

## **SOC/SW 262 SOCIAL WELFARE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

Spring 2018

Mondays and Wednesdays 8:00 AM to 9:15 AM

CCC Building, room 321

**INSTRUCTOR:** Jess Bowers, MSW, APSW

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**OFFICE HOURS:** Mon and Wed 11:00 AM- 12:30, Tuesdays 9:30-11 AM, or by appointment

**COURSE WEBSITE:** <https://uwsp.courses.wisconsin.edu/> (Desire2Learn)

### **REQUIRED TEXT:**

**DiNitto, D. (2011).** *Social Welfare: Politics and Public Policy, 8<sup>th</sup> ed.* University of Texas.

**Please select one (1) of the following books to read and critique.** You will be required to submit reflection papers on your selected book during the course of the semester. The reaction paper assignments are outlined in the syllabus.

**Abramsky, Sasha.** *The American Way of Poverty: How the other half still lives (2014).*

Fifty years after Michael Harrington published his groundbreaking book *The Other America*, in which he chronicled the lives of people excluded from the Age of Affluence, poverty in America is back with a vengeance. It is made up of both the long-term chronically poor and new working poor—the tens of millions of victims of a broken economy and an ever more dysfunctional political system. In many ways, for the majority of Americans, financial insecurity has become the new norm. He travels the United States meeting the poor, whose wrenching tales he inserts among data-driven analyses and acute dissections of government programs. The country he portrays is damaged by indifference at high levels — his American heroes are not in Congress or boardrooms — but is rescued here and there by caring citizens at the grass roots, their inventive programs achieving small successes.

**Desmond, Matthew.** *Evicted: Poverty and profit in the American city (2016).* In Milwaukee, Desmond moved into a trailer park and then to a rooming house on the -poverty-stricken North Side and diligently took notes on the lives of people who pay 70 to 80 percent of their incomes for homes that, objectively speaking, are unfit for human habitation. He takes readers into the poorest neighborhoods of Milwaukee, where families spend most of their income on housing and where eviction has become routine—a vicious cycle that deepens our country’s vast inequality. Based on years of embedded fieldwork and painstakingly gathered data, *Evicted* transforms our understanding of extreme poverty and economic exploitation while providing fresh ideas for solving a devastating, uniquely American problem.

**Egan, Timothy.** *The Worst Hard Time: The untold story of those who survived the great American Dust Bowl (2006).* The dust storms that terrorized the High Plains in the darkest years of the Depression were like nothing ever seen before. Following a dozen families and their communities through the rise and fall of the region, Egan tells of their desperate attempts to carry on through blinding black dust blizzards, crop failure, and the death of loved ones. Brilliantly

capturing the terrifying drama of catastrophe, Egan does equal justice to the human characters who become his heroes. In an era that promises ever-greater natural disasters, *The Worst Hard Time* is an amazing nonfiction book about the greatest environmental disaster ever to be visited upon our land and a powerful cautionary tale about the dangers of trifling with nature. It also offers a unique perspective on the government's implementation of several social welfare policies to offer relief to impacted families such as the Social Security Act and Civilian Conservation Corps.

**Stevenson, Bryan. *Just Mercy: A story of Justice and Redemption* (2014).** Unfairness in the Justice system is a major theme of our age. DNA analysis exposes false convictions on a regular basis. The predominance of racial minorities in jails and prisons suggests systemic bias. Sentencing guidelines born of the war on drugs look increasingly draconian. Studies cast doubt on the accuracy of eyewitness testimony. Even the states that still kill people appear to have forgotten how; lately executions have been botched to horrific effect. Stevenson is the co-founder of the Equal Justice Initiative, and this book focuses mainly on that work, and those clients. Stevenson has worked to free scores of people from wrongful or excessive punishment, arguing five times before the Supreme Court. His writing reaffirms that we should judge the character of a society by how they treat the poor, the condemned, and the incarcerated. He reminds us that people should be defined by more than the worst thing they have done, and he challenges capital punishment in this country by asking, "Do we deserve to kill?"

