University of Minnesota School of Social Work

Syllabus

SW 8805-Aging and Disability Policy

Part I: Course information
SW 8805-Aging and Disability Policy
2 credits
Faculty contact:
Name:
Email:
Phone:
Office Location:

Course descriptions:

Short Description
This course focuses on social policy related to disability and aging. Explores the major policy areas of income support, health, education, caregiving, employment, housing and retirement.

Long Description
This course analyzes legislation, policies and politics that influence the context of social work practice in disability and aging, especially human rights and social justice, with a particular focus on access to programs and services. Students will learn about specific disability and aging policies related to education, income support, anti-discrimination, housing and long term-care, employment and retirement. Students will discuss ethical issues in current disability and aging policies while also gaining and understanding of the diverse and special needs of marginalized populations.

Pre-requisites:
1. This is an advanced social work class, and the material presented in this class is at an advanced level. Social Work students enrolled in this course should have completed the foundation classes listed below, or have advanced standing status.
   SW 5051 - Human Behavior and the Social Environment
   SW 5801 - Policies and Programs in American Social Welfare
   SW 8151 - Social Work Practice Methods: Individuals and Systems
   SW 8152 - Social Work Practice Methods: Families and Groups
   SW 8153 - Models of Community Intervention
   SW 8841 - Social Work Research Methods
2. If you are not a Social Work student, you need permission of the instructor

Clinical Licensure Hours:
This course contains some clinical content, as required by the Minnesota Board of Social Work for eligibility for the Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW). The number of hours in each required category is listed below:
### Part II: Course outcomes

**Course Objectives**  
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the principles, historical foundation and provisions of the primary disability and aging policies in the United States.
2. Demonstrate the analytic, theoretical and value assessment skills that enable social workers to evaluate policies and apply change strategies.
3. Apply concepts and principles of human rights, social justice, and social work ethics to policy analysis, development and change strategies.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the current disability and aging-related policy environment.
5. Understand specific current disability and aging policies regarding education, income support, anti-discrimination, housing and long-term care, employment, and retirement.
6. Be able to apply a policy analysis framework to identify the strengths and weaknesses of current policy and policy proposals related to aging or disability.
7. Demonstrate skills to propose well-reasoned, creative and viable disability and aging-related policy solutions.
8. Discuss ethical issues in current aging and disability policies.
9. Understand aging and disability policy issues as they pertain to diverse, special needs of marginalized populations.
10. Understand the implications of aging and disability policies for social work practice, program development and management.
11. Describe policy approaches to aging and disability of other countries.

**Social Work Practice Competencies**
Successful completion of this concentration course implies that the student has achieved competency in the following advanced practice behaviors:

**Competency: 2.1.2 – Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice**  
Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice Behavior</th>
<th>Covered in class through (i.e., activity, reading, content)</th>
<th>Assessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Identify and analyze value-based and ethical dilemmas that arise in their area of practice, using professional codes of ethical standards and through appropriate professional consultation.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Policy Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Competency: 2.1.3 – Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments**  
Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information. Social workers:

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>• Identify and synthesize multiple sources of knowledge to understand policy and practice issues related to their area of practice.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Policy Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EP 2.1.5 – Advance human rights and social and economic justice**  
Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice. Social workers:

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>• Gain a full comprehension about disparities and their development, contribute to knowledge about institutional barriers to equality and apply concentration-appropriate strategies to advance social and economic justice.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Competency: 2.1.8 – Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being**  
Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know the history and current structures of social policies and services; the role of policy in service delivery; and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers:

| Practice Behavior | Covered in class through (i.e., activity, reading, content) | Assessed |
Competency: 2.1.9 – Respond to contexts that shape practice
Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively. Social workers:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Assess the impact of historical and contemporary contexts on practice and policy in their area of practice.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Policy Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are responsive to dynamic changes in society and in their areas of practice.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Policy Brief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Organize and advocate with community members, program participants, service providers, community organizations, policy makers and the public to improve practice and service delivery in their area of practice.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Policy Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part III: Course requirements

Texts and Materials

All materials are available through e-Reserves

Assignments
More assignment information and instructions is available on the course Moodle page.

