

# Political Science 3551: The Welfare State and Social Policy in America

Ryan T. Moore\*

17 March 2009

## Course Information

L32 Political Science 3551  
L98 American Cultural Studies 3551  
The Welfare State and Social Policy in America  
Tuesday and Thursday, 1.00-2.30pm  
Seigle Hall, Room L006

## Instructor Information

Ryan T. Moore, Ph.D.  
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## Readings

The course readings are a mixture of academic articles, book chapters, and perspectives from the popular press. Many readings are available on the course Ereserves page at <http://eres.wustl.edu>. In some cases, the required readings represent only a subset of the pages posted on Ereserves. Short news articles are available the web, and are linked directly from this document. The following four books with substantial required reading assignments have been ordered for the campus bookstore.

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Three other books representing substantial supplementary readings have also been ordered for the campus bookstore.

Henry J. Aaron and Jeanne M. Lambrew. *Reforming Medicare: Options, Tradeoffs, Opportunities*. Brookings Institution Press, 2008.

William G. Gale, John B. Shoven, and Mark J. Warshawsky. *The Evolving Pension System: Trends, Effects, and Proposals for Reform*. Brookings Institution Press, Washington, DC, 2005.

Martin Gilens. *Why Americans Hate Welfare*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1999.

Katherine Swartz. *Reinsuring Health: Why More Middle-Class People are Uninsured and What Government Can Do*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2006.

## Course Description

Contemporary political questions frequently focus on the American welfare state and the social policies that comprise it. Should social security be partially or wholly privatized? How, if at all, should policy deal with the millions of Americans without health insurance? Was the 1996 welfare reform a success? These are the sorts of debates that stem from the politics of American social policy. The first half of this course describes the American welfare state broadly construed, places it in a comparative context, and elucidates major political science explanations for the size and scope of American social policy. Here we touch on several areas of social policy while constructing the generalized lenses through which particular political outcomes can be understood. The second half of the course then focuses on three major aspects of the American welfare state: old age pensions, health care, and policies related to work, poverty, and inequality.

## Requirements and Evaluation

Students are required to do the weekly reading, attend class, complete all assignments and exams, and participate in course discussions about the material.

The student's final course assessment includes six components: an annotated bibliography, a midterm exam, a paper outline, a final paper, a final exam, and participation. A proposed paper question and related annotated bibliography are due 24 February, and comprise 5% of the final grade. The in-class midterm exam is Thursday, 5 March, and comprises 25% of the final grade. The paper outline is due Tuesday, 14 April, and comprises 5% of the final grade. The final exam is 5 May, and comprises 40% of the final grade. The final paper of no more than 3000 words is due Tuesday, 5 May, and comprises 20% of the final grade. Table 1 summarizes the evaluation components. The final paper should consider a specific element of American social policy using the lenses of this course or another political science approach. The bibliography and outline intend to structure and simplify the paper-writing process. Sample paper questions and strategies for success will be discussed in class.

No late work will be accepted. If you cannot submit an assignment on time, arrange to submit it early. I encourage you to use office hours to discuss any specific assignments, difficulties, or questions about the course.

Assignment	Weight	Due date
Question & Annotated Bibliography	5%	24 February
Midterm Exam	25%	5 March
Paper Outline	5%	14 April
Final Paper due	20%	5 May
Final Exam	40%	5 May
Participation	5%	

Table 1: Course Assessment Summary

Academic integrity is a core value of institutions of higher learning. It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism, cheating, and dishonesty. If you haven't done so recently, reread the University policy on academic integrity at <http://www.wustl.edu/policies/undergraduate-academic-integrity.html>.

## Course Evaluation

The course evaluation will be available at <http://evals.wustl.edu> towards the end of the semester. Students who submit the evaluation will earn one percentage point toward the participation grade.

## Calendar

### I. Introduction

#### A) Introduction and Definitions

**13 January**

#### B) The American Welfare State: Size, Scope, and Scale

**15 January**

World tour. "American Exceptionalism".

### Required reading.

Torben Iversen. *Capitalism, Democracy, and Welfare*. Cambridge U Press, New York, 2005, pp. 3-29.

Steven Greenhouse. Verizon and 2 Unions Reach Accord, Averting Strike. *New York Times*, 10 August 2008. [Link here..](#)

Shira Schoenberg. City welfare spending \$50,000 more than usual. *The Concord Monitor*, 12 January 2009. [Link here..](#)

Mitchell Zuckoff. Social Security a Ponzi Scheme? No Way. *Fortune*, 7 January 2009. <http://money.cnn.com/2009/01/06/news/economy/social.security.fortune>.

### Supplementary reading.

Gøsta Esping-Anderson. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1990.

