

**Health and Welfare Policy W-5316**  
**Fall 2015**  
**Sul Ross State University**  
**SYLLABUS**

**Professor:** Dr. Tiffiny Vincent  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is designed with a focus on the development, assessment, and evaluation of the complexities of the public policy making process. To this end, we will study several domestic policy areas (*with a focus on health and welfare policy*), discuss their strengths/weaknesses, as well as identify and evaluate areas of improvement.

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Evaluate the political intricacies surrounding the policy process.  
**Method of Assessment:** Weekly discussion, research paper, and Exam 1
2. Identify and apply major conceptual policy models.  
**Method of Assessment:** Weekly discussion, research paper, and Exam 1
3. Describe the role of public opinion on setting the policy agenda.  
**Method of Assessment:** Weekly discussion, research paper, and Exam 2
4. Identify strengths and weaknesses of contemporary domestic policy issues.  
**Method of Assessment:** Weekly discussion, research paper, and Exam 3

**COURSE FORMAT & EXPECTATIONS:**

This is an online distance education course. As such, it is open throughout the semester but there are assigned due dates for submitting assignments and exams (see class schedule below; *\*NOTE:* some assignments/due dates will be announced via our Blackboard homepage throughout the semester). This course is designed to allow for a more peer-led learning vs. instructor-led lecture environment. The role of the instructor will be to guide the students through the process of understanding the course subject matter. The role of the student will be to read the required materials each week and participate in the online class discussion forums. Specifically, it is required that each student:

1. Read and be prepared to discuss the assigned materials.
2. Raise relevant questions and contribute relevant observations to the topic at hand.
3. Fully participate in online discussion forums.
4. Demonstrate appropriate and respectful communication with classmates and the instructor.

**DISTANCE EDUCATION STATEMENT:**

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

**CLASSROOM POLICIES:**

Without full participation and being prepared for each weekly activity, students shall find themselves at a severe disadvantage for achieving success in this course. *Keep in mind that your computer problems are NOT an excuse for any lack of completion of course material. YOU will need to maintain access to a reliable Internet connection (keep in mind there are computers available for your use in the Sul Ross Library). I am not responsible for any technological glitches that may occur in the online environment.* Sul Ross State University does not tolerate cheating, plagiarism, or collusion. Procedures for dealing with these acts are outlined in the Scholastic Dishonesty Policy.

**CIVILITY STATEMENT:**

In the classroom environment I hold each of you accountable for both your actions and words. Therefore, you should commit yourself to behave in a manner that recognizes personal respect and demonstrates concern for the personal dignity, rights, and freedoms of every individual in the classroom, including respect for University property and the physical and intellectual property of others. If a student is asked to leave the classroom because of uncivil behavior, the student may not return to that class until he or she arranges a conference with the professor, it is the student's responsibility to arrange for this conference. –\*Note: This *DOES* apply to this online course.

**DISABILITY POLICY:**

In order to receive accommodations on exams or assignments, proper documentation must first be provided to the Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services. Contact Mary Schwartz (Office: 112 Ferguson Hall) to set up an accommodations meeting, or call (432) 837-8203. Students must then present this documentation to the instructor as soon as possible so that accommodations may be arranged.

**TEXTBOOK (Required):**

Dye, Thomas R. *Understanding Public Policy*, 14<sup>th</sup> Edition. Pearson, 2013. ISBN: 978-0-205-23882-8

**GRADING SCALE:**

- 45% Exams (3 exams worth 15% each)
- 20% Weekly Discussion Questions
- 20% Research Paper
- 15% Participation

\*There is NO EXTRA CREDIT for this course, so please do not ask.

This course follows the traditional percentage based grading system below.

- A: 100-90
- B: 89-80
- C: 79-70
- D: 69-60
- F: 59 & below.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**EXAMS-** Each student will complete three exams in this course. These exams will be in the form of essays— directions/prompt to be given on our Blackboard homepage (*each exam is worth 15% of your overall final course grade*) and will be due on the date specified in the course outline below. **Missed exams will result in a grade of zero. Exam deadlines are inflexible and absolute – no excuses.**

**RESEARCH PAPER-** Each student will select an area/topic of interest discussed in the course (choose a topic from the course schedule below). Criteria/directions for this paper will be posted on our course Blackboard page. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. (Research Paper: 20% total course grade).

