Instructor Kirsten Nyrop, MACT, knyrop@med.unc.edu
Adjunct Faculty, UNC School of Social Work
Ph: 919-966-0289
Office: 4106 Bioinformatics Bldg. (130 Mason Farm Rd.) – directions
http://www.med.unc.edu/medicine/fgidc/directions_bioinformatics.htm

Office Hours Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday between 3:00-5:00 pm –
by appointment

Course Description Students will acquire the ability to describe and analyze significant
historical and contemporary social welfare policies, critique their
effectiveness and understand their specific impact on disadvantaged,
vulnerable and oppressed persons.

Learning Objectives At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of current social welfare policies and programs in the U.S. and the
   ideals which shaped existing public welfare structures;

2. Identify and describe the social concerns which those structures have or have not been able to
   address successfully. Special attention will be given to their impact on various family types.

3. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of social work and effects of social policy on
   historic and contemporary patterns of social welfare service provision;

4. Rigorously evaluate existing research related to social welfare policies and demonstrate
   knowledge of the development and implementation of contemporary social welfare policy;

5. Demonstrate an understanding of the values and ethics of social work that guide professional
   behavior in the conduct of public policy activities;

6. Demonstrate skill in strategies for advocacy and social change that advance social and
   economic justice;

7. Identify conditions that promote or deter equal access to resources for minorities and women
   and be able to discuss concerns related to race, disability, gender and sexual orientation.

Skill Base By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Assess clients for eligibility for major publicly funded programs and/or benefits.
- Analyze the effects of social welfare policies on the well-being of and opportunities for lower-
  income individuals and families and other vulnerable populations.
- Articulate the underling values and principles of major public welfare policies.
• Describe how legislative and administrative policy is made and how to influence policy development.

**Required Texts**
The following two texts are required for this class and can be purchased at the Health Sciences Bookstore or online through internet bookstores, such as [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or [www.bestbookbuys.com](http://www.bestbookbuys.com).


Additional required readings listed in the “Class Schedule and Assigned Readings” can be found at:
- the **URL** stated in the “Class Schedule & Assigned Readings” OR

Readings not available through these two means will be distributed in class.

Students are responsible for reading all assigned materials before the class date for which the readings have been assigned.

*The instructor reserves the right to add and delete readings throughout the semester.*

**Course Requirements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
<th>Date/Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Monday, 10/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study Exercise</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Written Assignment: Monday, 10/27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testimony Assignment</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Abstract: 9/22 Briefing Paper: 11/24 (20%) Presentations: 11/17, 11/24 (4%) Senator role (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Friday, December 5, 9:00am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exam 1 and Exam 2 will be in-class, closed book examinations comprised of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. The content of the exam questions will be derived from required readings, classroom lectures and classroom discussion.

**Grade Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Clear Excellence</td>
<td>94-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Entirely Satisfactory</td>
<td>80-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Low Passing</td>
<td>70-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>&lt;70</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Honor Code**
Students are expected to complete assigned and independent readings, contribute to the development of a positive learning environment, and demonstrate their learning through written assignments and class participation. Original written work is expected and required. The University of North Carolina has a rich and longstanding tradition of honor. If you have not yet done so, please carefully read the Student Code of Honor. All submitted work must conform to the Honor Code of the University of North Carolina. For information on the Honor Code, including guidance on representing the words, thoughts and ideas of others, please see: [http://instrument.unc.edu](http://instrument.unc.edu).

Note that plagiarism is defined in the Code as “the intentional representation of another person’s words, thoughts, or ideas as one’s own.” Violation of the Honor Code will result in a grade of 0 points for the assignment and referral to the Honor Court.

From the Code: “It is the responsibility of every student to obey and support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic processes or University, student or academic personnel acting in an official capacity. Students will conduct all academic work within the letter and spirit of the Honor Code, which prohibits the giving or receiving of unauthorized aid in all academic processes.”

