HDFS 4323.001
Family Law & Public Policy
Spring 2018

Professor: Dr. Lauren Kelly, PhD
Office: Matthews Hall 322DA
E-mail: lauren.kelly@unt.edu
*Please do not use the Blackboard messaging feature to contact me. Emails during the week will be responded to within 48 hours. Emails sent Friday after 4 pm will not receive a response until Monday. *
Office Phone: 940-369-8377
Office Hours: M/W: 12:00 PM or by appointment
Class Meets: MWF: 11-11:50, WH 116

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course will explore the reciprocal linkages between family functioning and public and private policies in this country and across the globe. Students will explore in what ways families contribute to social problems, how families are affected by these problems, and whether families should be involved in policy solutions. Students will assess the consequences policies may have for family well-being. The course will include theoretical frameworks for conceptualizing family policy, roles professionals can play in building family policy, and approaches professionals can use in implementing these roles.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
In this course, students are expected to:

- Critically examine theoretical orientations for conceptualizing family policy and for connecting research and policymaking.
- Gain an understanding of how policy is influenced by demographic changes, values, attitudes, and perceptions of the well-being of children and families.
- Apply the family impact lens to policy analysis by assessing current policy issues in terms of their sensitivity to and supportiveness of diverse contemporary families.
- Explore the roles professionals can play in conducting family policy research, and in formulating and implementing policies that strengthen and support families across the life cycle.
- Examine how these roles can be implemented using an educational or advocacy approach.
- Develop critical thinking skills and engage in effective communication for developing and expressing clear logical arguments for policymakers, professionals, and the public.

REQUIRED TEXTS
*Additional readings will be assigned and will be available on Blackboard.

COURSE PHILOSOPHY
My intent is to encourage students to consider policies from the perspective of families, rather than individuals. To encourage students to examine ideas critically, some of the course readings are included because of their insensitivity to family well-being or conceptual inconsistencies. The course purposefully includes writings from across the political spectrum. The intent of this course is not to have the students complete the class espousing the instructor’s political views, but rather to explore more fully a range of political perspectives in an attempt to determine their own views on current family policy issues. In keeping with this philosophy, there is no right or wrong answer on some of the assignments. Instead, students are evaluated on their ability to articulate a particular view, identify its theoretical underpinnings, support it with empirical findings, and refute alternative views.

WEBSITES OF INTEREST
The White House: www.whitehouse.gov
The US House of Representatives: www.house.gov
The US Senate: www.senate.gov
Library of Congress: www.loc.gov (also Thomas legislative search engine: http://thomas.loc.gov/)
CNN Inside Politics: www.allpolitics.com
C-Span: www.c-span.org
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP): www.clasp.org
The Urban Institute: http://www.urban.org/
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. PARTICIPATION AND DISCUSSION:

The material in this course is most effectively mastered through careful reading, critical thinking, and lively debate/discussion. No issue is cut-and-dried, and the success of this course depends on our ability to have thoughtful conversations about the course readings and current event assignments. Class will be conducted seminar-style and your informed participation is the most important requirement for this class. You will earn credit (points) for active participation throughout the semester. (You will not earn points for mere passive presence.)

2. STUDENT-LED DISCUSSION OF READINGS:

To ensure insightful class discussion of the readings, 1 time during the semester you will be responsible for leading/facilitating discussion of the readings. To prepare for this responsibility you will be expected to orally review/summarize “your” article or case for the class and generate 2-3 incisive and provocative discussion questions/talking points that arise from the assigned reading. The goal of this assignment is two-fold: a) to give you a chance to really think through the readings before you come to class; and b) to give the entire class a starting point for discussion. This discussion will be presented in front of the class using powerpoint. Presentations should last 15 minutes and should be related to family law and public policy using the family impact checklist as an analytical tool. Because these assignments are meant to help facilitate discussion, there will be absolutely no extensions. Further instructions will follow.

3. ATTENDANCE

Attendance from 10 random class days will count towards your overall course grade.

iClicker Reef - Participation

Engagement, participation and interaction are important elements of the learning process. To that end, we will be using iClicker Reef, so each student must be registered to Reef and have a device (computer, smartphone or tablet) for polling responses for this course. Because iClicker Reef is flexible across devices, you may participate by choosing one of the two options below:

1. iClicker Reef app: You may use your own smartphone or tablet by downloading the app available for iOS and Android
2. iClicker Reef website – iclicker.com – for browser-based use

With either option, you will create an account with iClicker, select University of North Texas as your institution, and enter your EUID (your Blackboard login ID) in the Student ID (optional) space.