**Urrea, Luis Alberto. *The Devil's Highway* (2004)** A true story about Mexican migration into the United States. It retells the tragic story from May of 2001 when a group of men attempted to cross the U.S. border. After entering the desert of Arizona, they endured the deadliest region in North America, the Devil's Highway. The Border Patrol does not even travel through it. Twenty-six men entered the region, and only twelve people survived. As a journalist, Urrea uses his investigative trade to paint a larger picture of United States-Mexico relations and U.S. immigration concerns by way of individual stories. By doing so, the reader can get a different view of the perils facing those who make the decision to cross the border illegally. Urrea's investigative touch hits on each illegal immigrant, showing them as more than a statistic or "illegal alien." He focuses on the exploitation of illegal immigrants by also recounting the role of their guides, or Coyotes, as they are known. Urrea also delves into Mexico's past to show origin stories and sources of hope and inspiration for Mexican people. Topics like Spanish explorers, missionaries, human trafficking, and Native American tribes are all brushed upon to shed light on a storied past.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course introduces students to policy practice in public and private organizations and in community and legislative arenas. Students will learn to analyze social policy, understand policy implication, and research and analyze a policy for proposed change or implementation. This course will also emphasize the development and implementation of political strategy, policy formation, as well as the policy evaluation in historical context of social welfare policies in the United States, and the negotiation of policy changes.

## **COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION CORE COMPETENCIES**

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) identifies core competencies (measurable practice behaviors comprised of knowledge, values, and skills) that students must demonstrate and apply throughout their education and that social work programs must infuse into their curricula. This course was designed to provide exposure to these competencies and serve as a foundation for the further development that will take place should a student be admitted into the social work major. Students pursuing further education in social work should familiarize themselves with these competencies.

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.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Understand that policies define the context within social service delivery systems from micro to macro levels. (Social Work Competency 5)
2. Analyze a specific social welfare policy to assess its effectiveness at combating social injustice and inequality (Social Work Competencies 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5).
3. Understand the value base of social policy practice, including value for diversity, and develop skills in cultural competence in all aspects of policy analysis (Competencies 2, 3, and 5, 7, and 9).
4. Understand the value of and skills necessary to engage in political action and policy practice, as well as a students' role in being engaged and active in campus and community policy action. (Social Work Competency 5, 6, 8 and 9).
5. Demonstrate the ability to utilize the results of evaluation and research to build effectiveness in understanding and using policy advocacy (Social Work Competencies 4, 5, and 9).
6. Understand and implement negotiation techniques to affect policy advocacy or changes in policy (Competency 5).

### **CLASS FORMAT:**

Classes will be structured to include lecture, discussion, media clips, individual and group exercises.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

All assignments will be submitted through D2L on or before their due date. All written assignments must adhere to **APA guidelines**. Students are responsible for obtaining guideline information. Please see the instructor if you need assistance in doing this.

Students are expected to attend class regularly and read all assignments before attending the class for which they are assigned. Students should be prepared to take part in discussion, experiential, and written assignments in class. **Laptop use and cell phone use, including texting, is forbidden during class. One participation point will be awarded per class in the course of the semester based on attendance and participation.**

\*If there is a particular reason you may need a laptop or other device please see your instructor.

One of the goals of this class is to learn accurate information that will help us change prejudice and discrimination--our own and that of others. There is an expectation that students will do their best to use non-sexist, non-racist, gender-neutral, and non-stigmatizing language during class discussions and in written work. Some useful guidelines for accomplishing this include:

- When referring to ethnic and racial groups use the language that is presently acceptable to that group.
- When referring to people who have intellectual, cognitive, or emotional challenges, are homeless, etc. present this in a way that does not stigmatize them. Avoid using terms like “the mentally ill”, “the disabled”, “illegal aliens” or “the homeless”. Instead use person-centered language, such as “individuals experiencing mental illness”, “people with disabilities”, undocumented immigrant or worker, etc.

### **WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:**

- ◆ Papers will be graded on accuracy, breadth of content, consideration of social work/sociological principles, development of ideas, spelling, and grammar.
- ◆ Spelling and grammar should be checked. Please do not rely on spell and grammar check as your only editorial tools.
- ◆ When references are used, ALL references must appear in a reference list at the end of the paper in APA formatting.
- ◆ All assignments are posted in the content area in D2L, and must be submitted to the course “Dropbox” as attachments.
- ◆ Students will lose points for late assignments. If extensions are needed on assignments, it is your responsibility to discuss this with the instructor prior to the due date. If assignments are turned in late, partial credit will be given. No late assignments will be accepted two weeks past their due date.

### **ASSISTANCE WITH ASSIGNMENTS**

I am happy to meet with you to discuss assignments. We can do this in person, by phone, or by e-mail. If you want to meet in person, you may stop in during office hours or we can schedule another time that works for both of us.

### **LATE PAPERS/MISSED EXAMS/INCOMPLETES**

Students are expected to complete course work by the date that it is due. You are responsible to contact me to negotiate for any alternate dates. You must do this **BEFORE THE DUE DATE**. The same process is necessary to request an incomplete. Requesting an extension does not

automatically mean that you will receive one. If assignments are turned in late, partial credit will be given. No late assignments will be accepted two weeks past their due date.