Theodore R. Marmor, Jerry L. Mashaw, and Philip L. Harvey. *America's Misunderstood Welfare State: Persistent Myths, Enduring Realities*. Basic Books, 1992.

### 20 January

Public and private. Visible and less visible. Choices over benefit levels, durations, and targeting.

### Required reading.

Christopher Howard. *The Hidden Welfare State: Tax Expenditures and Social Policy in the United States*. Princeton University Press, 1997, pp. 13–52.

Jacob S. Hacker. *The Divided Welfare State: The Battle Over Public and Private Social Benefits in the United States*. Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 5–20, 28–51.

Larry Rohter. Social Security Too Hot to Touch? Not in 2008. *The New York Times*, 13 August 2008. [Link here.](#)

### Supplementary reading.

Peter H. Schuck and Richard J. Zeckhauser. *Targeting in Social Programs: Avoiding Bad Bets, Removing Bad Apples*. Brookings Inst Press, Washington, DC, 2006.

## II. Influences and Structure

### A) History

### 22 January

### Required reading.

Walter I. Trattner. *From Poor Law to Welfare State: A History of Social Welfare in America*. Free Press, 1999, pp. 1–76.

### 27 January

### Required reading.

Edwin Amenta. *Bold Relief: Institutional Politics and the Origins of Modern American Social Policy*. Princeton UP, Princeton, 1998, pp. 54–79.

**Supplementary reading.**

Theda Skocpol. *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers*. Harvard U Press, Cambridge, MA, 1992.

B) Institutions

**29 January**

Policymaking.

**Required reading.**

John W. Kingdon. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. Longman, 2nd edition, 2003, pp.165–221.

**3 February**

Majoritarian and Antimajoritarian institutions. Interbranch relationships.

**Required reading.**

Sven Steinmo and Jon Watts. It's the Institutions, Stupid! Why Comprehensive National Health Insurance Always Fails in America. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 20(2):329–372, 1995.

Herbert Obinger. Federalism, Direct Democracy, and Welfare State Development in Switzerland. *Journal of Public Policy*, 18(3):241–263, 1998.

**Supplementary reading.**

David W. Brady and Craig Volden. *Revolving Gridlock: Politics and Policy from Carter to Clinton*. Westview Press, 1998, pp.12–48.

Robert P. Inman and Daniel L. Rubinfeld. Rethinking Federalism. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 11:43–64, 1997.

C) Preferences, Interests, and Identities

**5 February**

Inequality, Interest/Preference Heterogeneity, and Implications.

**Required reading.**

Allan H. Meltzer and Scott F. Richard. A Rational Theory of the Size of Government. *Journal of Political Economy*, 89:914–27, 1981.

Karl Ove Moene and Michael Wallerstein. Inequality, Social Insurance, and Redistribution. *American Political Science Review*, 95(4):859–874, December 2001.

Torben Iversen and David Soskice. An Asset Theory of Social Policy Preferences. *American Political Science Review*, 95:875–893, 2001.

## 10 February

Public opinion.

### Required reading.

Clem Brooks and Jeff Manza. Why Do Welfare States Persist? *Journal of Politics*, 68(4):816–827, 2006.

Adam J. Berinsky. Silent Voices: Social Welfare Policy Opinions and Political Equality in America. *American Journal of Political Science*, 46(2):276–287, 2002.

Cindy D. Kam and Yunju Nam. Reaching Out or Pulling Back: Macroeconomic Conditions and Public Support for Social Welfare Spending. *Political Behavior*, 30(2):223–258, 2008.

## 12 February

Gender.

### Required reading.

Ann Shola Orloff. Gender in the Welfare State. *Annual Reviews in Sociology*, 22(1):51–78, 1996.

Virginia Sapiro. The Gender Basis of American Social Policy. *Political Science Quarterly*, 101(2):221–38, 1986.

Laura Palotie. Gender Gap in Retirement Income. *The New York Times*, 9 May 2008. [http://www.nytimes.com/inc\\_com/inc1210266665441.html?pagewanted=all](http://www.nytimes.com/inc_com/inc1210266665441.html?pagewanted=all).

### Supplementary reading.

Ann Shola Orloff. Gender and the Social Rights of Citizenship: The Comparative Analysis of Gender Relations and Welfare States. *American Sociological Review*, 58:303–328, 1993.

Diane Sainsbury. *Gender and Welfare State Regimes*. Oxford University Press, 1999.

## 17 February

Race and immigration.

### Required reading.

Martin Gilens. *Why Americans Hate Welfare*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1999, pp.11–59.

Rodney E. Hero and Robert R. Preuhs. Immigration and the Evolving American Welfare State: Examining Policies in the US States. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(3):498–517, 2007.

How Immigrants Saved Social Security. *The New York Times*, 2 April 2008. [Link here](#).

