Policy Practice and Analysis/SOWK 5330/Section 400

Instructor Information

Name: Charles Chear, MSW
Email: charles.chear@unt.edu
Office Location: 397G Chilton

Course Description

Introduces foundational knowledge and skills in policy practice, including the policy-making process and intervention techniques aimed at impacting and changing social welfare and public policies. Analysis of contemporary social issues, public policy and social welfare programs. Examination of global influences that affect U.S. social policy.

Course Prerequisites or Other Restrictions

This course is part of the Advanced Year Curriculum for the Master of Social Work Program.

Required/Recommended Materials

Required Textbooks:

Karger, H. J., & Stoesz, D. (2023). *American social welfare policy: A pluralist approach* (9th ed.). New York, NY: Pearson.

Additional materials including selected articles and videos will be utilized during the semester. These materials will be available through links within the course Canvas platform and/or through the University library.

Course Objectives

Core Competency	COURSE OBJECTIVES By the end of this course students will be able to:
Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior (EPAS Competency 1)*	1. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context
Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice (EPAS 2)	1. Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels 2. Engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice

Engage in Policy Practice (EPAS C5)	1. Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services 2. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

*Council on Social Work Education Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) Social Work Core Competencies

Technical Requirements & Skills

Minimum Technology Requirements

- Computer
- Reliable internet access
- Speakers
- Microsoft Office Suite
- [Canvas Technical Requirements](https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements) (https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements)

Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

Technical skills learners must have to succeed in this course include:

- Using Canvas
- Using email with attachments

Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors online. Here are some general guidelines:

- Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in email or any other communication.
- Always use your professors' proper title: Dr. or Prof., or if in doubt use Professor
- Unless specifically invited, don't refer to your instructor by first name.
- Use clear and concise language.
- Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar (this includes discussion boards).
- Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you."
- Use standard fonts such as Ariel, Calibri or Times new Roman and use a size 10 or 12 point font
- Avoid using the caps lock feature AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETTED AS YELLING.
- Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons like :) or ☺.
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously or sound offensive.
- Be careful with personal information (both yours and other's).
- Do not send confidential information via e-mail

See these [Engagement Guidelines](https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) (https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) for more information.

Success in an Online Course

While the online classroom shares many similarities with the face-to-face classroom, success in online education requires certain skills and expectations that students should review: "How to Succeed as an Online Student" (https://clear.unt.edu/teaching-resources/online-teaching/succeed-online).

Getting Help

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk
Email: helpdesk@unt.edu
Phone: 940-565-2324
In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130
Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm
Telephone Availability:
- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
- Friday: 8am-8pm
- Saturday: 9am-5pm

Laptop Checkout: 8am-7pm

For additional support, visit Canvas Technical Help (https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328)

Student Support Services

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- Student Health and Wellness Center (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center)
- Counseling and Testing Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
- UNT Care Team (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)
- UNT Psychiatric Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry)

Other student support services offered by UNT include

- Financial Aid (https://financialaid.unt.edu/)
- Student Legal Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services)
- Career Center (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center)
- Counseling and Testing Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
- UNT Food Pantry (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/desresources/programs/food-pantry/)

Academic Support Services
- Academic Resource Center (https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources)

- [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (https://success.unt.edu/asc)
- [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (https://library.unt.edu/)
- [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (http://writingcenter.unt.edu/)
- [MathLab](https://math.unt.edu/mathlab) (https://math.unt.edu/mathlab)

How to Succeed in this Course

MSW Classroom Policies

Intellectual Property

All course materials and course content are the intellectual property of the instructor and/or your classmates. As a result, recording audio or video of the class, as well as the duplication of or forwarding of e-mail and Canvas postings is prohibited without written permission. This means, for example, that you may not post materials from the class, audio of lectures, or video of the class to personal web pages, Facebook, YouTube or any other electronic medium without the written consent of the instructor, and if appropriate, all relevant class members. Students may, however, request permission from the instructor to record course lectures for personal academic use. (See UNT Policies-Academic Integrity)

ADA Statement
The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website (http://www.unt.edu/oda). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity emanates from a culture that embraces the core values of trust and honesty necessary for full learning to occur. As student-centered public research university, UNT promote the integrity of the learning process by establishing and enforcing high academic standards. Academic dishonesty breaches the mutual trust necessary in an academic environment and undermines all scholarship. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, submitting a paper multiple times to complete course requirements, forging the signature of the instructor or of another student, fabrication, and/or facilitating or sabotaging the academic dishonesty of other students for exams, papers etc.

