LBJ SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
COURSE OFFERING
FALL SEMESTER 1997

TITLE: Politics and Policies in an Aging Population

FACULTY: Professor Jacqueline L. Angel

COURSE NUMBER: PA 388K (56270)

MEETING: Wednesday 9:00 - 12:00

ROOM: SRH 3.110

DESCRIPTION: There is widespread concern among policy makers about the growing number of older people in our society and the rising cost of providing medical care and support services to those who need them. This course will explore the impact of an aging population on social institutions and explore the potential utility of different approaches to responding to the long-term care needs of an increasingly ethnically and racially diverse aged population. The course will examine population processes shaping the age structure of U.S. society, focusing especially on recent changes in family structure.

To understand the needs of older adults and potential social policy responses to them, we will survey the scientific literature pertaining to demographic aspects of aging, intergenerational relationships, and income transfers. We will also investigate the organization and financing of health care for the elderly. The objective throughout the course is to assess alternative models for providing income, housing, health care, and social services to an increasingly older population. Toward this end, we will consider the process of policy formation, identify key players and interest groups, and contrast political ideologies regarding state and private responsibility for the elderly.

REQUIRED BOOKS


Recommended articles for each topic area will be made available in the Public Affairs Library. Readings may occasionally be modified to suit the needs of the class, and additional material may be distributed during the course of the semester depending on student interest and the availability of time. Please feel free to discuss with me anything about the course. You can reach me at: jangel@mail.utexas.edu or 471-2956.

Student Responsibilities

The class will follow a fairly standard seminar format. You will be responsible for familiarizing yourself with all listed readings and for participating in class discussions. Material to be emphasized during class discussions will be announced prior to each class meeting. The required books are available for purchase at the U.T. Co-op East (472-6156). In addition, a packet of supplemental readings could be purchased at Abel’s Copies, 1906 Guadalupe
Street, 472-5353. I will also put copies of these materials on reserve at the Public Affairs Library.

**Course Requirements**

Your course grade will be determined on the basis of the following requirements:

1. A 15 page library-based policy research paper involving an analysis of social policy with respect to older persons or with some particular aspect of aging that is of policy interest. The topic will be chosen by the student, early in the semester, and approved by the instructor;

2. A 10-15 minute oral presentation of a single article that will entail the following: describing the objectives of the article identifying the primary motivation giving rise to the research, noting its strengths and weaknesses, and preparing two questions from the article that have policy relevance; a group project that will involve organizing you into teams of approximately 4 or 5 students who will jointly be responsible for assembling a literature review on a specific public policy issue pertinent to aging populations. Each member of the group will present their own interpretation of the literature and as a class we will arrive at some conclusion about the state of knowledge.

   Although class attendance will not be taken, it is strongly recommended since one-quarter of your final grade will be based on class attendance and participation.

**Grading**

The research paper will count for 50 percent of your final grade; the oral presentations, 25 percent. Student participation in classroom discussion will be worth 25 percent of your final grade.
Tentative Course Outline

Weeks 1, 2: August 30, September 6

I. An Introduction to Public Policy and Aging: The Politics of Age

A. Historical perspectives
   1. The aged in preindustrial societies
   2. Modernization and the status of the elderly

B. Power and politics today

C. The Meaning of Power

Moody, Prologue. pages IX - XXIV

Olson, Chp. 1.


Derthick, Martha. "How Easy Votes on Social Security Came to an End." The Public Interest 54:94-105.


Weeks 3, 4: September 13, 20

II. Demographic Processes and Population Age Structure, Fertility and Immigration, and the Politics of Population Growth

A. The Succession of Cohorts and Age, Period, and Cohort (APC) Effects


B. Population Composition: Diversity among the Aged
Moody, Reading 24


Optional:


C. Migration


Optional:


D. Housing and Living Arrangements


Hispanic Females." Demography 29:93-112.

Optional:


Week 5: September 27

III. The Economic Status of the Aged and Intergenerational Transfers

Moody, Readings 21-22.

A. Income and Assets: Thrift and Productivity in an Aging Society


B. Intergenerational Relationships, Generational Equity, Conflict, and Budgetary Reform


Optional:


Weeks 6, 7: October 4, 11

IV. Power, Participation, and Policy: Institutional and Non-institutional Forces

A. Senior power: social movement, interest group, or coalition?

B. Political attitudes and participation

C. The politics of government programs and policies


Weeks 8, 9

V. Death and Taxes: The Economics of Morbidity and Mortality

Moody Readings 4 and 5

A. Age-related Physiological and Psychological Changes

1. Mental Health


Optional:


2. Physical Health


3. Disability


4. Mental and Physical Co-morbidity

B. Long-term Care: Institutional and Community-based Services

Olson, Chp. 2 - "Public Policy and Privatization: Long-term Care in the U.S."


