

Social Welfare Policy
PSC 73906 / SOC 85700 [85902] / WSCP 81000
Professor Janet Gornick
Fall 2019
Tuesdays 4:15pm–6:15pm

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Office Hours: By appointment.
Call or email with questions at any time.

Note: *Please turn off all cell phones during class! Thank you.*

Course Description:

This course will examine social welfare policy in the United States, including historical and cross-national perspectives.

We will begin with an overview of the development of social welfare policy in the U.S. We will focus on crucial historical periods – including the Civil War years, the Progressive Era, the New Deal, the Great Society, and the “welfare reform” of the 1990s and early 2000s.

Second, we will assess “the big picture” of the American welfare state, through the lens of its underlying institutional and cultural frameworks, and via a brief look at outcomes.

Third, we will analyze a set of contemporary challenges in the U.S. that call for active policy responses, including inequality, poverty, health care, housing, incarceration, and care provision.

Finally, we will survey selected social policy lessons from other high-income countries, especially in Europe, where social provisions are typically both different and more extensive than they are in the U.S.

Course Requirements:

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| • weekly summary of readings (to be discussed) | 15% of grade |
| • attendance, class participation, and supervision of one class session | 15% of grade |
| • mid-term exam (October 29, in class) | 30% of grade |
| • final exam | 40% of grade |

Course Overview:
I. Introduction

August 27	CLASS 1	Introduction to the Course
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II. U.S. Social Welfare Policy – Historical Development, Theoretical Frameworks, and Outcomes

September 3	CLASS 2	History - 1
September 10	CLASS 3	History - 2
September 17	CLASS 4	Theoretical Frameworks and Outcomes - 1
September 24	CLASS 5	Theoretical Frameworks and Outcomes - 2

III. U.S. Social Welfare Policy – Contemporary Challenges

October 15	CLASS 6	Inequality
October 22	CLASS 7	Poverty
October 29	CLASS 8	Mid-term Exam
November 5	CLASS 9	Health
November 12	CLASS 10	Housing
November 19	CLASS 11	Incarceration
November 26	CLASS 12	Care Provision

IV. Policy Lessons from Other High-Income Countries

December 3	CLASS 13	Lessons from Europe
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V. Conclusions

December 10	CLASS 14	Wrap-up of the Course
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Books:

These books are required reading. I recommend that you buy all of them. You should be able to purchase the whole set for about \$150 – or much less, if you buy e- and/or used versions.

They have also been placed on reserve at the GC Library, and on order via CUNYfirst.

Many can be found in full-text via the GC Library.

- [For September 3, 10, 17, and 24](#)

The Oxford Handbook of U.S. Social Policy

Daniel Beland, Christopher Howard, Kimberly J. Morgan (Eds.), 2014

Oxford University Press / available from Amazon, starting at \$39.49

- [For October 15](#)

The Great Divergence: America's Growing Inequality Crisis and What We Can Do about It

Timothy Noah, 2013

Bloomsbury Press / available from Amazon, starting at \$9.99

- [For October 22](#)

\$2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America

Kathryn Edin and H. Luke Shaefer, 2016

Mariner Books / available from Amazon, starting at \$6.66

- [For November 5](#)

Priced Out: The Economic and Ethical Costs of American Health Care

Uwe E. Reinhardt, 2019

Princeton University Press / available from Amazon, starting \$15.37.

- [For November 12](#)

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City

Matthew Desmond, 2017

Broadway Books / available from Amazon, starting at \$12.99

- [For November 19](#)

From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America

Elizabeth Hinton, 2016

Harvard University Press / available from Amazon, starting at \$8.10

- [For November 26](#)

For Love and Money: Care Provision in the United States

Nancy Folbre (Ed.), 2012

Russell Sage Foundation Press / available from Amazon, starting at \$17.83

- [For December 3](#)

Lessons From Europe: What Americans Can Learn From European Public Policies

R. Daniel Kelemen (Ed.), 2013

Sage - CQ Press / available from Amazon, starting at \$4.45.

Required Reading:

II. U.S. Social Welfare Policy – Historical Development, Theoretical Frameworks, and Outcomes

September 3 CLASS 2

History - 1

Reading:

The Oxford Handbook of U.S. Social Policy
Daniel Beland, Christopher Howard, Kimberly J. Morgan (Eds.), 2014
Oxford University Press

- Chapter 1 The Fragmented American Welfare State
- Chapter 2 Social Provision before the Twentieth Century
- Chapter 3 The Progressive Era
- Chapter 4 The Great Depression and World War II

September 10 CLASS 3

History - 2

Reading

The Oxford Handbook of U.S. Social Policy

- Chapter 5 From the Fair Deal to the Great Society
- Chapter 6 The U.S. Welfare State Since 1970
- Chapter 7 Cross-National Perspective on the American Welfare State

September 17 CLASS 4

Theoretical Frameworks and Outcomes - 1

Reading:

The Oxford Handbook of U.S. Social Policy

- Chapter 8 Cultural Influences on Social Policy Development
- Chapter 9 Political Institutions and U.S. Social Policy
- Chapter 10 Political Parties and Social Policy
- Chapter 11 Interest Groups
- Chapter 12 Constituencies and Public Opinion

September 24 CLASS 5

Theoretical Frameworks and Outcomes - 2

Reading:

The Oxford Handbook of U.S. Social Policy

- Chapter 13 Race and Ethnicity in U.S. Social Policy
- Chapter 14 Gender
- Chapter 32 Inequality
- Chapter 33 Poverty
- Chapter 34 Citizenship

III. U.S. Social Welfare Policy – Contemporary Challenges

October 15	CLASS 6	Inequality
	Reading:	<i>The Great Divergence: America's Growing Inequality Crisis and What We Can Do about It</i> Timothy Noah, 2013 Bloomsbury Press
October 22	CLASS 7	Poverty
	Reading:	<i>\$2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America</i> Kathryn Edin and H. Luke Shaefer, 2016 Mariner Books
November 5	CLASS 9	Health Care
	Reading:	<i>Priced Out: The Economic and Ethical Costs of American Health Care</i> Uwe E. Reinhardt, 2019 Princeton University Press
November 12	CLASS 10	Housing
	Reading:	<i>Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City</i> Matthew Desmond, 2017 Broadway Books
November 19	CLASS 11	Incarceration
	Reading:	<i>From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America</i> Elizabeth Hinton, 2016 Harvard University Press
November 26	CLASS 12	Care Provision
	Reading:	<i>For Love and Money: Care Provision in the United States</i> Nancy Folbre (Ed.), 2012 Russell Sage Foundation Press
		Introduction
		Chapter 6 The Care Policy Landscape
		Chapter 7 The Disparate Impacts of Care Policy
		Chapter 8 A Care Policy and Research Agenda

IV. Policy Lessons from Other High-Income Countries

December 3 CLASS 13

Lessons from Europe

Reading:

Lessons From Europe:

What Americans Can Learn From European Public Policies

R. Daniel Kelemen (Ed.), 2013

Sage - CQ Press

Chapter 1 Introduction: Why Look to Europe for Lessons?

Chapter 2 Gender, Employment, and Parenthood

Chapter 4 Pensions: Who is Learning from Whom?

Chapter 5 Labor Market Policy: Toward a “Flexicurity” Model

Chapter 6 Immigration Policy: A Transatlantic Comparison

Chapter 10 Transatlantic Lesson Drawing