Social Welfare Policy
PSC 72500 // SOC 85902// WSCP 81000
3 credits
Professor Janet Gornick
Fall 2014

Wednesdays 4:15pm to 6:15pm
Room TBA

Faculty: Janet Gornick
Professor of Political Science and Sociology
The Graduate Center, CUNY

Office: Room #6203.07 (enter via the Center for Human Environments; take two lefts)

Phone: 212-817-1872

Email: jgornick@gc.cuny.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:00pm to 4:00pm, or by appointment.
Call or email with questions at any time.

Course Description:

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

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 framework. We will read two recent books, one an overview of welfare state development, retrenchment and restructuring, with an emphasis on the U.S. in comparative perspective, and one on the increasing assumption of risk by American families.

Third, we will analyze contemporary challenges in the U.S. that call for active policy responses: inequality, health insurance, low-wage work, and care.

Finally, we will survey selected social policy lessons from other high-income countries, especially in Europe, where social provisions are typically more extensive than they are in the U.S. We will focus on policies related to health care, pensions, and labor markets, as well as those that aim to support working families.
Course Requirements:

- 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 15, in class) 30% of grade
- final exam 40% of grade

Course Overview:

Introduction and Historical Overview

September 3  Class #1  Introduction to the Course
September 10 Class #2  Historical Perspectives I: From 1601 to 1930
September 17 Class #3  Historical Perspectives II: From 1930 to the Early 2000s


September 24  –  NO CLASS (Rosh Hashanah)
October 1  Class #4  The U.S. in Comparative Perspective
October 8  Class #5  The New Economic Insecurity
October 15  Class #6  MIDTERM EXAM (in class)

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

October 22  Class #7  Inequality
October 29  Class #8  Health Insurance
November 5  Class #9  Low-Wage Work
November 12 Class #10  Care
November 19  –  CLASS CANCELLED

IV. Policy Lessons from Other High-Income Countries

November 26  Class #11  “Lessons from Europe”: Health Care, Pensions, and Labor Market Policy
December 3  Class #12  Work-Family Reconciliation Policies

V. Conclusions

December 10  Class #13  Wrapping Up
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 $190 (plus shipping) – or much less, if you buy Kindle or used versions.

- For October 1
  *What is Social Policy: Understanding the Welfare State*
  Daniel Béland, 2010 / Polity Press / Available from Amazon, $22.95

- For October 8
  *The Great Risk Shift: The New Economic Security and the Decline of the American Dream*

- For October 22
  *The Great Divergence: America’s Growing Inequality Crisis and What We Can Do About It*
  Timothy Noah, 2012 / Bloomsbury Press / Available from Amazon, $10.24

- For October 29
  *Reinventing American Health Care: How the Affordable Care Act will Improve our Terribly Complex, Blatantly Unjust, Outrageously Expensive, Grossly Inefficient, Error Prone System*
  Ezekiel J. Emanuel, 2014 / Public Affairs Press / Available from Amazon, $16.39

- For November 5
  *What Works for Workers? Public Policies and Innovative Strategies for Low-Wage Workers*
  Stephanie Luce, Jennifer Luff, Joseph A. McCartin, Ruth Milkman (Eds.), 2014
  Russell Sage Foundation Press / Available from Amazon, $47.50

- For November 12
  *For Love and Money: Care Provision in the United States*
  Nancy Folbre (Ed.), 2012 / Russell Sage Foundation Press / Available from Amazon, $35.00

- For November 26
  *Lessons From Europe: What Americans Can Learn From European Public Policies*
  R. Daniel Kelemen (Ed.), 2013 / Sage - CQ Press / Available from Amazon, $36.00

- For December 3
  *Families That Work: Policies for Reconciling Parenthood and Employment*
  Russell Sage Foundation Press / Available from Amazon, $17.53

These books have been placed on reserve at the Mina Rees Library.
Required Reading:

All reading should be completed before the corresponding class.

NOTE: Additional required readings may be distributed during the semester; mainly, these will be news or opinion pieces.

