I. COURSE DOMAIN AND BOUNDARIES

Policies shape the ways that services are delivered, financed and governed. The making and implementing of policy at national, state and local levels directly impacts the wellbeing of children, youth, and their families. The course is designed to develop a base of knowledge of and skills to influence federal, state and local policies and services for vulnerable children and families. The course uses an evidence-based and applied approach to examining and learning to influence policy in order to build the capacity of service providers and consumers in achieving social and economic justice. Consideration is given regarding how race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental disability or illness, age and national origin plays a role in the social conditions policy is designed to address, policy formation, and implementation. Attention is also given to the role of values and ethics at the individual, local, state, and federal levels may play a role in the development of policy.

II. MSW CORE COMPETENCIES ADDRESSED IN THE COURSE

| Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior | C1  |
| Engage diversity and difference in practice. | C2  |
| Advance human rights and social and economic and environmental justice. | C3  |
| Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice. | C4  |
| Engage in policy practice | C5  |
| Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities | C7  |
| Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities | C8  |
| Evaluate individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities | C9  |
III. COMMON PEDAGOGICAL ELEMENTS

Pedagogical elements common to all sections of this course include:

1. Across each two-hour course session, instructors are expected to vary the instruction methods. Possible multi-media pedagogies include group work, exercises, lectures, discussion, videos, and guest speakers.
2. Instructors will guide students how to use historical evidence in developing their critical thinking, understanding discrimination and other social injustice, and planning for social changes and advocacy work.
3. Students will analyze a problem that impacts child, youth and families and use the evidence based practice approach to evaluate current policy related to addressing this problem. Students will write a policy brief, in-depth policy analysis report, testimony, fact sheet, or other appropriate form of product to recommend a new or altered policy that can address this problem.
4. Students will develop and deliver a 10-minute oral testimony based on this brief.
5. Students will demonstrate capacity to work effectively in groups through in-class activities or other class assignment.

IV. BROWN SCHOOL ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity in the completion of tests, oral presentations and written assignments (including statistical syntax) is expected. Violations of academic integrity (e.g., plagiarism) are very serious offenses. Violations will result in notification to the Assistant Dean for the appropriate (MSW or MPH) program and may result in referral to the Academic and Professional Integrity Committee, which could lead to dismissal from the program. Please review and adhere to the entire set of Academic Integrity guidelines in the student handbook on Inside Brown:

Student Handbook 2017-2018

Accommodations: If you have a learning disability, sensory, or physical disability or other impairment, and you may need special assistance in lectures, reading, written assignments, and/or exam taking, please contact the Brown School Director of Student Affairs who can provide coordination of accommodations at Washington University and the Brown School. The Disability Resource Center, a University-wide resource, provides diagnostic and academic accommodations support and referrals.

English Language Proficiency: If your English language proficiency is such that you may need special assistance in lectures, reading, written assignments, and/or exam taking, please communicate these needs to your instructor who may refer you to the English Language Program (ELP), a University-wide resource which provides classes and academic English language support designed to increase non-native English speaking students' English language proficiency and to facilitate their academic success at Washington University. You may also find the Academic Assistance resources available through the Office for International Students and Scholars to be helpful.

Professional Use of Electronic Devices in the Classroom: Computers or other electronic devices, including “smart pens” (devices with an embedded computer and digital audio recorder which
records the classroom lecture/discussion and links that recording to the notes taken by the
student), may be used by students at the discretion of the faculty member to support the learning
activities in the classroom. These include such activities as taking notes and accessing course
readings under discussion. If a student wishes to use a smart-pen or other electronic device to
audio record lectures or class discussions, they must notify the instructor in advance of doing so.
Permission to use recording devices will be at the discretion of the instructor, unless this is an
accommodation approved by Disability Resources.

Nonacademic use of laptops and other devices is distracting and seriously disrupts the learning
process for everyone. Neither computers nor other electronic devices are to be used in the
classroom during class for non-academic reasons. This use includes emailing, texting, social
networking, and use of the Internet. The use of cell phones during class time is prohibited, and
they should be set on silent before class begins. In the case of an emergency, please step out of
the room to take the call. The instructor has the right to hold students accountable for meeting
these expectations, and failure to do so may result in a loss of participation points, a loss of the
privilege of computer use in the classroom, or being asked to leave the classroom.

Religious Holidays: The Brown School recognizes the individual student’s choice in observing
religious holidays that occur during periods when classes are scheduled. Students are encouraged
to arrange with their instructors to make up work missed as a result of religious observance, and
instructors are asked to make every reasonable effort to accommodate such requests.

V. WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC SUPPORT POLICIES

Accommodations based upon sexual assault: The University is committed to offering reasonable
academic accommodations to students who are victims of sexual assault. Students are eligible
for accommodation regardless of whether they seek criminal or disciplinary action. Depending
on the specific nature of the allegation, such measures may include but are not limited to:
implementation of a no-contact order, course/classroom assignment changes, and other academic
support services and accommodations. If you need to request such accommodations, please
direct your request to Kim Webb (kim_webb@wustl.edu), Director of the Relationship and
Sexual Violence Prevention Center. Ms. Webb is a confidential resource; however, requests for
accommodations will be shared with the appropriate University administration and faculty. The
University will maintain as confidential any accommodations or protective measures provided to
an individual student so long as it does not impair the ability to provide such measures.

If a student comes to me to discuss or disclose an instance of sexual assault, sex discrimination,
sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking, or if I otherwise observe or
become aware of such an allegation, I will keep the information as private as I can, but as a
faculty member of Washington University, I am required to immediately report it to my
Department Chair or Dean or directly to Ms. Jessica Kennedy, the University’s Title IX
Director. If you would like to speak with directly Ms. Kennedy directly, she can be reached at
(314) 935-3118, jwkennedy@wustl.edu, or by visiting the Title IX office in Umrah
Hall. Additionally, you can report incidents or complaints to the Office of Student Conduct and
Community Standards or by contacting WUPD at (314) 935-5555 or your local law enforcement
agency. See: Title IX
You can also speak confidentially and learn more about available resources at the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center by calling (314) 935-8761 or visiting the 4th floor of Seigle Hall. See: RSVP Center

Bias Reporting: The University has a process through which students, faculty, staff and community members who have experienced or witnessed incidents of bias, prejudice or discrimination against a student can report their experiences to the University’s Bias Report and Support System (BRSS) team. See: brss.wustl.edu

Mental Health: Mental Health Services’ professional staff members work with students to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can affect the academic experience. These include conflicts with or worry about friends or family, concerns about eating or drinking patterns, and feelings of anxiety and depression. See shs.wustl.edu/MentalHealth

Additional Issues or Concerns: If you feel that you need additional supports in order to be successful in your time at Brown, beyond the aforementioned accommodations, please contact Essie Rochman, Director of Student Affairs at erochman@wustl.edu. She can assist you in navigating a myriad of concerns. Her office is in Brown Hall, room 320.

VI. TEXT/REQUIRED READINGS

Required Texts:

Provides a brief historical introduction to and analysis of policies in key areas of concern related to children, youth and families and explores ways of applying research.

The text has been ordered through the bookstore. A copy of the text is also available as an e-book. The link to the electronic version is https://www.vitalsource.com/textbooks?term=9781483344553

Other Required Readings:
Additional required readings will be used to help students appraise current status of social conditions and to introduce the most recent discussions/perspectives on areas covered. These readings or links to access the readings will be available on Blackboard or be distributed by the instructor. Students will be expected to access and use additional readings they identify to support arguments for policy briefs.

Recommended Readings for Additional Help:
For students who feel they need additional assistance with or review of how to consume research literature, or want a good resource to serve as a reference in this area, the following book is recommended and will be on reserve:


For students interested in more discussion of policy analysis, the following book is on reserve:

**Helpful on-line sites:**
To assist students in locating and accessing policy and evidence for their individual and group assignments the following list is provided and also available on Inside Brown.


Centre for Educational Research and Innovation  
[http://www.oecd.org/department/0,3355,en_2649_35845581_1_1_1_1_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/department/0,3355,en_2649_35845581_1_1_1_1_1,00.html)

Child Welfare League of America  
[http://www.cwla.org/advocacy/2008legpriorities01.htm](http://www.cwla.org/advocacy/2008legpriorities01.htm)

Children’s Defense Fund  

Clearinghouse on International Developments in Child, Youth and Family Policies  

Institute for Women’s Policy Research; Work & Family  
[http://www.iwpr.org/Work/Research_work.htm](http://www.iwpr.org/Work/Research_work.htm)

Library of Congress: THOMAS  
[http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/thomas](http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/thomas)

Missouri House and Senate Joint Bill Tracking  

National Registry of Evidence-based programs and practices:  

North American Resource Center on Child Welfare:  
[http://www.ihs-trainet.com/about.htm](http://www.ihs-trainet.com/about.htm)

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Model Programs Guide:  

Oregon Health and Science University, Center for Evidence Based Policy  
[http://www.ohsu.edu/ohsuedu/research/policycenter/about/services.cfm](http://www.ohsu.edu/ohsuedu/research/policycenter/about/services.cfm)

Promising Practices Network on Children, Families and Communities:
VI. ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE

Because of the limitations of a single class, the content will focus largely on US policies, however, some on-line resources and readings do touch on international issues. International students or those interested in future practice in other countries are encouraged to customize their individual assignments to address their area of interest. This class will be approached as a practice class and employs multiple approaches to learning including lectures, presentations by speakers, reading groups and class discussion. Because guest speakers change from course to course, these will be announced after classes begin.

