

**School of Social Work
University of Wisconsin-Madison
1350 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53706
SW 950: Disciplinary Perspectives on Social Policy
Fall 2013**

Instructor Name: Lonnie Berger (Primary Instructor); Kristi Slack (Co-Instructor)
Class Day(s) & Time: Wednesday 9:00-11:30
Office Hours: By appointment
Phone Number: 263-6332 (Berger); 263-3671 (Slack)
E-mail: Lmberger@wisc.edu; ksslack@wisc.edu

I. Catalog Description

II. Course Overview

This PhD seminar aims to expose students to diverse perspectives on social policy and social policy scholarship from a variety of disciplines and fields of study. The course will focus on how various theoretical and methodological approaches shape the types of questions, analyses, and evidence that are commonly associated with a particular discipline or field of study. This will be accomplished by integrating a range of expert guest speakers, class discussions, and readings in disciplines such as demography, developmental psychology, economics, law, sociology, political science, public health, and public management, as well as a cross-national perspective. In addition, the course aims that students are informed and up-to-date on the primary domains of U.S. social policy as well as current trends, debates, and research developments in each. This will be accomplished through a series of student-led presentations and discussions.

III. Course Objectives

After completing this course, students should demonstrate:

- (1) Advanced knowledge of the major theoretical and empirical approaches to social policy from a range of disciplines and fields of study.
- (2) A solid understanding of major U.S. social policy domains, including specific policies and programs, trends, issues and debates, and research developments.
- (3) The skills to employ multi-disciplinary approaches to the study of social policy.
- (4) The ability to summarize policy-related content and facilitate discussion thereon.

IV. Course Content

Week 1: 9/4

Topics: Introductions and Course Overview: Review of U.S. Social Policy Structure and Domains; Policy grid: child welfare

Required Readings:

- Committee on Ways and Means, U.S. House of Representatives. (2012). 2012 Green Book: Background Material and Data on the Programs within the Jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means. Chapter 11: Child Welfare. Washington, DC: Author. Available at: <http://greenbook.waysandmeans.house.gov/2012-green-book>

Week 2: 9/11

Topics: Demographic/Sociological Perspectives—Marcy Carlson

Required Readings:

- Carlson, Marcia J., VanOrman, Alicia G., & Pilkauska, Natasha V. (2013). “Examining the Antecedents of U.S. Nonmarital Fatherhood.” *Demography*, 50, 1421-1447.
- Cherlin, Andrew J. (2010). “Demographic Trends in the United States: A Review of Research in the 2000s.” *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 403-419.
- McLanahan, Sara, Tach, Laura, & Schneider, Daniel. (2013). “The Causal Effects of Father Absence.” *Annual Review of Sociology*, 39, 399-427.
- Thomson, Elizabeth, Lappegard, Trude, Carlson, Marcia, Evans, Ann, & Gray, Edith. (2013). “Childbearing across Partnerships in Australia, the United States, Norway, and Sweden.” Manuscript, Stockholm University.

Week 3: 9/18

Topics: Developmental Perspectives—Katherine Magnuson

Required Readings:

- Bryk, Richard L. & Fisher, Phillip A. (2012). “Training the Brain: Practical Applications of Neural Plasticity from the Intersection of Cognitive Neuroscience, Developmental Psychology, and Prevention Science.” *American Psychologist*, 67, 87-100.
- Dodge, Kenneth A. (2011). “Context Matters in Child and Family Policy.” *Child Development*, 82, 433-442.
- Huston, Aletha. (2008). “From Research to Policy and Back.” *Child Development*, 79, 1-12.
- Lerner, Richard M., Agans, Jennifer P., DeSouza, Lisette M., & Gasca, Santiago. (2013). “Describing, Explaining, and Optimizing Within-Individual Change Across the Life

Span: A Relational Developmental Systems Perspective.” *Review of General Psychology*, 17, 179-183.

- Meany, Michael J. (2010). “Epigenetics and the Biological Definition of Gene X Environment Interaction.” *Child Development*, 81, 41-79.

