Master

19:910:542: Social Welfare Policy and Services II: Health Care and Aging

Instructor: 
Office: 
Office Hours: 
Phone: 
Fax: 
Email: 

I. Catalog Course Description

Models of policy analysis applied to understanding the strengths and limitations of the U.S. health care system and services, as well policies, programs, and services for the aging population. Addresses understanding of values and socio-political forces that define problems; populations affected; current policies and programs and their impact, along with their unintended consequences; service delivery and resource allocation; unmet needs; trends; analysis of political processes and change strategies; and the role of evaluation.

II. Course Overview

The purposes are to teach students the skill of policy analysis as applied to the substantive area of health care and aging; to help students understand the role of values, preferences and assumptions in the policy making process; to consider how structures, special interest groups, policies and other contextual factors (i.e., social, economic, political, and professional) affect policy development, policy implementation, and program delivery; and to analyze policies, programs or conditions that need changes as well as the opportunities for such change. Attention is given to problem definition, characteristics of populations at risk, and ways that policy issues are shaped through legislation and political processes.

Students will learn how to follow a line of inquiry, which will help them to answer fundamental questions about any proposed policy or program change:

1. Who is it supposed to help and how?
2. Will it do what it is supposed to do?
3. Do we want it? (Implications of costs and benefits?)
4. Is it feasible? How could we get it?

III. Place of Course in Program
This course has a pre-requisite 19:910:504 (SWPS I) and the rest of the Professional Foundation year. This is a required course for Advanced Year students.

IV. **Course Objectives**

1. To understand how social problems are defined and how political values, ideologies, and power influence this process.

2. To understand the processes of social policy development including how practitioners and citizens can participate in the policy making process; how the political, social, economic, and organizational factors influence policy formulation and implementation; and the relationship between state and federal policy.

3. To critically apply conceptual frameworks and empirical research in the examination of social policies, services, and state and federal funding mechanisms concerning the U.S. healthcare system.

4. To understand the potential effects of health policy on individual, family, and community well-being, particularly how policies affect marginalized, oppressed, and otherwise disadvantaged populations.

5. To examine the role of policy practice and the reciprocal relationship between social policy and social work practice. This will include developing an understanding of how to apply social work values, ethics, skills and interventions to advocate for social and economic justice.

6. To describe the historical organization of health care policies and services and to understand how this background affects current policy decision-making activities. This will include a critique of the current funding mechanisms for health care and their impact on equity and access.

V. **Required Texts**


The book is available for purchase at the Rutgers University Book Store, 1 Penn Plaza, Ferren Mall, New Brunswick, Tel. 732/ 246-8448. New Jersey Books (at 108 Somerset St., New Brunswick) may also sell texts.

Students also are expected to read other works from a selection of books and journals (as indicated on syllabus). These readings are on electronic reserve, which can be accessed through the Rutgers University Libraries home page.
www.libraries.rutgers.edu, click on IRIS, and then click on Reserve Desk. Readings are located under SWPS II under Professor Simmel’s name.

In addition, students are expected to read a major national newspaper frequently (e.g., *The New York Times; Washington Post; Wall Street Journal*) so that they are current with relevant federal and state issues that may be related to the course.

**Course Requirements**

**Attendance requirements:**

It is expected that students will attend all class sessions having read assigned materials and fully prepared for discussion and assigned activities. In order for a student to be considered present for class, the student must attend all of the class. Students who leave during the break will be marked as absent for that class. Appropriate absences (e.g., religious holidays) are allowed with prior permission from the instructor. Consistent lateness to class will also result in being marked absent.

The use of cell phones (including text messaging), blackberries, PDAs, or any similar type of electronic device is not permitted in class. Please turn them off prior to class. If there is an emergency and you need to leave your cell phone on, please turn it to vibrate and attend to the call in the hallway so that you will not disturb your colleagues.

**Receiving Course Messages through Email:**

Students are expected to regularly check their RU email account for course messages. If students prefer to use a non-University email account, they are responsible for setting up account preferences such that mail sent to their Rutgers account is automatically forwarded to their non-University account.

**Teaching Methods:**

A variety of teaching methods are utilized including lectures, discussions, class exercises and assignments, DVDs/videos, readings, and presentations by students and guest experts. The course outline contains a list of the required and Suggested readings for each course topic. While the required readings are to be read prior to the class date for that specific topic, the Suggested readings are listed as information resources for students to pursue as considered necessary; thus they are not required.

**Course assignments:**

All assignments are to be completed by scheduled due dates at the beginning of class, not via email. Late assignment will not be accepted. If a due date conflicts with a religious observance, please consult with the professor prior to the assignment’s due date. All written assignments must be typed and adhere to APA format.
Assignments for this class:

VII. Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class attendance and participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief assignment</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy summary</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class final exam</td>
<td>35%</td>
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</tbody>
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VIII. Course Evaluation

Rutgers University issues a survey that evaluates both the course and the instructor. This survey is completed by students toward the end of the semester, and all answers are confidential and anonymous. An additional mid-semester evaluation may be distributed as well.

