

Soc404: Welfare and Social Policy in America

Instructor: Sarah Halpern-Meekin

Monday, Wednesday 11-12:15pm, Bolton B84

Office hours: Monday 10:00-10:30am & 12:30-1pm; Wednesday 10:00-10:30am & 12:30-1pm

Office: NWQ 7414

The phenomena we study in sociology are not just naturally occurring, but profoundly shape and are shaped by the policies of a particular society. In this class we explore several areas of social and welfare policy in America. We will gain a better understanding of what policies are in place, what their form and function shows us about society, and how these policies impact society, both intentionally and unintentionally. We will primarily discuss the social safety net (including welfare, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and food assistance) and family policies (including child support and relationship and marriage education programs). In their independent work, students will have the opportunity to explore other policy areas of interest, including housing policy, urban development, criminal justice/sentencing, and education.

Course Requirements: Students should use the syllabus and course website to plan out their work for the semester. Do the readings before class each week and come prepared to ask questions and discuss course material.

Quizzes (best 9 of 10 x 4.44%):	40%
Attendance and Participation:	20%
Paper Proposal	1%
Annotated Bibliography	4%
Paper Presentations	5%
Paper	
Option #1	30%
Option #2	
Paper Draft #1	10%
Peer Review	5%
Paper Draft #2	15%

Each quiz will be available online for a 24-hour period. Be sure to check the date and time of each quiz so that you don't miss them. There are no make-ups available.

There is one set of writing assignments during the semester; plan ahead to give yourself adequate time to work on it. You have two options for the writing assignment:

- 1) Option #1: Write one final version of the paper, due May 10th.
- 2) Option #2: Go through the review process.
 - a. Write a first draft of the paper, due March 29th.
 - b. Go through the peer review process: You will exchange papers with an assigned peer review partner, and you will each provide one another with feedback. I will also provide some feedback on this first draft. Your review of your partner's paper is due April 19th.
 - c. Revise the paper and turn in a final draft, due May 10th. Note that revising the paper does not guarantee you a higher grade, and if you do not adequately revise

the paper (e.g., you make a couple small changes, but basically turn in the same paper), you will receive a lower grade.

- d. Note: Once you turn in paper draft #1, you have committed to Option #2. That is, you can't turn in paper draft #1, decide you don't like your grade and opt for Option #1 instead.

Attendance and Participation: There will be a great deal of discussion during the class as well as information presented that will not be in your course readings, therefore it is essential that you attend class regularly. Please come to class having done your readings and ready to participate actively and productively in the discussion. If you feel uncomfortable participating in class discussions, I encourage you to jot down a few questions or comments while doing the readings that you can draw on in the classroom.

The nature of the subjects we will be discussing in this class can be both intellectual and personal. When making comments in class, please be mindful of the feelings and previous experiences of your classmates. I expect, and in fact hope, that you will disagree with one another, but I also expect that you will always be respectful in doing so.

Please note: The use of laptop computers or tablets during class requires prior notification and approval. If you need to use your laptop/tablet to take notes during class please discuss this with me. Please do not use cell phones during class – this includes sending or checking texts; cell phones should not be out during class to avoid any temptations.

The weekly time expectations for the course break down as follows (note: these are approximations):

Readings (books, articles, websites)	3-4 hours
Class attendance	2.5 hours
Reviewing for quizzes	1-2 hours
Working on long-term paper assignments	2-3 hours

If it is taking you much more or much less time than these estimates to complete your work each week, please let me know so we can discuss how you are approaching the assignments.

Requirements for any enrolled graduate students will be different than those for undergraduates and will be discussed individually. Please see me for the graduate syllabus if you are taking this course for graduate credit.

Required Texts:

Welfare: A Documentary History of U.S. Policy and Politics. By Gwendolyn Mink and Rickie Solinger (2003).

American Dream: Three Women, Ten Kids and the Nation's Drive to End Welfare. By Jason De Parle (2004).

Creating an Opportunity Society. By Ron Haskins and Isabel Sawhill (2009).

All other course readings will be available on the web or on the course website.

Other Course Policies:

For further information on departmental and university policies, please see the last page of the syllabus.

Students with disabilities should discuss necessary accommodations with me as soon as possible.

If you would like to dispute a grade on a paper or assignment, write a one-page memo stating your case. Your case for a grade change should be based on the merits of your work alone, not on whether you think it is better than someone else's assignment in the class. You have one week from the day assignments are returned to submit a grade change memo to me. Submitting a grade-change memo is not a guarantee of receiving a higher grade.

Please make use of my office hours to discuss any difficulties you are having with the class material or assignments. Don't wait until just before the quizzes or due dates! You do not need to make an appointment or email me beforehand to come to my office hours – just drop by. Use email often and wisely. Please check the syllabus first for the answer to your question before emailing me. Please allow for at least a day for me to respond (no last minute requests!).