Week 4: 9/25

Topics: Political Science Perspectives—Joe Soss

Required Readings:

- Joe Soss. 2005. "Making Clients and Citizens: Welfare Policy as a Source of Status, Belief, and Action." In A. Schneider and H. Ingram, eds. *Deserving and Entitled: Social Constructions and Public Policy*. State University of New York Press. pp.291-328.
- Joe Soss, Richard C. Fording, and Sanford F. Schram. 2008. "The Color of Devolution: Race, Federalism, and the Politics of Social Control." *American Journal of Political Science*. 52(3): 536-53.
- Joe Soss, Richard C. Fording and Sanford F. Schram. 2011. *Disciplining the Poor: Neoliberal Paternalism and the Persistent Power of Race*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. (Chapters. 2, 8-10). pp.18-52, 176-261.

Week 5: 10/2

Topics: Discussion of U.S. Social Policy: TANF, Child Support

Required Readings:

- Green Book Chapters 7 (TANF) and 8 (Child Support Enforcement): Discussion leaders to read, everyone else to skim
- Blank, Rebecca. (2002). “Evaluating Welfare Reform in the United States.” *Journal of Economic Literature*, 40, 1105-1166.
- Cancian, Maria, Meyer, Daniel R., & Ha, Eunhee. (2011). “Child Support: Responsible Fatherhood and the Quid Pro Quo.” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 635, 140-162.
- Meyer, Daniel R., Cancian, Maria, & Cook, Steven T. (2005). “Multiple-Partner Fertility: Incidence and Implications for Child Support Policy.” *Social Service Review*, 79, 577-601.
- Pavetti, LaDonna, Trisi, Danilo, & Schott, Liz. (2011). “TANF Responded Unevenly to Increase in Need During Downturn.” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. January 25, 2011.

- Scholz, John Karl, Moffitt, Robert, & Cowan, Benjamin. (2009). “Trends in Income Support.” In M. Cancian and S. Danziger, eds. *Changing Poverty, Changing Policies*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Pp. 203-241.

Week 6: 10/9

Topics: Discussion of U.S. Social Policy: Family Leave; Child Care Subsidies; Head Start/Early Head Start

Required Readings:

- Green Book Chapters 9 (Child Care); Advisory Committee on Head Start Research and Evaluation Final Report, August 2012 (http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/eval_final.pdf), see also program facts (<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/mr/factsheets/docs/hs-program-fact-sheet-2012.pdf>); ACF website section on “about Early Head Start” (<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/Early%20Head%20Start/about.html>): Discussion leaders to read, everyone else to skim
- Advisory Committee on Head Start Research and Evaluation Final Report, August 2012. Chapter 2: Understanding the Impacts of Head Start and EHS.
- Berger, Lawrence M., Hill, Jennifer, & Waldfogel, Jane. (2005). “Maternity Leave, Early Maternal Employment, and Child Health and Development in the U.S.” *The Economic Journal*, 115: F29-F47.
- Duncan, Greg J. & Sojourner, A. J. (2012). “Can Intensive Early Childhood Intervention Program Eliminate Income-Based Cognitive and Achievement Gaps?” IZA Discussion Paper No. 7087. Available at: <http://ftp.iza.org/dp7087.pdf>.
- Knudsen, Eric I., Heckman, James J., Cameron, Judy L., & Shonkoff, Jack P. (2006). “Economic Neurobiological, and Behavioral Perspectives on Building America’s Future Workforce.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 103, 10155-10162.
- Rossin-Slater, Maya, Ruhm, Christopher J., & Waldfogel, Jane. (2013). “The Effects of California's Paid Family Leave Program on Mothers’ Leave-Taking and Subsequent Labor Market Outcomes.” *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 32, 224–245.
- Waldfogel, Jane. (1999). “The Impact of the Family and Medical Leave Act.” *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 18, 281-302.