I. Introduction and Historical Overview

September 3  Class #1  Introduction to the Course

September 10 Class #2  Historical Perspectives I: From 1601 to 1930
Reading:  Social Welfare: A History of the American Response to Need
June Axinn and Mark J. Stern
Sixth Edition, 2005
Pearson / Allyn & Bacon
Chapter 1  Introduction
Chapter 2  The Colonial Period: 1647-1776 (skim)
Chapter 3  The Pre-Civil War Period: 1777-1860 (skim)
Chapter 4  The Civil War and After: 1860-1900
Chapter 5  Progress and Reform: 1900-1930
NB: all chapter appendices and documents can be skimmed (to be distributed in pdf)

September 17 Class #3  Historical Perspectives II: From 1930 to the Early 2000s
Reading:  Social Welfare: A History of the American Response to Need
June Axinn and Mark J. Stern
Sixth Edition, 2005
Pearson / Allyn & Bacon
Chapter 6  The Depression and The New Deal: 1930-1940
Chapter 7  War and Prosperity: 1940-1970
Chapter 8  Economic and Social Stagnation: 1970-1990
NB: all chapter appendices and documents can be skimmed (to be distributed in pdf)


October 1  Class #4  The U.S. in Comparative Perspective
Reading:  What is Social Policy: Understanding the Welfare State
Daniel Bélard, 2010
Polity Press
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| October 8  | Class #5| **The New Economic Insecurity**            | *The Great Risk Shift: The New Economic Security and the Decline of the American Dream*  
|            |         |                                            | Jacob S. Hacker  
|            |         |                                            | Oxford University Press |
| October 15 | Class #6| **MIDTERM EXAM**                           |                                                                        |
|            |         | III. U.S. Social Welfare Policy – Contemporary Challenges |
| October 22 | Class #7| **Inequality**                             | *The Great Divergence: America’s Growing Inequality Crisis and What We Can Do About It*  
|            |         |                                            | Timothy Noah, 2012  
|            |         |                                            | Bloomsbury Press |
| October 29 | Class #8| **Health Insurance**                       | *Reinventing American Health Care: How the Affordable Care Act will Improve our Terribly Complex, Blatantly Unjust, Outrageously Expensive, Grossly Inefficient, Error Prone System*  
|            |         |                                            | Ezekiel J. Emanuel, 2014  
|            |         |                                            | Public Affairs Press |
| November 5 | Class #9| **Low-Wage Work**                          |                                                                        |
|            |         |                                            | *What Works for Workers? Public Policies and Innovative Strategies for Low-Wage Workers*  
|            |         |                                            | Stephanie Luce, Jennifer Luff, Joseph A. McCartin, Ruth Milkman (Eds.), 2014  
|            |         |                                            | Russell Sage Foundation Press  
|            |         | Chapter 6                                  | Career Ladders in the Low-Wage Labor Market  
|            |         | Chapter 7                                  | Employment Subsidies to Firms and Workers…  
|            |         | Chapter 8                                  | Living Wages, Minimum Wages, and Low-Wage Workers  
|            |         | Chapter 9                                  | Improving Low-Wage Workers’ Access to Unemployment Insurance |
| November 12| Class #10| **Care**                                   |                                                                        |
|            |         |                                            | *For Love and Money: Care Provision in the United States*  
|            |         |                                            | 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

November 26  Class #11  “Lessons from Europe”: Health Care, Pensions, and Labor Market Policy

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 3  The Role of Regulation in Health Care Policy  
Chapter 4  Pensions: Who is Learning from Whom?  
Chapter 5  Labor Market Policy: Toward a “Flexicurity” Model in the United States  
Chapter 10  Transatlantic Lesson Drawing: Utopia, Road to Ruin, or Source of Practical Advice

December 3  Class #12  Work-Family Reconciliation Policies

Reading:  
Families That Work: Policies for Reconciling Parenthood and Employment  
Janet C. Gornick and Marcia K. Meyers  
2003 (paperback 2005)  
Russell Sage Foundation Press  
Chapter 1  Introduction  
Chapter 2  The Changing American Family (skim)  
Chapter 3  The U.S. in Cross-National Perspective (skim)  
Chapter 4  Reconciling the Conflicts (skim)  
Chapter 5  Family Leave Policy  
Chapter 6  Regulation of Working Time  
Chapter 7  Child Care, Preschool, and Public Schooling

V. Conclusions

December 10  Class #14  Wrapping Up