

PUAF 734: Foundations of Social Policy, Spring 2005
Syllabus

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Time: Tuesday 4.15-6.45
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Course website: <http://www.publicpolicy.umd.edu/faculty/papers/reuter/Courses.htm>

This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of: (1) demographic changes, their sources and policy impacts; (2) the sources and role of quantitative data in social policy; (3) the evolution of social policy toward the poor in the United States; (4) the differences between social policies in the US and other nations; and (5) policies to help particularly vulnerable populations. It involves explicit analysis of economic, political and normative aspects of social policy. The course is intended to develop student skills in integrated policy analysis and oral presentation.

Grades will be based on five activities:

- (1) One memo. By March 2, each student will prepare a 7 page ¹[12 point, 1.5 space] memo analyzing a specific aspect of immigration flows, with an emphasis on assessing the data sources (assignments given after class on Feb. 8). **[10%]**
- (2) Mid-term Exam. This will be open-book, take-home exam, given out on March 18 and due back by March 27. **[30%]**
- (3) One paper (length 15 pages) due in final form at the end of the semester. This paper should typically involve an analysis of the working of a program or institution, but I am open to suggestions. A list of potential topics is given below; students are welcome to offer additional topics. Specific paper proposals (one to two page description of goals, methods and sources) are due April 5, and drafts by April 26; comments will be provided by May 2. Final drafts are due May 15 **[30%]**
- (4) One presentation. Based on the paper, this will be given on May 17 or 18; half the students will present on each day. The paper will be circulated to two other students in advance; they have responsibility for preparing questions. Presentation skills get some emphasis in this class. I provide some instruction on briefings, using a short guideline on briefings from the RAND Corporation. **[10%]**
- (5) Class participation. Since classes will include a substantial discussion component; the readings need to be digested before the class session. Some questions during class will be directed at specific students and responses to those questions will weigh particularly heavily in the participation grading. Other questions will invite answers from whomever feels that she has something relevant to say. Students will receive mid-term assessments of their class participation after spring break. The grade will be based on willingness to participate and evidence of thoughtfulness and preparation. Each student will also be asked to make a 10 minute presentation in class based on one of the readings. **[20%]**

All papers, exams and memos are to be delivered in electronic form as Word documents; send them as email attachments. The filename should be your name plus the sequence of the assignment; for example the long paper will be #3. I will provide comments using the

¹[1] Page refers to space and a half, 12 point Times New Roman type.

“Tracking Changes” mode. Please also provide Powerpoint slides for all oral presentations; those files should be sent directly to me.

Required Books

Danziger, S., R. Haveman (eds.) *Understanding Poverty* Harvard University Press, 2001
Trattner, W. *From Poor Law to Welfare State* (6th Edition) New York, Free Press, 1999
Jencks, C. *The Homeless* Harvard University 1994
Gutman, A. (ed) *Democracy and the Welfare State* Princeton University Press, 1988

All these books should be available from the Book Store.

Illustrative Potential Paper Topics

The ideal topic covers economic, political and normative issues for a single policy topic. Consider for example "The Child Support Enforcement Program: factors limiting the effectiveness of paternity establishment programs." The paper would examine the alternative methods that have been suggested for establishing paternity and how they might affect behavior and collections, then turn to the value issues raised and finally discuss political and/or bureaucratic obstacles. Not all dimensions would be treated in equal length.

Most of the following were successful paper topics in previous years:

The Promise and Limitations of the New Urbanist Design in the Revitalization of Severely Distressed Housing: A Critical Analysis of Hope VI
Effects of Sex-Separated Education for Girls and Implications for Race-Separated Models of Education
Child Well-being in Debating, Legislating, and Evaluating Work Requirements for Single Welfare Mothers
Community Development Corporations - Theory and Practice
Sex and Race Equity Issues in Social Policy Reform
Availability of high quality child care for rural/low-income families and implications for school readiness

Course Outline and Readings

1. February 1: (a) Course Introduction (b) U.S. Demography in the Twentieth Century

Overview of the course; what constitutes social policy and what we can cover in one semester. Patterns of demographic change (age, location, family composition etc.). Sources and consequences of those patterns. Techniques and limits of projections; assessing the consequences of these uncertainties.