All written work must be accompanied by a signed Honor Code statement. Work lacking this affirmation will not be accepted. The statement reads as follows:

*I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.*

**Class Attendance and Participation**
To maximize everyone’s learning, we will rely on the contributions and insights of all students when issues are discussed. The participation of each student is essential, and responsibility for class discussion is shared. Class participation includes attendance, being prepared to discuss readings and assignments, sharing your opinions on the topic at hand, facilitating the participation of other students, and engaging with any guest speakers.

Attendance is crucial to both your learning experience and the learning of your peers. Students with more than one absence will not earn an H. Students with more than two absences will not earn a P.

Attendance will be documented at the onset of class (9:00am).

**Policy on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**
Students with disabilities that affect their participation in the course should notify the instructor if they wish to have special accommodations (in instructional format, examination format, etc.) considered, and should obtain a supporting letter from the UNC Department of Disability Services ([http://disabilityservices.unc.edu](http://disabilityservices.unc.edu)).

**Policy on the Use of Laptops and Cell Phones**
Use of laptops is not permitted while class is in session, unless requested or permitted by the instructor. All cell phones must be turned off while class is in session.
Written Assignments
All written assignments are due and must be submitted – in printed copy -- to me (the instructor) no later than 9:00 am on the date specified in the “Class Schedule & Assigned Readings”.

A paper is considered late if it is handed in any later than 9:00 am on the day it is due. “Handed in to the instructor” means delivering the paper to me in person or bringing the paper to my office (slip it under the door, Room 4106 Bioinformatics Bldg.) The grade for late papers will be reduced 10% per day. A paper due at 9:00 am on Monday but handed in at any time later on Monday will be considered 1 day late; if it arrives on Tuesday, it is 2 days late, etc. Extensions may be approved by me only under extraordinary circumstances, and must be discussed and approved in advance.

Students are expected to use correct academic English; grades will be lowered for poor grammar, syntax or spelling. Anyone having difficulty writing or wanting to improve their writing skills is strongly encouraged to contact the Writing Center at 962-7710 or http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb.

The School of Social Work faculty has adopted APA* style as the preferred format for papers and publications. Therefore, all written assignments completed for this course must follow APA style for the formatting of the paper, citations, etc. A summary of the format was distributed at orientation. The following web sites provide additional information:

- [http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html](http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html) (APA Style for material in electronic formats)
- [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_apa.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_apa.html) (general information about documentation using APA style)
- [http://www.bartleby.com/141/](http://www.bartleby.com/141/) (electronic version of Strunk's *The Elements of Style* which was originally published in 1918)
- [http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~wricntr/resources.html](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~wricntr/resources.html) (The Writing Center, links to on-line reference material and many other useful sites for authors)

# Class Schedule & Due Dates – Overview

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/25</td>
<td>Introduction &amp; Overview</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>No Class – Monday, September 1, 2008 – LABOR DAY Holiday</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9/8</td>
<td>Early Western History of Responding to Need</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9/15</td>
<td>American Social Welfare in the Progressive Era (<strong>GUEST</strong>: Iris Carlton-Laney, PHD)</td>
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<td>* <strong>Testimony Abstract Due</strong> *</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9/29</td>
<td>The Social Security Act: Cornerstone of US Social Welfare Policy (Pt.2)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>10/6</td>
<td>* <strong>Exam 1</strong> *</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10/13</td>
<td>TANF and Welfare Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10/20</td>
<td>Health Programs: Medicare, Medicaid, SCHIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10/27</td>
<td>Health Care and Mental Health Reform (<strong>GUEST</strong>: Anna Scheyett, PhD)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* <strong>Case Study Exercise Due</strong> *</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11/3</td>
<td>Taking Stock: Income, Wealth &amp; Poverty in the US (Pt. 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11/10</td>
<td>Taking Stock: Income, Wealth &amp; Poverty in the US (Pt. 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>11/17</td>
<td>Testimony Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>11/24</td>
<td>Testimony Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* <strong>Policy Brief Due</strong> *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>12/1</td>
<td>Testimony Presentations (if necessary); Course Review Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>12/5</td>
<td>FRIDAY -- * <strong>Exam 2</strong> * -- 9:00 am (location Room 101 TTK)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
**General scope of the assignment**

As social workers, you will often work with individuals who are attempting to survive through difficult circumstances, often on very little money and other resources. They often face huge challenges in identifying and securing the support they need, both personal and financial, and in making choices on how to use their scarce resources. This exercise provides an opportunity to learn more about the dilemmas that families face and the difficult decisions they need to make to survive.