Students who cheat or attempt to cheat will either receive a zero score for that quiz or assignment or a failing grade for the course. In addition, the incident will be reported in writing to the dean so that he may decide whether further disciplinary action is warranted. **Using ideas or words taken from another source and not properly citing them is cheating; any words that are not your own should appear in quotation marks, and a citation, including a page number, must be provided.** Unfortunately, I catch students plagiarizing each semester, which is very unpleasant for me and for them. If you are at all unclear about what constitutes plagiarism, ask me, ask a librarian (they're happy to help!), and see:
http://www4.uwm.edu/acad_aff/policy/academicmisconduct.cfm
Knowledge of these rules is your responsibility, and lack of familiarity with these rules in no way constitutes an excuse for acts of misconduct.

Week One (Week of January 21st): Introduction

- “Who is Poor?” <http://irp.wisc.edu/faqs/faq3.htm>
- Haskins and Sawhill: chapter 3
- Listen to “The Psychology of Poverty” at <http://whyy.org/cms/radiotimes/2011/12/21/the-psychology-of-poverty/>

Week Two (Week of January 28th): Introduction, continued

- Haskins and Sawhill: chapters 2, 4-6
- “Does Inequality Matter?” By Christopher Jencks in *Daedalus* (2002).

Quiz #1 – available Friday, Feb. 1 12pm – Saturday, Feb. 2 11:59am

Week Three (Week of February 4th): Background

- The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism. By Gosta Esping-Andersen (1990). Read: pages 1-5, Chapter 1, pages 141-143, Chapter 9 [Note: This is the most difficult reading assignment we will do this semester. Aim to get a sense for Esping-Andersen's main points, and try not to get frustrated with his writing style.]

Quiz #2 – available Friday, Feb. 8 12pm – Saturday, Feb. 9 11:59am

ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE February 8th by 11:59pm: Write 1-2 paragraphs proposing a topic for your final paper. Your proposal should be specific (e.g., “The paper will explore the role of the educational system in America” is too general – What aspect of the educational system? What aspects of America?). The more specific and detailed your proposal, the better the feedback I’m able to give you. See the box on page 5 of the syllabus for more details about the assignment. Turn in your assignment to me by email (make sure to check your sent mail folder to see that the email went through with the file attached and that the file is saved in either a .doc or .docx format).

Week Four (Week of February 11th): The American Welfare State, Part 1

In-class: students will give brief presentations on their policy papers.

(these readings go in chronological order, so read the pages in the order listed)

- Mink and Solinger: pgs. 1-11, 33-34, 42-44, 55-64, 89-98, 101-105, 145-154, 174-190, 195-198, 212-216, 223-238, 313-319

NOTE: February 18th is the last day to drop full semester courses without a W on your record

Week Five (Week of February 18th): The American Welfare State, Part 1 (cont.)

- Mink and Solinger: pgs. 331-339, 349-350, 368-372, 417-424, 441-442, 447-458, 466-467, 482-483, 535-539, 551-562, 565-571, 587-589, 622-623, 636-637, 658-662, 725-728

Quiz #3 – available Friday, Feb. 22 12pm – Saturday, Feb. 23 11:59am

Week Six (Week of February 25th): The American Welfare State, Part 2

- American Dream: Three Women, Ten Kids and the Nation’s Drive to End Welfare. By Jason De Parle. Part I.

ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE March 1st by 11:59pm: Turn in an annotated bibliography for your final paper. You should find 5 sources for this assignment. Provide the citation for each source and with each citation you will write a brief paragraph explaining how the citation relates to your chosen topic. The explanation of how the source relates to your paper should be specific (i.e., “This book is on the American education system and my paper is also exploring education in America” just won’t cut it). DO NOT just cut and paste from article abstracts, etc., as that would be plagiarism. If you are unsure how to do an annotated bibliography, be sure to ask for clarification/help well in advance. Turn in your assignment to me by email (make sure to check your sent mail folder to see that the email went through with the file attached and that the file is saved in either a .doc or .docx format).

Week Seven (Week of March 4th): The American Welfare State, Part 2 (cont.)

- American Dream. By De Parle. Part II

Week Eight (Week of March 11th): The American Welfare State, Part 2 (cont.)

- American Dream. By De Parle. Chapters 10-15

**NOTE: March 15th is the last day to drop or withdraw from full-term courses.
March 17-24 is spring recess.**

Week Nine (Week of March 25th): The American Welfare State, Part 2 (cont.)

NOTE: We will not have class on March 25th for the Passover holiday

For students doing paper option #2:

- Email me by **March 27th** to let me know if you are doing paper option #2 (I need to know so I can create the peer review pairings)
- **Paper draft due March 29th by 11:59pm** – turn in your paper to me AND your peer review partner by email (make sure to check your sent mail folder to see that the email went through with the file attached and that the file is saved in either a .doc or .docx format).

In-class: students will give brief presentations on their policy papers.

- American Dream. By De Parle. Chapters 16-epilogue

Quiz #4 - available Friday, Mar. 29 12pm – Saturday, Mar. 30 11:59am

Writing Assignment:

For your paper, you will choose an area of social or welfare policy to explore in detail, using a sociological lens. This does not have to be a topic that we have covered in class. In the paper's introductory paragraph, you should present a thesis statement that summarizes the argument you seek to prove in the paper. Each paragraph in the body of the paper should be focused on evaluating the evidence from the articles in terms of this thesis/central argument. You should have an updated bibliography/works cited section with at least 10 sources (5 from the annotated bibliography assignment and 5 additional ones); this is not an annotated bibliography.

Here are some questions you can ask yourself to help in developing a thesis:

- What social norms or judgments have guided the development of this policy area?
- How might this set of policies reinforce or undermine existing disparities among particular sociodemographic groups?
- How effective has this set of policies been at achieving its goals? What direction should policy in this area take in the future? Why?

Your paper should be in .doc or .docx format, 10-12 pages in length, double-spaced, with 12-point Times New Roman font, 1" margins, and proper citations (both within the text and with a 'works cited'/bibliography section). Spelling and grammar are a part of the assignment, as incorrect usage can inhibit your ability to communicate your argument. The paper should be focused on synthesizing information and presenting your own analysis and logic based on your research; go beyond only reiterating the findings from existing research – include your original thought and analysis (but make sure you're not making baseless assertions or just giving your personal feelings). Late papers will be penalized by one grade per day. Last minute extensions may not be requested. For those doing paper option #2, paper draft #1 due March 29th.

Week Ten (Week of April 1st): Other Pieces of the Welfare Puzzle

- “Leaving Money (and Food) on the Table.” By Alan Berube and Matt Fellowes (2005). http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2005/05childrenfamilies_fellowes/20050517_FoodStamp.pdf
- “Once Stigmatized, Food Stamps Find Acceptance.” By Jason DeParle and Robert Gebeloff in *The New York Times* (February 10, 2010). Also look at the interactive map of food stamp use by state and the “changing demographics” link in the article. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/11/us/11foodstamps.html>
- (Unless you are quite familiar with the EITC, review these websites before reading the Berube piece)
http://www.eitc.irs.gov/public/site_files/34506j09-962E-S.pdf
<http://www.eitc.irs.gov/central/abouteitc/>
<http://www.eitc.irs.gov/central/eitcstats/>
- “The New Safety Net: How the Tax Code Helped Low-Income Working Families During the 2000s.” By Alan Berube (2006). http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2006/02childrenfamilies_berube/20060209_newsafety.pdf

Quiz #5 - available Friday, Apr. 5 12pm – Saturday, Apr. 6 11:59am

Week Eleven (Week of April 8th): Teen and Unintended Pregnancy

- Mink and Solinger: pgs. 624-630, 713-715
- “Abstaining from Sex.” By Isabel Sawhill (2002). http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2002/01childrenfamilies_sawhill.aspx
- “Reducing Unplanned Pregnancies through Medicaid Family Planning Services.” By Melissa Kearney and Phillip Levine (2008). http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2008/07_reducing_pregnancy_kearney/07_reducing_pregnancy_kearney.pdf
- “The DCR Report.” Sections A and E, skim Sections F, G, and H. http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/dcr/NATC_DCRreport.pdf

Quiz #6 – available Friday, Apr. 12 12pm – Saturday, Apr. 13 11:59am

Week Twelve (Week of April 15th): Fatherhood Initiatives and Child Support

For those doing paper option #2, **peer review assignment due April 19th by 11:59pm** – turn in your paper to me AND your peer review partner by email (make sure to check your sent mail folder to see that the email went through with the file attached and that the file is saved in either a .doc or .docx format).

In-class: students will give brief presentations on their policy papers.

- Mink and Solinger: pgs. 706-712
- “Elements of Promising Practice for Fatherhood Programs: Evidence-Based Research Findings on Programs for Fathers.” By Jacinta Bronte-Tinkew, Jennifer Carrano, Tiffany Allen, Lillian Bowie, Kassim Mbawa, and Gregory Matthews (2007). Read pgs. 2-15, and then choose three of the programs to read about (one from Appendix 1, one from Appendix 2, and one from Appendix 3). Find the report at: <http://www.fatherhood.gov/about-us/nrfc-resources/nrfc-promising-practices>

- “Ten Key Findings from Responsible Fatherhood Initiatives.” By Karin Martinson and Demetra Nightingale (2008).
http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411623_fatherhood_initiatives.pdf?RSSFeed=UIWork/Income.xml
- “Unwed Fathers’ Ability to Pay Child Support: New Estimates Accounting for Multiple-partner Fertility.” By Marilyn Sinkewicz and Irwin Garfinkel in *Demography* (2009).

