Social Welfare Policy
SOWK 8090 | 3 credit hours

Fall Semester 2022
Class Meetings: Mondays | 4 P.M. – 6 P.M. | 206 CPACS

Instructor: Professor C.J. Washington (Dr. Washington, She / Her)
Office: 206 CPACS
Office Phone: 402.554.2792
Email: washingtoncj@unomaha.edu

NOTE: Students should contact the instructor via email rather than by phone. Email messages will be responded to within 24 hours, excluding weekends, holidays, and breaks.

Office Hours: In-Person: Tuesdays | 1 P.M. – 3 P.M. or by appointment.
Online: Wednesdays | 6:30 P.M. – 8 P.M. or by appointment

Course Information

Description
This course is an introduction to social welfare policy. The course examines social welfare policy considering historical, political, economic, social, racial, cultural, and global influences. Basic concepts and choices are examined in relation to values, ethics, context, social functioning, and social consequences.

Rationale/Overview
This course examines social policy and its implications on micro- and macro-level systems in historical perspective and in the context of political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions of society. The focus of this course is on social work policy practice, including political advocacy, and the process of policy formulation/development, implementation, and evaluation/analysis at the local, state, and federal levels of government.

Special attention is placed on the multiple macro systemic processes that influence policy development and implementation, including but not limited to racism, sexism, ageism, faithism, ableism, classism, and heterosexism. Additionally, the complexities associated with determining how best to respond to human need and social conditions across the lifespan through specific U.S. social welfare policies and services (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, Americans with Disabilities Act, Older Americans Act, Civil Rights Act, Affirmative Action, Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, Social Security Act) are addressed. Public policy implications for specific populations at risk (e.g., children, older adults, people with disabilities, people of color,
sexual minorities, immigrants) are also addressed. This course prepares students for active participation in the design of effective macro system interventions aimed at enhancing the quality of life for individuals, families, organizations, institutions, communities, and society.

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

As a result of this course, students will be able to…

1. Analyze how values, ideology, culture and history shape American social welfare policy.
2. Demonstrate critical-thinking and problem-solving skills in the analysis of how public and private anti-poverty social welfare programs impact individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
3. Analyze policy implications for the delivery of social services through rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses.
4. Analyze how age, disability, social status, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and religious beliefs impact social welfare policy.

**Prerequisites of the Course**

Admission to the MSW program.

**Required Text / Supplemental Materials**

*Required Texts:*


**Course Structure / Format**

Video lectures, discussions, weekly assignments, audio-visual aids, and guest speakers will be used to present course materials.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

NOTE: This syllabus is written as an expectation of class topics, learning activities, and expected learning outcomes. However, I reserve the right to make changes in this schedule that may result in enhanced or more effective learning for students. These modifications will not substantially change the intent or objectives of this course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>Introduction to the course and review syllabus</td>
<td>Read: Trattner, Ch. 1-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Lecture: Social problem, social policy, and social values</td>
<td>Read: Trattner, Ch. 4, 5, 8, 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 3</td>
<td>Lecture: History of U.S. social welfare policy and origins of social work</td>
<td>Read: Trattner, Ch. 11, 12, 13 Assignment: Policy paper: identify topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 4</td>
<td>Lecture: History of U.S. social welfare policy and origins of social work (cont’d)</td>
<td>Read: Trattner, Ch. 14, 15, 16, 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 5</td>
<td>Lecture: Economic and political contexts</td>
<td>Read: Chapin, Ch. 4 Assignment: Mid-term quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 6</td>
<td>Lecture: Economic and political contexts (cont’d)</td>
<td>Assignment: Identify your state senator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 7</td>
<td>Lecture: Social welfare policy analysis</td>
<td>Read: Chapin, Ch. 5, 224–235 Assignment: Policy paper: Identify a policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 8</td>
<td>Lecture: Poverty, economic inequality, and social justice</td>
<td>Read: Chapin, Ch. 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 9</td>
<td>Lecture: Anti-poverty, social insurance, and public assistance</td>
<td>Read: Chapin, Ch. 8 Assignment: Policy watch presentation #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 10</td>
<td>Lecture: Anti-poverty, social insurance, and public assistance (cont’d)</td>
<td>Read: Chapin, Ch. 8 Assignment: Policy watch presentation #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 11</td>
<td>Lecture: Policies and programs for children and families</td>
<td>Read: Chapin, Ch. 9 Assignment: Policy watch presentation #3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 12</td>
<td>Lecture: Healthcare policy; Medicare and Medicaid</td>
<td>Read: Chapin, Ch. 10 Assignment: Policy watch presentation #4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 13</td>
<td>Lecture: Immigration policy</td>
<td>Discussion board: Take an immigrant’s journey Assignment: Policy paper: Final paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 14</td>
<td>Future trends and course wrap-up</td>
<td>Read: Healy (2017) (see Canvas) Discussion board: Putting knowledge into practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessments (Activities, Assignments, and Exams)