### **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism—using words or ideas of another person without citation—will result in a failing grade for the course and may lead to other disciplinary action. Any quotation, fact, or major idea taken from a book, article, or other source, must be cited, as well as being included in your reference list at the end of the paper using APA formatting. If you do not do this, it is plagiarism.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

Students who have special needs that affect their participation in the course may notify the instructor if she/he wishes to have special accommodations considered in either instruction or examination. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor as early in the semester as possible to discuss special needs.

UWSP is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities and temporary impairments. If you have a disability or acquire a condition during the semester where you need assistance, please contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center on the 6th floor of Albertson Hall (library) as soon as possible. DATC contact information: 715-346-3365 or DATC@uwsp.edu. More information about disability services is available at their website:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/disability/Pages/students/studentInformation.aspx>

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

We will be discussing case examples about real people. It is important that class members respect the confidentiality of the people who are discussed. Members of the class may wish to make comments that they do not want repeated outside of the classroom. If a student requests confidentiality prior to her/his remarks, the class is expected to respect this confidentiality as well.

### **POLICY RELATED TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON CAMPUS**

Our school is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and our school policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, which includes harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. In the event that you choose to disclose about having survived sexual violence, including harassment, rape, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, and specify that this violence occurred while a student at UWSP, federal and state laws mandate that I, as your instructor, notify the Dean of Students, Troy Seppelt.

The Dean of Students or designee will contact you to let you know about accommodations and remedies available at UWSP and in our community. Please see the information on the Dean of Students webpage for information on making confidential reports of misconduct or interpersonal violence, as well as campus and community resources available to students.

<http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/default.aspx>

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In the event of a medical emergency, call 911. Offer assistance if trained and willing to do so. Guide emergency responders to victim.

In the event of a tornado warning, proceed to the lowest level interior room without window exposure. See [www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures/other/floor-plans](http://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures/other/floor-plans) for floor plans showing severe weather shelters on campus. Avoid wide-span rooms and buildings.

In the event of a fire alarm, evacuate the building in a calm manner. Meet at the Sun Dial. Notify instructor or emergency command personnel of any missing individuals.

In the event of an active shooter – Run/Escape, Hide, Fight. If trapped hide, lock doors, turn off lights, spread out and remain quiet. Follow instructions of emergency responders. See UW-Stevens Point Emergency Management Plan at [www.uwsp.edu/rmgt](http://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt) for details on all emergency response at UW-Stevens Point.

**RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES** For more information on rights and responsibilities associated with being a student at UWSP, please see the UWSP Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities at: <http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsCommBillRights.pdf>

**Changes in assignments or dates of assignments will be announced as far ahead of time as possible.**

## **CLASS TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Week 1 (1/22/18 and 1/24/18)**

- **Topic:** Introductions
- **Read:** Chapter One: Politics and the Policy Making Process
- **Assignment:** Choose and obtain paperback book from list above
- Content Focus: Social Work Competency 5

### **Week 2 (1/29/18 & 1/31/18)**

- **Topic:** Evaluating Policy
- **Read:** Chapter Two: Analyzing, Implementing, and Evaluating Social Welfare Policy
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 5, 7, and 9

### **Week 3 (2/5/18 & 2/7/18)**

- **Topic:** History of Social Welfare Policy; research project discussion
- **Read:** Chapter 3: Politics and the History of Social Welfare Policy
- **Assignment: News Article Review due by 8 AM on 2/5/18**
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1, 3, and 4

### **Week 4 (2/12/18 & 2/14/18)**

- **Topic:** Poverty
- **Read:** Chapter 4
- **Read:** chosen paperback book:

- Ambramsky: Prologue, Chap. 1-3
- Desmond: Part 1: RENT
- Egan: chap. 1-5
- Stevenson: Introduction, Chap. 1-3
- Urrea: Part 1- Cutting the Drag
- **Assignment: Reaction paper due by 8 AM on 2/14/18**
- **Assignment:** Policy selection and group assignments for research project – (in class)
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1, 2, 3, and 4

#### Week 5 (2/19/18 & 2/21/18)

- **Topic:** Preventing Poverty
- **Read:** Chapter 5: Social Insurance and Personal Responsibility
- **Assignment:** Group Contract Due for Policy Group Project on 2/19/18
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1, 3 and 5

#### Week 6 (2/26/18 & 2/28/18)

- **Topic:** TANF/W2
- **Read:** Chapter 7: Helping Needy Families: An End to Welfare as we knew it
- **Assignment: News Article Review due by 8 AM on 2/26/18**
- **Assignment: In class policy research group work 2/28/18**
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7