Plagiarism can take various forms:

Cheating: This includes exchanging answers on tests or pretending the work of others is your own work. This includes using work drawn from books, essays, newspapers and magazines, websites, and papers you wrote for another class or one that was written by other students.

Non-attribution: Copying quotes or text where you don't give proper credit. You should use quotation marks for quotes and block indentations for passages. Always use citations at the end of a quote. The best way to avoid

non-attribution is to always give ample credit to source authors. Better to have too many citations than to fail to credit your sources.

Patchwriting: Using quotes and the structure of someone else's writing as your own. It is careless paraphrasing. Please summarize and report what you are reading using your own words. Quotes should be kept to a minimum as per APA guidelines.

Students who are unsure whether a particular act constitutes plagiarism should consult their instructor. Professors will periodically utilize Turn-It-In software on Canvas to determine that students are not plagiarizing.

Tutorials on Academic Integrity

We strongly recommend that you complete the tutorials and quiz linked from the UNT Academic Integrity website.

Also review CBB (Colby, Bate, and Bowdoin Colleges) Plagiarism Resource

After reviewing these resources, please take the "Plagiarism Self Test"

Students identified as potentially committing academic dishonesty at UNT will be reported to the Graduate Director and Chair of the MSW Program and will also be reported to appropriate University officials. University policy supersedes department policy.

At UNT, after meeting with the student, a report may be made to the Dean of Students.

Faculty will immediately contact students with a potential violation to meet with them to discuss the situation. Students will be apprised of their student rights and responsibilities and asked to provide an explanation for their behavior. If the student(s) acknowledges the act of academic dishonesty and the faculty member is satisfied that the incident can be effectively resolved with a grade sanction, the faculty member will assign one of the following sanctions:

a. Admonition. Verbal or written reprimand

b. Performance of additional work/Assignment of Educational Coursework. The student may be

required to perform additional coursework not required of other students in the specific course.

c. Changing/reduction of grade--Partial or no credit for an assignment or assessment. The

instructor may award partial or no credit for the assignment or assessment on which the student

engaged in academic dishonesty, to be calculated into the final course grade

d. Withdrawal from the course

e. Failure. The instructor may assign a failing grade for the course

Academic dishonesty is grounds for termination from the Social Work Program or denial of admission.

Using AI tools

In this course, you may use Generative AI (GenAI) tools—such as Claude, ChatGPT, Gemini—to support your learning and develop skills for a GenAI-oriented workforce. This use will help us stay technically proficient and ethically grounded. However, GenAI should complement, not replace, our course materials. If something seems unclear, feel free to ask.

GenAI, for example, can be used to edit a paper you wrote (e.g., checking grammar, spelling, improving sentence structure), to better understand or confirm a concept you're having a difficult time with, and to assist in searching for research papers. However, GenAI should not be used to write portions or an entire paper for you, or to answer, say, test questions. If you use GenAI to look for research papers, you need to double-check whether the paper, in fact, exists—and if it does, whether the content is accurate. You do this by going to a search engine like Google Scholar or the UNT Library website and reading the paper (which you are expected to do). If you use inaccurate content that was generated by AI, you will be held responsible for it, especially if it violates UNT academic integrity policy.

Communication: Email is the best way to communicate with me for any concerns or questions, or to set up an in-person, phone or Zoom meeting. You can expect to receive a response to emails within 48 hours on business days. During busy times, my inbox becomes rather full, so if you contact me and do not receive a response within two business days, please send a follow up email. A gentle nudge is always appreciated.
I work to return graded assignments within two weeks.

You may wish to review Online Communication Tips (https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) that has been created by UNT's CLEAR

Inclusion and Civility

As a student you should consider the viewpoints and ideas of others with courtesy, even if you disagree. This policy extends to our online interactions, including discussion boards, emails and social media. Creating a civil discourse is part of embracing our professionalism.