You will be provided with a description of a family residing in one of North Carolina’s poorest counties (you decide on the specific town or city). Your assignment is to write a professional “brief” to your supervisor – concise and referenced, but also demonstrating empathy and imagination.

The objective of your brief is two-fold: (1) identify the family’s expenses (housing, food, medications, child care, transportation, etc.) and (2) identify potential resources to cover these expenses (both the family’s resources and other sources). This will require you to research the local cost of living and explore resources available in your community for low income families.

- **Your opening paragraph** should provide a brief description of the county where your family resides (1/2 page).
- **Expenses**: Provide an opening paragraph about your approach to identifying your family’s expenses in light of your stated assumptions about the family and the local cost of living. The remainder of this section should provide a bulleted list of expense categories, using local estimates – 1-2-sentences per bullet (about 1.5 pages for this section).
- **Resources**: Provide an opening paragraph about your approach to identifying potential resources (financial and other supports) to cover the family’s expenses. The remainder of this section should provide a bulleted list of potential resources with brief explanations -- several sentences per bullet (about 3 pages for this section).
- **Conclusion**: In about one page, summarize your thoughts about the challenges faced by your family and the adequacy of available resources.
- **References**: Follow APA style for all references. This includes conversations with experts.
- **Appendix**: Attach your family description. You may also attach up to 6 pages of brochures or flyers that illustrate unique and especially helpful resources in your particular county/community.

Your paper should be 5-6 pages, not including references. Papers longer than 6 pages will not be accepted.

**Work on this assignment is strictly independent. Students may not receive help from one another. Honor code is in full effect.**
DUE DATES –

• **Testimony abstract and copy of the legislation** -- due to me in printed copy *no later than* 9:00am – September 22
• **Oral testimony** – November 17, November 24 & December 1 -- exact date to be determined
• **Legislative panel** – November 17, November 24 & December 1 -- exact date to be determined
• **Policy brief** (written assignment) – due to me in printed copy *no later than* 9:00am – November 24

General scope of the assignment
Students will conduct a mock expert testimony before a legislative panel of a State General Assembly concerning a bill of their choosing. You have been asked to testify concerning the bill because you are an expert in this particular field. If you like, you can adopt the identity of an existing advocacy or research organization or make one up.

Students will (1) complete a **testimony** that includes (a) an **oral presentation** and (b) a **written policy brief** and (2) play the role of a **legislator** on a legislative panel questioning a fellow student expert.

Legislator Role
For the second part of the assignment, you will serve as a state legislator on one or more mock legislative panels that is hearing testimony. You will receive a copy of the legislation and the student expert’s position on each bill for which you are hearing testimony. Your job will be to question your peer about her or his testimony. Your questions should be thoughtful and probing. Questions that reflect lack of knowledge about the bill and/or are “softballs” (i.e. not challenging) will receive a poor evaluation. In playing your role as a legislator, you **oppose** the position supported by the person testifying before you, regardless of your personal feelings about the issue. You will prepare two thoughtful, well-considered questions for each expert who testifies before you. **You must submit your prepared questions to me (the instructor) the day of your panel appearance.**

Oral Testimony
**Students will receive their grade based on the testimony -- the oral presentation and the written policy brief.** You will need to carefully craft your testimony before the legislature. You will need to make the logical, financial and emotional case for your perspective on the proposed legislation. You have the difficult task of persuading a body of individuals who generally lack knowledge and experience in your subject area. As such, you must try to avoid jargon and be clear, concise, persuasive and authoritative. Your goal is to obtain passage of (or block) legislation that will affect the lives of your clients. You must give your panel of legislators a copy of the bill you are addressing the week prior to your testimony, and a statement of whether you will support or oppose the bill. Further instructions about your testimony are below.