WEEKLY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS-In the discussion section of Blackboard each week, I will pose a discussion question or two over the assigned reading(s). Discussion post(s) will appear every Monday and will be due on Sunday @ 11: 55 p.m. of the same week, so you will have 7 days to think about and construct your answers. Each week you are required to respond to my question, create a question of your own, and respond to a classmate's question. *For each week then, a total of 3 discussion posts are required (each set of 3 will receive 1 grade every week).* The questions/answers should be analytical (theoretical) over the topic at hand and/or an attempt to develop a closely related line of inquiry. The purpose is to generate productive classroom discussion and demonstrate critical thinking ability with regard to the assigned reading(s). The questions/answers are meant to be evaluative/analytical for the sake of discussion rather than trivia questions from the readings. Failure to be respectful and civil in your responses/questions with classmates or with the instructor will result in no credit—and potential removal from the course. At the end of the semester, I will take the average of your grade on these weekly submissions and that grade will be worth 20% of your overall final course grade.

PARTICIPATION- Worth 15% of the overall course grade, your active and productive participation in this course is expected and required.

## Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings
Wk. 1	Policy Analysis Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dye, Chapters 1-3</li> <li>• Furstenberg 2011</li> <li>• Kwak 2011</li> </ul>
Wk. 2	Policy Process and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dye, Chapters 4 &amp; 5</li> <li>• Selected Readings (announced via Blackboard) from: State of the Union-Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality</li> </ul>
Wk. 3	Poverty and Inequality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Census Measurements</li> <li>• Blank and Greenberg 2008</li> <li>• Rector and Sheffield 2011</li> </ul>
Wk. 4	Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dye, Chapter 7</li> <li>• Hero and Preuhs 2007</li> <li>• Morgan 2013</li> </ul>
Wk. 5	Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dye, Chapter 8</li> <li>• Hacker 2009</li> <li>• Oberlander 2010</li> </ul>
<b>Wk. 6</b>	<b>EXAM 1 DUE (covers weeks 1-5)</b>	
Wk. 7	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dye, Chapter 9</li> <li>• Tucker 2012</li> <li>• U.S. Dept. of Education – Fact Sheet</li> </ul>
Wk. 8	Economic and Tax Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dye, Chapters 10 &amp; 11</li> <li>• Baicker and Skinner 2011 (<i>Working Paper</i>)</li> </ul>
Wk. 9	Immigration (Trade and Healthcare)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dye, Chapter 12</li> <li>• Immigration Policy Center (selected readings)</li> <li>• Bacon 2014</li> </ul>
Wk. 10	<b>EXAM 2 DUE (covers weeks 7-9)</b>	
Wk. 11	Civil Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dye, Chapter 14</li> <li>• Additional Readings will be posted on Blackboard</li> </ul>
Wk. 12	Welfare Policy – Comparative Perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glazer 2010</li> <li>• Mares and Carnes 2009</li> </ul>
Wk. 13	Health Policy – Comparative Perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schoen et al. 2009</li> <li>• Rechel et al. 2012</li> </ul>
Wk. 14	<b>RESEARCH PAPER DUE</b>	
Wk. 15	Course Reflections	<b>EXAM 3 DUE (covers weeks 11-13)</b>

## READING LIST:

In addition to reading the required Dye Textbook chapters from the schedule above, students are also required to read the following articles. Most of the articles can be accessed by clicking on the URL link or cut and pasting the link into your web browser; if the URL is not available you can access the articles via the Sul Ross Library online (library.sulross.edu). *Be aware that this schedule is tentative and therefore subject to change at my discretion. I may also post articles for you to read via our course Blackboard page.*

### Week 1 Readings:

Furstenberg, Francois. 2011. "What History Teaches Us about the Welfare State." *Washington Post*.  
[http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/what-history-teaches-us-about-the-welfare-state/2011/07/01/AGGfhFuH\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/what-history-teaches-us-about-the-welfare-state/2011/07/01/AGGfhFuH_story.html)