#### Week 7 (3/5/18 & 3/7/18)

- **Topic:** Economic Assistance for Low Income Families
- **Read:** Chapter 6:
- **Read:** chosen paperback book:
  - Abramsky: Chap. 4-6
  - Desmond: Part 2: OUT
  - Egan: chap. 6-12
  - Stevenson: Chap. 4-7
  - Urrea: Part II- Dead Man's Sign
- **Assignment: Reaction Paper Due by 8 AM on 3/7/18**
- **Assignment: Take-home midterm will be posted on 3/7/18**
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 3, 4, 5, and 9

#### Week 8 (3/12/18 & 3/14/18)

- **Topic:** Disability Policy/Policy group work
- **MIDTERM EXAM-** Take home
- **Assignment: Submit Midterm Exam via D2L due 8 AM on 3/14/18**
- **Assignment: In class policy research group work on 3/12/18**
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1 and 2

#### Week 9 (3/19/18 & 3/21/18)

- **Topic:** Healthcare
- **Read:** Chapter 8: Financing Healthcare: Can all Americans be insured?

- **Guest Speaker:** 3/19/18- Marlene Pohl: Travel Trainer and Disability Advocate
- **Assignment:** In class discussion on Letter to the Editor/Letter to legislator
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 3 and 5

### **SPRING BREAK: No Class 3/26/18 & 3/28/18**

#### **Week 10 (4/2/18 & 4/4/18)**

- **Topic:** Education and Employment
- **Read:** Chapter 9: Preventing Poverty: Education and Employment Policy
- **Read:** chosen paperback book:
  - Abramsky: Part II, Intro-Chap 1
  - Desmond: Part 3, AFTER
  - Egan: chap. 13-19
  - Stevenson: Chap. 8-11
  - Urrea: Part III- In Desolation
- **Assignment: Reaction Paper due by 8 AM on 4/4/18**
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 3 and 5

#### **Week 11 (4/9/18 & 4/11/18)**

- **Topic:** Social Services
- **Read:** Chapter 10: Providing Social Services: Help for children, older Americans, and individuals with mental and substance use disorders
- **Assignment: In class group policy presentations 4/11/18**
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1, 4, and 5

#### **Week 12 (4/16/18 & 4/18/18)**

- **Topic:** Creating Policy within a diverse society
- **Read:** Chapter 11: The Challenges of a Diverse Society: Gender and Sexual Orientation
- **Assignment: In class group policy presentations 4/16/18 & 4/18/18**
- **Assignment: Letter to the Editor/Legislator due by 8 AM on 4/18/18**
- Content Focus: Social Work Competences 1, 2, 3, and 5

#### **Week 13 (4/23/18 & 4/24/18)**

- **Topic:** Immigration
- **Read:** Chapter 12: The Challenges of a Diverse Society: Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration
- **Assignment: In class group policy presentations 4/23/18 & 4/24/18**
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1, 2, 3, and 5

#### **Week 14 (4/30/18 & 5/2/18)**

- **Topic:** The Future of Social Welfare Policy
- **Read:** chosen paperback book:
  - Abramsky: Part II, Chap 2-3
  - Desmond: Epilogue: Home and Hope; About this Project
  - Egan: chap. 19-25
  - Stevenson: Chap. 12- Epilogue



- Urrea: Part IV- Aftermath
- **Assignment: Reaction Paper due by 8 AM on 5/2/18**
- **Assignment: In class group policy presentations 4/30/18 & 5/2/18**
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1, 2, 6, 7 and 8

#### **Week 15 (5/7/18 & 5/9/18)**

- **Topic:** The Future of Social Welfare Policy and course wrap up
- **Read:** Text Book Conclusion
- **Assignment: In class group policy presentations 5/7/18**
- **Final exam will be posted on D2L on 5/9/18**
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 3 and 5

#### **Week 16 (12/18/16)**

##### **FINAL EXAM**

- **Final Exam will be due at 2:45 PM on 5/15/18**
- **Submit final exam to D2L and turn in hard copy of final at scheduled final exam**

##### **EXAMS:**

Students will complete two take-home exams in the course of the semester. A **midterm exam (100 pts)** will be due by **8 AM on 3/14/18**. This is an open book exam that will be posted in D2L on 3/7/18, and will be submitted via D2L once completed. Questions will be short answer, and essay. The **final exam (100 pts)** will be due on **5/15/18 at 2:45 PM**. Questions will be short answer, and essay. Exams will be submitted to the appropriate Dropbox in D2L.