Readings

Jencks, C. “Introduction” in *Rethinking Social Policy: Race, Poverty and the Underclass* 1992 pp.(1-10) [optional]

Cancian and Reed “Changes in Family Structure: Implications for Poverty and Related Policy” Chapter 2 in *Understanding Poverty*

Kent and Mather, [What Drives US Population Growth](#), Population Reference Bureau (40 pages)

McFalls [Population: A Lively Introduction](#) Population Reference Bureau, 2003 pp.3-16

Bianci and Casper [American Families](#) Population Reference Bureau 2000 pp.3-27

Ahlburg, D. "[The Census Bureau's New Projections of the US Population](#)" *Population and Development Review* **19** (1) March 1993, pp.159-174

Aaron, H. "[Seeing through the Fog: Policy Making with Uncertain Forecasts](#)" *J Policy Analysis and Management* **19** (2) 2000 pp. 193-206 [optional]

2. February 8: Immigration

Patterns of immigration; source countries, demographic characteristics of immigrants, where they settle. Factors influencing flow of migration. US policies and the role of immigration policy. Impact on social policies and the politics of those policies.

Readings

Martin and Midgley "[Immigration to the United States: Shaping and Reshaping America](#)" *Population Bulletin* **58**(2) 2003 (40 pages)

Jencks, C. "Who Should Get In?" two part essay in the *New York Review of Books* Vol. 48, Nos. 19 and 20. [Part I](#) and [Part II \(35 pages\)](#)

Borjas, G. "[The New Economics of Immigration](#)" *The Atlantic* Nov. 1996 pp.72-80

Borjas, G. "[Economics of Migration](#)" *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences* Section 3.4, article 39 (20 pages)

Office of Policy and Planning U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service "[Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: 1990 to 2000](#)" (scan; focus on methodological issues) (20 pages)

Memo topic provided

3. February 15: The growth of the aged population and its consequences

Analysis of the sources of rapid increase in the fraction of the population aged 65 and over and 85 and over. The services demands of the elderly and who meets them. Principal public programs for the elderly. Political and policy consequences of population aging.

Readings

Preston, S. "[Children and the Elderly: Divergent Paths for America's Dependents](#)" *Demography* **21** (4) 1984 435-457 [old but classic]

Lee, R. and J. Haaga "[Government Spending in an Older America](#)" (pp.6-15)

Himes, C. "[Elderly Americans](#)" *Population Bulletin* 2001 (40 pages)

Smith, J. "[The Changing Economic Status of the Elderly: Income, Wealth and Social Security](#)" (pp.1-18)

Munnell, Hatch and Lee [Why Is Life Expectancy so Low in the United States?](#) Center for Retirement Research at Boston College (10 pages)

Longman "[The Global Baby Bust](#)" *Foreign Affairs* May/June 2004 64-79 (scan)

4. February 22: The Domains of Social Policy

What are the obligations of government to provide for its citizens? How have those views changed over time? The boundaries between public and charitable provision.

Readings

Storey, A. "[The Ethics of Immigration Controls](#)" 1995

Gutman A. (ed.) *Democracy and the Welfare State* Chapters 2 (The Moral Basis of the Democratic Welfare State: scan), 5 (Distributing Public Education in a Democracy) and 9 (Immigration and the Welfare State).

Kelman, M. "[The Moral Foundations of Special Education Law](#)" in Finn, Rotherman and Hokanson (eds) *Rethinking Special Education for a New Century* pp.77-84 [note the link is to the entire report--only read pages 77-84]

5. March 1: The Development of Poverty Programs up to the Depression

The nature of poverty pre-modern eras and the structure of support. The principal debates of the colonial and early industrial eras. The tension between private and public support. Learning from comparative historical analysis of the evolution of social policy [Skocpol & Ritter], the development of professionalism in poverty alleviation [Trottner].

Readings

- Trottner Chapters 4 [pp.47-76], 10-12 [pp.214-272]
Besley, Coate and Guinane “[Incentives, Information and Welfare: England’s New Poor Law and the Workhouse Test](#)” (2001)
Skocpol, T. and G. Ritter “[Gender and the Origins of Modern Social Policies in Britain and the United States](#)” in Skocpol *Social Policy in the United States* (pp.72-135)
[The Almshouse Experience: Collected Reports](#) First report; by Philadelphia Board of Charity [focus on Baltimore]

First Memo Due Before March 2 Class

6. March 8: (a) The Origins of Policy Numbers, and (b) Poverty in America

(a) How are the major social phenomena measured? Examples will be drawn from housing, crime and education. Emphasis on the dominant role of surveys; problems of sampling frames, conceptual fuzziness, response rates, validity of responses.