IX. Disability Accommodation

Persons with special needs are to be fully included in this course. Any student who believes that s/he may need an accommodation in this class due to a disability should contact the designated Coordinator for the Concerns of Students with Disabilities at the School of Social Work, Arlene Hunter the Assistant Dean for Student Services [amhunter@rci.rutgers.edu or 732-932-7126 x 127] for a letter of accommodation in order to receive accommodations. (Undergraduate New Brunswick students should contact the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities for their College.) Any student who has already received a letter of accommodation, should contact the instructor privately to discuss implementation of his/her accommodations immediately. Failure to discuss implementation of accommodations with the instructor promptly may result in denial of your accommodations.

IX. Academic Integrity Policy

It goes without saying that all work submitted must be your own, for every assignment. It is unethical and a violation of the University’s Integrity Policy to present the ideas or words of another without clearly and fully identifying the source. Inadequate citations will be construed as an attempt to misrepresent the cited material as your own. It is important that you refer to the APA Style Manual for the correct procedures in citing material.

Plagiarism is the representation of the words or idea’s of another as one’s own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be promptly cited in the text or in a footnote. Acknowledgement is required when the material from another source is stored in print, electronic, or other medium and is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one’s own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state “to
paraphrase Plato’s comment ……” and conclude with a footnote or parenthetical note identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased materials. Information which is common knowledge, such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be footnoted; however, all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. All materials cited in the body of the paper must be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a subtle issue. Any questions about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the professor.

Instances of suspected plagiarism will be handled by the School of Social Work’s Dean of Academic Affairs: Antoinette Farmer, who will then decide on the degree of disciplinary action. This may include the possibility of suspension from the School for up to two semesters.

For more information about Rutgers’ policies on academic integrity, please visit the following website: http://ctaar.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html

X. Library Resources

The Rutgers University library system contains a very impressive collection of resources and materials that will be of great assistance to you as you complete assignments for this class and your other graduate courses. Many of these materials can be accessed on-line. The university librarians offer free tutorials on using the in-library services and on-line search tools; understanding how to navigate these tools is vital for ensuring timely, thorough, and proficient completion of the assignments for this course.

Some library tools that may be of particular relevance to this course:
Under the main library website, check out the following links:
http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/index.shtml

a. The Electronic Reference Sources under the Reference link. You can find on-line links for the APA Style Manual, assistance with grammar and writing, and many other useful connections under (see Style Manuals).

b. Subject Research Guides under the Research Resources link. The Social Work category contains links to Government Resources (state and federal websites relevant to policy research) and numerous other resource sites and reference collections.

c. RefWorks, a web-based bibliography and citation manager.

Course Outline
Week 1:
Topic: Overview of course and of health and aging policy


Week 2:
Topic: The role of state and federal governments in the development of social policies and programs for vulnerable individuals

Required Reading:


Relevant State & Federal websites:
- Web site of New Jersey Legislature [www.njleg.state.nj.us](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us)
- Web site of the State Judiciary [www.judiciary.state.nj.us](http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us)
- U.S. Senate [http://www.senate.gov/](http://www.senate.gov/)

Suggested Reading:
Week 3:

Topic: Frameworks for policy development and policy analysis; concept of groupthink

Required Reading:


Suggested Readings:


Week 4:

Topic: Overview and history of health care policy

Required Reading:


Suggested Reading:


Week 5:

Topic: The current organization of the health care system in the United States


Suggested Readings:


- *Health Affairs, 2001*, *20*(1). Entire Issue on Expanding Health Coverage


Week 6:

**Topic:** Understanding Medicare and Medicaid

**Required Readings:**


**Relevant Website:**


**Suggested Reading:**


Weeks 7 & 8: Health disparities and access to health care: Examining the barriers to health care in the U.S.

**Week 7 Required Readings:**


Week 8 Required Readings:


Suggested Readings:


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**Week 9:**
**Topic:** An overview of the vast population of older adults; Primary framework of social services for older adults: The Older Americans Act; Social Security; Supplemental Security Income

**Required Readings:**


Relevant Websites:


- Administration on Aging http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Index.aspx

- Older Americans Act: www.aoa.dhhs.gov


Suggested Readings

- Historical Development (of basic social insurance programs in the USA). http://www.ssa.gov/history/pdf/histdev.pdf


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Week 10:

Topics: Primary framework of social services for older adults (continued): Family Medical Leave Act; and Long-Term Care services.
Required Readings:


Relevant Website links:

- Long Term Care: Research Report: [http://www.aarp.org/research/longtermcare/costs/fs27r_ltc.html](http://www.aarp.org/research/longtermcare/costs/fs27r_ltc.html)

Suggested Readings:


Week 11:

Topic: Public policy and fiscal considerations: Budgeting and financing; the federal and state budget processes; health care finance and managed care

Required Reading:


- For more details on the federal budget, also see: http://www.gpoaccess.gov/usbudget/


Suggested Reading


- Gilbert & Terrell, Ch. 8, The Mode of Finance: Systems of Transfer
Week 12:
Topic: Policy Practice: The influential relationship between social work and public policy (Social action; social justice; advocacy and lobbying; and ethical responsibilities and challenges)

Required Reading:

Suggested Reading:

Week 13
Topic: Policy Practice: The influential relationship between social work and public policy (Social action; social justice; advocacy and lobbying; and ethical responsibilities and challenges)

Required Reading:


Suggested Reading:


Week 14
Topic: The implementation of public policy: How to measure the strengths and weaknesses of public policies, programs, and services; determining the future direction of health and aging policies

Required Reading:


Suggested Reading:


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**Week 15:**

**Topic: FINAL EXAM In-class cumulative final exam**

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