**Policy Watch Presentation (1)**

40 points (total)

The purpose of this assignment is to increase student's awareness of contemporary social welfare events and understanding of why and how vulnerable populations continue to experience discrimination, oppression, and poverty in the United States. In Session 9 through Session 12, each student will present in the discussion board on one current social welfare issue (e.g., a social problem, a social policy or programs, or legislation) from The New York Times (https://www.nytimes.com/). Students will also prepare at least two questions for the audience to discuss and post their responses.

**Policy Paper (1 paper with 3 phases)**

70 points (total)

Students will identify one social issue of interest to them and write a 10–12-page policy paper. In this paper, students will explore how this problem/issue has been defined, who is affected by this problem, and what factors have been hypothesized to contribute to the problem. Then, identify and analyze one contemporary federal social policy that has been taken to alleviate the problem. Recommendations for future policy direction will also be discussed.

- Phase 1: Identify policy paper topic (5 pts.)
- Phase 2: Identify a policy (5 pts.)
- Phase 3: Final paper (60 pts)
Policy Reading Reflection (1)  
30 points (total)  
Students will read and write a 3-page reflection on one of the following books (see Canvas page for instructions):  

Midterm Quiz (1)  
20 points (total)  
The mid-term quiz is 30 minutes and open-book, covering contents from sessions 1 – 5.

Discussion Board and Weekly Assignments  
40 points (total)  
Discussion board and weekly assignments will be assigned in the weekly modules. Due dates and specific points for each activity will be specified on Canvas.

Grading Procedures

Final Grades will be determined based upon the following:  
Policy Watch Presentation (presentation is 30 pts. and discussion board is 10 pts.) 40 pts  
Policy Paper (phase 1 is 5 pts, phase 2 is 5 pts, and phase 3 is 60 pts) 70 pts  
Policy Reading Reflection 30 pts  
Midterm Quiz 20 pts  
Discussion Board and Weekly Assignments 40 pts  
Total 200 pts

Late Assignment Policy

Turning your work in on time requires good time management skills. These skills are especially important when working with clients whose well-being are dependent on you completing your job tasks. Therefore, turning in assignments on time is important as it helps you to develop skills of prioritizing what needs to be done. For this class, I will accept late work until the last day of class, but your assignment grade will be docked by 20%. Scores and feedback for all assessments can be accessed at any time using the Grades section of the Canvas.
Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Quality Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98 - 100%</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94 - 97.9%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 - 93.9%</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88 - 90.9%</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84 - 87.9%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81 - 83.9%</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78 - 80.9%</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74 - 77.9%</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71 - 73.9%</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68 - 70.9%</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64 - 67.9%</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 - 63.9%</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 60.9%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing Guidelines

Always make sure your writing is free of grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors. Papers should adhere to the most recent citation style outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA).

Plagiarism Statement

In this course, you will submit written work in which you make use of information and ideas found in print or online sources. Whenever you use material from another writer, it is important that you quote or paraphrase appropriately and cite the source.

Never let it appear that ideas and information gleaned from other sources are your own. The UNO Academic Integrity policy defines plagiarism as “presenting the work of another as one’s own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source) and submitting academic work in whole or in part as one’s own when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person.”