Listen with openness, offering your suggestions and ideas in a positive and respectful manner. When in doubt, refrain from responding until you at least thoughtfully considered what they are stating. Reread emails and other communications to assess tone and discrepancies between message intended and message conveyed. In a national climate of distrust and disrespect it is important to model civility in every word and deed. Our social work program provides a unique opportunity to deconstruct our biases, prejudices, and privilege and to evolve our values. We must make the commitment to know ourselves deeply. We learn to speak out against incivility. We must sometimes embrace uncomfortable discoveries about who we have been and still are. Growth often begins where our comfort zones end. Through reflection, especially for those who are new to this journey, we seek to understand other persons' perspectives. Connecting in relationships with those who are different from us will sometimes leave us feeling uncomfortable, awkward, sad, or enraged.

Respectful dialogue, even without resolution, is valuable. We are committed to fostering socially just environments in our classrooms, work and gathering spaces. It is everyone's job to continue building social environments where we can have honest and respectful conversations. Valuing the dignity and worth of all persons and seeking to honor our cultural/racial/ethnic differences is paramount to embracing the ethical basis of our profession. How we choose to treat our colleagues and fellow students reflects directly on how we will interact as social workers with our clients. These common, ordinary exchanges are a window into our commitment to professionalism and social justice.

As members of the UNT community, we have all made a commitment to be part of an institution that respects and values the identities of the students and employees with whom we interact. UNT does not tolerate identity-

based discrimination, harassment, and retaliation so we will work as a class to collaborate in ways that encourage inclusivity. For more information, please see: Code of Student Conduct

Assessing Your Work

Assignment	Point Value	Percentage
Weekly Activities	460	46%
Advocacy Blog	200	20%
Policy Advocacy Paper	100	10%
Quizzes	240	24%
Total	1000	100%

Course Requirements/Schedule

1. **Weekly activities: (C1, C3, C5):** Students will complete activities in the Canvas platform. These activities will help students synthesize, analyze, and articulate learning of readings and exercises. Examples of these activities include writing a policy brief and viewing, analyzing a legislative hearing, and creating an elevator pitch.
2. **Advocacy Blog:** Students will choose a legislative bill or an issue and maintain a blog on developments related to tracking and promoting the bill or the issue to policy makers. Students will post a minimum of four blog posts, and each blog posts should no more than 300 words. The social work perspective on the issue should be addressed.
3. **Policy Advocacy Paper (C1, C3, C5):** Students will select a state or federal bill ad create a detailed advocacy plan for promoting the bill or the development of a bill. The advocacy plan may include a concise definition of the problem area, the historical antecedents of the bill, adequate data to support the need of the bill, identification of the stakeholders and policy makers that could impact the bill.
4. **Quizzes:** Students will complete quizzes to test their comprehension of policy concepts introduced in the textbook.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due for Class	Assignment Due
Week 1		Introduction to course and overview of social policy	Chapter 8: The Making of Governmental Policy (Karger & Stoesz, 2023) National Association of Social Workers (NASW). NASW Code of Ethics.	*Quiz 1* *Weekly Assignment 1*
Week 2		Federal and State Policy Making Process	Policy Websites available in the Course Guide through UNT library	Weekly Assignment 2 Blog 1
Week 3		Tax Policy and Income Distribution	Chapter 9: Tax Policy and Income Distribution	Chapter 9 Quiz Weekly Assignment 3
Week 4		Social Insurance Programs and policy	Chapter 10: Social Insurance Programs	Chapter 10 Quiz Weekly Assignment 4
Week 5		Public Assistance Programs and policy	Chapter 11: Public Assistance Programs	Chapter 11 Quiz Weekly Assignment 5
Week 6		American Health Care policy	Chapter 12: The American Health Care System	Chapter 12 Quiz Weekly Assignment 6 Blog 2
Week 7		Mental health and substance abuse policy	Chapter 13: Mental Health and Substance Abuse Policy	Chapter 13 Quiz Weekly Assignment 7
Week 8		Criminal justice policy	Chapter 14: Criminal Justice	Chapter 14 Quiz Weekly Assignment 8
Week 9		Child welfare policy	Chapter 15: Child Welfare Policy	Chapter 15 Quiz Weekly Assignment 9 Blog 3
Week 10		Housing policy	Chapter 16: Housing Policies	Chapter 16 Quiz Weekly Assignment 10
Week 11		Food policy	Chapter 17: The Politics of Food Policy and Rural Life	Chapter 17 Quiz Weekly Assignment 11
Week 12		Policy Advocacy	Chapter 18: Social Welfare Policy and Education	Chapter 18 Quiz Weekly Assignment 12