Week 7: 10/16

Topics: Economic Perspectives—Maria Cancian

Final paper prospectus due

Required Readings:

- Ehrenberg, Ronald G. , & Smith, Robert S. (2008). *Modern Labor Economics: Theory and Public Policy*, 10th Edition. Prentice Hall. Selected readings from Chapters 1-3.
- Summers, Lawrence H. (1989). “What Can Economics Contribute to Social Policy? Some Simple Economics of Mandated Benefits.” *American Economic Review Papers and Proceedings*, 79, 177-183.
- Conti, Gabriella & Heckman, James J. (2012). “The Economics of Child Well-Being.” IZA Discussion Paper No. 6930. Available at: <http://ftp.iza.org/dp6930.pdf>.
- Doyle, Joseph J. (2007). “Child Protection and Child Outcomes: Measuring the Effects of Foster care.” *American Economic Review*, 97, 1583-1610.
- Heckman, James J., Pinto, R., & Savelyev, Peter A. (2012). “Understanding the Mechanisms through which an Influential Early Childhood Program Boosted Adult Outcomes.” NBER Working Paper 18581. Available at: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w18581>

Week 8: 10/23

Topics: Discussion of U.S. Social Policy Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance; Medicare

Required Readings:

- Green Book Chapters 1 (Social Security) and 2 (Medicare); Medicare at a Glance(<http://kff.org/medicare/fact-sheet/medicare-at-a-glance-fact-sheet/>): Discussion leaders to read, everyone else to skim
- Congressional Budget Office. (2012). *The 2012 Long-Term Budget Outlook*. Pub. No. 4507. Read sections 3 (“The Long-Term Outlook for Major Federal Health Care Programs”) and 4 (“The Long-Term Outlook for Social Security”) carefully. Skim other sections.
- Munell, Alicia H. (2013). “Social Security’s Financial Outlook: The 2013 Update in Perspective.” Center for Retirement Research at Boston College.
- Weathers, Robert R. II & Hemmeter, Jeffrey. (2011). “The Impact of Changing Financial Work Incentives on the Earnings of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Beneficiaries.” *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 30, 708-728.
- Couch, Kenneth A., Ed. (2012). “Point/Counterpoint: The Social Security Disability Insurance System: Time for Reform?” *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 31, 453-474. Pieces by Burkhauser and Daly, Reno and Ekman.

- Herd, Pamela, Smeeding, Timothy, and Harrington Meyer, Madonna. (2009). “A Targeted Minimum Benefit Plan (MBP): A New Proposal to Reduce Poverty Among the Elderly.” Available at: <http://aging.senate.gov/ss/uwisconsin.pdf>.
- National Academy of Social Insurance. (2013). *Social Security: Benefits, Finances, and Policy Options. A Primer*. Author.
- Van De Water, Paul N. (2013). “Medicare Is Not ‘Bankrupt’: Health Reform Has Improved Program’s Financing.” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Week 9: 10/30

Topics: Discussion of U.S. Social Policy: Medicaid, S-CHIP, Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

Required Readings:

- Medicaid (<http://www.medicaid.gov/Medicaid-CHIP-Program-Information/Medicaid-and-CHIP-Program-Information.html>), S-CHIP (<http://www.medicaid.gov/Medicaid-CHIP-Program-Information/By-Topics/Childrens-Health-Insurance-Program-CHIP/Childrens-Health-Insurance-Program-CHIP.html>), Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Kaiser Family Foundation (2013). *Summary of the Affordable Care Act.*): Discussion leaders to read, everyone else to skim
- Kaiser Family Foundation (2010). *Focus on Health Reform: Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program Provisions in the New Health Reform Law*.
- National Academies of Science (2013). “U.S. Health in International Perspective: Shorter Lives, Poorer Health.”
- Blumberg, Linda J. (2012). “The Affordable Care Act: What Does It Do for Low-Income Families?” *IRP Fast Focus*, No 15-2012.
- Cutler, David M. (2010). “The Simple Economics of Health Reform.” *The Economists’ Voice*.
- Cutler, David M., & Zeckhauser, Richard J. (2000). “The Anatomy of Health Insurance.” *Handbook of Health Economics, Volume 1*, A.J. Culyer and J.P. Newhouse (Eds). Elsevier. Ch. 11.
- Gruber, Jonathan. (2000). “Health Insurance and the Labor Market.” *Handbook of Health Economics, Volume 1*, A.J. Culyer and J.P. Newhouse (Eds). Elsevier. Ch. 12.
- Cutler, David, Skinner, Jonathan, Stern, Ariel Dora, & Weinberg, David. (2013). “Physician Beliefs and Patient Preferences: A New Look at Regional Variation in Health Care Spending.” NBER Working Paper 19320.