Optional:


Optional:


C. Social Support and Dependency


Optional:


Weeks 10,11: November 1,8

VII. Age-Related Role Transitions: Changing Expectations

A. Work, Retirement, and Pensions

Optional:


B. The Family Life Cycle


Generation of Fatherless Families (Chp. 1). Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin.

Optional:

C. Grandmothers, Single Mothers, Parenting

Moody, Reading 19


Optional:


*****FIRST COMPLETE DRAFT OF PAPER DUE*****

Week 12: November 15

VII. Old Age Security and the Baby Boom Generation

A. The Social Security Act: Income support
1. Old Age Assistance, Title I
2. Old Age Insurance, Title II
3. Supplemental Security Income, Title XVI

Schulz, chapters, 5, 6, 9

Moody, pp. 255-294


Week 13: November 22

VIII. The Social Security Act (continued)

A. Health Security
   1. Medicaid, Title XIX
   2. Medicare, Title XVIII
   3. Social Services, Title XX

Rowland et al. 1993. Chapters 1,4,5, & 7


Week 14: November 29

IX. Future Policy Directions for Gerontonic Health and Social Services: An Agenda for the Year 2000

Moody, Reading 20.

Schulz, Chp. 9


Week 15: December 6
Final draft, peer-review critiques of policy research paper, and student presentations.
Instructions for Policy Research Paper

As your syllabus notes, one-half of your course grade will be based on your library-based research paper. In order to help you direct your choice of a topic and to be certain that you understand the format of the paper itself, I am providing you with a list of possible topics and some additional information on the structure of the paper. Of course, you may chose some other topic. I can help you with the selection if you come and see me.

The paper itself is to consist of approximately 15 pages (no longer) of text. Since this is a seminar on social policy with respect to aging, your paper should deal with some policy-related issue confronting older Americans. For this assignment, you can use professional writings for the general public, for a scholarly audience, and also what we discuss in class and discover in our readings. You might choose to write on some aspect of one of the following issues or any other topic you wish to learn more about, given you check with me first.

1. An evaluation of a specific aging policy. For example,

   How do systemic factors, such as income, living arrangements, societal attitudes, and the private sector, interest groups, and the cost and visibility of a program influence the development of major aging-related policies?
   - Social Security
   - Older Americans Act
   - Medicare
   - Supplemental Security Income
   - Medicaid
   - Social Service and Home Care programs
   - Housing assistance

2. The consequences of the increasing racial and ethnic diversity on the older population:
   - How does acculturation and structural assimilation affect the health and welfare of older Mexican Americans?
   - What factors affect the need for and the use of long-term care among minority elderly Americans over sixty-five?
   - The role of the community in improving the lives of Mexican Americans over the age of sixty-five.

3. The impact of retirement age on the Social Security system:
   - What impact have age-related changes in retirement patterns had on the Social Security system and on private pension plans?
   - Evaluate the elimination of mandatory retirement amendment to the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) and its effect on employment among older workers.

4. The financing and organization of medical care, including:
   - the evolution of managed care, in particular, the HMO, SMO, PPO, and
capitation
- federal attempts to control costs, e.g., prospective-based reimbursement systems, for the seriously impaired aged
- how might the reliance on the family for the care of the elderly be enhanced by the selective use of targeted formal assistance, e.g., Medicaid waivers

5. The health and consequences of elderly migration:
- effects of population aging on the demand for health and social services
- costs of long-term care for states and cities
- income effects of return migration from the Sunbelt

As noted on your syllabus, the paper should consist of the following components:

A. A clear statement of the question.

B. A review of literature to place the question in context and to outline what is known. This will involve some library work in which you read research journal articles, book chapters, government documents, books, newspapers, and even interviews. I will say more later on specific sources for these topics.

C. A critique of what has been done and an evaluation of the systemic factors, political participants and roles, and program characteristics that affect policy formation. For example, what are the benefits of expanding Medicare benefits to cover long-term care services? What are the dangers? The objective is to demonstrate that you have a clear understanding of the issues involved.

D. A conclusion in which you briefly summarize what you have learned and in which you make your own policy recommendations based on your new and informed insights.