To add the course to your iClicker Reef list, log into Blackboard using a browser and click the link in this course. You’ll be directed to your iClicker Reef account. Log in as needed and the course will appear in your personal list.

Click on the course and JOIN when we are in session. Connecting via wifi in UNT classrooms is highly recommended.

4. READING QUIZZES

Random quizzes/ICAs will be provided throughout the semester. Quizzes can be over the following course materials; chapter readings, lectures, videos, but not article presentations.

5. Final Group Project

Media Coverage Assessment - Assessment of media coverage of a family policy issue. The objective of this assignment is to help students develop skills to assess media coverage of a family policy issue. Using a minimum of 4 different print, Internet, and electronic sources, follow the media coverage of a family policy issue of your choice for a minimum of four weeks. Then, present on the following using PPT or
PREZI (a) the policy issue, (b) common perspectives as well as differences in coverage, (c) a critique of the reporting, (d) policy implications for families, (e) a summary of the media sources you used, (f) a reference slide listing all the readings/sources used in your critique and the dates of access. You will get in groups of 4-5 people and you will present your findings to the class during the last 2 weeks of class.

6. ASSIGNMENTS
Students must be present or have an excused absence (major illness, family emergency, hospitalization, or university sponsored event) to receive credit.

Choose 2 of 3

1. Observe a law/policy making session-Students will observe a session (minimum of 60 minutes long) involving the discussion, creation, or implementation of a law or policy. The session can be at the local, state, or federal level. Students will complete a 3-4 page write up detailing the issue being discussed, implications to families, misrepresentations, and facts vs. misconceptions.

2. Social Networking Analysis-Students will pose a question on a current, specific law/policy to a social networking site (e.g. Reddit, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, maybe Snapchat?). After soliciting responses for approximately 24-48 hours, modify the question or add additional information and ask respondents if their opinions have changed. Complete a 3-4 page analysis including a summary of the responses, your perception of the average person’s knowledge on the issue, and implications for how we involve/inform citizens in the policy making process. Include a screenshot of the post.

3. Article Summaries- Students will clip/print from a current newspaper, magazine, etc. at least 5 separate articles that review family policy focused on the topics covered in this course. Along with the clipping, students will submit a 1-page analysis (so, total of 5 pages) of how the article relates to and affects family policy making.

All assignments must define (and reference) a specific policy/law and incorporate the benefits or challenges associated with at least 2 different principles of the Family Impact Checklist. Include a title page with the name of the class and name of the assignment ONLY. Copies uploaded to Blackboard should contain an extra page at the end with your name. Write your name on the back of hard copies you submit in class.

Extra Credit (no hard copy needed):

Register to vote (5 points)-register or show proof of registration by uploading a picture/screenshot of your voter registration information.

Proof of Voter Registration-5 points Extra Credit Due April 2nd.
If you are already a registered voter, visit the Texas Secretary of State website (https://teamrv-mvp.sos.texas.gov/MVP/mvp.do). Log in (you just have to know your name, DOB, and county of residence). Your registration information will be shown; screenshot or take a picture of the information. Submit the screenshot/photo to Blackboard.
If you are registered in a state other than Texas, visit https://www.headcount.org/verify-voter-registration/. Select your state and you will be provided a link to the appropriate site. Follow directions for submission above.

If you are not registered to vote, you can register using the websites above. You will need to fill out, print, and mail in the forms (to the county you LIVE in). This will require you to wait for confirmation through the USPS (which means you may not have proof by the due date). Alternatively, you can visit the deputy voter registrars at Eagle Commons Library and Willis Library’s Library Learning Services Department on campus to register in person. Take a picture of your voter registration card and submit to Blackboard as proof of registration.

You are eligible to register to vote if:
- You are a United States citizen;
- You are a resident of the county where you submit the application;
- You are at least 18 years old on Election Day;
- You are not a convicted felon (you may be eligible to vote if you have completed your sentence, probation, and parole); and
- You have not been declared by a court exercising probate jurisdiction to be either totally mentally incapacitated or partially mentally incapacitated without the right to vote.

If you are unable to vote for any of the aforementioned reasons please see me for an alternate assignment.

Senate Election (10 Points)- Write an (approximately) 1-page single spaced summary of the candidates of the upcoming Texas senate race (2018). Provide the candidate(s) name, political affiliation, and summarize their platform (their principal goals). Discuss: if you had to vote for one of these candidates today based on their platform and your learning in this course (think family impact checklist), who would you vote for and why? Due April 2nd.
COURSE GRADING

Questions about grades are not to be asked in class. Questions about grades should be discussed with the instructor one-on-one. Students must wait a full 24 hours after a grade is posted/assignment returned to ask questions and/or make an appointment to discuss grades.