Readings

- Jencks, C *The Homeless* pp. 1-20 and pp.128-137 (Derivation of Table 2); read this just for the methodology.
Cook and Ludwig “[The Gun Debate’s New Mythical Number: How Many Defensive Gun Uses per Year?](#)” *J. Policy Analysis and Management* 1997 16(3)463-469
Best, J. “[Missing Children, Misleading Statistics](#)” *The Public Interest* 92 Summer 1988 84-92
Reuter, P “[Drug Use Measures: What Are They Really Telling Us?](#)” *NIJ Journal* April 1999 pp.13-19

(b) How is poverty measured? Trends in poverty and income inequality and the factors that have driven them. How effective is poverty alleviation in the United States?

Readings

- Burtless and Smeeding “The Level, Trend and Composition of Poverty” Chapter 1 in *Understanding Poverty*
Edin, K. and L. Lein [Making Ends Meet](#) pp. 20-59 [background; describes how poor mothers survive] [P]
Triest, R. “[Has Poverty Gotten Worse?](#)” *J. Econ Perspectives* 12(1) Winter, 1998 97-114

7. March 15: Patterns of Social Policy Spending

The allocation of spending across programs classified by: service provided (e.g. housing, health care, income), recipient group (old, young, disabled), levels of government. Changes in these patterns over time and the sources of those changes.

Readings

- Danziger and Haveman “Introduction” (pp.1-8 only) in *Understanding Poverty*
Scholtz and Levine “The Evolution of Income Support Policy in Recent Decades” Chapter 6 in *Understanding Poverty*

2004 Green Book -([2004 Green Book search page](#)) : Each student will be assigned to a four person group, which will be given a section to read and be ready to discuss. The relevant sections will be on the course website. [Section 8](#); [Section 11](#); or [Section 15](#).

Midterm Exam Distributed March 18

March 22 Spring Break

Midterm Exam Due Back March 27

8. March 29: Social Security

The central piece of US programs to reduce old age poverty has been seen as facing extraordinary financial problems in the foreseeable future but all efforts to reform it have consistently failed to find political acceptability. This first of two classes on Social Security is focused on its current structure (financing and service provision and how it has developed over time. The difficulties of reform are very much rooted in its history.

Readings

[2004 Green Book Chapter 1](#) (pp.1-33), plus relevant statistical tables)

Congressional Budget Office [Social Security: A Primer](#) Chapter Two "An Overview of the Social Security Program" and Chapter Four "Strategies for Preparing an Aging Society"

Jacobs, L. and R. Shapiro "[Myths and Misunderstandings about Public Opinion Toward Social Security: Knowledge, Support, and Reformism](#)" The Century Foundation 1999

Lowenstein "[A Question of Numbers](#)" New York Times Jan 16, 2005 (15 pages) [focus on the historical discussion]

Bowman "[Attitudes about Social Security Reform](#)" American Enterprise Institute (22 pages) [scan]

Paper Topic Due

9. April 5: Social Security Reform

For the third time in 10 years Social Security Reform has been identified as the principal domestic policy issue for Congress. What are the principal proposals and what are their strengths and weaknesses; the assessment will take account of economic, distributional and political dimensions. Medicare, the other federal behemoth, will get brief description and discussion, mostly for comparison purposes.

Readings

Burtless, "[International Evidence on the Desirability of Individual Retirement Accounts in Public Pension Systems](#)" (Congressional testimony, 2001) [11 pages]

Gramlich, E. "[Social Security Reform in the Twenty-First Century](#)" Federal Reserve Board of Governors, 2001

Cogan & Mitchell "[Perspectives from the President's Commission on Social Security Reform](#)" J. Economic Perspectives, Spring 2003, pp.149-172
 Johnson and Penner "[Will Health Care Costs Erode Retirement Security](#)"
 Center for Retirement Research at Boston College (10 pages)
 Orszag "[Strengthening Retirement Security](#)" (Congressional Testimony 2004) [17 pages]
 Sass [Reforming the UK Retirement System: Privatization plus a Safety Net](#) Center for Retirement Research at Boston College (15 pages)
 Sunden [How do Individual Accounts Work in the Swedish Pension System](#) Center for Retirement Research at Boston College (10 pages)

10. April 12: How do other wealthy nations deal with poverty alleviation and income inequality?

Other nations have very different approaches to reducing poverty, providing education and helping the elderly. These differences reflect variations in history, culture and institutional arrangements. Examining how other countries deal with these matters can inform US debates.

