SOCW 421 SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

In-depth examination of current social welfare policy and program issues in the context of social welfare history in the United States. Utilizes a systematic analytical framework for critical study of multiple causal factors (socio-economic, cultural, governmental structure). Prerequisites: ECON 113; POLS 114, SOCW 275. Not for graduate credit.

II. COURSE OVERVIEW

Social welfare has to do with the organized response of society to the needs of its citizenry. Social welfare policies as they are enacted and implemented have a great effect on clients, social workers, and the general public. In order to be effective, a practicing social worker needs to understand the policy environment in which s/he works, including an understanding of the policy process and the ability to analyze policies.

The formation and implementation of policies will be studied, with examples from both the state and national levels. The role of the voluntary and for-profit sectors in implementing policy will be discussed. Special emphasis will be given to deferential impacts of social welfare policies on rural, low income, women, minority, and oppressed groups. Also, the role of technology, especially the Internet, in understanding social welfare policy and advocating for policy changes will be explored, with students having the opportunity to develop skills in using the Internet for policy purposes.

III. PLACE OF THE COURSE IN THE PROGRAM

This course builds on materials presented in SOCW 275. It provides students with knowledge and skills for their course work in their senior year and field practice experience.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the student will:

Demonstrate mastery in the following competencies:

  Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Specifically, they will:

  1. describe the process by which policies are formulated and implemented on the federal and state level;
2. acquire a familiarity with the sources of information useful in understanding social welfare policies;
3. describe the role of social welfare policy in helping people achieve optimal health and well-being, and advancing social and economic justice and human rights.
4. analyze the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of a social welfare policy;
5. demonstrate an understanding of the connections between social work practice and social welfare policy;
6. demonstrate an understanding of the multiple ways that social welfare policies affect the groups at risk (diverse population based on race, ethnicity, poverty, gender, sexual orientation, age and rural populace).
7. describe social work values and ethics in the formation, adoption and implementation, and evaluation of social welfare policy.
8. utilize the Internet for policy analysis and advocacy purposes.

V. REQUIRED TEXT

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

VII. GRADING

(Include grade scale, rubric, points for assignments, bonus, supplemental assignments, and attendance policy and how attendance is factored into final grade).

SIUC policy regarding Incompletes: “An INC grade is assigned when, for reasons beyond their control, students engaged in passing work are unable to complete all class assignments. An INC must be changed to a completed grade within one semester. Should the student fail to complete the course within one semester, the incomplete may be converted to a grade of F and such grade will be computed in the student's grade point average.”

VIII. COURSE EVALUATION

At the end of the semester, students will use the SIUC Instructor Course Evaluation (ICE) to evaluate the course and the instructor. Student mastery of the competencies listed in the Course Objectives section will be evaluated as part of the ongoing program assessment for the School of Social Work.

IX. COURSE OUTLINE

(Instructors provide a weekly list of topics, readings, assignments, and tests)

IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Update references to within 5 years for most materials)