VIII. ROLE OF STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR

Role of Student:

- Students are expected to attend all class sections and come prepared to participate in discussion and class activities. Assignments and papers are to be completed on time.
- Students are expected to integrate readings into their assignments as well as class discussion whenever possible. Readings should be completed prior to class.
- Absences should be cleared by notifying the instructor prior to or immediately following the absence.
If you have a learning disability, sensory, or physical disability or other impairment, or if English is your second language, and you may need special assistance in lecture, reading, assignments or testing, please notify the instructor on or before the first class so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

Role of the Instructor:
- Instructor will provide lectures, readings, and assignment information, organize classes, and be available for consultation and feedback.
- Grading scales for group, policy brief and oral presentation assignments follow on page 10 of the Course Outline.
- Assignments will be returned with comments in a timely manner.
- Feedback regarding topics of interest, questions or suggestions are welcomed throughout the course.

IX. ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING CRITERIA

1. CLASS PARTICIPATION (5% of final grade, 50 points)
   Class participation will account for 5% of the final grade. Attaining points is dependent upon turning in the reading responses, in class participation, attendance, and turning in assignments on time. Students are expected to complete readings and assignments, attend classes and be prepared to participate in class activities and discussions.

2. WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS (50% of final grade, 500 points)
   a. Discussion Starter (50 points) The Discussion Starter will be used in the Discussion Groups. One student will be responsible each of 5 weeks to be the Discussion Leader. The Discussion Leader will prepare the Discussion Starter for the week and lead the group discussion. The role of Discussion Leader will rotate among the students in the group, but all students need to be prepared to discuss each assigned reading. The Discussion Starter will reference each reading assigned for the class and list at least 3 points related to each article. The points may include items such as:
      - main themes of the article,
      - unresolved questions posed by the author(s), strategies for future action related to the topic, or
      - a view contrary to the one expressed by the author(s).

   b. In-class discussion and Policy news articles (50 points). Each week select students will sign up to bring in a news article that is related to a current policy. The policy should be on a general topic that is covered in class and may be from any reputable print or web based news source. In class the student will discuss the focus of the article and the policy that is relevant to the article and offer comments on the article. Each student will be responsible for 1 policy news article discussion.

   c. Policy Brief Responses (100 points x 4 =400 points). This is a 1 page written assignment that the students will turn in related to the preparation of the topic that you choose for
your policy brief. There will be 4 assigned over the course of the semester, each 100 points.

3. **POLICY BRIEF (45% of total grade, 450 points)**
The written brief and later oral presentation based on this brief together will be worth 45% of the course grade, 15% will be the oral portion and 30% will be the written portion.

a. **Written portion (30%, 300 points).** Each student is required to complete a written policy brief related to a major issue for children, youth and families. This can be done in relation to their practicum or on a topic of interest. The policy solution proposed can be at the local, state or federal level. Briefs have a much more succinct format rather than term papers *(a minimum of 4 pages single spaced and maximum of 7 pages plus title page and references page)* because this is key to engaging and influencing policy makers.

The policy brief must include:
1) a title;
2) a 1-2 paragraph executive summary,
3) context and importance of problem;
4) critique of options, including consideration of whether the options include increased costs or are cost neutral;
5) a breakdown of the specific steps or measures that need to be implemented (with consideration of feasibility) to address the situation;
6) a closing paragraph; and
7) a bibliography using APA style.

The proposal should be evidence-based—in other words grounded in research about the problem and potential solutions. **The final version of the brief is due on May 3, 2017 by 9:00 am**

b. **Oral ignite presentation on policy brief topic (15%, 150 points).** Students will give an ignite presentation based on their brief. This is not a new assignment but rather an attempt to translate the written brief into a succinct and influential oral presentation. Students will act as if the audience (fellow students, instructors) were determining whether to adopt the proposal. Oral Presentations will be offered in the last few classes.

**GRADES**
The grade for this class will be determined as follows:
1. Class participation 5% 50 points
2. Weekly assignments 50% 500 points
3. Individual written policy brief 30% 300 points
4. Ignite Presentation on policy brief 15% 150 points
The final grade in the class will be based upon the sum of the grade for each course component multiplied by the above weights. The final scale is as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93 - 100</td>
<td>78 - 79.9</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 - 92.9</td>
<td>73 - 77.9</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88 - 89.9</td>
<td>70 - 72.9</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83 - 87.9</td>
<td>61 - 69.9</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 - 82.9</td>
<td>60&lt;</td>
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**COURSE OUTLINE (Order is Subject to change per speaker availability)**

**Class 1 Introduction**

We will introduce the class and requirements. We will also cover elements of a policy brief.

