

Social Work 295

Comparative Social Policy in Mexico and USA: Social Policy for Social Change

Instructors: Hillary Mealman and Lisanne Morgan

Required Texts

Segal, E. *Social Welfare Policy and Social Programs: A Values Perspective*. Brooks/Cole, 2012.

Sowers, K. and Rowe, W.S. *Social Work Practice and Social Justice: From Local to Global Perspectives*. Brooks/Cole, 2007.

Course Description

The major aim of this course is to prepare Social Work students to function as informed and competent participants in efforts to achieve change in social policies and programs. This course in comparative social policy uses Mexico and the United States as comparative contexts for studying policy formation, implementation, and analysis. The course will examine the influence of values and ideology of the two countries on these processes. Central to this course are numerous guest speakers and site visits to agencies and programs in urban and rural settings reflecting social service policy in Mexico. A service-learning component may be available depending on learning goals and fluency in Spanish. Roles and responsibilities addressed in this course include: generalist social workers in formulating, implementing, and evaluating policy that is responsive to social and human needs.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will have achieved the practice behaviors and competencies reflected in the following course objectives:

1. Understand the impact that social organizational policy and agency delivery systems have on individuals, groups, families, organizations, and communities in Mexico and the United States.
2. Compare and contrast social policies, including federally funded social services in the United States and Mexico.
3. Recognize the importance of context in policy practice, including the role of social problems in shaping policy responses as well as the role that social policy plays in service delivery and learn to respond to these contexts in order to improve the quality of services.
4. Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social wellbeing.
5. Collaborate with colleagues and individuals, groups, families, organizations, and communities for effective policy action.
6. Demonstrate critical thinking using oral and written communication skills appropriate for comparative policy analysis.
7. Learn how to engage in practices to advocate for human rights and economic and social justice and to apply the US Social Work Code of Ethics, the United Nation's Declaration of Human Rights, and other perspectives on social justice.
8. Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures, history and values create policies that may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.
9. Discuss the impact (intended and unintended) of social policies on people's lives, with emphasis on the poor, women, immigrants, people of color and people of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, gay and lesbian persons and other marginalized groups.
10. Demonstrate commitment as a generalist social worker to being involved in the policy arena to work for achieving social and economic and environmental justice in Mexico-United States relations.

Course Requirements

- Course Participation (10%)**
- Advocacy Letters (20%):** You will be asked to write two letters during the semester advocating for a policy change. The first letter should be to one of you Senators or Representatives and the second can be a follow-up letter to the same person or a letter to your school advocating a policy or program change.
- Policy Analysis Paper (35%):** This analysis paper is designed to analyze and consider the ways in which policies influence professional social work relationships, impacts and interventions with clients, as well as impacts on the public as a whole. 13-15 page research paper. Details to follow.
- Policy Presentation (15%):** You will create a presentation about the chosen issue of your policy paper and create a PowerPoint (in Spanish) to present to the UNAM Students of Social Work during Week 14.
- Policy Tracking and Paper (20%):** Choose a current USA political subject of interest. It can be a federal, state or local municipality issue. Follow the progress by checking current debate 4 times within a six week period. Write a 6-8 page paper. Details to follow.

Weekly Schedule

Wk #	Location and Activities	Course Topics and/or Objectives	Required Readings (Text and Chapters)	Potential Speakers, Excursions and Class Discussions	Assignments Due
1	Orientation to the program, the group and Cuernavaca	Introduction to Course - What is Social Welfare - What are Social Problems	Segal Ch 1		No assignments due this week.
2	Rural homestay Amatlán trip starts on Sun.	Social Policy Issues of Today and Discrimination in Policy	Sowers and Rowe Preface and Ch 1	Rural seminar and homestays in Nahua indigenous community of Amatlán de Quetzalcoatl QUETZALCOATL - DIF Tepotlan	No assignments due this week.
3	Internship interviews 1 st Spanish Classes, Week 1	Policy Process and Analysis - Policy Creation - Points of intervention - Role of Practitioner	Segal Ch 3 and 6	Visit to the Congress of Morelos	Choose your policy to track and policy for your paper
4	1 st Spanish Class, Week 2 Urban Homestay, Week 1	Poverty and Policy - Influencing factors - Historical Context - State of the Union Address - Mexican Constitution	Segal Ch 7 and 8 Sowers and Rowe Ch 7	Talk with Homestay Families	1 st Advocacy Letter Due

