Administrative Unit: Criminal Justice Administration and Social Work Department

Course Prefix and Number: SOWK 365

Course Title: American Social Policy

Number of: Credit Hours: 3  Lecture Hours: 3  Laboratory Hours: 0

Catalog Description: The nature and development of American social welfare policy, the history of current structures of social welfare services, the role of policy in service delivery, and analyses of current social welfare policy issues with an emphasis on policy that promotes optimal health and social well-being. Cross-listed as SOCI 365. Prerequisite: SOCI 111 or SOWK 101.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): SOCI 111 or SOWK 101.

Text(s): Many suitable textbooks are available from various publishers and the following list is not comprehensive. Other textbooks may be judged by individual instructors to be more suitable:

Most current editions of the following:

Required Textbooks:


Recommended Textbook:

CSWE Policy Statement: Programs provide content about the history of social work, the history and current work practice, and attainment of individual and social well-being. Course content provides students with knowledge and skills to understand major policies that form the foundation of social welfare; analyze organizational, local, state, national, and international issues in social welfare policy and social service delivery; analyze and apply the results of policy research relevant to social service delivery. Understand and demonstrate Policy practice skills in regard to economic, political, and organizational systems, and use them to influence, formulate, and advocate for policy consistent with social work values; and identify financial, organizational, administrative, and planning processes required to deliver social services.
Course Objectives:

• To gain a deeper understanding of the major policies that form the foundation of social welfare services.
• To develop critical thinking skills and demonstrate an understanding of how social policy affects social work practice.
• To develop skills in policy analysis and research.
• To provide knowledge of advocacy techniques and opportunity to practice advocacy skills.

Measurable Learning Outcomes:

Knowledge Objectives:

• Understand the history and evolution of the social work profession.
• Gain an understanding of the historical roots and current structures of major policies that form the foundation of social welfare programs and services.
• Gain an understanding of the role of policy in service delivery, social work practice, and attainment of optimal individual and social well-being.
• Gain an understanding of the political and economic forces that shape social welfare policies.
• Understand the role of organizations and service delivery systems in influencing and implementing policies.
• Learn strategies to influence social policy.
• Identify financial, organizational, administrative, and planning processes required to deliver social services.
• Acquire a familiarity with the sources of information useful in understanding social welfare policies.

Skill Objectives:

• Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
• Demonstrate by way of policy analysis, knowledge of the process by which policies are formulated and implemented on the federal and state level.
• Analyze the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of a social welfare policy in light of the principles of social and economic justice.
• Analyze the results of policy research relevant to social service delivery and demonstrate how it can be used to influence the policy process.
• Analyze organizational, local, state, national, and international issues in social welfare policy and social service delivery.
• Advocate for policy consistent with social work values.
• Utilize the Internet for policy analysis and advocacy purposes.
• Understand the use of American Psychological Association (APA) format for papers.

Value Objectives:

• Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles as they apply to social welfare policy, with special emphasis on the
Understand how social welfare policies have been used as mechanisms for oppression and discrimination, and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.

Gain an understanding of distributive justice, human and civil rights, and the global interconnectedness of oppression.

Topical Outline (major areas of coverage):

- NASW Code of Ethics:
  - Preamble
  - Ethical Responsibility to the Broader Society
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Historical Perspectives
- The Social Security Act
- Social Insurance Programs
- Public Assistance Programs
- Social Services
- Poverty
- Nutrition
- Health Care
- Mental Health Care
- Child Welfare
- The Elderly
- Women, Minorities, and Immigrant Policies
- Affirmative Action
- Native Americans
- Policy Analysis
- Global issues and comparisons
- Testifying before a legislative committee
- Implementation and evaluation

Recommended maximum class size for this course: 25

Library Resources: Online databases are available at http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp. You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.

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Date: January 27, 2005

NOTE: The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course’s subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.

Office of Academic Affairs