

The University of Maine

DigitalCommons@UMaine

College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and
Agriculture

University of Maine Departmental Records

Spring 2020

College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture_SWK 440 Revised Syllabus

Alison Mitchell
University of Maine

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/c19_nsfa



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), [History Commons](#), [Medicine and Health Sciences Commons](#), and the [Social Work Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Mitchell, Alison, "College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture_SWK 440 Revised Syllabus" (2020). *College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture*. 15.
https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/c19_nsfa/15

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.

**University of Maine
School of Social Work**

SWK 440: Social Welfare Policy and Issues

Alison Mitchell, PhD, LCSW
Phone: 207-356-6418
Email: Alison.Mitchell@maine.edu

Synchronous meetings Weds 9:30-10:30
Asynchronous content posted on BB
No office hours due to COVID19 distancing

COVID19 ADJUSTED SYLLABUS

In light of the restrictions imposed by COVID19 and the wisdom of “social distancing” as a strategy to stem the spread of the virus, the second half of the semester, after spring break, will be conducted online. I want to share the following principles, borrowed from Prof. Brandon Bayne at UNC – Chapel Hill, after he shared with a pedagogy group online. His principles articulated well what I have been considering in terms of how to approach the remainder of our shared semester in a meaningful way.

Principles

- 1. Nobody signed up for this.**
 - Not for the sickness, not for the social distancing, not for the sudden end of our collective lives together on campus
 - Not for an online class, not for teaching remotely, not for learning from home, not for mastering new technologies, not for varied access to learning materials
- 2. The humane option is the best option.**
 - We are going to prioritize supporting each other as humans
 - We are going to prioritize simple solutions that make sense for the most
 - We are going to prioritize sharing resources and communicating clearly
- 3. We cannot just do the same thing online.**
 - Some assignments are no longer possible
 - Some expectations are no longer reasonable
 - Some objectives are no longer valuable
- 4. We will foster intellectual nourishment, social connection, and personal accommodation.**
 - Accessible asynchronous content for diverse access, time zones, and contexts
 - We will discuss how to incorporate synchronous discussion to learn together and combat isolation while also maintaining reasonable expectations for participation
- 5. We will remain flexible and adjust to the situation.**
 - Nobody knows where this is going and what we’ll need to adapt
 - Everybody needs support and understanding in this unprecedented moment

Rationale for Revisions to Syllabus

Reading through the course introduction and objectives of the syllabus as presented at the beginning of the semester helped me define with clarity the main goals of the course. Accordingly the syllabus has been redesigned to highlight the main learning aims through synchronous interactions, and to allow the flexibility of asynchronous responses to the remainder of the material. Though it is all important, in this moment of unexpected adaptation, focusing on the most important aspects of the course seems prudent.

The Course Objectives as originally presented are below. The common theme through most of them is focusing on how social welfare policies advance human rights and social and economic justice and, when they do not, how social workers can intervene to promote policies that do. Accordingly, as a class, we will come together synchronously through Zoom or other means of collaboration to provide continued support and learning around the history and legacies of social welfare policy and current responses to human needs, providing an analytical perspective on the development of social service, health, and income maintenance programs in the United States.

Course Objectives

With regular class attendance and participation, completion of assigned readings, and completion of course assignments, at the conclusion of the course, students will be expected to:

1. Understand the historical context of current social welfare and economic policy.
2. Understand the current social welfare system, including income maintenance and social services.
3. Understand the relationships among social problems, social policy, health and social services, and social work practice.
4. Articulate the differential impact of social welfare and economic policies on rural populations, marginalized and diverse groups.
5. Understand how societal structures oppress and marginalize some groups, while privileging others.
6. Identify the history of the social work profession and its role in advancing human rights and social and economic justice.
7. Apply library research skills to social policy analysis.
8. Apply oral and written communication skills to social policy analysis.
9. Demonstrate analytical skills, including critical analysis of readings, and systematic policy analysis.

REVISED COURSE OUTLINE

DUE DATES FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS HAVE NOT CHANGED (MUCH).