### Supplementary reading.

- David Austen-Smith and Michael Wallerstein. Redistribution and Affirmative Action. *Journal of Public Economics*, 90(10-11):1789–1823, 2006.
- Margaret Weir. States, Race, and the Decline of New Deal Liberalism. *Studies in American Political Development*, 19(02):157–172, 2005.
- Ira Katznelson and Suzanne Mettler. On Race and Policy History: A Dialogue about the G.I. Bill. *Perspectives on Politics*, 6(3):519–537, 2008.
- Michael K. Brown. *Race, Money, and the American Welfare State*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 1999.
- Robert C. Lieberman. *Shifting the Color Line: Race and the American Welfare State*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1998.

### III. Policies

#### A) Pensions

#### 19 February

Introduction. The 19<sup>th</sup> century and before.

#### Required reading.

- Theda Skocpol. *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers*. Harvard U Press, Cambridge, MA, 1992, pp.102–151.
- David Leonhardt. \$73 an Hour: Adding it Up. *The New York Times*, 10 December 2008. page A1.

#### Supplementary reading.

- Edwin Amenta. *When Movements Matter: The Townsend Plan and the Rise of Social Security*. Princeton UP, Princeton, 2006.
- Ann Shola Orloff. *The Politics of Pensions: A Comparative Analysis of Britain, Canada, and the United States, 1880-1940*. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI, 1993.
- Peter David Blanck and Michael Millender. Before Disability Civil Rights: Civil War Pensions and the Politics of Disability in America. *Alabama Law Review*, 52(1):1–50, 2000.

#### 24 February

Social Security.  
Question & annotated bibliography due.

#### Required reading.

- Daniel Béland. *Social Security: History and Politics from the New Deal to the Privatization Debate*. University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, KS, 2005, pp. 62–140.

### **Supplementary reading.**

David M. Kennedy. *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*. Oxford University Press, 1999, pp.323–380.

Gareth Davies and Martha Derthick. Race and Social Welfare Policy: The Social Security Act of 1935. *Political Science Quarterly*, 112:217–236, 1997.

Martha Derthick. *Policymaking for Social Security*. Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, 1979.

### **26 February**

Pension policy feedbacks.

### **Required reading.**

Andrea Louise Campbell. *How Policies Make Citizens: Senior Political Activism and the American Welfare State*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2003, pp.65–114.

### **3 March**

Private pension policy.

### **Required reading.**

William G. Gale, John B. Shoven, and Mark J. Warshawsky. *The Evolving Pension System: Trends, Effects, and Proposals for Reform*. Brookings Institution Press, Washington, DC, 2005, pp.11–49.

### **5 March**

Midterm Exam.

### **17 March**

Private pensions. Funding and public opinion.

### **Required reading.**

William G. Gale, John B. Shoven, and Mark J. Warshawsky. *The Evolving Pension System: Trends, Effects, and Proposals for Reform*. Brookings Institution Press, Washington, DC, 2005, pp.51–121.

### **Supplementary reading.**

Andrea Louise Campbell and Kimberly J. Morgan. Financing the Welfare State: Elite Politics and the Decline of the Social Insurance Model in America. *Studies in American Political Development*, 19:173–95.

B) Health Care

## 19 March

Introduction. Health care policy in the U.S.

### Required reading.

Henry J. Aaron and Jeanne M. Lambrew. *Reforming Medicare: Options, Trade-offs, Opportunities*. Brookings Institution Press, 2008, pp.1–72.

Paul Krugman. Can It Happen Here? *New York Times*, 10 August 2008. [Link here](#).

### Supplementary reading.

John D. Wilkerson. The Political Economy of Health in the United States. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 6(1):327–343, 2003.

## 24 March

The policy future.

### Required reading.

Henry J. Aaron and Jeanne M. Lambrew. *Reforming Medicare: Options, Trade-offs, Opportunities*. Brookings Institution Press, 2008, pp.73–137.

Jonathan Oberlander. The Partisan Divide – The McCain and Obama Plans for US Health Care Reform. *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 21 August 2008. [Link here](#).

Atul Gawande. Getting There From Here: How Should Obama Reform Health Care? *The New Yorker*, 26 January 2009. [Link here](#).

### Supplementary reading.

Timothy S. Jost. Our Broken Health Care System and How to Fix It: An Essay on Health Law and Policy. *Wake Forest Law Review*, 41:537–618, 2006.

## 26 March

State policies.

### Required reading.

Craig Volden. States as Policy Laboratories: Emulating Success in the Children’s Health Insurance Program. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(2):294–312, 2006.

Lawrence Jacobs, Theodore Marmor, and Jonathan Oberlander. The Oregon Health Plan and the Political Paradox of Rationing: What Advocates and Critics Have Claimed and What Oregon Did. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 24(1):161–180, 1999.

