

**AMERICAN SOCIAL POLICY**  
**Program in Public Policy**  
Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy  
Rutgers - The State University of New Jersey  
34:833:585  
**Fall 2005**

Professor Henry A. Coleman  
Wednesdays, 4:30 p.m.-7:10 p.m.  
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**Course Syllabus**

**I. Description**

The course will be divided into five sections:

- I. Introduction--- What is meant by “social policy,” and why do certain social problems seem to be intractable?
- II. The Historical Development of the U.S. Welfare State--- What is meant by “welfare state,” and what theories help to explain the development of the American welfare state?
- III. The U.S. Welfare System in a Comparative Context--- Is the welfare state in the United States less comprehensive, less coordinated with other national (economic?) policies, and/or slower in developing than its counterparts in other industrialized countries?
- IV. Dilemmas in Social Policymaking--- How do the values, (changing) budget conditions, structure of government (i.e., federal system), emphasis on non-governmental approaches to problems, etc. in the U.S. affect the nature and development of social policy?
- V. Contemporary Social Policy Issues---How can a better understanding of these theories and dilemmas help in developing better solutions to current social problems?

This course is designed to encourage students to think analytically about social policy. We will rely on insights from various disciplines---history, economics, political science, and sociology---to explore the evolution of contemporary social policymaking.

**II. Readings**

The readings consist of two required texts, which may be purchased at the Rutgers University Book Store:

Weir, Margaret, Ann Shola Orloff, and Theda Skocpol (editors) (1988), The Politics of Social Policy in the United States, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press) (hereafter **Weir et al.**)

and

Mead, Lawrence M. (editor) (1997), The New Paternalism, (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution) (hereafter **Mead**)

Other readings will be available through the Internet or in a packet that can be purchased from University Publishing, 302 Ryders Lane, East Brunswick, New Jersey 08816 (732/220-1211). In addition, other readings may be assigned or substituted as appropriated throughout the semester.

### **III. Evaluation**

Grading for the course will be based on several factors, including:

1. a two-page policy memorandum of assigned readings and leading class discussion (10 points)
2. two (2) policy papers and oral presentations (20 points each paper; 10 points for each oral presentation), and
3. an in-class final examination (30 points).

The two-page analysis will be in the form of a policy memorandum that does not simply summarize what was said, but a) outlines the arguments advanced by the authors of the assigned readings and b) presents a critical analysis (i.e., were the arguments well developed, coherent, compelling, and supported by evidence?). The individual who prepares the memo analyzing the readings for the week is also responsible for providing a copy for the entire class (either hard copies on the day of the class or electronic copies sent out the day before class), giving a ten-minute presentation to initiate the class discussion, and then leading the ensuing discussion. Every other student must come prepared with at least three questions from the readings that warrant discussion. Both the policy memo and the questions must be handed in at the start of each class.

There will also be two brief (i.e., 5-7 page) policy papers required. In the first paper, students will describe how a particular theory of the welfare state has informed the debate around a particular social issue. For the second policy paper, students will choose a major policy dilemma covered in the readings that influenced debate around another specific social issue. For both papers, students should use the following format:

1. state your thesis,
2. provide some background on the theory of the welfare state (for the first paper) or policy dilemma (for the second paper),
3. provide some background on the social policy issue that you are considering,
4. provide a brief analysis of how the theory of the welfare state/policy dilemma and the social policy issue interrelate, and
5. provide an analysis of how you see the policy issue evolving in the future (i.e., provide a critique or specific recommendations).

Students will present both policy papers orally in class.

The in-class final examination will be based on the readings, the policy memoranda, and the

policy briefs prepared by students.

**IV. Office Hours**

Office hours will be Mondays from 2:45 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., and by appointment.

## READINGS\*

### **Introduction**

Week 1 (September 7<sup>th</sup>) *Providing Context*

Sherman, A. (2005), "Public Benefits: Easing Poverty and Ensuring Medical Coverage," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (August 17<sup>th</sup>) (available at [www.cbpp.org](http://www.cbpp.org))

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (2005), "What Does the Safety Net Accomplish?" News Release (July 19<sup>th</sup>) (available at [www.cbpp.org](http://www.cbpp.org))

U.S. Census Bureau (2005), Current Population Reports, P60-229, Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2004 (Washington, DC: USGPO) (available at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/p60-229.pdf>)

### **The Historical Development of the U.S. Welfare State**

Week 2 (September 14<sup>th</sup>) *Competing Explanations*

Weir, M., A.S. Orloff, and T. Skocpol (1988), "Introduction: Understanding American Social Politics" in Weir et al., pp. 3-35.

Orloff, A. (1988), "The Political Origins of America's Welfare State" in Weir et al., pp. 37-80.

Piven, F. F. and R.A. Cloward (1993), Regulating the Poor: The Functions of Public Welfare (New York: Vintage Books), pp. 45-79.

Week 3 (September 21<sup>st</sup>) *Important Eras*

Hecl, H. (1986), "The Political Foundations of Antipoverty Policy," in Sheldon Danziger and Daniel Weinberg (editors) Fighting Poverty: What Works and What Doesn't (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press)

Amenta, E. and T. Skocpol (1988), "Redefining the New Deal: World War II and the Development of Social Provision in the United States," in Weir et al., pp.81-122.

Lieberman, R.C. (1995), "Race and the Organization of Welfare Policy," in P.E. Peterson (editor) Classifying by Race (Princeton: Princeton University Press)

### **The U.S. Welfare System in a Comparative Context**

Week 4 (September 28<sup>th</sup>) *View from Abroad*

King, A. (1973), "Ideas, Institutions and the Policies of Government: A Comparative Analysis," British Journal of Political Science 3:409-423.

Gilbert, N. (2002), Transformation of the Welfare State (Oxford: Oxford University Press), Chapters 1-2.

Pierson, P. (1994), Dismantling the Welfare State? (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), chapter 1 ("The Logic of Retrenchment") and chapter 3 ("Retrenchment in a Core Sector: Old-Age Pensions")

Week 5 (October 5<sup>th</sup>) **1<sup>ST</sup> PAPER DUE IN CLASS/Oral Presentations**

### **Dilemmas in Social Policymaking**

Week 6 (October 12<sup>th</sup>) *Values*

Murray, C. (1984), Losing Ground (New York: Basic Books), pp. 3-9, 13-50.

Ellwood, D. (1988), Poor Support (New York: Basic Books), pp. 14-25.

Morone, J. (1996), "The Corrosive Politics of Virtue," The American Prospect (May/June), pp. 30-39.

Week 7 (October 19<sup>th</sup>) ***Budget Politics***

Burtless, G. (1994), "Public Spending on the Poor: Historical Trends and Economic Limits," in Danziger, S., G.D. Sandefur, and D.H. Weinberg (editors), Confronting Poverty: Prescriptions for Change (Cambridge: Harvard University Press)

Slessorav, H. (1988), "Racial Tensions and Institutional Support: Social Programs During a Period of Retrenchment," in Weir et al.), pp.357-380.

Heclo, H. (1994), "Poverty Politics," in Danziger, S., G.D. Sandefur, and D.H. Weinberg (editors), Confronting Poverty: Prescriptions for Change (Cambridge: Harvard University Press),

Aaron, H. (2000), "Presidential Address-Seeing Through the Fog: Policymaking with Uncertain Forecasts," Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 19(2), pp. 193-206.

Patashnik, E. (2000), "Budgeting More, Deciding Less," The Public Interest (Winter), pp. 65-78.

Week 8 (October 26<sup>th</sup>) ***Federalism***

Chesney, J. (1994), "Intergovernmental Politics in the Allocation of Block Grants Funds for Substance Abuse in Michigan," Publius: The Journal of Federalism (24), pp. 39-46.

Goetz, E. (1995), "Potential Effects of Federal Policy Devolution on Local Housing Expenditures," Publius: The Journal of Federalism (25), pp. 99-116.

Peterson, P. and Mark Rom ((1989), "American Federalism, Welfare Policy, and Residential Choices," American Political Science Review (83), pp. 711-728.

Donahue, J.D. (1997), "The Devil in Devolution," The American Prospect (May/June), pp. 42-47.

U.S. General Accounting Office (1992), Interstate Child Support-Mothers Report Receiving Less Support from Out-of-State Fathers (GAO/HRD-92-39FS).

Week 9 (November 2<sup>nd</sup>) ***Privatization/Non-Profits***

Henig, J.R. (1989/90), "Privatization in the United States: Theory and Practice," Political Science Quarterly (104), pp. 649-670.

Lipsky, M. and S.R. Smith (1989/90), "Nonprofit Organizations, Government, and the Welfare State," Political science Quarterly (104), pp. 625-648.

Stevens, B. (1988), "Blurring the Boundaries: How the Federal Government Has Influenced Welfare Benefits in the Private Sector, in Weir et al., pp. 123-148.

U. S. General Accounting Office (1996), Child Support Enforcement-States' Experience with Private Agencies' Collection of Support Payments (GAO/HEHS-97-11).

Press, E. (2001), "Lead Us Not into Temptation," The American Prospect (April 9)

Ponnuru, R. (2000), "Taking on the Biggest," The National Review (June 5)

Week 10 (November 9<sup>th</sup>) ***Targeting Spending versus Universalism***

Wilson, W.J. (1991), "Another Look at the Truly Disadvantage," Political Science Quarterly (106), pp. 639-656.

Blank, R. (1997), It Takes a Nation (Princeton: Russell Sage Foundation), chapter 6.

Hughes, M.A., and P.M. Van Doren (1990), "Social Policy Through Land Reform: New Jersey's Mount Laurel Controversy," Political Science Quarterly (105), pp. 97-111.

Week 11 (November 16<sup>th</sup>) **2nd PAPER DUE IN CLASS/Oral Presentations**

## **Contemporary Social Policy Issues**

### Week 12 (November 22<sup>nd</sup>) *Urban Poverty*

Orfield, G. (1988), "Race and the Liberal Agenda: The Loss of the Integrationist Dream," in Weir et al., pp. 313-356.

Mincy, R.B. (1994), "The Underclass: Concept, Controversy and Evidence," in Danziger, S., G.D. Sandefur, and D.H. Weinberg (editors), Confronting Poverty: Prescriptions for Change (Cambridge: Harvard University Press)

Phillips-Fein, K. (1998), "The Still Industrial City," The American Prospect (September/October), pp. 28-37.

Valliant, G.E. (1997), "Poverty and Paternalism: A Psychiatric Viewpoint," in Mead, pp. 279-304.

Shore, M.F. (1997), "Psychological Factors in Poverty," in Mead, pp. 305-329.

Katz, B. (2000), "Enough of the Small Stuff!" The Brookings Review (18:3), pp. 4-9.

### Week 13 (November 30<sup>th</sup>) *Homelessness*

Hambrick, R. and G.T. Johnson (1998), "The Future of Homelessness," Society (September), pp. 28-37.

Main, T.J. (1997), "Homeless Men in New York City: Toward Paternalism through Privatization," in Mead, pp. 161-181.

Kirchheimer, D. W. (1989/90), "Sheltering the Homeless in New York City: Expansion in an Era of Government Contraction," Political Science Quarterly (104), 607-623.

Egan, J. (2002), "To Be Young and Homeless," New York Times Magazine (March 24), pp. 32-37, 58, and 59.

### Week 14 (December 7<sup>th</sup>) *Welfare Reform and Child Support Enforcement*

Mead, L. (1997), "Welfare Employment," in Mead, pp. 39-88.

Jencks, C. and J. Swingle (2000), "Without a Net," The American Prospect (January 3)

Rosin, H. (1997), "About Face," The New Republic (August 4)

Milbank, D. (1997), "Under the Underclass," The New Republic (August 4)

Mincy, R. and H. Pouncy (1997), "Paternalism, Child Support Enforcement, and Fragile Families," in Mead, pp. 130-160.

Sawhill, I. "Is the Lack of Marriage the Real Problem?" The American Prospect Online (13:7)

### (December 14th) **Final Examination**