Quiz #7 – available Friday, Apr. 19 12pm – Saturday, Apr. 20 11:59am

Week Thirteen (Week of April 22nd): Relationship Education and Marriage Promotion

- Mink and Solinger: pgs. 764-766
- Haskins and Sawhill: Appendix B
- “The Decline in Marriage: What to do.” By Ron Haskins, Sara McLanahan, and Elisabeth Donahue (2005).
http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2005/fall_childrenfamilies_haskins/200509foc.pdf

Quiz #8 – available Friday, Apr. 26 12pm – Saturday, Apr. 27 11:59am

Week Fourteen (Week of April 29th): Policy and Citizenship

- Haskins & Sawhill: Chapter 7
- “From Policy to Polity: Democracy, Paternalism, and the Incorporation of Disadvantaged Citizens.” By Sarah Bruch, Myra Marx Ferree, and Joe Soss (2009).
<http://irp.wisc.edu/publications/dps/pdfs/dp136209.pdf>

Quiz #9 – available Friday, May 3 12pm – Saturday, May 4 11:59am

Week Fifteen (Week of May 6th): Policy Proposals

In-class: students will give brief presentations on their policy papers.

- “The Sequence of Personal Responsibility.” By Ron Haskins.
http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2009/0709_responsibility_haskins.aspx
- Haskins and Sawhill: chapters 8-11

Quiz #10 – available Wednesday, May 8 12pm – Thursday, May 9 11:59am

FINAL PAPER DUE May 10th – turn in your paper to me by email (make sure to check your sent mail folder to see that the email went through with the file attached and that the file is saved in either a .doc or .docx format).

UNIVERSITY AND SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT POLICIES

The Secretary of the University maintains a web page that contains university policies that affect the instructor and the students in this course, as well as essential information specific to conduct of the course. The link to that web page is: <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/SyllabusLinks.pdf>

Students with Disabilities. Verification of disability, class standards, the policy on the use of alternate material and test accommodations can be found at the following:

<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC/SACltr.pdf>

Religious Observances. Policies regarding accommodations for absences due to religious observance are found at the following: <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm>

Students called to active Military Duty. Accommodations for absences due to call-up of reserves to active military duty are found at the following:

http://www4.uwm.edu/current_students/military_call_up.cfm

Incompletes. You may be given an incomplete if you have carried a course successfully until near the end of the semester but, because of illness or other unusual and substantiated cause beyond your control, have been unable to take or complete the final examination or to complete some limited amount of course work. An incomplete is not given unless you prove to the instructor that you were prevented from completing the course for just cause as indicated above. The conditions for awarding an incomplete to graduate and undergraduate students can be found at the following:

<http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S31.pdf>

Discriminatory Conduct (such as sexual harassment). Discriminatory conduct will not be tolerated by the University. It poisons the work and learning environment of the University and threatens the careers, educational experience and well-being of students, faculty and staff. Policies regarding discriminatory conduct can be found at: <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S47.pdf>

Academic Misconduct. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors. Policies for addressing students cheating on exams or plagiarism can be found at the following:

<http://www4.uwm.edu/osl/dean/conduct.cfm>

Complaint Procedures. Students may direct complaints to the Sociology Department Chair or the Associate Dean for Social Sciences in the College of Letters & Sciences. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the Sociology Department Chair, the Associate Dean for Social Sciences in the College of Letters & Sciences, or to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy. Policies may be found at:

<http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S49.7.htm>

Grade Appeal Procedures. A student may appeal a grade on the grounds that it is based on a capricious or arbitrary decision of the course instructor. Such an appeal shall follow the established procedures adopted by the department, college, or school in which the course resides or in the case of graduate students, the Graduate School. These procedures are available in writing from the respective department chairperson or the Academic Dean of the College of Letters & Science.

Procedures for undergraduate student grade appeal can be found at

http://www4.uwm.edu/lets/upload/grievance_procedure.pdf

Procedures for graduate student grade appeal can be found at

<http://www.graduateschool.uwm.edu/students/policies/>

Final Examination Policy. Policies regarding final examinations can be found at the following:

<http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S22.htm>

Book Royalties. In accord with Department of Sociology policy, the royalties from the sale of faculty-authored books to students in their classes are donated to a UWM Foundation/Sociology Account to support future awards and activities for UWM students in Sociology.