

SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY, PP746
Winter 2008, Monday and Wednesday, 4:00-5:30pm, 1230 Weill Hall

Section 1: January 7-March 5, 2 credits (paper due March 5)

Section 2: January 7-April 14, 3 credits (paper due April 14)

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Course Overview:

This course examines social welfare programs and policies that affect the nonelderly poor in the U.S., emphasizing how they have evolved over the last four decades and how they might be reformed so as to further reduce poverty. The course emphasizes understanding what we know from social science research about the strengths and weaknesses and the intended and unintended effects of these policies and how they are influenced by and how they affect labor market outcomes and family structure.

The course begins by addressing some basic questions about the nature of poverty and the scope of current social welfare programs. What does it mean to be poor in the U.S. today? How do the extent of poverty and the scope of social welfare programs in the U.S. compare to those in other industrialized countries?

We then review the development of American social welfare programs and policies from the War on Poverty that was declared by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965 to the present. Particular attention will be given to understanding trends in poverty and inequality, the origins and consequences of the War on Poverty, the Great Society, and a range of successful and unsuccessful welfare reform proposals—President Nixon’s Family Assistance Plan, President Carter’s Program for Better Jobs and Income, President Clinton’s 1992 promise to “make work pay and end welfare as we know it” and the transformation of that promise into the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 (PRWORA). We evaluate the legacy of the 1996 reform and the operation of the new program, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), including its effects on the work effort and well-being of current and former welfare recipients and other individuals who are not steadily employed or are employed at low wage rates. Are employers willing to hire welfare recipients? Are recipients finding and keeping jobs? What are the consequences of the new law for welfare recipients, their children, the absent parents of their children?

The course ends by analyzing a range of social policy reform options that might further reduce poverty—labor market policies, employment and training programs, child support reforms, family policies, tax policies, etc.

Topics by Date:

- January 7: Introduction to Course and Overview of Assignments; Discussion exercise—Who Should Receive What Kind of Assistance?
- January 9: What Does It Mean to Be Poor in America? Trends in Poverty and Income Inequality
- January 14: American Social Welfare Policy: The War on Poverty Era and the Expansion of Social Welfare Programs, 1964-1980
- January 16: American Social Welfare Policy: The Reagan Retrenchment and the Revolt Against Welfare, 1980-1996
- January 21: Martin Luther King Day, no class. Please attend the M.L. King Day Symposium hosted by the National Poverty Center, 3-5:00 pm on “Jobs and Housing: Trust, Distrust, and Social Class in the Black Community.” Presentations by Sandra Smith, University of California-Berkeley, and Mary Pattillo, Northwestern University. Comments by David Harding, UM Sociology Department.
- January 23: How did the 1996 Reform “End Welfare as We Knew It”?
- January 28: The Extent of Poverty and the Scope of Social Welfare Programs in Comparative Perspective
- January 30: The Labor Market and Policies to Raise Employment and Earnings
- February 4: Promoting Marriage, Reducing Poverty
- February 6: “The Missing Class: Portraits of the Near Poor in America,” Speaker, Katherine Newman, Princeton University
- February 11: Fathers’ Employment and Ability to Pay Child Support
- February 13: Exam Review; Discussion Exercise: Reallocating Antipoverty Spending
- February 18: Reforming Social Welfare Policy for the 21st Century
- February 20: EXAM IN CLASS- TWO HOURS, 4:10-6:10 pm
- All students are expected to attend all class sessions, including the Martin Luther King Day Symposium. **More than 1 unexcused absence will result in a lowering of your grade.**

Required Books:

Jason De Parle, American Dream: Three Women, Ten Kids and the Nation’s Drive to End Welfare (2004). (Available in paperback at Shaman Drum Bookstore)

A course pack will be available from Excel Test Preparation on South University. Part I should be available on January 8. Part II will be available by mid-January.

Suggested Supplemental Readings:

- James T. Patterson, America’s Struggle against Poverty in the Twentieth Century (2000).
- Ron Haskins, Work Over Welfare: The Inside Story of the 1996 Welfare Reform Law (2006).
- Sheldon Danziger and Robert Haveman, eds., Understanding Poverty (2002).
- William Julius Wilson, When Work Disappears (1996).
- Rebecca Blank and Ron Haskins, eds., The New World of Welfare (2001).
- Kathryn Edin and Maria Kefalas, Promises I Can Keep (2005).
- Peter Edelman, Harry Holzer and Paul Offner, Reconnecting Disadvantaged Young Men (2006).
- Mary Pattillo, Black on the Block: The Politics of Race and Class in the City (2007).
- Sandra Smith, Lone Pursuit: Distrust and Defensive Individualism Among the Black Poor (2007).