Week/ Date/Topic	Synchronous Activities	Asynchronous Activities	Assignments due
Week 9 March 19	 SPRING BREAK! 	No class, no reading	☺
Week 10 March 26 <i>Children and Families</i>	1pm ZOOM MEETING (no more than 1 hour) https://maine.zoom.us/j/121798489	Segal (2016) Ch 11 Newspaper reactions: Gabby Bickford Delany Dow Hanna Goulet	Policy paper abstract due by 11:59pm on Sunday 3/29/220 via BB
Week 11 April 2 <i>Aging and Social Welfare Policy</i>	1pm ZOOM MEETING (no more than 1 hour) https://maine.zoom.us/j/121798489	Segal (2016) Ch 9 & 10 Newspaper reactions: Chloe Davis Margaret Miller-Finch MacKayla Faloon	QUIZ #3 (Ch 9-11)
Week 12 April 9 <i>Health Care Policy</i>	1pm ZOOM MEETING (no more than 1 hour) https://maine.zoom.us/j/121798489	Segal (2016) Ch 12 Newspaper reactions: Olivia Eckert Abby Smith Zoe Thomas	Two page draft of policy paper OR Essay 1 of options 2 or 3 due by 11:59pm on BB
Week 13 April 16 <i>Immigration and International Comparisons</i>	1pm ZOOM MEETING (no more than 1 hour) https://maine.zoom.us/j/121798489	Segal (2016) Ch 13 Newspaper reactions: Negina Lowe Kaitlyn Gravel Lauren Williams	
Week 14 April 23 <i>Policy Practice</i>	1pm ZOOM MEETING (no more than 1 hour) https://maine.zoom.us/j/121798489	Segal (2016) Ch 14	QUIZ #4 (Ch 12-14)

Week/ Date/Topic	Synchronous Activities	Asynchronous Activities	Assignments due
Week 15 April 30	1pm ZOOM MEETING (no more than 1 hour) https://maine.zoom.us/j/121798489	No reading! ☺	FINAL POLICY PAPERS OR ESSAY 2 of options 2 or 3 DUE by 11:59pm on BB

Course Content & Class Participation in the COVID19 Environment

In the first half of the course, class participation included in-class presentations and discussion, in-class activities and discussions based on assigned reading, as well as a couple early semester assignments thinking about policy areas of interest.

For the second half of the semester, class participation will include attending synchronous Zoom-based class meetings (if possible, there is flexibility when there is communication), and completing assignments as outlined below.

The assigned chapters listed above remain as required reading, and reading quizzes will still happen in the same format and timeframe as the first half of the semester.

We will decide based on class consensus about the utility and desirability of continued live Zoom connection. At a minimum, I'd like to meet Thurs 3/26/2020 and Thurs 4/30/2020.

For now, Zoom conferences are scheduled to start at 1:00pm on Thursdays March 26, April 2, April 9, April 16, April 23, and April 30. April 30 is our last class. I would like to use our first meeting to check in, regroup, and have some discussions of how to proceed. Ultimately, this is your course, you have the right to have some input into how we shape our remaining time together this semester.

Assigned readings: Still assigned as outlined above. Complete the remaining 2 reading quizzes on dates as posted. Nothing is changing about the process or format of the reading quizzes.

COVID19 Revised assignments for SWK 440, Spring 2020

1. Reading quizzes

NO CHANGE: STILL ASYNCHRONOUS

Take the last 2 reading quizzes.

2. Newspaper presentations

THIS IS A CHANGE: ASYNCHRONOUS

Expectations for presenters: On the Wednesday night before your newspaper presentation is assigned (see revised schedule above in course outline), post a written presentation in the

appropriate discussion forum on BB (they are each labeled pretty clearly in their respective course content weekly folders). Your written facilitation should include:

- A brief summary of the article to orient us to your chosen topic
- A brief statement of what drew you to that article
- A link to at least one recurring theme in social welfare policy and why or how you are making that link
- One or two discussion questions or guiding statements for reflection by classmates

The overall intention here is to have the presenters share a written “presentation” that will spark reflection and conversation among classmates.

Expectations for non-presenters: Choose at least one newspaper article presentation, preferably a couple, and read your classmates’ presentation. Respond through the discussion boards with your reflections, reactions, comments about social justice, thoughts on opportunities for advocacy, issues of oppression or privilege, etc. If you think of a different recurring theme than what the author presents, you may share that, too, with rationale for why.