Abstract: A single-paragraph statement (abstract) of the position you intend to take and a copy of the legislation itself are due in writing to me (the instructor) on **September 22, 2008**. You decide the aspect of the bill to which you intend to direct your testimony. **You must choose a social welfare bill that is currently before either the North Carolina legislature or another state legislature.** Any bill you choose must address a substantive issue related to social welfare – technical, regulatory or language changes.
will not be accepted. Federal bills are not acceptable. Every student must have a unique bill; in the event a bill has been selected by more than one student, there will be a conference to resolve this issue.

Oral Presentation of Your Testimony: You will orally present your testimony during class 12, 13 or 14, with the actual date to be determined by September 15. Your testimony will be limited to 5 minutes, and an additional 4 minutes will be used for questions and answers from the legislative panel. Consistent with real-life legislative testimony, this time constraint will be strictly enforced. You must practice your testimony in advance to ensure that you will not exceed the time limit, or fail to adequately use the opportunity to address the legislators.

You will present your testimony to a legislative panel comprised of your peers. To prepare for their questioning, you will give each legislator a draft of your testimony the week prior to your oral presentation. Like real legislators, your panel may or may not have knowledge of your subject area. Your job is to present your testimony in a compelling way. A dull reading of your testimony may put your legislators to sleep – not necessarily the best strategy to win legislative support for your position.

Policy Brief (written component of the assignment):
The purpose of a policy brief is to educate legislators and other decision-makers about an important issue that is the subject of the legislation that you either support or oppose in your oral testimony. Whereas the oral testimony is your opportunity to present compelling and persuasive argument based on ethical, moral, legal, and scientific reasons, the policy brief should be factual, evidence-based and logically tied to and supportive of your testimony. In other words, it is the substance that backs up your testimony.

The definition of a policy brief is a document which outlines the rationale for choosing a particular policy alternative or course of action in a current policy debate. In general, a policy brief has the following characteristics, which should be reflected in what you submit:

- **Concise** – legislators will not read lengthy, verbose reports
- **Timely** – addresses an issue of current public concern
- **Action-oriented** – problem can clearly be addressed through legislation
- **Evidence-based** – data is used and analyzed
- **Professional** – rational, without insulting, divisive or inflammatory rhetoric
- **Feasible** – a problem(s) that can actually be solved or improved
- **Accessible** – free of jargon; clear, understandable language

The policy brief should be 4-6 pages in length, including charts, tables and graphs but excluding citations. Policy briefs that exceed to 6-page limit will not be accepted. For this assignment, with the exception of in-text and bibliographic references, APA format is waived. Look at examples of briefs to see how they are formatted to look professional, accessible, interesting, etc.

**Sources of background information and supporting data**
Like any expert preparing a policy brief to support your legislative testimony, you will rely primarily on the evidence generated by sound research on your topic. For your policy brief, you must rely on scholarly sources, using no fewer than:
- **4 articles** published in peer-reviewed research journals (e.g., Social Work, Research on Social Work Practice, Social Services Review, Health and Social Work, Child Development, American Journal of Public Health, Mental Retardation, Social Work Research, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science). **At least one** of these four articles must be drawn from a peer-reviewed social work journal. The other two may be drawn from any peer-reviewed journals, including social work journals.

- **3 reports** published by (two separate) think tanks or philanthropic and/or research organizations (e.g., Kaiser Foundation, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Children’s Defense Fund, Institute for Women’s Policy Research, Commonwealth Fund, Brookings Institute, Urban Institution, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Families USA).

- **2 substantive reports** from governmental agencies. These may be federal or state sources. Good federal sources for social welfare data include: U.S. Census Bureau, the General Accounting Office, the Congressional Budget Office, the Department of Health and Human Services, and HHS constituent agencies.

You may use more references than these **minimum** requirements, but **all** cited material must be drawn from scholarly sources. “Popular culture” sources are not acceptable in research papers such as this testimony. Examples of forbidden sources: newspapers, websites, and magazines.

