

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

**Course Number:** SOWO 837  
**Course Title:** Disability Policy  
**Semester and Year:** Spring 2021  
**Time and Location:** Mondays, March 15 – April 26  
9:00 – 11:50 am  
**Instructor:** Laurie Selz Campbell, MSW, CPRP  
Clinical Associate Professor  
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**Office Hours:** Mondays 12:00 – 1:00 or by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Using an advanced policy analysis framework, this course focuses on strategies for policy change, national and state policy, and legal and socio-political factors influencing financing, access, and service delivery.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** The student who successfully completes this course should be able to demonstrate understanding of the following issues in regard to disability policy:

1. Identify the principles, foundation and provisions of the primary social welfare programs that affect disability policies in the United States.
2. Demonstrate the analytic, theoretical and value assessment skills that enable social workers to evaluate policies and apply change strategies.
3. Apply concepts and principles of human rights, social justice, and social work ethics to policy analysis, development and change strategies.
4. Understand specific disability policies regarding financing, ethical, and legal issues related to civil rights, income transfer, education, housing, employment, and health.
5. Explain interrelationships among disability policies at federal, state, and local levels.
6. Explain the intended and actual consequences of the major US disability policies.
7. Discuss ethical issues in current disability policy, including individual and family rights, issues of distributive justice, power, discrimination, oppression, culture & race.
8. Articulate both formal and informal disability policy development and strategies at multiple system levels.
9. Develop leadership strategies for planning, developing, and changing disability policies in a context of empowerment and partnership with individuals, families and communities.

**EXPANDED DESCRIPTION:** The ability to understand the complexities of policy is crucial for successful professional practice with individuals with disabilities and their families, as social workers shape policy, implement programs, respond to systemic inequities, and assure that services are available for individuals and families who need them. This course will critically examine a number of relevant policies using a disability justice framework, and will explore their

impacts on individuals, families, service providers, and systems.

In addition to developing an understanding of the policies that affect individuals with disabilities throughout the life course, this course is also designed to help students develop a set of professional skills. Specifically, students will be able to use a policy framework to develop a detailed analysis of an existing policy in the United States. Furthermore, students will improve their advocacy skills by planning and presenting a policy testimony.

**REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS:** All readings are available on the internet or posted on Sakai.

**TEACHING METHODS AND EXPECTATIONS:** Class will be conducted via Zoom (for synchronous activities) and Sakai (for asynchronous activities). The balance will vary over the weeks, but basically, you can expect the following:

1. We will start class at **9:30**, and will limit our zooming time to no more than 2 hours per class (with a break in the middle, I promise!). During this time, we will focus on discussion and small group activities. To the extent possible, I will avoid long Zoom lectures – rather, I will share slides beforehand (sometimes with accompanying written or voice-over notes) and invite you to review them before class. Then, when we meet synchronously, I can take just a few minutes to emphasize the really important points/concepts, and discuss, clarify, and answer questions before jumping into small group or activity-based learning.
2. Along with synchronous activities, we'll have occasional asynchronous activities that you will complete during the week. These will take a variety of forms -- for example, (a) accessing videos, podcasts, or online materials and briefly commenting on these, or (b) briefly reflecting on a guest speaker's presentation.
3. A few notes about our work together on Zoom: When it's possible for you to be present on camera, please do so -- while it's no substitute for personal contact, the Zoom space at least allows us to respond to one another's faces and visual presence! Please also know that I appreciate that this isn't always feasible, for any number of reasons – if you do need to turn off your camera for a time, just send me/us a quick message in the chat to let us know.

The chat is a great way to support one another, but it can also impede engagement and learning. It can become a distraction, especially for folks who have challenges with multi-tasking. As a general guideline, think about the chat as a way to (a) express support, and/or (b) let me know things like “(name) was trying to say something, you might not have noticed” (as a facilitator, I *definitely* appreciate this!). There may also be times that I'll ask you to do something like “type one word into the chat that describes your reaction to this article.” Generally, though, if you have a substantive question or comment to share during a discussion, the preference would be to share those verbally rather than in the chat.

4. A few notes about learning in the pandemic: In addition to the Zoom environment, the pandemic poses unique and likely unprecedented challenges to all of us as learners. There may be challenges related to our (and our loved ones') health/mental health; challenges related to economic security; challenges related to having many people, with competing needs, together in one space; challenges related to the pain of witnessing the further destruction of our communal safety nets and watching folks who are already the most vulnerable bearing the brunt of that. Please know that my default stance on all of this is one of kindness, adaptation, and respect for all of these various struggles. ***I know that you***

*wouldn't be here if you weren't profoundly motivated to be the best healers and change agents possible, and my intent will be to work with each of you with flexibility and care to accomplish just that.*

**ASSIGNMENTS:** In addition to engagement, there are 2 assignments in the course. These are summarized below.

**Assignment 1: Human Face of Policy** **Various due dates**

Please identify an individual who has been impacted by one of the policies discussed in class. We will sign up for these during our second class meeting. The individual can be a personal acquaintance, a client, yourself, or a family member. You will complete the worksheet (shown below and also posted under Assignments on Sakai) using bullet points (no need for a long paper or even full sentences!) and will use it as an outline for a short (~10-15 minutes) presentation to the class. You do not need to provide the worksheet to class members but should upload it to Sakai on the day of your presentation. *Note: If you have trouble identifying a person for this assignment, please let me know and we can develop an alternative.*

**Human Face of Policy Worksheet Template**

Description	Your Reflection
Describe the person (no names please) – relevant demographics (sex, age, race, SES, disability, living situation, other facts of relevance)	
Describe the policy that has impacted the person &/or family	
Describe the person's/family's experience with navigating the policy. You can also include your own experience (if your role was as a service provider or advocate)	
Describe the <i>immediate</i> impacts on the person &/or family. Impacts can be emotional, financial, or logistical, & can include things like access to needed resources. In the <i>longer term</i> , how might this policy enhance/support, or impede, the person's overall well-being, empowerment, & life trajectory?	
Reflect on intersections between disability & other dimensions of identity or social location, including race, SES, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, immigration status, & others of relevance. How did these intersecting identities/social locations affect the way that the policy might have played out or been experienced by the individuals involved?	
Based on your reflection, what in this policy do you believe is working &/or not working well? What might account for this (for example, is the policy well- or poorly designed to achieve its aims? Is it implemented as intended? If not, what do you think impedes this?). In retrospect, might anything have been done to result in a more favorable outcome? In what ways might the policy need to be changed?	
Finally, what does this suggest to you about broader issues of power, social construction, & intended or unintended consequences of social welfare policies?	

### Scoring Rubric for Human Face of Policy

Element	Points
Overview of the policy & the individual's, family's, &/or worker's, experience	5
Analysis of the immediate & longer-term impacts of the policy on the individual &/or family	6
Reflections on intersectionality of identities	7
Reflections on the adequacy or effectiveness of the policy. Recommendations for change	7
Reflection on power, social construction, & their consequences as manifested in the policy	7
Clarity of presentation	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>

***Assignment 2: Disability Policy Analysis & Testimony*** ***Due April 26***

This assignment will give you the opportunity to analyze a policy of your choice in detail, to create a persuasive policy brief, and to deliver a brief “testimonial” presentation to your peers. The following is the general structure for the assignment. Further details on writing policy briefs and delivering policy testimonials will be provided on Sakai and discussed in the near future. Meanwhile, please use the following to begin thinking about your analysis:

Dimension	Element
Policy overview & evolution	Briefly describe the policy – what it does, mandates, prohibits, requires – as well as the target group on which it focuses. How did the policy come into being? Were there particular events or conditions that prompted its creation?
Structure & implementation of the policy (feel free to select the most relevant elements to respond to)	Eligibility & access: Who is eligible (& ineligible) for the benefits of the policy? How are these benefits accessed/ what burdens are imposed on claimants? Conversely, if the policy is one that <i>constrains</i> various rights, who is constrained?
	Funding: If there is funding associated with the policy, what is the source?
	Administration & enforcement: How (& by whom) is the policy implemented &/or enforced? How is fidelity to the intent of the policy ensured? What incentives or consequences exist for (a) noncompliance, or (b) poor implementation?
Justice, equity, & anti-oppression impact	How adequate & effective is the policy in terms of reach, funding, & scope? Consider two related questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has the policy achieved its aims?</li> <li>• Were these aims defined in a way that fully addresses the issue?</li> </ul>
	How does the policy embody (or not) vertical &/or horizontal equity?

Dimension	Element
	<p>What is the anti-oppression impact (or lack) of the policy? Consider any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What social constructions are reflected by the policy? How are targeted groups characterized?</li> <li>• To what extent does the policy enhance human rights, self-determination, &amp; well-being?</li> <li>• To what extent does the policy correct for past legacies of systemic oppression &amp; harm?</li> <li>• To what extent is the policy responsive to the voices of those most impacted?</li> </ul>
Recommendations & Reflections	Finally, based on your analysis above, what are 2-3 recommendations for how this policy should be amended or changed to promote greater adequacy & effectiveness, greater equity, and/or greater anti-oppression impact?
	How can we best use our capacity as social workers to promote these justice, equity, & anti-oppression impacts?

**Additional Notes:** Remember that a policy brief is not the same as an APA-formatted paper. You can write much more succinctly/concisely. Be sure, however, to appropriately cite information, and to include a list of references at the end. In terms of sources, you should use the scholarly literature, and/or data from government, think tank, or advocacy websites. If you need a bit of help choosing or accessing these, please let me know and I'd be happy to help out! While a strict number of sources is difficult to specify, you might aim for 5-6, as long as they are fairly substantial.

### Scoring Rubric for Policy Analysis & Testimony

Element	Points
Policy overview & evolution	6
Structure & implementation	6
Justice, equity, & anti-oppression impacts	10
Recommendations & reflections on social work engagement	6
Effective, persuasive use of data	6
Professionalism & clarity of written material	8
Professionalism & clarity of presentation	8
Total	54

**SCORING & GRADING:** Points will be assigned as follows:

Engagement & Asynchronous Responses	15%
Human Face of Policy	35%
Policy Analysis/Brief	40%
Policy Testimony	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Grades will be assigned as follows:

H: 94 and above  
P: 93-74  
L: 73-70  
F: 69 and below

**POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:** I assume that all students follow the UNC Honor Code. Please include the Honor Code statement “I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance in completing this assignment”, on all assignments. If reason exists to believe that academic dishonesty has occurred, a referral will be made to the Office of the Student Attorney General for investigation and further action.

**POLICY ON ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** UNC Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, temporary disability, or pregnancy complications resulting in difficulties with accessing learning opportunities. All accommodations are coordinated through the Accessibility Resources and Service Office. In the first instance please visit their website <http://accessibility.unc.edu>, or 919-962-8300 or Email; - [accessibility@unc.edu](mailto:accessibility@unc.edu). A student is welcome to initiate the registration process at any time; however, the process can take time. ARS is particularly busy in the run-up to and during Finals. Students submitting Self-ID forms at that time are unlikely to have accommodations set until the following semester. Please contact ARS as early in the semester as possible.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topics	Readings & Activities
Week 1 March 15	Intro to each other & core themes	None for today!
Week 2 March 22	<p>Intersectional &amp; critical frameworks</p> <p>Universal design principles</p>	<p><b><u>Models &amp; implications:</u></b>            Krcek, T. E. (2013). Deconstructing disability &amp; neurodiversity: Controversial issues for autism &amp; implications for social work. <i>Journal of Progressive Human Services</i>, 24(1), 4-22.</p> <p><b><u>Intersectional &amp; critical approaches (please choose ONE):</u></b>            Ben-Moshe, L. (2017). “The institution yet to come”: Analyzing incarceration through a disability lens. In L. J. Davis (Ed.), <i>The disability studies reader</i> (pp. 119-130). New York: Routledge. <b>(UNC Libraries e-book)</b></p> <p>Erevelles, N., &amp; Minear, A. (2017). Unspeakable offenses: Untangling race &amp; disability in discourses of intersectionality. In L. J. Davis (Ed.), <i>The disability studies reader</i> (pp. 381-395). New York: Routledge. <b>(UNC Libraries e-book)</b></p> <p>Longmore, P.K. (2017). “Heaven’s special child”: The making of poster children. In L. J. Davis (Ed.), <i>The disability studies reader</i> (pp. 35-42). New York: Routledge. <b>(UNC Libraries e-book)</b></p> <p><b><u>First person accounts (please choose ONE):</u></b>            Clare, E. (2017). Stones in my pockets, stones in my heart. In L. J. Davis (Ed.), <i>The disability studies reader</i> (pp. 483-493). New York: Routledge. <b>(UNC Libraries e-book)</b></p> <p>Rousso, H. (2017). Token of approval. In L. J. Davis (Ed.), <i>The disability studies reader</i> (pp. 416-423). New York: Routledge. <b>(UNC Libraries e-book)</b></p> <p><b><u>Universal design:</u></b>            Please explore Ireland’s Centre for Excellence in Universal Design: <a href="http://universaldesign.ie/">http://universaldesign.ie/</a>. This site is full of educational materials &amp; examples!</p> <p><b><u>Optional:</u></b>            Titchkosky, T. (2017). Life with dead metaphors: Impairment rhetoric in social justice praxis. In L. J. Davis (Ed.), <i>The disability studies reader</i> (pp. 269-281). New York: Routledge. <b>(UNC Libraries e-book)</b></p>