Katherine Newman and Victor Tan Chen, The Missing Class: Portraits of the Near Poor in America (2007).

Richard Freeman, America Works: Critical Thoughts on the Exceptional U.S. Labor Market (2006)

Web Sites for background reading and research for policy analysis paper:

National Poverty Center _____ <http://www.npc.umich.edu>

Michigan Program on Poverty and Social Welfare Policy:

<http://www.fordschool.umich.edu/research/poverty/index.php>

Institute for Research on Poverty: _____ <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp>

MDRC: _____ <http://www.mdrc.org>

Urban Institute: _____ <http://www.urban.org>

Administration for Children and Families: _____ <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov>

Asst. Secy. of HHS for Planning and Evaluation: _____ <http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov>

Brookings Institution: _____ <http://www.brookings.edu>

Census Bureau: _____ <http://www.census.gov>

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities: _____ <http://www.cbpp.org>

Center for Law and Social Policy: _____ <http://www.clasp.org>

Fragile Families and Child Well-Being _____ <http://www.fragilefamilies.princeton.edu/>

Heritage Foundation: _____ <http://www.heritage.org>

Class Assignments and Grading for students registered for 2 credits:

Grades will be based on the Wednesday February 20 in-class exam (50 percent), class participation (10 percent), and a 10-15 page policy analysis paper due after winter break, Wednesday, **March 5** (40 percent).

The policy analysis paper should focus on the successes and failures of a current poverty-related social policy and how you would modify the policy to more effectively meet its goals. Policies include, but are not limited to, policies related to child care, preschool programs, health insurance, job training, child support, family policy, income support policies, and housing. For example, someone might take the position that government should provide public jobs of last resort to welfare recipients or absent fathers who seek but can not find jobs or that TANF is too lenient and that recipients should not be allowed to receive cash benefits for more than 3 years or that mothers ought to have the choice to stay home and care for young children or that states should provide more access to education and training programs or that participation in marriage promotion activities should be made mandatory. You will be graded on the *quality* of the analysis you present in your paper not on any position taken. The paper should **not** be an advocacy document. While it should propose a social welfare policy reform, it should recognize the limits as well as strengths of the proposal.

Students should discuss potential paper topics with me in January during office hours and/or via e-mail interchanges and should submit a brief (1-2 page) abstract with selected references via e-mail no later than 10 pm on Monday, **January 28**.

Class Assignments and Grading for Students registered for 3 credits:

Grades will be based on the Wednesday, February 20 in-class exam (40 percent), class participation (10 percent), and a 25-30 page policy research/policy analysis paper (50 percent).

Each student will prepare a research/analysis paper (25-30 pages). These papers can cover topics similar to those described above. However, these longer papers should present a research/policy analysis of the issue under study based on a *careful* review of the relevant empirical literature, with data and research evidence that documents the pros and cons of the social policy issue. You will be graded on the *quality* of the evidence and analysis you present in your paper not on any position taken. The evidence should be drawn from the recent literature on your topic, especially rigorous evaluations of the kinds of policies and programs discussed during the class. The paper will involve extensive additional reading and analysis on your part. It should demonstrate mastery of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature. The paper should **not** be an advocacy document.

Students should discuss potential paper topics with me in January during office hours and/or via e-mail interchanges and should submit a brief (2 page) abstract for their paper with selected references via e-mail no later than 10pm on **Monday, February 4**.

A first draft of the paper is due to me no later than 10pm on **Monday, March 17**. Students registered for 3 credits will meet on March 24, March 26, March 31 and April 2 during the regular class time. Each student will have 15 minutes to make an oral presentation of her/his paper; this will be followed by open discussion and comments. Depending on the number of students who take the course for 3 credits, we may need to extend some of these sessions. Please reserve time until 6pm for each of these class sessions. We will select presentation dates for each student prior to the winter break.

I will prepare **detailed critical, but constructive**, comments and suggestions for revision based on your written draft and the class discussion and return that to you no later than one day after your oral presentation. The revised draft that responds to my comments and those from the open discussion is due by 10pm on **Monday, April 14**.

Reading Assignments

(All readings except the De Parle book are in the course pack)

- January 7** **Introduction to Course and Overview of Assignments; In-class Discussion Exercise, “Who should receive what kind of assistance?”**
- January 9** **What Does it Mean to Be Poor in America? Trends in Poverty and Income Inequality**
- R. Blank, “How to Improve Poverty Measurement in the United States,” (November 2007), forthcoming *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*.
- L. Kaufman, “Bloomberg Seeks New Way to Decide Who is Poor,” New York Times, December 30, 2007.
- S. Danziger and P. Gottschalk, “Diverging Fortunes: Trends in Poverty and Inequality,” The American People, Census 2000. Population Reference Bureau (December 2004).

