**Social Welfare Policies & Services II (SWPSII)**

**Policy Analysis - Brief Instructions**

**General Instructions:**

* Paper should be 10-12double-spaced pages. **NOT** longer (including final figure but not including bibliography)
* Use headings and subheadings to match the main sections outlined below
* Grammar and spelling count
* **10> References**

Describe, discuss, and analyze a **federal social welfare** policy that addresses a particular social problem, in the form of an informative “Policy Brief”. Alternatively, state-level policy implications may be addressed as part of the paper.  Domains of social welfare policies and examples of policies are below (domains are not mutually exclusive).

You may choose a policy within the broad special topic group categories as   – note: it must be a different policy and a different paper than any previously submitted paper, as completed for SWPS 1.

    LOOK AT OUTLINE ALONG WITH THE INFORMATION BELOW FOR THIS PAPER TO BE SUCCESSFUL

**Specific Requirements (10-12 pages: 12 maximum, including figure, excluding bibliography: include Abstract, Introduction, Conclusion or Summary):**

1.      History and background (1-2 pages)

o   Describe the social problem that this policy was meant to address

o   Describe the stated policy goals (explicit goals) and any implicit or unwritten goals

o   Very briefly provide some history of the social policy

  When was it enacted, who signed it into law

  Who sponsored it and who supported it

  Who was against it – was it controversial?

2.      Structure and design of the program (2 - 3 pages)

o   Describe the policy/programusing the dimensions of choice model from Gilbert & Terrell. Make sure to use the terms that we discussed to describe social welfare programs (cash, in-kind, vouchers, means-tested, universal, social assistance, social insurance, entitlement program)

  What is the basis of allocation (who gets benefits)

  What are the benefits

  How are benefits delivered

  How is program financed

o   What are expenditures on the program

o   How many people receive services through this program

o   Variation by state/locality (if any)

  Describe the program in your state (if it differs from the federal policy)

o   Any new developments or recently debated points

3.      Analyze this policy within the frameworks we discussed previously (2 – 3 pages)

o   How does it fit w/American values about social welfare policies? How is this policy framed to make it appealing to American values?

o   How does it address or not address the conundrums inherent in all social welfare policies?

o   How does it fit w/in perspectives on the causes of need in our society?

o   How does it fit within the individualist vs. community perspectives on social welfare policies?

o   Who supports this policy? Who might be against it?

4.      Is the program effective (2 – 3 pages)

o   What has research found about the effects of this program?

  Address the explicit goals, implicit goals, and any unexpected consequences

o   What are the critiques of the program?

  Are the critiques based on research or ideological differences?

o   What recommendations have been made to improve the program?

  You may also provide your own ideas about how this program may be improved(this is the only place where you could use first person ‘I’.)

5.      References(not included in page count)

o   Use at least 10 sources (you may include readings from the syllabus)

o   You must use peer reviewed sources

o   Follow the instructions for all written assignments regarding proper citations and references

6.      Figure (not included in page count)

o   Paper must include a figure (chart, graph, or map) that illustrates one of the required elements above

o   Examples

  Figure could be used to show extent of the social problem the policy was enacted to address. e.g.: map of the US showing percent of children in each state living in poverty.

  Figure could be used to show how the program has changed over time, or how many different types of individuals the program serves. e.g.: chart showing increase in expenditures on the program between its inception and today.

o   Figure should come from a reputable source: gov’t, think tank, or research org. website, or a reading, etc. (you should not create the figure yourself)

  Make sure to correctly cite the source

o   Figure should be called Figure 1 with an appropriate title (e.g. Figure 1: Proportion of Children Living in Poverty by State).

o   You must refer to the figure in the text to illustrate a specific point (e.g. “Figure 1 shows….”).

o   Figureshould be copied into a word document and added to the paper after the bibliography, and is included in the page count

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| **Content**  -Topic is sufficiently focused  -Thesis is clearly defined and presented  -Scholarly evidence and use of course resources is presented in support of the argument  -As relevant to the assignment, argument demonstrates clear understanding of principals of social problem definition, policy dynamics, the processes of  policy development and implementation, policy analysis (following Gilbert & Terrell Benefit Allocations Framework) and role of policy in service provision, policy critique and advocacy  -Argument is compelling  -Tone is objective and evidence-based, appropriate for policy brief (i.e., not personalized or casual; direct, not passive voice) | 50 |
| **Organization, logic and clarity of the argument**  -**follows APA format** and use of headings, subheadings to organize the paper (use outline subheads provided or alternate subheads)  -paragraphs with topic sentences and transitions between paragraphs  -sentences in paragraphs organized logically to build argument  -evidence incorporated in support of argument | 25 |
| **Grammar/Mechanics**  -Standard English grammar rules are observed: subject/verb agreement; tenses; punctuation; spelling  -sentence structure:  clear, concise sentences (avoid run-ons and complex sentences)  -appropriate word usage  -evidence of proofreading | 10 |
| **Integration of scholarly sources using APA formatting of citations/references**  -see APA manual for direction on citation and formatting of journal articles, documents/reports, web resources and other materials | 15 |