Readings

Smeeding, Rainwater and Burtless "U.S. Poverty in a Cross-National Context" Chapter 5 in *Understanding Poverty*

Jencks "[Does Inequality Matter?](#)" *Daedalus* 2002, 49-65

Gornick, J. and Meyers, M. "[Lesson-Drawing in Family Policy: Media Reports and Empirical Evidence about European Developments](#)" *J. Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice* 3 2001 31-57 (scan)

Waldfogel, J. "[A Cross-National Perspective on Policies to Promote Investments in Children](#)" Joint Center for Poverty Research, August 2002 (20 pages)

Letablier "[Fertility and Family Policies in France](#)" J. Population and Social Security (Population) Supplement to Vol. 1 245-261

Siegelman, R. "[Welfare and Dependency in Switzerland](#)" *Public Interest* (1986), #82 pp.106-121.

11. April 19: (a) Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity, and (b) Disability

(a) The effort to correct for past discrimination and ensure against continued discrimination remains one of the dividing issues for social policy. It affects discourse about almost all categories of programs such as housing, criminal justice, access to health services. How fair is it and how effective at achieving its objectives?

Readings

Dworkin, R. "[The Court and the University](#)" *New York Review of Books* May 13, 2003 [10 pages]

Dworkin, R. "[Is Affirmative Action Doomed?](#)" *New York review of Books* November 5, 1998 [17 pages]

Thernstrom, S. & Thernstrom A. "[Reflections on The Shape of the River](#)" *UCLA Law Review* 46, 1583; June 1999 [28 pages, plus 20 pages of footnotes!]

Rothman, Lipset and Nivette "[Racial Diversity Reconsidered](#)" *Public Interest* Spring 2003 pp 25-38

(b) Those with handicap have a clear moral claim to help. How views of what constitutes "handicap" and "help" have changed over time. The role of the charitable sector.

Readings

Burkhauser, R. and M. Daly "U.S. Disability Policy in a Changing Environment" *J. Economic Perspectives* **16 (1)** 213-224 *

Burkhauser and Daly "[Disability and Work: The Experiences of American and German Men](#)" *Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco Economic Bulletin Economic Review* 1998 pp.17-29.

Switzer, Jacqueline "[Compensation and Rehabilitation](#)" *Disabled Rights: American Disability Policy and the Fight for Equality* 2003 pp.44-67.

Switzer, Jacqueline "[Table 3 from Compensation & Rehabilitation](#)" *Disabled Rights: American Disability Policy and the Fight for Equality* 2003 pp.51-52.

12. April 26: (a) Briefings, and (b) Homelessness

(a) The 1st half will be on how to brief the results of analysis. After reviewing the RAND Briefing guidelines, a PhD Student will present a paper from her dissertation. The class will help improve the briefing.

Readings

RAND [Guidelines for Briefings](#) [*]

(b) Case study in emergence of new social problem. Liebow's work constitutes an instant classic of ethnographic description of a population. Jencks book is a fascinating example of piecing together a variety of sources to describe an elusive phenomenon. Difficulty of developing effective policies for such a multi-risk population.

Readings

Jencks *The Homeless* pp.21-40, 61-74, 103-124

Liebow, Eliot [Tell Them Who I Am](#) pp.1-49

Burt, M "[What Will it Take to End Homelessness](#)" Urban Institute

First Drafts of Paper Due April 26

13. Social Policy in Developing Nations

This is an addition to the course, at the request of students in 2004. There are at least three reasons for being interested in how poor nations deal with the problem of poverty and providing their citizens with both a safety net and opportunity: (1) A growing percentage of US residents come from poor nations and bring with them the set of expectations and experiences formed by policies of their home countries (2) The US has undertaken to help developing nations help themselves and to provide aid particularly to nations with good policy regimes (3) We might learn about our own policies from examining theirs.

Readings

Kanbur and Squire “[Evolution in Thinking about Poverty: Exploring the Interactions](#)”[30 pages]

World Development Report 2001 Chapter 1 “[Nature and Evolution of Poverty](#)” [pp. 15-29] Chapter 8 “[Helping Poor People Manage Risk](#)” [pp.135-159]

Easterly “[The Political Economy of Growth without Development: A Case Study of Pakistan](#)” (World Bank Research Group paper, 2001) [35 pages]

First Draft of Papers Returned May 2

14. May 10: Education, Macroeconomics and the Future

How well do human capital investments work as poverty alleviation programs? What is the impact of macroeconomic factors on poverty; The likely future of American social policy.

Readings

Freeman “The Rising Tide Lifts...” Chapter 3 in

Understanding Poverty

Karoly “Investing in the Future: Reducing Poverty Through Human Capital Investments” Chapter 9 in *Understanding Poverty*

Ellwood, D. "[Anti-Poverty Policy for Families in the Next Century: From Welfare to Work-and Worries](#)” *J. Econ. Perspectives* **14** (1) 2000 187-198 [*]

Final Papers Due May 15

May 17-18 Final student presentations