You may respond to your classmates’ comments as well. Though it is not necessary to respond to all newspaper presentations, do keep in mind that these would have been in-class activities and we would have discussed all four in the whole-class format when they were presented in person. In addition, be mindful that multiple people will be posting, so if there are some presentations that are already well-responded to, perhaps choose a different reflection for your participation.

DUE: Newspaper presenters are to post by 11:59pm on the Weds night before they are scheduled to present. Responders can post reactions for up to one week, from Thurs to the following Weds night. I will close the discussions every Weds evening around 8pm.

3. Final assignment

THIS IS A CHANGE: Select ONE option from the 3 options outlined below and complete it.

OPTION 1:

If you have already invested time and effort into the final policy analysis paper as outlined in the syllabus presented at the beginning of the semester, and want to complete what you have started, you may do that. Aim for a final paper of 4-7 pages. 5-6 is the typical length.

Your abstract is due no later than Sunday 3/29/2020

Your 2-page draft is due by the end of Thurs 4/9/2020

Your final paper is due by the end of Thurs 4/30/2020

OPTION 2:

If you are happy with or committed to the policy you've already chosen, but haven't made a lot of progress writing yet, you may consider an alternate approach. Instead of one big paper, we will break the assignment into smaller essays.

Your abstract is due no later than Sunday 3/29/2020

Essay 1 is due by the end of Thurs 4/9/2020, 1-2 pages

In Essay 1, explain the background and history of how your policy came into being. What are/were the goals? Who are/were some of the key players who helped or hindered the policy as it was developed? What are the social issues, human rights issues, social/economic justice considerations addressed by this policy?

To develop this essay beyond what might have been covered in the personal policy reflection paper, focus on the social issues, humans rights, social and economic justice considerations of the policy. Cite any work you use to draw information or develop your argument

Essay 2 is due by the end of Thurs 4/30/2020, about 2-3 pages

In Essay 2, apply concepts from class discussions and readings to the policy you've chosen. Incorporate and analyze recurring themes in social welfare policy as they apply to this policy. Then reflect on the impact of the consequences of the policy. How might this policy oppress or privilege certain populations? What are implications for social work. Cite any work you use to draw information or support for your argument.

OPTION 3:

Instead of analyzing a federal level policy, you may complete the two-essay approach outlined above in response to CCOVID19.

Your abstract is due no later than Sunday 3/29/2020 and can be on the original topic you thought you were going to write about. You do not need to create a whole new abstract even if you choose this option for the final assignment. It's important to practice writing an abstract.

Essay 1 is due by the end of the day Thurs 4/9/2020, 1-2 pages

In essay 1, develop a history of the virus, how scientists hypothesize it came into being, why it is such a dangerous virus, and how it has spread. In short, develop the historical context of the virus. Cite any sources you use.

Essay 2 is due by the end of the day Thurs 4/30/2020, about 2-3 pages

In Essay 2, chose a policy response to COVID19 (municipal, like city responses; state; or federal). Apply concepts from class discussions and readings to the policy you've chosen. Incorporate and analyze recurring themes in social welfare policy as they apply to this policy. Then reflect on the impact of the consequences of the policy. How might this policy oppress or privilege certain populations? What are implications for social work in the

context of COVID19 distancing? Cite any work you use to draw information or support for your argument.

Final Written Assignment Grading Criteria

I will use the following rubric for grading policy analysis papers, adapted to suit the 3 options for final assignments:

CRITERION	POINTS
How clearly did you address the basic parts of this assignment as outlined? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy issue(s) involved • Goal(s) of the policy • History of the policy & key players and their interests • Impact of the consequences of the policy • Implications for social work/ social workers 	/5
How thoroughly did you complete the parts of the assignment as outlined? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy issue(s) involved • Goal(s) of the policy • History of the policy & key players and their interests • Impact of the consequences of the policy • Implications for social work/ social workers 	/5
Was your search for materials thorough enough to locate relevant sources?	/2
How well have you applied the analytical framework to this policy area?	/3
How well did you connect the analytical questions raised by the framework with issues relevant to this particular policy area?	/2
Have you integrated analysis of how recurring themes and values in social welfare policy impact your policy area?	/2
Did you consider how this policy does or does not advance social/economic justice and human rights?	/2
Did you provide citations to sources of information or argument, when those were not your own? Did you use APA 6 th citation style correctly?	/2
How well organized is your paper? How correct are your grammar, spelling, punctuation, and citations?	/2
TOTAL POINTS	/25

Example of an Analytical Framework for Policy Analysis

This framework provides a set of questions which are useful for guiding our examination of any social policy area or proposal.

