

Social Welfare System and Social Work Development in Current U.S. Society

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COURSE OUTLINE

I. Course Description:

This course is designed to provide students a fresh and update perspective on understanding social welfare policies and programs which are been applied in current U.S. society. Students are supposed to have a clear idea of how and why social welfare policies and programs in America are developed, implemented, and changed, as well as the social, economic and political forces that shape American social policies. Meanwhile, students are particular provided plenty of information on current social work education and practice development in the U.S. Therefore, students are supposed to be provided a broader perspective on social work approach, as well as make constructive comparison between that of China and U.S.

II. Course Objectives:

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

1. Understand the social, economic and political forces in American society that shape social welfare policy and programs;
2. Have a general idea of major social problems and affected population(minority groups, women, children, poor, ill, and aged, etc) in American society;
3. Describe major social welfare programs and how they work and make meaningful comparison with some programs in China;
4. Form an international perspective on social work education and practice by comparing its development in both countries;
5. be equipped with scientific method to develop social work research and integrate research with practice;
6. Find out their most interested areas in social work field for their future career.

III. Texts and References

The following textbooks are main textbooks for this course:

- DiNitto, Diana. *Social Welfare: Politics and Public Policy*, fifth edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2000
- Karger, H.J. and J. Midgley, editors. *Controversial Issues In Social Policy*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1994.

Due to the availability of the textbooks in China, I will bring a couple of copies of these two books. Important chapters and materials will be copied to students. (I will be responsible for the copyright issue by consulting the library at OSU)

Other readings for the course will be provided at each lecture time. Most of them are online resources. (I will contact with NanKai University to see if their database is available in advance)

IV. Evaluation of Student Performance

- a. Attendance at every class session is required. Students are expected to attend class regularly, do the assigned readings before each class, be prepared to discuss and participate in class. Only one absence with reasonable excuse will be allowed. For any additional absence, five points will be deducted from the final grade. Exceptions may be made for special circumstances which need to be discussed with the instructor in advance.
- b. Completion of all assigned reading is expected. In particular, students are supposed to finish required readings for each session before class. Otherwise, they cannot participate the class activities.
- c. Individual assignments. There is one assignment for some sessions of the class which aims at reviewing and synthesizing all materials discussed in class and needs to be finished after class. Students are responsible to finish the assignments on time. Requirement for each assignment will be elaborated in class.

- d. Group project. There is one assignment designed to be finished by a group of students. Each group will hand in a group paper(no need to write the paper individually) and make a in-class presentation to the whole class. Grade will be given to the whole group.
- e. Field Trip (to be arranged). There will probably be a field trip visit to an international non-government organization at the end of the entire class lectures. Students are required to join the field trip.
- f. There is no final comprehensive examination for this class. The final grade depends on the performance that students have for all the above activities.
- g. Final course grades will be computed as follows:

Class participation	25 points
Individual assignments for each class	40 points
Group project	30 points
Field trip	5 points *
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Total	100 points

* if this activity would not happen, the points will be added to class participation

V. Course Schedule

Lecture One: Overview of social welfare policy in current U. S. society.

- Goals:
1. identify three types of social welfare policies and explain how their differences are shaped by the different ways of defining the problems;
 2. identify historical developments that have shaped social welfare policy and explain how present programs have their roots in earlier programs and policies;
 3. describe how social welfare policy is different in other countries.

Readings: DiNitto: Chapter 1, 2

Karger and Midgley: Chapter 1,5

Assignment: Write down a social problems, such as hunger, mental illness, childless couples, discrimination against women, etc. In one or two pages, describe each problem and note the policy programs which have been created to deal with it in both US and China. Also, try to make some comparison between the policies in two countries.

Lecture Two: Social insurance program in U.S.A.

Goals: 1. describe how social insurance and public assistance represent two different approaches to social policy with differences in funding and attitudes toward them, and be able to give examples of programs that fit each approach;

2. explain how Social Security works, whose interests it serves, how it is funded, and options for keeping it solvent into the future;

Readings: DiNitto: Chapter 3, 4
Karger and Midgley: Chapter 2

Assignment: Compare and contrast social security systems between U.S.A and China. Find one or two points that you are most interested to analyze.

Lecture Three: Health care policy in U.S.A.

Goals: 1. explain how American health care policy has developed including the Effects of managed care on patients and providers;

2. describe the Medicaid and Medicare programs, how they are funded now and will be funded in the future, and potential problems for participants;

Readings: DiNitto: Chapter 7
Karger and Midgley: Chapter 3, 9

Assignment: Sketch out a table comparing and contrasting the Medicaid and Medicare programs.

Group activity: Debate on health care reform proposal of 1993 in U.S.A.

Lecture Four: Other social welfare programs: TANF/ADFC, SSI, Food Stamps

Goals: 1. describe how a variety of social welfare programs are formulated, funded and delivered;
2. describe how interest groups have been affected by different programs.

Readings: DiNitto: Chapter 8

Group assignment: select one social welfare program that you are most interested to do more research and try to analyze its applicability to the similar problem if it were adopted here in China.

Lecture Five: Group presentation

Lecture Six: Social work education and social work approach to social problems in U.S.A.

Goals: 1. introduce the development and current situations of social work in U.S.A.
2. outline two major tracks in social work approach to deal with social problems: micro- and macro- perspectives

Readings: 1. Hartman, A. (1993). The professional is political. *Social Work*, 38, 4, 365, 366, 504.
2. Saleebey, D.(1997). The strengths perspective in social practice. New York: Longman.

Group discussion: compare and contrast social work education between U.S. and China.

Group Activity: social work practice skills development laboratory

Lecture Seven: Social work research

- Goals:
1. emphasize that social work is not only a professional but an academic Subject;
 2. introduce research methodology in social work research;
 3. clarify the relationship between social work research, practice and social policy;
 4. grant proposal writing skills.

- Readings:
1. Robson, C. (1993), *Real World Research: A Resource for Social Scientists and Practitioner-researchers*, UK: Blackwell Publishers.
 2. Reinharz, S. (1992), *Feminist Methods in Social Research*, New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press

Assignment: compose a grant proposal

Lecture Eight: Field Trip or Guest Speaker (to be determined)

- Field trip—visit an international organization which mainly applies social work approach to its programs in China;
- OR
- Guest speaker—invite Professor Lee Ann Mejlde-Mossey from OSU to give an lecture on her comparative research on social work practice with elderly in both countries.