Week 10: 11/6

Topics: Public Management/Organizational Perspectives—Don Moynihan

Required Readings:

- TBA

Week 11: 11/13

Topics: Cross-National Perspectives—Tim Smeeding

Required Readings:

- TBA

Week 12: 11/20

Topics: Discussion of U.S. Social Policy: Unemployment Insurance, EITC, SSI,

Required Readings:

- Green Book Chapters 3 (SSI) and 4 (UI): Discussion leaders to read, everyone else to skim
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (2013). “Policy Basics: The Earned Income Tax Credit.”
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (2012). “Policy Basics: State Earned Income Tax Credits.”
- Marr, Chuck, Charite, Jimmy, & Huang, Chye-Ching. (2013). “Earned Income Tax Credit Promotes Work, Encourages Children’s Success at School, Research Finds.” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.
- Moffitt, Robert A. (in press). “The Great Recession and the Social Safety Net.” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*.
- Mincy, Ronald B., Klempin, Serena, & Schmidt, Heather. (2011). “Income Support Policies for Low-Income Men and Noncustodial Fathers: Tax and Transfer Programs.” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 635, 240-261.
- Smith, Daniel L. & Wenger, Jeffrey B. (2013). “State Unemployment Insurance Trust Solvency and Benefit Generosity.” *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 32, 536–553.

- Wheaton, Laura, & Sorensen, Elaine. (2010). "Extending the EITC to Noncustodial Parents: Potential Impacts and Design Considerations." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 29, 749-768.
- Schmidt, Lucie (2013). "Supplemental Security, Income, Welfare Reform, and the Recession." *Communities and Banking*, Spring 2013.

Week 13: 11/27

Topics: Discussion of U.S. Social Policy: Food and Nutrition Programs; Housing Policy

Required Readings:

- Currie, Janet. (2003). "U.S. Food and Nutrition Programs." In R. Moffitt (Ed.), *Means-Tested Transfer Programs in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 4. : Discussion leaders to read, everyone else to skim
- Olsen, Edgar O. (2003). "Housing Programs for Low-Income Households." In R. Moffitt (Ed.), *Means-Tested Transfer Programs in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 6. : Discussion leaders to read, everyone else to skim
- Quigley, John M. (2008). "Housing Policy in the United States." Fisher Center for Real Estate and Urban Economics, Program on Housing and Urban Policy. Working Paper.
- Hinrichs, Peter (2010). The Effects of the National School Lunch Program on Education and Health. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 29, 479-505.
- Senauer, Ben (2012). "The Role of Food Stamps in the Recession." *Communities and Banking*, Fall 2012.
- Kreider, Brent, Pepper, John V., Gundersen, Craig, & Jolliffe, Dean. (2012). Identifying the Effects of SNAP (Food Stamps) on Child Health Outcomes When Participation is Endogenous and Misreported." *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 107, 958-975.
- Coleman, Silvie, Nichols-Barrer, Ira P., Redline, Julie E., Devaney, Bargar L., Ansell, Sara V., & Joyce, Ted. (2012). *Effects of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC): A Review of Recent Research*. USDA Special Nutrition Programs Report Number WIC-12-WM.
- Quigley, John M. (2007). "Just Suppose: Housing Subsidies for Low-Income Renters." Paper prepared for Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University, Revisiting Rental Housing: A National Policy Summit.

Week 14: 12/4

Topics: Student Policy Paper Presentations

Required Readings:

- Draft papers

Week 15: 12/11

Topics: Student Policy Paper Presentations

Required Readings:

- Draft papers

V. Texts and Reading Materials for the Course

There are no required textbooks. All required readings will be posted on the class web site at Learn@UW or available from the web approximately 2 weeks prior to their discussion in class.