**Class 2 Understanding the policy system for children and families**

*Guest lecture: Ryan Barker*

*Text:*

Jenson & Fraser – Chapter 1 “A risk and resilience framework for child, youth and family policy.”

*Readings:*


**Class 3**

*Evidence based practice in the macro context and influencing policy development/change and policy implementation*

We will discuss the application of the evidence-based practice model to macro issues. We will review types of evidence and issues related to application of research to policy within an ecological system approach. We will review the first two stages of the evidence-based process as related to moving from a broad issue to more specific problem to be addressed. Approaches to influencing policy at the agency, region, and national levels. We will discuss the complexity of using evidence to bear on practice and policy. What happens after a policy is passed? We will discuss the importance of implementation and how it does or does not influence the “success” of a policy.

We will discuss the skills and communication techniques (testimony, briefs, fact sheets, amicus briefs) required to bridge the gap between evidence and policy.

*Text:*

Jenson & Fraser Chapter 10 “Toward the integration of Child, Youth and Family Policy”

*Readings:*


**Class 4 Education**
**Guest Lecturer – TBA**
Completing high school is arguably now the minimum requirement for achieving an adequate standard of living in adulthood. Can we leave no child behind? What type of evidence is needed to set policy? Is this an agency/organizational, local, state or national issue?

**Text:**
Jenson & Fraser, Chapter 4, Frey, Mandlawitz, Perry, Walker, “Education policy for children, youth and families”

**Readings:**


**Class 5 Child Welfare**
**Guest Lecturer – Gayle Flavin**
How does the child welfare approach relate to our values about families and child rights? What type of evidence is needed to set policy? Is this an agency, local, state or national issue? What outcomes should child welfare be responsible for?

**Text:**
Jenson & Fraser, Chapter 3: Pecora and Harrison-Jackson, “Child welfare policies and programs”

**Readings:**


**Class 6 Juvenile Justice**

**Guest Lecture: Susan Guerra**

What do are policies say about how we as a society view delinquency and rehabilitation? What type of evidence is needed to set policy? Is this an agency, local, state or national issue? What would a successful policy agenda look like?

**Text:**

Jenson & Fraser, Chapter 9, Barton “ Juvenile justice policies and programs”.

**Readings:**


**Class 7 Early Childhood**

**Guest Lecturer – Katie Rhan**

How do we view early childhood care? What type of evidence is needed to set policy? Is this an agency, local, state or national issue? How do we evaluate success?

**Readings:**


Class 8 Mental Health
Guest Lecturer Nancy Spargo
How important a problem is this? What type of evidence is needed to set policy? Is this an agency, local, state or national issue? Do we need new policy or better implementation? How should we define success?

Text:
Jenson & Fraser, Chapter 5: Fraser and Lanier, “Child mental health policy: Promise without fulfillment?”

Readings:


“Rural Children Don’t Receive the Mental Health Care They Need” (January 2009) Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine.


Class 9 Families and poverty
Guest Lecturer: Gary Parker
What policies impact family earning and child poverty? What policies are in place to reduce child poverty?

Text:
Jenson & Fraser Chapter 2: Shanks and Danzinger “Anti-Poverty Polices and Programs for Children and Families”

Readings:

Mattingly, M. (Winder 2009) Child Tax Credit Expansion Increases Number of Families Eligible for a Refund, Carsey Institute, University of New Hampshire.


**Class 10 Health Care.**

**Guest lecturer: Dean McKay**

The issue of health care access for children was recently a hotly debated national issue. No one argues that children should not be healthy so why does access and use continue to be an issue? What type of evidence is needed to set policy? Is this an agency, local, state or national issue? What would you propose?

**Text:**

Jenson & Fraser, Chapter 6: Rounds, Hall, and Huitron “Health policy for children and youth”

**Readings:**

Wikipedia (2009). *State Children’s Health Insurance Program*  


*School-Based Health Alliance* website (www.sbh4all.org). Under the tab titled “Our Issues”, read about health care reform, sustainability, laws and policies.

**Class 11 Student Advocacy Day Field Trip to Jefferson City**

**Class 12 Disability.**

**Guest Lecturer: Mark Keeley**

What do are policies say about how we as a society view disability in childhood and adolescence? What type of evidence is needed to set policy? Is this an agency, local, state or national issue? What would a successful policy agenda look like?

**Text:**

Jenson & Fraser, Chapter 7: Parish, Saville, Swaine, and Igdalsky “Policies and programs for children and youth with disabilities”

**Readings:**


**Class 13** Oral Presentations begin

**Class 14** Oral Presentations end.

**Class 15.** Final version of Policy Brief is due.