Wk #	Location and Activities	Course Topics and/or Objectives	Required Readings (Text and Chapters)	Potential Speakers, Excursions and Class Discussions	Assignments Due
5	1 st Spanish Class, Week 3 Urban Homestay, Week 2	Social Welfare Policy - Forms of Welfare - Public Assistance - Generational Poverty	Segal Ch 4 Sowers and Rowe Ch 3	SEDESOL - Secretary of Social Development	No assignments due this week.
6	1 st Spanish Class, Week 4 (Last week) Urban Homestay, Week 1 Internships, Week 1	Social Policy with Children and Families - TANF - Child Protective Services - Educational policy	Segal Ch 10 Sowers and Rowe Ch 4	Araceli - Procuraduría del Menor - Overview of the DIF	No assignments due this week.
7	Urban Homestay, Week 4 2 nd Spanish Class, Week 1 Internships, Wk 2	Social Policy and Aging - Social Security - Boomer Generation - Community Outreach	Segal Ch 12 Sowers and Rowe Ch 6	Senior Home - Las Palomas o Casa del Día	No assignments due this week.
8	2 nd Spanish Class, Week 2 Internships, Week 3 Visit to Atzin and trip to Tlama-capzapa, Guerrero	Social Policy and Domestic Violence - Ciudad Juarez - DV and Immigrant Populations - Review Policy Analysis	Sowers and Rowe Ch 5	Talk by Xochitl Ramirez, representative of Atzin Excursion to <i>Nahua</i> indigenous village of Tlamacazapa, Guerrero with Atzin.	No assignments due this week.
*	½ group goes to Tlama on Fri and ½ Sat.				
9	2 nd Spanish Class, Week 3 Internships, Week 4	Social Justice and Criminal Justice - Restorative Practices - Incarceration rates in the U.S.	Sowers and Rowe Ch 12	Procuraduría - Attorney General's Office Policía Comunitaria - Community Based Police Prision visit in Morelos	Policy Paper DRAFT Due
10	2 nd Spanish Class, Week 4 - last week Internships, Week 5	Social Policy and Health - Physical health and abilities - Mental health - Chemical health	Segal Ch 11 Sowers and Rowe Ch 8-11	Sandra Trevino - Health Systems Expert IMMS - Social Security Hospital Parres Public Hospital	Policy Paper FINAL Due

Wk #	Location and Activities	Course Topics and/or Objectives	Required Readings (Text and Chapters)	Potential Speakers, Excursions and Class Discussions	Assignments Due
11	Internships, Week 6	Social Policy and Immigration - History - Current Practice - Current Efforts	Segal Ch 13	Grace Lundergan - Life on the border and ACLU Regional Center for Border Rights Raziel Valiño - Share insights from doctoral research and fieldwork	No assignments due this week.
12	SPRING BREAK! ☺		Get a head start on your reading. Read as much as you can! ☺		
13	SWK Students at UNAM in DF	Policy Change Process in Mexico - Policy advocacy and social work	No readings this week.	UNAM	No assignments due this week.
14	UNAM SWK students in Cuernavaca. Internships, Week 7	Social Policy Change Movements - Same Sex Marriage - Affordable Care Act - Medical and Recreational Marijuana	Sowers and Rowe Ch 14	US Embassy Visit Tochan - Migrant Shelter in DF	Policy Presentation
15	Internships, Week 7 (Last full week)	Future Trends in Social Policy - Role of Social Work - Code of Ethics - Presence at the table	Segal Ch 14 Sowers and Rowe Ch 15		Policy Tracking Paper Due
16	Outing on Fri. Last Week of Semester	ADVOCACY!! - How and where to make change in the world - Where to make change	No required readings this week.	Last class session.	2 nd Advocacy Letter Due

Additional Comments

Explanation of Grades

Augsburg College uses a numerical grading system using the following definitions:

Number	Letter Equivalent	Percentage	Augsburg Definition
4.0	A	93-100%	Achieves highest standards of excellence
3.5	A-/B+	88-92%	
3.0	B	83-87%	Achieves above basic course standards
2.5	B-/C+	78-82%	
2.0	C	73-77%	Meets basic standards for the course
1.5	C-/D+	68-72%	
1.0	D	63-67%	Performance below basic course standards
0.5	D-	60-62%	
0.0	F	Under 60%	Unacceptable performance (no credit for the course)

A "Pass" grade is 2.0 or above.

Grading Policy and Late Assignments

You must submit assignments on time. If you need an extension, you must talk to us **in advance** to negotiate a new deadline. If you have not been given an extension in advance and you turn in a late assignment, you will be docked half a grade (from a 4.0 to a 3.5 or 3.5 to a 3.0, 3.0 to a 2.5, 2.5 to a 2.0, etc.) If you are more than one week late, you will be docked a full grade. No assignments will be accepted more than two weeks after the original deadline; a "0" will be given after that. Assignments due near the end of the semester will not be accepted after the last day of the semester.

Augsburg Honesty Policy

You are expected to follow the Augsburg Honesty Policy which is printed in the program manual. We assume that you have read the honesty policy, understand it, and are following it. Except when the assignment expressly encourages group work, it is assumed that all course work will be your own. You may not copy other students' work. The first occurrence of plagiarism will result in the failure of the assignment. A student who commits plagiarism a second time will fail the course.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities

Students with formally diagnosed learning or physical differences have legal rights to course modifications. Those who qualify should identify themselves to the instructor as soon as possible in order to obtain extra assistance.