Stuart H. Altman and Michael Doonan. Can Massachusetts Lead the Way in Health Care Reform? *New England Journal of Medicine*, 354:2093–2095, May 2006.

Robert Steinbrook. Health Care Reform in Massachusetts – A Work in Progress. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 354:2095–2098, May 2006.

Kevin Sack. Massachusetts Faces Costs of Big Health Care Plan. *The New York Times*, 15 March 2009. [Link here](#).

### **31 March**

Health insurance markets. Middle-class health insurance.

#### **Required reading.**

Katherine Swartz. *Reinsuring Health: Why More Middle-Class People are Uninsured and What Government Can Do*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2006, pp.1–59.

### **2 April**

Health insurance markets. Middle-class health insurance.

#### **Required reading.**

Katherine Swartz. *Reinsuring Health: Why More Middle-Class People are Uninsured and What Government Can Do*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2006, pp.60–135.

C) Work, Poverty, and Inequality

### **7 April**

Introduction.

#### **Required reading.**

R. Kent Weaver. *Ending Welfare As We Know It*. Brookings Institution Press, Washington, DC, 2000, pp. 54–101.

#### **Supplementary reading.**

Gordon M. Fisher. Mollie Orshansky: Author of the Poverty Thresholds. *Amstat News*, pages 15–18, September 2008. <http://tinyurl.com/96cuvo>.

Margaret Weir. *Politics and Jobs: The Boundaries of Employment Policy in the United States*. Princeton University Press, 1992.

### **9 April**

The fuzzy border between work and welfare.

### **Required reading.**

Kathryn Edin and Laura Lein. *Making Ends Meet: How Single Mothers Survive Welfare and Low-wage Work*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1997, pp.20–119.

### **Supplementary reading.**

Robert P. Stoker and Laura A. Wilson. *When Work is Not Enough*. Brookings Institution Press, Washington, DC, 2006, pp.27–63, 112–126.

Joe Soss. Lessons of Welfare: Policy Design, Political Learning, and Political Action. *American Political Science Review*, 93:363–380, 1999.

Barbara Ehrenreich. *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*. Metropolitan Books, 2001.

## **14 April**

Ending welfare as we know it.

Paper outline due.

### **Required reading.**

R. Kent Weaver. *Ending Welfare As We Know It*. Brookings Institution Press, Washington, DC, 2000, pp.102–134, 316–354.

### **Supplementary reading.**

Charles A. Murray. *Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950-1980*. Basic-Books, 1994, pp.154–166.

Robert P. Inman and Daniel L. Rubinfeld. Rethinking Federalism. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 11:43–64, 1997.

Nada Eissa and Hilary Hoynes. Redistribution and Tax Expenditures: The Earned Income Tax Credit. NBER Working Paper Series, September 2008. Number 14307.

## **16 April**

State policies.

### **Required reading.**

Joe Soss, Sanford F. Schram, Thomas P. Vartanian, and Erin O’Brien. Setting the Terms of Relief: Explaining State Policy Choices in the Devolution Revolution. *American Journal of Political Science*, 45:378–95, 2001.

Matthew C. Fellowes and Gretchen Rowe. Politics and the New American Welfare States. *American Journal of Political Science*, 48(2):362–373, 2004.

Scott W. Allard and Sheldon Danziger. Welfare Magnets: Myth or Reality? *Journal of Politics*, 62(2):350–368, 2000.

### **Supplementary reading.**

Paul E. Peterson and Mark Rom. American Federalism, Welfare Policy, and Residential Choices. *American Political Science Review*, 83(3):711–728, 1989.

William D. Berry, Richard C. Fording, and Russell L. Hanson. Reassessing the “Race to the Bottom” in State Welfare Policy. *Journal of Politics*, 65(2):327–349, 2003.

### **21 April**

Race and welfare.

### **Required reading.**

Martin Gilens. *Why Americans Hate Welfare*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1999, pp.60–79, 102–132, 146.

### **Supplementary reading.**

Jill S. Quadagno. *The Color of Welfare: How Racism Undermined the War on Poverty*. Oxford University Press, New York, 1994.

## IV. Conclusions

### **23 April**

Proposals.

### **Required reading.**

David T. Ellwood. *Poor Support: Poverty and the American Family*. Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1988, pp.3–44, 231–243.

Charles A. Murray. *In Our Hands: A Plan to Replace the Welfare State*. AEI Press, 2006, pp.8–36.

Peter Singer. The Singer Solution to World Poverty. *The New York Times Sunday Magazine*, 5 September 1999. [Link here](#).

### **5 May**

Final exam, 1.00-3.00pm, Seigle Hall L006.

Final paper due.