Failure to cite sources appropriately is plagiarism, a serious academic offense. Plagiarized work will not be accepted. Consequences for plagiarism are up to the discretion of the instructor; they may range, for example, from rewriting all or part of a paper to a grade of F for the course. Students who plagiarize more than once are subject to disciplinary action, which may include expulsion from the university.
Students SHOULD NOT GUESS when it comes to using or citing another writer's work. Students should contact the instructor or a consultant at the UNO Writing Center with questions. Students should take a printout of the original source as well as the paper that is being written to the consultation.

**Academic Integrity Policy**

The maintenance of academic honesty and integrity is a vital concern of the University community. Any student found responsible for violating the policy on Academic Integrity shall be subject to both academic and disciplinary sanctions. Violations of the policy on Academic Integrity include, but are not limited to, the following: cheating, fabrication and falsification, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials and/or equipment, complicity in academic dishonesty, falsifying grade reports, and/or misrepresentation to avoid academic work. More information about these areas and the procedures addressing academic integrity is available from the Office of Academic and Student Affairs.

**Student Handbook**

GASSW students are invited to read the [student handbook](https://www.unomaha.edu/information-technology-services/labs-and-classrooms/labs-and-kiosks.php) which includes information on helpful people and resources at the GASSW and UNO, professional behavior for social workers, competency-based education, academic standards, academic behaviors and grades, review of student performance, and reinstatement and reapplication procedures.

**Netiquette**

Netiquette is a set of rules for acceptable online behavior. The following bullet points cover some basics to communicating online in this course:

- Be respectful of others’ views and opinions when responding to the introductory blog during Session 1. Be sensitive to cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as well as different political and religious beliefs.
- Don’t use all capital letters when composing your journal responses as this is considered “shouting”.
- Use academic tone when composing your responses in your journals unless instructed otherwise. This style of writing requires the use of correct grammar and spelling.
- Be careful when using acronyms in your assignments. If you use an acronym spell out its meaning first, then put the acronym in parentheses afterward.

**Technology Requirements**

Students will be expected to have access to a computer frequently, as all writing assignments used will be typed out and not handwritten. The software you use to write your assignments is irrelevant, as long as you follow my writing guidelines outlined later in my syllabus. I recommend to have access to a computer weekly. If you do not own a computer, there are computers accessible to you on the UNO campus. Consult the Web pages of Information Technology Services (https://www.unomaha.edu/information-technology-services/labs-and-classrooms/labs-and-kiosks.php) and the Criss Library (https://www.unomaha.edu/criss-library/library-services/computers-and-equipment.php) for more information on equipment availability.
Technical Support

Technical support for common university systems, including Canvas and email, is available from Information Services Technical Support located in 104 Eppley Administration Building. The help desk may also be contacted via email to unohelpdesk@unomaha.edu or via phone at 402-554-4357.

Accessibility Accommodations

It is my goal that this class be an accessible and welcoming experience for all students. Reasonable accommodations are provided for students who are registered with Accessibility Services Center (ASC) and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact ASC (Location: 104 H&K, Phone: 402.554.2872, Email: unoaccessibility@unomaha.edu)

Classroom Expectations

Students are expected to arrive on time to class meetings. I expect students to come to class well prepared, meaning readings and other assignments have been completed before class time. Students are expected to be respectful of their classmates and the instructor. Distracting and/or disrespectful behaviors will not be tolerated.

Criss Library

UNO’s Criss Library offers a wide variety of resources that support student learning. Subject specialist librarians have in-depth knowledge of researching within specific disciplines and can give you guidance specifically for your area of study. Students are encouraged to explore customized resources featured on their Web site: https://www.unomaha.edu/criss-library/research-and-instruction/subject-librarians.php

Cell Phones, Mobile Devices, Laptops

Students are welcome to use cell phones, mobile devices, and/or laptops in class provided they are used for academic purposes such as note taking, accessing course materials, or researching course concepts and their use does not disrupt fellow classmates. Please silence devices if at all possible. If you should receive a phone call or text, please step outside to respond. DO NOT take pictures or video during class.

Emergency Preparedness

The University of Nebraska at Omaha is prepared for a wide range of emergencies. Students should familiarize themselves with procedures and assistance available at https://www.unomaha.edu/emergency/index.php.

If travel to campus is not feasible due to a declared emergency, a combination of Canvas, teleconferencing, and other technologies will be used to facilitate academic continuity. I will notify students of procedures through Canvas course site announcements and email as appropriate.

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement or threatening weather, students should use his/her best judgment regarding travel to and from campus. If you cannot get to class because of adverse weather conditions, contact me
as soon as possible. Similarly, if I am unable to reach our class location, I will notify you of any cancellation or change as soon as possible (by approximately 1 hour before class starts and by posting an announcement to our course site in Canvas). If you cannot get to class because of weather conditions, I will make allowances relative to attendance policies as well as any scheduled tests, quizzes, or other assessments.

**Preferred Name and Preferred Gender Pronouns**

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

**Writing Center**

The UNO Writing Center offers free one-on-one consultations with trained consultants to all students, faculty, and staff. Their goal is to help writers improve their writing skills and confidence in all types of writing, in all subject areas, and at all stages of the writing process. For more information about their hours and locations or to schedule an appointment, go to unomaha.edu/writingcenter or visit them at their main location in Arts and Sciences Hall, Room 150.

**Reporting Sexual Misconduct and Related Resources at UNO**

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 states that “No person in the United States, shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” The University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) seeks to provide an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have been the victim of harassment, misconduct, or assault, we encourage you to report this. If you report sexual assault, sexual misconduct or sexual harassment to a UNO faculty or staff member, by law they must notify UNO's Title IX Coordinator about the basic facts of the incident. Students wishing to have a confidential conversation with a designated campus representative may contact UNO Counseling Services (402-554-2409) or UNO Ombuds Services. For more information about campus resources at UNO, please go to the UNO Student Safety Website at: http://www.unomaha.edu/student-life/student-safety/index.php

**Speech Center**

The UNO Speech Center provides free consulting and coaching services to all UNO students, faculty, and staff in preparing oral presentations. The Speech Center Consulting Room can help you with presentation preparation, outlining, effective delivery techniques, along with any other presentational needs. Speech consulting will help at any stage in the speech-making process, whether you are just starting to develop topic ideas or nearly finished with preparing a presentation.

For more information about their services or to schedule an appointment, go to www.unomaha.edu/speechcenter or visit them in Arts and Sciences Hall, Room 185.
Student Safety

A variety of resources are available to support student safety and security. If you have experienced or are experiencing a difficult personal situation, consult the resources available from the Division of Student Affairs at http://www.unomaha.edu/student-life/student-safety/index.php.

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Competencies

The student learning outcomes for this course are built upon the following nine social work core competencies set forth by the CSWE’s 2015 Educational Polices and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) which is required for all accredited social work programs.

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.
2. Engage diversity and difference in practice.
3. Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.
4. Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.
5. Engage in policy practice.
6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
7. Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
9. Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

This table shows how content in this course is related to the competencies along with the relevant dimension(s) and system level(s).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency #</th>
<th>Course Content (e.g., readings, assignments, class activities)</th>
<th>Dimension(s)</th>
<th>System Level(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lectures, readings, discussion board, weekly assignments, policy watch, mid-term exam, policy reading reflection, and policy paper</td>
<td>Knowledge, Skills, Values, Cognitive/ Affective Processing</td>
<td>Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Lectures, readings, discussion board, weekly assignment, policy reading reflection, policy watch, and policy paper</td>
<td>Knowledge, Skills, Values, Cognitive/ Affective Processing</td>
<td>Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lectures, discussion board, weekly assignment, policy reading reflection, policy watch, and policy paper</td>
<td>Knowledge, Skills, Values, Cognitive/ Affective Processing</td>
<td>Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>Knowledge, Skills, Values, Cognitive/ Affective Processing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lectures, readings, discussion board &amp; weekly assignment, policy reading reflection, policy watch, and policy paper</td>
<td>Knowledge, Skills, Values, Cognitive/ Affective Processing</td>
<td>Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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References


Piper, M. (2017), *Social Security made simple: Social Security retirement benefits and related planning topics explained in 100 pages or less*. Simple Subjects, LLC.