COMPONENTS

Systematic policy analysis involves studying each of the following components of a given policy area:

- A. **Issues** in this policy area. How the social problem is described in the literature, including definition(s) of the 'problem(s)', causal explanations and leading solutions? Consider issues of human rights as well as social and economic justice in this analysis. *Utilize scholarly literature in examining the issues in your problem area.* This section will probably be the longest part of your paper. You may want to consider the questions posed in the left column of Box 4.3 (p. 100) in the Segal text under the headings “Social Problem, Power Imbalance or Struggle, and Public Reaction”.
- B. **Goals** intended by this policy. Relationship of these stated goals to research findings regarding the nature of the problem.
- C. **History** of the policy debate, and the legacies of past policies and past institutional arrangements. You may want to include legislative history in this section if you are examining a statute.
- D. **Current environment** of associated economic, political and social events.
- E. **Players & Interests** and constituencies including activists, lobbies, and decision-makers and their relative power to effect change in this policy area. Who supports the policy and who opposes it.
- F. **Impact/Consequences** of policy implementation. Consider both substantive and symbolic impact, particularly in terms of the policy's effect on marginalized and oppressed populations. Is the policy oppressive or empowering and for whom? Does it shift the balance of privilege and power? Ultimately, does this policy advance social well-being? See right column of Segal’s Box 4.3 for relevant questions under “Implementation, Impact (Actual and Intended), Public Expectations, and Affected Populations.”
- G. **Implications for Social Workers** to consider. Does this policy advance human rights and social and economic justice? If not, what alternative policies might? How might social workers advocate for such alternatives?

Recurring Themes in Social Welfare Policy

The findings in the components of the analytical framework can be synthesized by considering similar elements which characterize U.S. approaches to social welfare. Among the themes and tensions that persist are:

1. Institutional VS. residual approaches
2. Universal VS. selective/exceptionalist services
3. Bureaucratization and professionalization VS. consumer/client participation and self determination
4. Public VS. private sector control, funding, and/or delivery
5. Decentralization VS. centralization; Federal, state, and local relationships of responsibility and control
6. Individualism VS. collectivism; Individual autonomy VS. family autonomy VS. state intervention
7. Institutional VS. community services (indoor vs. outdoor relief)
8. Social control VS. social enhancement; Liberating VS. oppressing aspects of policy
9. Cash transfers VS. material goods VS. service forms of aid

Please note: I will expect you to incorporate relevant themes into your policy analysis paper. You will be marked down if you do not bring at least one into your analysis.

Policy Concerning Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is very important. It is dishonest to cheat on exams, to copy term papers, to submit papers written by another person, to fake experimental results, or to copy or reword parts of books or articles into your own papers without appropriately citing the source (plagiarism). Papers will be checked for evidence of plagiarism/ falsification using electronic resources. Students committing or aiding in any of these violations may be given failing grades for an assignment or for an entire course, at the discretion of the instructor. In addition to any academic action taken by an instructor, these violations are also subject to action under the University of Maine Student Conduct Code. The maximum possible sanction under the student conduct code is dismissal from the University.

Academic dishonesty is also a violation of the NASW Code of Ethics.

Final Grades

Pass/Fail option: As of the moment I am writing this, I believe undergraduates will receive an email in the next week explaining the option of pass/fail grading for the spring term. The choice is up to you; you are welcome to make an appointment to chat with my individuals by phone or Zoom if you would like to discuss your position and what might be advantageous for you. I cannot discuss grades via email because of FERPA concerns.