##### **ASSIGNMENT DETAIL:**

#### **1. NEWS ARTICLE REVIEW:** (Social Work Competency 5)

According to DiNitto, “The mass media plays a very significant role in setting the agenda of the government by giving attention to various problems and issues facing society. The mass media is a powerful political weapon (p. 14).”

**For this assignment, you will be required to bring in a news article relevant to the topic of social welfare policy.** You can find articles from the internet, magazines, and/or newspapers. The article should be cited at the top of your summary in APA format.

**Write a brief summary (3-4 paragraphs) of your article including the following:**

- The source of the article
- What is the particular social welfare issue discussed in the article?
- Do you agree or disagree with the article?
- Should the government change or increase their role in addressing the particular issue? **(10 points. each)**

**Please bring your summary and article to class on the specific due dates, and submit your summary to the D2L site prior to class.** Reviews are due at 8 AM on 2/5/18 & 2/16/18.

**2. REACTION PAPERS:** (Social Work Competencies 3 and 5)

**Several times in the course of the semester, you will submit brief reaction papers on your chosen paperback book.** These should be submitted on the class D2L website by 8 AM on 2/14/18, 3/7/18, 4/4/18, & 5/2/18

Topic ideas may include (but are not limited to):

- What forms of oppression and discrimination are identified in your book? Does the book change your perspective on these issues?
- What barriers do the characters in the book experience to achieving social and economic equality?
- What suggestions do you have for policy development and/or changes that could improve the situations for the individuals in the book?
- What are your thoughts on the government's response to the social problems discussed in your book? **(10 points each)**

**3. LETTER TO THE EDITOR/LEGISLATOR:** (Social Work Competencies 1, 4, 5,)

According to my favorite social work professor, Melinda Gushwa, "Political Action is one of the most important things you can do as a citizen. Not only is it your right, but it is your responsibility. No political action is also action." It is critical that your voice is heard in policy issues and the political process. For this assignment, you will be contacting your legislator or writing a letter to a newspaper about a social welfare policy issue that is important to you.

**During this semester, you will write a letter to the editor or a letter to your legislator regarding a social welfare policy issue.** You will submit this on the class D2L website by 8 AM on 4/18/18. This assignment will be discussed during class, and examples will be provided. This assignment is worth 20 points, and 5 points will be awarded for confirmation it was submitted to a publication or legislator.

Your letter will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Did you clearly identify a social welfare policy issue?
- Were you concise and clear with your main ideas and points?
- Did you write in a professional manner with attention to grammar and punctuation? Your letter should be well written and articulate.
- You will submit a copy of your letter and screen shot or some other confirmation that your letter was sent to the Dropbox on the course website (25 points)

**4. GROUP RESEARCH PROJECT:** (Social Work Competencies 1, 2, and 5)

**Students will be assigned to groups and choose a specific social welfare policy intended to combat poverty and inequality. Students will research this policy to provide an analysis to the class by evaluating the following criteria:**

- Provide an overview of the welfare policy (services, benefits, eligibility requirements, etc.)
- Define the historical problem behind the policy (What was going on in history at the time this policy was implemented? Why was

this policy implemented at that specific time? What problem in society led to the development of this specific policy?)

- Describe the ideology surrounding the policy (Is this a conservative or liberal policy or both? This is not determined by the political party in power at the time the policy was enacted, but rather the ideals of the policy.)
- Describe your personal perspective on the policy. (Is this policy doing its job at combating poverty and inequality? Why or why not? How could the policy be improved?)

Please use a minimum of six peer reviewed journal articles and the class textbook. You will need to submit a reference list and a copy of your power point as part of your presentation.

**Each group of 3-4 members will prepare a 15-minute presentation to discuss their policy analysis based on the criteria listed above.** Presentations will occur during weeks 11-15. The format for this presentation should include a power point, and all group members should participate. Groups will create a contract to outline each participant's responsibilities. A signed contract should be turned in on 2/19/18. Students are expected to cite sources within the power point presentation in APA formatting. **A copy of the power point and reference list must be provided to the instructor on the day of the group's assigned presentation (50 points).**

### COURSE POINTS

Participation	=	30 pts.
News Article Review	=	20 pts.
Letter Assignment	=	20 pts.
Reaction Papers	=	40 pts.
Midterm Exam	=	100 pts.
Group Research	=	50 pts.
<u>Final Exam</u>	=	<u>100 pts.</u>
Total		360 pts.

### GRADING SCALE

A	=	94-100
A-	=	91-93
B+	=	88-90
B	=	84-87
B-	=	81-83
C+	=	78-80
C	=	74-77
C-	=	71-73
D+	=	68-70
D	=	60-67
F	=	59 and below