R. Rector and K. Johnson, "Understanding Poverty in America," Heritage Foundation Backgrounder #1713 (January 2004).

J. Isaacs, "Economic Mobility of Families across Generations," The Economic Mobility Project, www.economicmobility.org (November 2007).

L. Uchitelle, "Is there (Middle Class) Life After Maytag?" New York Times, August 26, 2007.

L. Uchitelle, "The Richest of the Rich, Proud of a New Gilded Age," New York Times, July 16, 2007.

January 14 American Social Welfare Policy: The War on Poverty Era and the Expansion of Social Welfare Programs, 1964-1980

S. Levitan and R. Taggart, "The 1960s, the Great Society and the Legacy," Part I, The Promise of Greatness, pp. 3-30, Harvard University Press, 1976.

R. Nixon, "Welfare Reform: A Message from the President, 1969." Reprinted as "The Nixon Administration's Welfare Reform: The Family Assistance Plan."

R. Moffitt, "The Idea of a Negative Income Tax: Past, Present, and Future," Focus, Newsletter of the Institute for Research on Poverty, Summer 2004.

J. K. Scholz and K. Levine, "The Evolution of Income Support Policy in Recent Decades," Focus, Newsletter of the Institute for Research on Poverty, Fall 2000.

U.S. House of Representatives, "Appendix K: Spending for Income-Tested Benefits, Fiscal Years 1968-2002," The Green Book.

January 16 American Social Welfare Policy: The Reagan Retrenchment and the Revolt Against Welfare, 1980-1996

J. DeParle, American Dream: Three Women, Ten Kids and the Nation's Drive to End Welfare, Chapters 1-5, pp. 1-100.

M. Novak, "The New War on Poverty," excerpted from The New Consensus on Family and Welfare, American Enterprise Institute, 1987, in Focus, Newsletter of the Institute for Research on Poverty, 1988.

C. Murray, Ch. 12, "Incentives to Fail I: Maximizing Short-Term Gains," Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950-1980, Basic Books.

W.E. Williams, "Prepared Statement, "Hearings before the Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States, Sept. 25, 1991.

L. Mead, "The Rise of Paternalism," Ch.1, The New Paternalism: Supervisory Approaches to Poverty, Brookings Institution, 1997.

January 21 Jobs and Housing: Trust, Distrust and Social Class in the Black Community. Martin Luther King Day Symposium, 3:00-5:00, Annenberg Auditorium, followed by reception and book signing.

S. Smith, "Don't Put My Name on It: Social Capital Activation and Job-Finding Assistance Among the Black Urban Poor," *American Journal of Sociology*, July 2005.

M. Pattillo, "Black Middle-Class Neighborhoods," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2005.

January 23 How did the 1996 Reform "End Welfare as We Knew It?"

Comparison of AFDC and TANF/PRWORA (2 page chart)

J. De Parle, *American Dream: Three Women, Ten Kids and the Nation's Drive to End Welfare*, remainder of book.

R. Rector, "The Impact of Welfare Reform," Statement Before the Committee on Ways and Means, U.S. House of Representatives, July 19, 2006

S. Parrott and A. Sherman, "TANF at 10: Program Results are More Mixed than Often Understood," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, August 17, 2006.

There are many papers on the Women's Employment Study available on line. A few are included in the course pack. See others on the web:

www.fordschool.umich.edu/research/poverty/publications.htm

S. K. Danziger and K. Seefeldt, "Barriers to Employment and the Hard to Serve." *Focus*, Newsletter of the Institute for Research on Poverty, 2002.

L. Turner, S. Danziger and K. Seefeldt. "Failing the Transition from Welfare to Work: Women Chronically Disconnected from Employment and Cash Welfare." *Social Science Quarterly*, 2006

January 28 The Extent of Poverty and the Scope of Social Welfare Programs in Comparative Perspective. Abstracts due for students enrolled for 2 credits.

T. Smeeding, "Poor People in Rich Nations: The United States in Comparative Context," forthcoming, *Journal of Economic Policy*, 2006.

J. Hills and J. Waldfogel, "A 'Third Way' in Welfare Reform? Evidence from the United Kingdom," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 2004

N. Glazer, "On Americans and Inequality," *Daedalus*, Summer 2003.

C. Jencks, "Does Inequality Matter?" *Daedalus*, Winter 2002.

January 30 Policies to Raise Employment and Earnings: What Works?