The final grade: I will calculate a final letter grade, regardless of your choice in terms of Pass/Fail or graded. The final grade (using the plus/minus format) will be based on the following activities, which are explained in detail in the Assignments section in the syllabus as originally presented at the beginning of the semester. The graded components of the course will be weighted as follows:

APA Assignment	5%
Quizzes	10%
Newspaper article reflection & Oral presentation	10%
Personal policy reflection paper	25%
Policy analysis paper OR options 2 or 3	35%
• <i>Abstract (5)</i>	
• <i>Draft (10) or Essay 1 (15)</i>	
• <i>Final paper (20) or Essay 2 (15)</i>	
Class participation & attendance	15%
<i>Including but not limited to:</i>	
• <i>Social issue of interest to you parts 1 & 2;</i>	
• <i>Candidate presentations;</i>	
• <i>Participation in class discussions & newspaper presentations; and</i>	
• <i>Regular class attendance</i>	

Final grades will be based primarily on scores on the assignments, which are set forth above, with a total of 100 possible points. Other factors, however, as noted above, will be considered in assigning final grades.

90-100 = in the A range: **Excellent: Work far exceeds course expectations**

Student displays outstanding work (over and above course expectations) during the course. Evidence of this may be shown by one or more of the following: mastery of course material as demonstrated by performance on exams; completion of all assigned readings *and* additional readings beyond what is assigned; superior written work with no grammatical, spelling, or citation errors; active engagement in class discussion and groups; evidence of critical thinking; creativity and innovation.

80-89 = in the B range **Good: Work exceeds course expectations**

Student displays good work in meeting course expectations during the course. Evidence of this may be shown by one of more of the following: mastery of course material as demonstrated by performance on exams; completion of all assigned readings; high quality written work with minimal or no grammatical, spelling, or citation errors; active participation in class discussion and groups.

79-73 = in the C range **Average: Work meets course expectations**

Student displays average work meeting course expectations during the course. Evidence of this may be shown by one of more of the following: basic grasp of course material as demonstrated by performance on exams; completion of all assigned readings; written work with some grammatical, spelling, or citation errors; limited participation in class discussion and groups.

Below 73 = F

Failure: Work does not meet course expectations

Grades below C (below 73, a C- or lower) are considered failing in the BSW program and the course will have to be repeated. Student demonstrates poor or unacceptable work during the course. Evidence of this may be shown by one of more of the following: inadequate understanding of course content as demonstrated by performance on exams; poor quality written work containing many errors and/or lacking citations, and may show minimal or no evidence of proofreading; minimal class participation, including group project participation, significant absences and/or persistent tardiness.

In accordance with the University of Maine grades and grading (<http://studentrecords.umaine.edu/home/grades-and-grading-policy/>), the grades A-F have the following numerical values used on calculating a student’s Grade Point Average (GPA):

	B+ = 3.33 87-89	C+ = 2.33 77-79	D+ = 1.33 67- 69
A = 4.00 95+	B = 3.00 83-86	C = 2.00 73-76	D = 1.00 65-67
A- = 3.67 90-94	B- = 2.67 80-82	C- = 1.67 70-72	F = 0.00 <65

The BSW program requires students to earn at least a C; grades of C- or lower (below 73) will be considered failing grades for this course and the student will be expected to repeat the course.

Rubric for grading written work:

Grade	Content	Critical thinking	Writing mechanics
In the A range	Complete mastery of concepts presented in assigned readings through accurate application, clear evidence of having read assigned readings. Literature review is comprehensive.	Creativity and innovation in responses, integrates information into analysis and interpretation, may draw on additional resources, provides strong evidence for argument	No grammatical, spelling, or citation errors.
In the B range	Shows general understanding of concepts presented through assigned readings and class materials. Literature review is complete.	Integrates information into analysis and interpretation, supports argument with specific examples	Minimal or no grammatical, spelling, or citation errors.
In the C range	Understands concepts presented in assigned readings and class materials, some inaccuracies may be present. Literature reviewed is limited.	Presents little analysis or interpretation. Makes assertions without support.	Adheres to basic rules of grammar, spelling, and citation style but contains errors in some or all.
Failure	Demonstrates inaccuracies in understanding or application of concepts presented in assigned readings and class materials. Literature review is flawed, lacking appropriate sources.	Shows superficial understanding, little to no integration of materials or attempts at analysis or interpretation	Serious grammatical, spelling, and/or citations errors, and may show little proofreading.