 (*Privatization & Human Service Corporations*), and *Social Work and the Popular Psychotherapies*

Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Activities due March 10 at 5 pm. (Module 3, Unit 7) Historical analysis and Lobby Day Quiz due; Discussion Rubric Team and Self Evaluation form due.

March 10–Key Points & Discussion Chapter 9 (*Tax policy & Income Redistribution*) and *Everyone is Still on Welfare*

March 17 is Spring Break-NO CLASS

Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Activities due March 24, 5 pm. (Module 3, Unit 8): Chapters 6, 7, 9 and related readings quiz due; Agency Analysis Part I due; Read K&S Chapters 10 & 14.

March 24–Discussion Agency Analysis I; Discussion and Key Points Chapter 10 (*Social Insurance Programs*) & Chapter 14 (*Criminal Justice*)

Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Activities due March 31, 5 pm (Module 3, Unit 9): Read K&S Chapters 11 & 15, Agency Analysis Part II due; Chapters 10 & 14 Quiz

March 31-Discussion of Agency Analysis 2; Key points and Discussion Chapters 11 (*Public Assistance Programs*) & 15 (*Child Welfare Policy*)

Module 4: State and Federal policy analysis

Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Activities Due April 7, 5 pm (Module 4, Unit 10) Chapters 11 & 15 Quiz; Read K&S Chapters 12 & 13; You should be finished with the DeParle book now!

April 7-Discussion and Key points of Chapters 12 (*American Health Care System*) & 13 (*Mental Health & Substance Abuse Policy*) ; Instructor comments on DeParle book; Discussion of DeParle book, 2014 State and Federal policies

Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Activities Due April 14, 5 pm (Module 4, Unit 11) Chapters 12 and 13 Quiz; Read Chapters 16 & 17 (K&S)

April 14-Key points and discussion Chapters 16 (*Housing Policy*) & 17 (Politics and Rural life); 2014 State and Federal policies

Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Activities due April 21, 5 pm (Module 4, Unit 12) Read K&S Chapter 18

April 21- Key points and discussion *The American Welfare State in International Perspective*; State and Federal policies

Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Activities due April 28, 5 pm (Module, 4, Unit 13) State/Federal Policy Intervention Assignment or DeParle Analysis due

April 28-Discussion of State/Federal Policy Intervention Assignment and DeParle analyses

Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions and Activities due May 5, 5 pm (Module, 4, Unit 14) Chapters 16, 17 & 18 quiz due

DIVISION OF SOCIAL WORK and UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The goal of the Division of Social Work is to prepare students for the professional practice of social work. The Division requires students to adhere to professional practices and standards in all classes and practicum. These practices and standards are outlined in the MSW Student Code of Conduct which can be found on pages 71-74 of the current *MSW Student Handbook*. The Code of Conduct must be signed by all students beginning MSW students.

The following standards are not negotiable: Students may depend on well-planned classes and knowledgeable instructors. Professors are committed to the facilitation of student success. Learning is a complex phenomenon for which BOTH instructors and students are responsible. Evaluation criteria are stated clearly in the syllabus. However, if students have questions about grading, it is the students' responsibility to discuss these matters with their instructors. The course syllabus represents a contract between students and the instructor. Professors reserve the right to modify syllabi, and students will be notified in writing when such changes are made. Likewise, students are responsible for reading and following instructions on the syllabi.

Class Attendance: Because the MSW Program is a professional program, class attendance is **MANDATORY**. The Attendance Policy is extremely important and can be found in the current *MSW Student Handbook* on page 66. Students are expected to be on time for class and to return from breaks in a timely manner. Likewise, students are expected to participate in class discussions and activities.

- **Face-to-Face Program:** Because of the large number of classes per course per semester, this policy has been changed, effective August 14, 2007. Students may miss one class per course for the semester without losing grade points. **This change does not apply to practicum or practicum seminar.** Depending on the course that is missed, the student may be asked to write a brief assignment to insure that content of the missed class is covered. Each **subsequent** unexcused absence (after the absence without a penalty) will result in a drop of one-half of a letter grade in the student's final grade. **Three total (3) class absences, either excused or unexcused, will result in a student's being unable to complete the course because too much content has been missed. Three missed classes missed represent 20% of a course. The course must be re-taken in order for the student to receive academic credit.**

Submission of Assignments: All assignments must be submitted ON TIME and IN THE MANNER directed by the faculty (e.g., brought to class, sent to an assignment drop box, etc). Deadlines are extremely important for professional social workers. Additional information about assignment submission is found in the Attendance Policy.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are not acceptable in a professional social work program. Students who engage in this type behavior risk failure on

specific assignments, in the course, and possible dismissal from the MSW Program. Academic dishonesty is prohibited by the university as well as the Division of Social Work. The Academic Dishonesty Policy for the Division of Social Work is found in the *MSW Student Handbook* on page 81. In the course shell, plagiarism detection may be used for written assignments.

Incompletes: Incomplete grades are given only in cases of extreme emergency with proper documentation, and are granted only with the prior approval of the instructor. Policies governing Incompletes are found in the *MSW Student Handbook*.

Academic Performance: Students are expected to maintain a 3.00 grade point average in the MSW Program. A discussion of all academic expectations and grading can be found in the *MSW Student Handbook*, including the Division's policy of Academic Deficiency Points given for grades lower than C.

Cancellation of Classes: The University President may cancel classes under specific emergency conditions. The most frequent cause of cancellation is inclement weather. Please check the main page of the VSU web site if you have concerns about inclement weather or an emergency situation: <http://www.valdosta.edu>

ADDITIONAL STUDENT INFORMATION

Technology Assistance: Students having technology problems may contact the [Help Desk](#) (phone 229-245-4357) or e-mail a question at helpdesk@valdosta.edu. The Help Desk is located on the 2nd floor of the Odum Library. Their hours are 8:00 AM – 9:00 PM, Mondays – Thursdays; 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Fridays; 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Saturdays; and 1:00 PM – 9:00 PM, Sundays.

Specific Learning Needs: Students requiring classroom accommodations or modifications because of a documented disability should discuss their needs with the professor at the beginning of the semester. Students who are not registered with the Access Office for Students with Disabilities should contact [VSU's Access Office](#) or call 229-245-2498 (229-219-1348 for TTY). The office is located in Room 1115 Nevins Hall.

Students Experiencing Academic Difficulties: Students with academic concerns are strongly encouraged to contact the staff of the [Student Success Center](#) or call them at 229-333-7570. The Student Success Center is located in Langdale Residence Hall on the main VSU campus. Services provided by the Success Center include tutoring, writing assistance, and help with time management. Students are encouraged to make appointments with Center Staff through the web link or by telephone. The Center is available to all VSU students, and evening appointments are available.

Additional services: The [Counseling Center](#) (phone 229-333-5940; in Powell Hall) provides services to students with emotional/mental, social, substance abuse and other problems.

Health Services on Georgia Avenue provides physical health services (phone 229-333-5886) to students.

Emergency Campus Policy: The Police Contact Number is **229-259-5555**. The Campus Police is located in the Oak Street Parking Garage. Officers will escort students on campus, and emergency phones are placed across campus. Students are **strongly encouraged to program the campus emergency number, and 911** (for local police) into their cell phones.