

Elaine Anderson
Family Policy Analysis
FAMILY POLICY ANALYSIS (FMST 452/698A)
Fall 1998

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Course Description

The impact of government policy on family life at both the federal and state level will be discussed. The course will emphasize the current state of families and the implications for family policy. In addition, policy making as it is related to women and children in particular, will be explored. Finally, emphasis on the process of policy formation, implementation, and evaluation will be reviewed.

The goal of this course is to empower students with a better understanding of families, policy making, and the political process. The course format is designed to facilitate interaction between all class participants and to provide students with the opportunity to determine the direction of their class projects and to take responsibility for their learning.

Texts

1. Fuchs, Victor R., How We Live. Harvard University Press, 1983.
2. I. Zimmerman, S. Understanding Family Policy. Sage Publications, 1988.
3. II. Zimmerman, S. Family Policies and Family Well-being. Sage Publications, 1992.
4. Additional readings will also be handed out periodically in class throughout the semester.

Code of Academic Integrity

The Department of Family Studies, as a unit within the University at College Park supports and abides by the University's Code of Academic Integrity. This code states, "All members of the University community -students, faculty, and staff, share the responsibility and authority to challenge and make known acts of apparent academic dishonesty."

The Code of Academic Integrity of the University of Maryland defines "academic dishonesty" as "any of the following acts when committed by a student:

1. Cheating: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.

2. Fabrication: intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
3. Facilitating academic dishonesty: intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provisions of this Code.
4. Plagiarism: intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise.

It is expected that every student in FMST 452/698A will adhere to The Code of Academic Integrity. Any violation will not be tolerated and will be dealt with according to the rules set forth by the University.

Course Requirements

25%--Final Exam (Essay)

25%--Final Paper

10%--Paper Presentation

10%--Readings Analysis and Current Events

10%--Class Participation and Attendance

10%--Family Impact Analysis

10%--Attend Legislative or Public Hearing

Course Grading Scale

A= 91

B= 90-81

C= 80-71

D= 70-61

F= 60 & Below

Course Outline

August 31

- Introduction

September 7

- Labor Day - No Class

September 14

- Topic
 - Discuss Policy and Present Readings
 - Define Family Policy
- Readings
 - Fuchs pp. 104, 219-242
 - Zimmerman I. p. 13-43
 - Zimmerman II. p. 3-21

September 21

- Topic
 - Family Policy Components
 - Family Policy History
- Readings
 - Fuchs pp. 15-89
 - Zimmerman I. p. 44-73
 - Zimmerman II. p. 22-35

September 28

- Topic
 - Social Policy
 - Meet at McKeldin Library 2nd Fl., Govt. Documents
- Readings
 - Fuchs pp. 159-217
 - Zimmerman I. p. 74-100
 - Zimmerman II. p. 36-53

October 5

- Topic
 - Finish Policy Introduction
 - Family Impact Analysis
- Readings
 - Fuchs pp. 159-217
 - Zimmerman I. p. 103-125

October 12

- Topic
 - Presentations of Family Analysis
 - Family Policy - Political Context, e.g. Family Protection Act, Values, Family Code
- Readings
 - Zimmerman II. p. 57-150

October 19

- Topic
 - Policy Components and Policy
 - Writing, Internal Policy Making and Values
- Readings
 - Zimmerman I. p. 126-144
 - Zimmerman II. p.153-166

October 16

- Topic
 - Begin Policy Process

- Readings
 - Zimmerman I. p. 145-157

November 2

- Topic
 - Policy Process (cont'd)

- Readings
 - Zimmerman I. p. 158-174

November 9

- Topic
 - Regulations, Sunset, and Advocacy/Involvement with change
 - Essay Exam handed out
 - Legislative hearing summary due

- Readings
 - Zimmerman I. p. 175-183

November 16

- No Class, Work on Essays and Papers!!

November 23

- Topic
 - Advocacy Discussion (Cont'd)
 - Wrap-up on Policy Research and Jobs

November 30

- Topic
 - Class presentation
 - Essay Exam Due

December 7

- Topic
 - Class Presentation
 - FINAL SUMMARY
 - ALL PAPERS DUE

Readings Analysis

Each week you are to write a one-page maximum reaction to the readings for the upcoming week. This is not to be a summary of the readings, but your thoughts and

reactions in terms of agreement or disagreement, relevancy, or relationship to other readings and ideas. You will receive either a check-plus, check or check-minus for each reaction paper. The days you are to do an analysis will be identified in class.