VI. Evaluation of Competencies and Practice Behaviors: Assignments, Grading and Methods

Grading Scale & Standards:

Students' final grade will be based on the following:

Points	Grade	What the point totals & subsequent grade generally indicate
94-100	A	Outstanding, excellent work in all areas
88-93	AB	Outstanding, excellent work in many areas
82-87	B	Meets expectations in all areas
76-81	BC	Meets expectations in most areas; below in others
70-75	C	Below expectations in most areas; not acceptable graduate work
64-69	D	Below expectations in all areas
<64	F	Course failure

Assignments:

Assignment	Points/Percentages
Class participation and presentations	25%
Short assignments	50%
Policy Paper	25%

Assignment Instructions & Grading Rubrics:

Class participation and presentations. Because much of the learning occurs during the class time, students are required to attend every class or to receive approval in advance for not

attending. In addition, students are expected to have carefully and critically read all assigned readings, and to be prepared to *be active participants in the seminar and discuss all assigned readings each week*. Students should notify the instructor in advance of class if they are unable to attend due to illness or emergency. Multiple absences will be counted against participation/presentation points, which constitute 25% of the final grade.

Short assignments. Each student will complete four short written assignments of roughly three pages each. Two of the three assignments will be short essays, which briefly summarize (roughly 1 page) and critique (roughly 2 pages) the key theoretical or methodological concepts presented in the readings for the week. These essays should be posted on the Learn@UW site by noon on the Monday of the week in which the perspective will be discussed. In addition, students are required to prepare opening questions for the guest speaker in weeks they write essays.

The other two short assignments will consist of a summary of a specific policy domain. This should be presented in outline, rather than paper form, and should serve as an overview of the particular policy, program, or policy area. It should explicitly address the following:

- What are the eligibility criteria for participation in the program? Is the program means/income tested? Is it categorical? Is it an entitlement program?
- How large is the program and what proportion of eligible individuals are served?
- How is the program administered and through which agency/agencies? What form does the benefit take (e.g., cash, near, cash, in-kind)? How generous is the benefit?
- How is the program funded and how much does it cost?
- What are the important recent trends in the program vis-à-vis population served, take-up rate, cost, etc.?
- What are the primary focus areas of debate vis-à-vis the policy, program, or policy area?
- What are the key recent policy or research developments in this area?

Note that the best place to start for most of these policies is the Green Book:

- Committee on Ways and Means, U.S. House of Representatives. (2012). 2012 Green Book: Background Material and Data on the Programs within the Jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means Washington, DC: Author. Available at: <http://greenbook.waysandmeans.house.gov/2012-green-book>

These summaries should be posted on the Learn@UW site by noon on the Monday of the week in which they will be discussed. In addition, the student will be responsible for (a) making a brief presentation (10-15 minutes) on the policy, program, or policy area, and (b) leading the class discussion on the policy, program, or policy area. Finally, multiple students will be assigned to each session, it is the students' responsibility to coordinate who will cover which topics in terms of both the summaries and presentations.

Each of the four short assignments will be worth 12.5% of the final grade.

Policy paper. Students will select a policy topic of their own choosing on which to prepare a mid-length policy paper (10-12 pages maximum). The paper should first provide background on the topic by documenting the major trends, issues, debates, and developments in the area (3-5 pages). It should then describe how theoretical or empirical approaches from at least three disciplines or field of study might be applied to that topic and discuss the implications of such application vis-à-vis shaping the types of questions, analyses, and evidence employed, as well as implications for policy. These policy papers will be presented to the class during the final two weeks of the semester (December 4 and December 11, 2013). The final papers should be posted to Learn@UW by noon on Wednesday, December 18, 2013. A prospectus of the paper (roughly one page or less) is due in Week 7 (10/16).

VII. Course Policies:

Students are expected to:

- attend each class session, actively participate in the in-class discussions.
- carefully and critically read all required readings before coming to class
- complete all assignments by the due dates and times (thus you are expected to plan your life so that you can make the required deadlines in the course)
- inform the instructor during the first week of the semester of any special accommodations needed for meeting class expectations (as approved by the McBurney Center)
- be respectful of other class members--a diversity of views and opinions may be articulated during discussions.

The instructors are expected to:

- assure that course objectives are being met
- be available to students by appointment and to answer questions through email during business hours
- give reasonable guidance on preparing assignments
- be open to discussing concerns about the course
- evaluate and return assignments in a timely manner.