Date	Topics	Readings & Activities
Week 3 March 29	Rights & access, with focus on education policy	<p><b><u>Disability discrimination:</u></b> For an overview of disability discrimination, see <a href="http://civilrights.findlaw.com/discrimination/disability-discrimination.html">http://civilrights.findlaw.com/discrimination/disability-discrimination.html</a></p> <p><b><u>Overview of IDEA (review as needed):</u></b> American Psychological Association resources: 1. <a href="http://www.apa.org/advocacy/education/idea/index.aspx">http://www.apa.org/advocacy/education/idea/index.aspx</a> 2. <a href="https://www.apa.org/monitor/apr05/idea">https://www.apa.org/monitor/apr05/idea</a></p> <p><b><u>UNC's Accessibility Resources &amp; Service website:</u></b> <a href="https://ars.unc.edu/">https://ars.unc.edu/</a></p> <p>In addition, please find one article on education policy &amp; access for any group of interest to you – this can include the entire lifespan (infancy through adulthood)</p>
Week 4 April 5	Policies related to resources for care & treatment during transition & adulthood	<p><b><u>Resources for youth:</u></b> Social Security Administration (2018). <i>Benefits for children with disabilities</i>. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10026.pdf">https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10026.pdf</a></p> <p><b><u>Overviews of benefit programs (review as needed)</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Overview of SSI: <a href="http://www.ssa.gov/redbook/index.html">http://www.ssa.gov/redbook/index.html</a></li> <li>2. Overview of Ticket to Work: <a href="http://www.ssa.gov/work/overview.html">http://www.ssa.gov/work/overview.html</a></li> <li>3. Overview of SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Advocacy, &amp; Recovery): <a href="http://soarworks.prainc.com/">http://soarworks.prainc.com/</a></li> <li>4. Overview of NC Medicaid Innovations Waiver: <a href="https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/providers/programs-and-services/behavioral-health-idd/nc-innovations-waiver">https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/providers/programs-and-services/behavioral-health-idd/nc-innovations-waiver</a></li> </ol>
Week 5 April 12	"Best interest" policies: Guardianship	<p>Kittay, E. F. (2017). Centering justice on dependency &amp; recovering freedom. In L. J. Davis (Ed.), <i>The disability studies reader</i> (pp. 305-310). New York, NY: Routledge. <b><i>(UNC Libraries e-book)</i></b></p> <p>Millar, D. S. (2013). Guardianship alternatives: Their use affirms self-determination of individuals with intellectual disabilities. <i>Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities</i>, 48(3), 291-305.</p> <p>Rood, C. E., Kanter, A., &amp; Causton, J. (2014). Presumption of incompetence: The systematic assignment of guardianship</p>

Date	Topics	Readings & Activities
		<p>within the transition process. <i>Research &amp; Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities</i>, 39(4), 319–328.  <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/1540796915571005">https://doi.org/10.1177/1540796915571005</a></p> <p>In addition, please explore Rethinking Guardianship, a multi-year initiative housed at our school:  <a href="https://rethinkingguardianshipnc.org/">https://rethinkingguardianshipnc.org/</a></p>
<p>Week 6 April 19</p>	<p>“Best interest” policies: Involuntary commitment (inpatient &amp; outpatient)</p>	<p><b><i>Note: Readings have been purposely chosen to highlight some of the passionate debates in the field.</i></b></p> <p>Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law: Forced treatment  <a href="http://www.bazelon.org/our-work/mental-health-systems/forced-treatment/">http://www.bazelon.org/our-work/mental-health-systems/forced-treatment/</a></p> <p>Cripps, S., &amp; Swartz, M. (2018). Update on assisted outpatient treatment. <i>Current Psychiatry Reports</i>, 20(12), 1-4.</p> <p>Jordan, J. T. &amp; McNeil, D. E. (2019). Perceived coercion during admission into psychiatric hospitalization increases risk of suicide attempts after discharge. <i>Suicide &amp; Life-Threatening Behavior</i>, 50, 180–188. <a href="https://doi-org.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/10.1111/sltb.12560">https://doi-org.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/10.1111/sltb.12560</a></p> <p>Peer Voice NC: Recovery Alternatives to Forced Treatment (RAFT): <a href="http://peervoicenc.com/raft/">http://peervoicenc.com/raft/</a></p> <p><b><i>Optional:</i></b></p> <p>Mickle, C. (2012). Safety or freedom: Permissiveness vs. paternalism in involuntary commitment law. <i>Law &amp; Psychology Review</i>, 36, 297–310.</p> <p>Rosenberg, L. (2014). Assisted outpatient treatment: We can do better. <i>Journal of Behavioral Health Services &amp; Research</i>, 41(3), 251–253.</p> <p>Stettin, B. (2014). An advocate’s observations on research concerning assisted outpatient treatment. <i>Current Psychiatry Reports</i>, 16(3), 435-440.</p>
<p>Week 7 April 26</p>		<p>Policy Presentations!</p>