Policy Brief and Elevator Speech
Students are to write a two page policy brief (single spaced, appearance matters!) that describes and analyzes a current policy issue. xxx

Media Assignment
Each student will select an aging and or disability policy relevant issue and two news stories regarding this issue from the current electronic or print media (newspapers, magazines, web), highlighting important theoretical, methodological, and policy relevance that are present or absent from the account. You will need to provide a link to your article so the entire class can read it and are required write a short paper (2-3) pages, summarizing your articles and analysis [10% of final grade]. You will pick a date for this on the first class.
**Final Policy Research and Analysis Paper**

In this assignment, students will write an 8-10 page analysis paper that describes a policy in disability and/or aging (e.g., social services, transportation, housing, healthcare, mental health, income security, caregiver support, end-of-life care, etc.) The objective is to provide a clear explanation of the issue(s) under consideration, the associated policy dimensions and implications, and recommendations for action. Select a policy area of interest and discuss the choice with the instructor. *A half page proposal of the paper is due (Week xx)*. **The policy analysis is due (Week xxx).**

**Grading Structure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy Brief</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Week Six</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Review</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sign-up (Weeks Four-Nine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Week Eight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Research Paper</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Finals Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Week Fifteen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Scale**

- A    = 93 - 100
- A-   = 90 - 92
- B+   = 87 - 89
- B    = 83 - 86
- B-   = 80 - 82
- C+   = 77 - 79
- C    = 73 - 76
- C-   = 70 - 72
- D+   = 67 - 69
- D    = 60 - 66

**Course Policies**

There are many University and School of Social Work policies that govern this course. Please go to [http://www.cehd.umn.edu/ssw/Documents/SSWCoursePolicies.pdf](http://www.cehd.umn.edu/ssw/Documents/SSWCoursePolicies.pdf) to see a complete description of all the policies.

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**Part IV: Course content**

**Week One: Introduction**

**Topic 1: Overview of the Policy Process and Policy Analysis Framework**

**Topic 2: Overview of the scope of disability and aging policies**

**Readings**

Week Two:  Foundations of Disability Policy

Topic A: Foundations of disability policy
Topic B: Demographics and Definitions of Disability
Topic C: Disability Rights Movement
Topic D: The Americans with Disabilities Act and Anti-Discrimination Policies for People with Disabilities

Required Readings:


Supplemental Readings:


**Week Three: Foundations of Aging Policy**

- **Topic A:** Foundations of Aging policy
- **Topic B:** Demographics and Definitions of Aging
- **Topic C:** Aging Advocacy Movement
- **Topic D:** Anti-Discrimination Policy for older people

**Required Readings:**

Hudson, Chapters 1-3, 5, 7 & 9

**Supplemental Readings:**


**Week Four: Family Issues**

- **Topic A:** Early Intervention
- **Topic B:** Family Support and Caregiving
- **Topic C:** Family Violence

**Required Readings:**


Hudson, Chapter 10

**Supplemental Readings:**


**Week Five: Education Policy**

**Topic A: Overview of Education Policy**  
**Topic B: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**  
**Topic C: Transition**  
**Topic D: Lifelong Learning Policies**

**Required Readings:**


http://www2.ed.gov/print/policy/speced/guid/modachieve-summary.html

**Supplemental Readings:**

**Week Six: Employment and Work Policies**

**Topic A: Supported Employment**  
**Topic B: Employee Protection Policies**  
**Topic C: Older workforce**
**Required Readings:**

Hudson, Chapters 16 & 17

**Supplemental Readings:**


**Weeks Seven and Eight: Income Supports**

**Topic A: Overview of income supports for people with disabilities (SSI, SSDI, workplace disability insurance)**

**Topic B: Overview of income supports for older people (Social Security, private pensions, workplace pensions)**

**Required Readings:**


Hudson Chapter 11

**Supplemental Readings:**

**Week Nine: Health Care & Medicare**

**Topic A: Medicare**  
**Topic B: Affordable Care Act**  
**Topic C: Quiz**

**Required Readings:**


Hudson Chapter 12

**Supplemental Readings:**


**Week Ten and Eleven: Medicaid and Long-Term Care, Housing, Consumer Directed Support**
Required Readings:


Hudson, Chapters 13 & 15

Supplemental Readings:


Week Twelve: Older Service Networks, Access, Transportation

Topic 1: Older Americans Act
Topic 2: Access
Topic 3: Transportation

Required Readings:


Hudson, Chapter 14

Supplemental Readings:

**Week Thirteen: Retirement and End of Life Planning Policies**

**Required Readings:**

**Supplemental Readings:**


**Week Fourteen: International Aging and Disability Policy**

**Required Readings:**


**Supplemental Readings:**


**Week Fifteen: Course Wrap-Up**

- Final Exam
- Panel Presentation

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**Additional Bibliography**

Bibliography:


What Older Americans Think: Interest Groups and Aging Policy /