Current Events

Each week you are to clip from a current newspaper, magazine, etc. an article that you believe is relevant to one interested in family policy. Along with the clipping, attach a one paragraph analysis of how this article relates to and affects family policy making. Periodically, throughout the course you will be called upon in class to share your analysis. You will either receive a check- plus, check or check-minus for each analysis. The days you are to hand in a current event will be identified in class.

Family Impact Analysis

Teams of four students will do a family impact analysis on an assigned Congressional legislative bill pertaining to a family issue. The format and procedure for the analysis will be discussed in class. In addition, each team will present their findings in class, as well as provide a written summary to the other members of the class. Each presentation will be seven minutes in length. You will be timed. At the conclusion of the presentation your peers will fill out a short evaluation of your team effort. The criteria for these evaluations will be handed out in class.

Legislative Hearing or Public Debate

All students are expected to attend a legislative hearing or city council meeting, or school board meeting that deals with some family policy issue. You are to submit a one to two page summary (typed) of your observation and experience, drawing on both the policy and family frame-works presented in class, highlighting the values underlying the arguments, and identifying parts of the policy process of particular note. For example, note who participated in the arguments and why this might be important, or how were decisions made, identify parts of the policy process of particular importance and what were your personal reactions. Make sure you include a heading that identifies the name of the meeting, place, date, and the total time you attended.

Final Paper Requirements

Option 1 (undergraduate students)

You are to select a topic in the area of family or one at least relevant to families which is an issue concerning a specific policy or an area of policy. For example, perhaps you're interested in how decisions around the area of housing might affect a families' well-being or perhaps you're interested in how policies concerning child care might affect the family and individual members. After you have selected your topic, you will review the relevant literature to identify any social, political, historical etc. issues or events which might have impacted your particular topic. Given current issues, next identify what presently might be impacting your topic area and what might impact the area in the future. In other words, in what direction is your topic area moving and what issues might policy makers (legislators, administrators, etc.) attend to and address? Finally, what policy recommendations would you make in this area, and why?

Your paper should be approximately 15 typewritten pages. You are required to use research journals as well as relevant books and brochures for your literature review. Your referencing should be in APA format. Particularly you should attend to correct style in writing your paper. A list of related journals will be handed out to you. You will hand in a copy of your paper no later than the last day of class. Paper topic selection and format will be discussed further in class. The topic of your paper must be approved by the instructor.

You are to do Option 1 and then expand one step further. After you finish the review of literature you are to write a methods section. Of the issues you've identified, how would you go about studying them further? What population and samples of people would you use and how would you get them? What instrumentation would you develop or use? What particular issues would be problematic? Your paper should be however long it takes to cover satisfactorily the topic area.

Paper Presentation

Each student will present, not read, the information from his/her paper to the class. You should be creative, yet informative with your presentation. This is each student's opportunity to teach the class about something you know. The presentation provides a formal opportunity for the students to research a subject of particular interest to them, and to organize that material into an informative and effective presentation. It will also provide students with the experience of presenting material before an interested audience. Approximately 30 minutes will be given to each student for the presentation. In addition, there may be some time for questions and comments depending upon the number of presentations. The day of your presentation, the class will complete a short evaluation form and provide written comments for the presenter. These forms will be returned to the presenter. On the basis of these evaluations the presenter will receive a fair grade for their effort which will be submitted to the instructor, along with the evaluations and a written justification at the next class. The instructor will determine the fairness of the evaluations that students provide each other.

Midterm Exam (Essay)

You will complete a take-home midterm exam. The exam will consist of three questions provided by the instructor, and one question written by the student. The questions will cover material discussed in class as well as in the readings. These topics will be identified for you specifically before the exam. We will discuss the specific content and format of the exam in more detail later in the course. You will have three weeks to complete the exam and hand it in during the class period. There will be a maximum page length for each question. The answers to your exam should be typed.