Week 13		Comparative Social Welfare Policy	Chapter 19: The American Welfare State in International Perspective	Chapter 19 Quiz Blog 4 Weekly Assignment 13
Week 14		Policy Advocacy	Lens,V.(2005). Advocacy and argumentation in the public arena: A guide for social workers. Social Work, 50(3), 231-238.	Weekly Assignment 14
Week 15		Policy Advocacy Continued	Sharwell, G.R. (1978). How to Testify Before A Legislative Committee. Reprinted from Toward Human Dignity, John W. Hanks, ed. pp.87-98. National Association of Social Workers, Inc	Weekly Assignment 15
Week 16		Final Thoughts: Course Wrap Up		Policy Advocacy Paper

Every student in my class can improve by doing their own work and trying their hardest with access to appropriate resources. Students who use other people's work without citations will be violating UNT's Academic Integrity Policy. Please read and follow this important set of guidelines for your academic success (https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003). If you have questions about this, or any UNT policy, please email me or come discuss this with me during my office hours.

Selected Bibliography

Bodenheimer, T. S., & Grumbach, K. (2016). Understanding health policy: A clinical approach. McGraw Hill Education, New York, NY.

Chambers, D., & Bonk, J. (2013). *Social policy and social programs: A method for the practice public policy analyst (6th ed.)*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Edelman, P. (2012) *So rich, so poor: Why it's so hard to end poverty in America*. New York: The New Press.

Gil, D. G. (2013). *Confronting Oppression and Inequality: Concepts and strategies for social workers.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Gil, D. (1992). *Unraveling Social Policy*. Rochester, VT: Schenkman Books.

Ginsberg, L. (1998). *Conservative social welfare policy: A description and analysis.* Chicago: Nelson-Hall, Inc.

Hayes, K., & Mickelson, J. S. (2009). Affecting change: Social Workers in the political arena (7th Eds.). Pearson, London, UK.

Howlett, M., Ramesh, M., & Perl, A. (2009). *Studying public policy: Policy cycles and policy subsystems*. NY: Oxford.

Lewis, M. & Widerquist (2001). *Economics for social workers: The application of economic theory to social policy and the human services.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Mignon, S. (2016). Child welfare in the United States: Challenges, Policy and Practice. Springer, Berlin, Germany.

Miringoff, M. L. (1999). *The social health of the nation: How is America really doing.* New York : Oxford University Press.

NASW (2012). *Social Work Speaks: Policy statements* (8th Edition).Washington, D.C.: NASW Press.

O'Connor, M.K. & Netting, F.E. (2011). *Analyzing social policy: Multiple perspectives for critically understanding and evaluating policy.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Okun, A.M. (1975). *Equality & Efficiency: The big tradeoff.* Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution

Pan, M.L. (2004). *Preparing Literature Reviews: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (2nd ed.). Glendale, CA: Pyrczak Publishing.

Rome, S.H. (2013). *Social Work and Law: Judicial Policy and Forensic Practice*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Wheelan, C. (2010). *Naked economics: Undressing the dismal science*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Recommended Websites:

The rise of global information technology has revolutionized the research process and has changed the nature of social policy analysis and policy practice. The World Wide Web allows organizations to gather policy information quickly and disseminate information to a wide audience. Thus, the task of policy research becomes far easier than was previously possible and students can consult an impressive range of internet resources when exploring policy issues.

Government organizations such as the following provide information and statistics:

Census Bureau www.census.gov

General Accounting Office www.gao.gov

U.S. Senate www.senate.gov

U.S. House of Representatives www.house.gov

Department of Health and Human Services www.dhhs.gov

Policy organizations such as the following provide substantial amounts of data and analysis:

Brookings Institute www.brook.edu

Rand Corporation www.rand.org

Urban Institute www.urban.org

There are also large sites that combine materials from many organizations such as:

Handsnet www.handsnet.org

Citizens for Tax Justice www.ctj.org

Other websites that may be useful for this course include:

The Economist www.economist.com

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities www.cbpp.org

The American Enterprise Institute www.aei.org