Kwak, James. 2011. "What Do You Mean, 'Government is too Big'?" *The Atlantic*, July.  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2011/07/what-do-you-mean-government-is-too-big/242093/>

### Week 2 Readings:

State of the Union. 2014. The Poverty and Inequality Report. *Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality*.  
[https://web.stanford.edu/group/scspi/sotu/SOTU\\_2014\\_CPI.pdf](https://web.stanford.edu/group/scspi/sotu/SOTU_2014_CPI.pdf)

### Week 3 Readings:

How the Census Bureau Measures Poverty:  
<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/about/overview/measure.html>

Blank, Rebecca M. and Mark H. Greenberg. 2008. "Improving the Measurement of Poverty." *The Brookings Institution*. [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2008/12/poverty%20measureme nt%20blank/12\\_poverty\\_measurement\\_blank.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2008/12/poverty%20measureme nt%20blank/12_poverty_measurement_blank.pdf)

Rector, Robert and Rachel Sheffield. 2011. "Air Conditioning, Cable TV, and an Xbox: What Is Poverty in the United States Today?" *The Heritage Foundation*. <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/07/what-is-poverty>

### Week 4 Readings:

Hero, Rodney E., and Robert R. Preuhs. 2007. "Immigration and the Evolving American Welfare State: Examining Policies in the U.S. States." *American Journal Of Political Science* 51, no. 3: 498-517.

Morgan, Kimberly. 2013. "America's Misguided Approach to Social Welfare." *Foreign Affairs*.  
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2012-12-03/americas-misguided-approach-social-welfare>

### Week 5 Readings:

Hacker, Jacob S. 2009. "Yes We Can? The New Push for American Health Security." *Politics and Society* 37 (3): 3-32.

Oberlander, Jonathan. 2010. "Long Time Coming: Why Health Reform Finally Passed." *Health Affairs* 29(6): 1112-1116.

### Week 7 Readings:

Tucker, Marc. 2012. "American Dinosaurs: What's the Matter with Health Care and Education?" *The Atlantic*. May.  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2012/05/american-dinosaurs-whats-the-matter-with-health-care-and-education/256807/>

U.S. Department of Education Fact Sheet- Focusing on Higher Ed: <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/fact-sheet-focusing-higher-education-student-success>

### Week 8 Readings:

Baicker, Katherine and Jonathan Skinner. 2011. Working Paper 16772. "Health Care Spending Growth and the Future of U.S. Tax Rates." *National Bureau of Economic Research*. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w16772>

**Week 9 Readings:**

Immigration Policy Center. 2009. "The Truth about Costly Verification Systems, Unauthorized Immigrants and Health Care.

[http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/docs/Verification%20Systems%20Immigrants%20and%20Health%20Care%20093009\\_0.pdf](http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/docs/Verification%20Systems%20Immigrants%20and%20Health%20Care%20093009_0.pdf)

Bacon, David. 2014. "Globalization and NAFTA Caused Migration From Mexico" Political Research Organization. August. <http://www.politicalresearch.org/2014/10/11/globalization-and-nafta-caused-migration-from-mexico/#sthash.JalRdDrx.oJHsqTuO.dpbs>

**Week 12 Readings:**

Glazer, Sarah. 2010. "Social Welfare in Europe: Can EU Nations Still Afford Expensive Welfare Programs?" *CQ Global Researcher* 4 (8): 185-210.

Mares, Isabela and Matthew E. Carnes. 2009. "Social Policy in Developing Countries." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12(93-113).

**Week 13 Readings:**

Schoen, Cathy, Robin Osborn, Michelle M. Doty, David Squires, Jordon Peugh, and Sandra Applebaum. 2009. "A Survey Of Primary Care Physicians In Eleven Countries, 2009: Perspectives On Care, Costs, And Experiences." *Health Affairs*: Web Exclusive.

Rechel, B., M. Ahmedov, B. Akkaziya, A. Katsaga, G. Khodjamurodov, and M. McKee. 2012. "Lessons From Two Decades Of Health Reform In Central Asia." *Health Policy and Planning* 27: 281-287.