Paula Hinton, a fabulous reference librarian at the Davis Library, has created a website of sources useful for securing social welfare policy materials. You may access this website at:  
**http://www.unc.edu/~pphinton/swpolicy.html**

All sources of information are to be properly cited, following APA* format.


Policy briefs must be submitted to me (the instructor), in printed copy at the beginning of class on **November 24, 2008**, even if your oral testimony is scheduled for a later date.
Class Schedule & Required Readings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 1: Introduction &amp; Overview</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>8/25</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Introductions &amp; course overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What is social welfare policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
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**No class on Monday, September 1 – Labor Day Holiday**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 2: Early Western History of Responding to Need</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9/8</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Historical roots, especially in English law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Approaches to public policy analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DBG: Chapters 1-2</td>
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<tr>
<th>Class 3: American Social Welfare in the Progressive Era</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>9/15</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Progressive Era: Roots of social work in the late 19th and early 20th centuries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unique contributions of African American leaders in social welfare</td>
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<tr>
<td>*** GUEST: Iris Carlton-LaNey, PhD ***</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>ICL: Chapters 2-8, 10</td>
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<tr>
<th>Class 4: Social Security Act: Cornerstone of US Social Welfare Policy (Pt. 1)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>9/22</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• The New Deal</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Social Security Act – original act and amendments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Impact of Social Security</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>DBG: Chapter 5</td>
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Scan these electronic pamphlets for program eligibility rules and benefits:


(read background information on Food Stamps, Women, Infants and Children, and School Meals programs)


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 5:</th>
<th>Social Security Act: Cornerstone of US Social Welfare Policy (Pt. 1)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/29</td>
<td>• Supplemental Security Income (SSI)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Disability Insurance (SSDI)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Readings: DBG: Chapter 7


Scan these electronic pamphlets for program eligibility rules and benefits:


Class 6: Exam 1

10/6

This exam covers all lectures, class discussion and readings up to and including Class 5

Class 7: TANF and Welfare Reform

10/13

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Welfare reform

Readings:

DBG: Chapter 11
ICL: Chapter 15

Read about (or watch or listen) to John McCain and Barack Obama proposals pertaining to Social Security and welfare programs:


Scan these electronic pamphlets for program eligibility rules and benefits:

- TANF in North Carolina  
  [http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/workfirst/index.htm](http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/workfirst/index.htm)

- Earned Income Tax Credit  
  [http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96406,00.html](http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96406,00.html)

- NC Food and Nutrition Services  
  [http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/foodstamp/index.htm](http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/foodstamp/index.htm)

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<tr>
<th>Class 8:</th>
<th><strong>Health Programs: Medicare, Medicaid, SCHIP</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/20</td>
<td>• Program eligibility parameters and benefits</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Impact</td>
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**Readings:**


- Medicaid in North Carolina  
  [http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/DMA/medicaid/index.htm](http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/DMA/medicaid/index.htm)


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<tr>
<th>Class 9:</th>
<th><strong>Health Care and Mental Health Reform</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/27</td>
<td><em>Case Study Exercise Due</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- How are effective Medicare, Medicaid and NC Health Check/Health Choice in providing health insurance and health access

- Health care debate in 2008

**GUEST:** Anna Scheyett, PhD
Read about (or watch or listen) health care proposals of John McCain and Barack Obama:


Class 10: Taking Stock: Income, wealth & poverty in the US (Part 1)

11/3

- Poverty in the US and NC
- Economic inequality

Readings:


Class 11: Taking Stock: Income, wealth & poverty in the US (Part 2)

11/10

- Where do we go from here?

Readings:

**DBG:** Chapters 12, 13, 14
**ICL:** Chapters 5 & 7 & 14


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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 12:</th>
<th>Testimony Presentations</th>
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<tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 13:</th>
<th>Testimony Presentations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/24</td>
<td>No reading assignments</td>
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| Class 14: | Testimony Presentations  
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Exam 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/5</td>
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*Friday, December 5 - 9:00am – Room 101 TTK*
Covers all lectures and class discussion and readings from Class 7 onward