R. Freeman, Introduction, Ch. 1, "The U.S. Market-Driven Labor System" & Ch. 2, "When Markets Drive Outcomes," *America Works: The Exceptional U.S. Labor Market*, 2007.

E. Applebaum, A. Bernhardt, and R.J. Murnane, Ch. 1, Low-Wage America: How Employers are Reshaping Opportunity in the Workplace, Russell Sage Foundation, 2003.

P. Edelman, H. Holzer and P. Offner. Ch. 3, "Education and Training Policies," and, Ch. 7, "Summary and Conclusions," Reconnecting Disadvantaged Young Men. Urban Institute, 2005.

"Inequality in America: What Role for Human Capital Policies?" Focus, Newsletter of the Institute for Research on Poverty, Spring 2005.

February 4 Promoting Marriage, Reducing Poverty, Guest Speaker, Kristin Seefeldt, National Poverty Center. Abstracts due for students enrolled for 3 credits.

K. Seefeldt and P. Smock, "Marriage on the Public Policy Agenda," National Poverty Center Working Paper, 2004, available at:
<http://www.npc.umich.edu/publications/workingpaper04/paper2/04-02.pdf>

S. Stanley, M. Pearson and G. Kline, "The Development of Relationship Education for Low Income Individuals: Lessons from Research and Experience," November 2005, working paper.

K. Edin, "What Do Low-Income Single Mothers Say about Marriage?" *Social Problems*, 2000.

S. McLanahan, "Diverging Destinies: How Children are Faring under the Second Demographic Transition," *Demography*, November 2004.

R. Rector and M. Pardue, "Understanding the President's Healthy Marriage Initiative, Heritage Foundation Backgrounder, No. 1741, March 26, 2004.

February 6 Guest Speaker, Katherine Newman, Princeton University, Annenberg Auditorium

K. Newman and V. Chan, Ch. 1, "The Missing Class," Ch 2, "Whose Neighborhood is This Anyway," Ch. 8, Missing Class Mobility." The Missing Class: Portraits of the Near Poor in America 2007.

February 11 Father's Employment and Ability to Pay Child Support

I. Garfinkel, "Child Support in the New World of Welfare," Ch. 17 in The New World of Welfare, Brookings 2001.

D. J. Pate, "The Life Circumstances of African American Fathers with Children on W-2." Focus, Newsletter of the Institute for Research on Poverty, 2002.

L. Kaufman, "When Child Support is Due, Even the Poor Find Little Mercy," New York Times, February 19, 2005.

C. Murray, "Keep it in the Family," London Sunday Times, November 14, 1993.

L. Mead, "Toward a Mandatory Work Policy for Men," *Future of Children*, Fall 2007.

G. Berlin, "Rewarding the Work of Individuals: A Counterintuitive Approach to Reducing Poverty and Strengthening Families," *Future of Children*, Fall 2007.

February 13 Exam Review; Discussion Exercise: Reallocating Antipoverty Spending

Some sample exam questions will be distributed in advance. Please come to class with any questions you have on readings, speakers, class discussion

February 18 Reforming Social Welfare Policy For the 21st Century.

S. Danziger and S. K. Danziger, "Poverty, Race and Antipoverty Policy Before and After Hurricane Katrina," *W. E. DuBois Review*, 2006.

Michael Tanner, "No Longer out of sight; Chance for an Effective War on Poverty," *Washington Times*, September 9, 2005.

W. J. Wilson, "A New Agenda for America's Ghetto Poor." in J. Edwards, M. Crain & A. Kalleberg, *Ending Poverty in America*, 2007.

J. Edwards, "Ending Poverty in America," in J. Edwards, M. Crain & A. Kalleberg, *Ending Poverty in America*, 2007.

B. Obama, "Changing the Odds for Urban America," 2007.

Center for American Progress, Task Force on Poverty, "Executive Summary," *From Poverty to Prosperity: A National Strategy to Cut Poverty in Half*, 2007.

February 20 Exam—2 hours, 4:10-6:10 pm

March 5 Papers due in class for students enrolled for 2 credits; exams returned

March 17 Draft papers due by 10pm for students enrolled for 3 credits

March 24 Presentations by students enrolled for 3 credits, I

March 26 Presentations by students enrolled for 3 credits, II

March 31 Presentations by students enrolled for 3 credits, III

April 2 Presentations by students enrolled for 3 credits, IV

April 14 Revised papers due by 10pm for students enrolled for 3 credits