You should be familiar with the University’s standards for academic honesty as described in the pamphlet, Academic Misconduct: Rules and Procedures, published by the Dean of Students’ Office. For individual assignments, you are expected to work alone. You can consult books, articles, and class notes but ideas from these sources must be cited. Failure to cite the source of ideas other than your own is plagiarism. Materials incorporated from the Internet also require proper citation.

All written assignments should be well-organized, demonstrate critical thinking, and apply concepts learned in the course or from other sources. Assignments should be professional in appearance—typed, double-spaced, and proofread for correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Assignments will be graded primarily on what is said (e.g., thoughtful analysis and application of course content), but also on how it is said (e.g., grammar, clarity, organization). Some assignments will be assessed based on their accessibility for lay audiences (i.e., consistency with the journalistic style used to write for policymakers).

All assignments are to be completed individually, submitted via Blackboard AND a hard copy IN CLASS. Emailed assignments will not be accepted. NO LATE WORK IS ACCEPTED. Assignments with major spelling/grammatical errors that affect the readability of the paper will be returned to the student with a zero (0). Students may resubmit the paper within 24 hours for an automatic 1-letter grade reduction.

Grades can be accessed in Blackboard. Grades in Blackboard are not final and are subject to change. Course Grades will be calculated according to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Final Grade Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>(10 x 10 pts each) = 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class activities/Reading quizzes</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-led discussion</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>700</td>
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ACADEMIC CALENDAR
(Topics and dates subject to change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Date</th>
<th>Topic/Chapter</th>
<th>Articles to select/Assignments Due</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 Jan 17 &amp; 19</td>
<td>Course Overview/Families in Policymaking/What is Law &amp; Policy?</td>
<td>Syllabus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2 Jan 22-26</td>
<td>Politics &amp; Risk/Resilience Perspective Ch. 1</td>
<td>Criss et al., 2002 Youngblood, 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4 Feb 5-9</td>
<td>Education &amp; Ch. 4</td>
<td>Price, 2010 Kalifeh, 2011 Sprague, 2000 Freeman et al., 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5 Feb 12-16</td>
<td>Juvenile Justice Policies/Programs &amp; Ch. 9</td>
<td>Merlo, 2010 Cochran, 2015 Peterson-Badali, 2015 Smith, 2012 Montgomery v Louisiana</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6 Feb 19-23</td>
<td>Child Mental Health Policy &amp; Ch. 5</td>
<td>Assignment 1 Benedict, 2015 Pearlman, 2013 Olson, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7 Feb 26-March 2</td>
<td>Health Policy &amp; Ch. 6</td>
<td>Miller, 2004 Thompson, 2011 Reed, 2013 CHIP</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Mar 12-18</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>April 16-20</td>
<td>Course Wrap-up and Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>April 23-27</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
</tr>
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<td>May 1</td>
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<td>Final/Presentations</td>
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</table>

The instructor reserves the right to adjust the course calendar.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam and/or an alternative sanction, including course failure, may be imposed. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

**ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct

**ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT**

Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs at my.unt.edu. All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward your e-mail: eagleconnect.unt.edu/

**ADA STATEMENT**

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of
accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at disability.unt.edu. You may also contact them by phone at (940) 565-4323.

**EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION & PROCEDURES**
UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at http://www.my.unt.edu. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas in the buildings where your classes are held, 2) determine how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and 3) identify where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

**RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS**
Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Blackboard online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university’s policy in accordance with those mandates at the following link: http://essc.unt.edu/registration/ferpa.html

**INCOMPLETES**
Incompletes will only be granted in extenuating circumstances that occur in the last weeks of the semester (see dates at http://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-registration-guide). “I did not have time” is not an extenuating circumstance. You must be passing at the time when you ask in order to be considered. The student must initiate the request and must complete the paperwork. There must be a verifiable medical situation or other excuse that is documented. Just because the instructor allows the incomplete does not mean it will be approved. It has to be approved by the department head and dean.

**ADD/DROP POLICY**
To drop a class login at www.my.unt.edu and follow the directions. Visit http://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-registration-guide for important information on drop dates. Students must be passing the class to receive a grade of W. If you are failing the class due to low grades or not turning in work, you will receive a grade of WF. If a student misses more than two weeks of class without documented excuses, you will be dropped from the class during the instructor drop dates.

**BASIC NEEDS**
Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess.