



Human Development and Family Science Program
A joint program of the College of Education and Human
Development and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences
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HDFS 401.001 Family Law and Public Policy (3:3:0)
Summer Session A 2015 – May 18-June 20
Online

Professor: Dr. Bethany Letiecq

Office Hours: By appointment

*Skype appointments can also be made (**Skype ID:** bethany.letiecq)

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Course Description

Examines contemporary family life and the impact of government laws, policies, and programs on families over time and across contexts and cultures. Explores the intended and unintended consequences of policies for diverse families across a variety of policy matters, from anti-poverty and social welfare policies to health and environmental policies.

This course fulfills the **Writing Intensive** requirement in the HDFS major. Please note the writing requirements for the course throughout the syllabus to include the 15-page policy research and analysis paper due 6/20/15. The policy research and analysis paper will be completed through a draft/feedback/revision process. Your policy research topic is due 5/24/15. Your abstract and paper outline are due 5/31/15. The first draft of your paper is due 6/14/15. I will provide commentary on the draft and the revised draft will be due on 6/20/15. We will discuss this writing assignment throughout the course. All students are expected to meet with me at least once during the semester to discuss your writing approach and outline for the paper.

Nature of Course Delivery

This course utilizes a Blackboard online learning format requiring timely and active participation of all students throughout the semester. Activities to support student achievement of the learner outcomes include instructor presentations, videos, collaborative student work in small groups, assigned readings, and projects leading to written products. Students engage in timely critical reflection and accountable talk related to the learning activities.

Learner Outcomes

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Develop an understanding of the ways in which families and government interact
2. Gain an understanding of family laws and policies that explicitly and/or implicitly impact families in US society by using policy research and analytical tools
3. Comprehend the definitions, approaches, and issues involved in family policy impact analysis and policy evaluation
4. Gain an understanding of family laws and policies in terms of their sensitivity to and supportiveness of diverse families using policy impact analyses
5. Develop an ability to apply a family perspective to policy-making and policy analysis
6. Expand their understanding of US policy by comparing and contrasting US family laws and policies to those of other countries
7. Improve their ability to utilize course concepts and tools in their research of family policies

8. Expand their intellectual curiosity, interest, and understanding of the ways in which policies impact or will impact their individual and family functioning

Professional Standards

This course is aligned with the standards established by the National Council on Family Relations, focusing specifically on the “Family Law and Public Policy” content area, to include “an understanding of the legal issues, policies, and law influencing the well-being of families.”

Required Texts

Bogensneider, K. (2014). *Family policy matters: How policymaking affects families and what professionals can do* (3rd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Polikoff, N.D. (2008). *Beyond (straight and gay) marriage: Valuing all families under the law*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Additional readings: See schedule below.

Recommended Texts:

Huntington, C. (2014). *Failure to Flourish: How law undermines family relationships*. NY: Oxford.

APA Publications Manual, 6th edition

You can purchase the book(s) at the bookstore or online (i.e., Amazon). In addition to the textbook, supplementary readings are uploaded as PDF files on our Blackboard site. [Please note: You are expected to take responsibility for obtaining copies of all required reading in time to prepare for class each week.]

This course uses Blackboard provided through the University. To access our Blackboard site, please use Mozilla Firefox (a free downloadable browser that is most compatible with the Blackboard software). Then go to mymasonportal.gmu.edu and log on using your GMU ID and password. For help logging onto Blackboard, contact Teaching and Learning with Technology [see <http://itusupport.gmu.edu> or call 703-993-8870]. **The instructor cannot assist you with log-on problems.**

George Mason University Policies and Resources for Students

- Academic integrity (honor code, plagiarism) – Students must adhere to guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>].
- Mason Email – Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- Counseling and Psychological Services – The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops, and outreach programs) to enhance students’ personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- Office of Disability Services – Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor in writing at the beginning of the semester <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].

- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- The Writing Center (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- University Libraries (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Libraries provide numerous services, research tools, and help with using the library resources [See <http://library.gmu.edu/>].

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Core Values Commitment: The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

Collaboration

Collaboration is an important human activity that involves shared responsibility in promoting healthy, productive lives, and educational success. We commit ourselves to work toward these goals in genuine partnerships with individuals, families, community agencies, schools, businesses, foundations, and other groups at the local, regional, national, and international levels.

Ethical Leadership

In all professions represented by the college, leadership is an essential component denoting ability and willingness to help lead professional practice to higher levels. We commit ourselves to practice ethical leadership through deliberate and systematic attention to the ethical principles that guide all leaders in a moral society.

Innovation

We have a history of creating dynamic, innovative programs, and we are dedicated to continue creating innovative approaches in all areas of our work. We commit ourselves to seeking new ways to advance knowledge, solve problems, improve our professional practice, and expand on our successes.

Research-Based Practice

The best practice in any discipline is based upon sound research and professional judgment. We commit ourselves to basing our instruction, scholarship, and policy recommendations on well-established principles that, wherever possible, emerge from research and reflection on its implications for professional practice.

Social Justice

Social justice embodies essential principles of equity and access to all opportunities in society, in accordance with democratic principles and respect for all persons and points of view. We commit ourselves to promoting equity, opportunity, and social justice through the college's operations and its missions related to teaching, research, and service.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

Course Requirements

General Requirements

1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities, it is imperative that students keep up with the readings and participate in class.
2. Attendance in class and/or online is important to students' learning; therefore, students are expected to make every effort to attend class sessions and/or complete online modules within the designated timeframe. Absences, tardiness, leaving early, and not completing online modules in the designated timeframe may negatively affect course grades. If, due to an emergency, students will not be in class, they must call the instructor and leave a message or send an email before class. The following policy is from the university course catalog:

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

3. In line with Mason's policy that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious holidays, students shall be given an opportunity to make up, within a reasonable time, any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observations in advance of the class that will be missed. Notice should be provided in writing as soon as possible.
4. During face-to-face and live online meetings, cell phones, pagers, and other communicative devices are not allowed in this class. Students must keep them stowed away and out of sight. Laptops or tablets (e.g., iPads) may be permitted for the purpose of taking notes only. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g. gaming, email, chat, etc.) will result in a significant reduction in the participation grade.
5. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time. However, it is recognized that students occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, students should speak to the instructor prior to the assignment due date (when possible). If the student does not communicate with the instructor, a late penalty will be applied.
6. Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when responsible for a task, students will perform that task. When students rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, they will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind), students will ask for guidance and clarification.

Written Assignments

All formal written assignments will be evaluated for content and presentation. The American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the Mason library web at <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/content.php?pid=39979> Students may consult the Writing Center for additional writing support.

Students will do the following:

1. Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)
2. Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
3. Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)
4. Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

Grading Criteria

97-100	A+	87-89	B+	77-79	C+	60-69	D	Below 60	F
93-96	A	83-86	B	73-76	C				
90-92	A-	80-82	B-	70-72	C-				

Grading Policy

All CEHD/CHSS undergraduate and graduate students are held to the university grading policies as described in the Academic Policies section of the current catalog, which can be accessed at <http://catalog.gmu.edu>

Specific Course Assignments

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Dialogic Posts on BB	Ongoing	30
Midterm Exam	6/7/15	25
Homework Assignments: Abstract and Outline; Letter to policymaker	Ongoing	10
Final Paper	Draft due 6/14/2015; Final paper due 6/24/2015	35
TOTAL		100

CONTENT MODULES – 5 MODULES TOTAL

This course will utilize 5 content modules. Within these modules, all the relevant course material will be available in the format of course notes, power point presentations, and additional readings. This content will be incorporated into all online discussions, quizzes, and projects. It is critical for students to review all content on each module in a timely manner. Following a traditional classroom model, each module contains several “in class” lectures that are based on your readings and also include information gleaned from other sources. It is imperative that you view each module to prepare for discussions, quizzes and the genogram project.

I. **Dialogic Posts** (30 points)

There will be three dialogic posts to a series of discussion questions. You are asked to participate in these “class discussions” by addressing the question and expanding upon a classmate’s posting.

Requirements of Posts: To earn full credit, you will need to answer **each** question posted by the instructor for each discussion session as well as post at least one additional response to a classmate’s post. This means that you must complete at least 2 posts (within the one-week period allotted for posts and responses.) **Each post** should include references to your readings and other sources to enrich the discussion. These are not opinion posts and should be based on what you are learning in this course material.

Evaluation of Discussion Posts: I consider three categories that are important for building a learning community through group discussions: **1) promptness and initiative, 2) quality of posting in terms of relevance and contribution to the learning community, and 3) quantity of posts.**

- Promptness and initiative: Student responds in a timely manner to the discussion questions posted, leaving adequate time for fellow students to reply and engage in a meaningful dialogue about the questions and responses. **Please be kind to your group-mates and do not wait until the last minute to participate in the discussions. (1 point)**
- Quality of posting: Responses to the instructors question should be **at least 3 paragraphs in length** (remember a **paragraph must be no less than 3 sentences long**) and must directly reference either module notes or readings in the formulation of your response. Skimpy responses or responses that do not cite course resources will not receive full credit. I will give you feedback early on so you understand the depth and breadth or expected responses. **(3 points)**
- Quantity of postings: Students engaged in discussions will likely **post multiple times** throughout the open discussion as they dialogue with group-mates to delve deeply into course materials and explore relevant course constructs and research findings. Quantity of postings is considered in relation to quality of postings. In other words, all postings should be meaningful and thoughtful. **(1 point)**

Discussions are asynchronous, which means that you will have time to read and respond at any time during the 1-week window that the discussions are available. You do not have to respond at the same exact time as everyone else in class. **Discussion windows will close at the end of the 1-week period on Sunday evening at 11:00pm.** Refer to the course calendar for “due by” dates. You will NOT be able to make up any missed discussion post except under extraordinary circumstances (as previously defined in this syllabus).

II. Midterm Exam (25 points)

There will be one mid-semester multi-choice/short-answer/essay exam in this course to examine your comprehension of family policy terms, historical underpinnings, conceptual frameworks, and family policy matters. A discussion of the exam and review of key issues will be held prior to the examination.

III. Homework Assignments (10 points)

Abstract and Detailed Outline: 5 points

As noted on the syllabus schedule, please submit a 150-word abstract detailing your paper topic and a brief outline of the tentative contents of your final paper. The abstract/outline will likely change as you research your topic and further develop your ideas. However, this effort will facilitate forward movement with your work and will allow for our continued dialogue. All students are strongly encouraged to meet with me individually about your topic/paper outline.

Letter to Policymaker: 5 points

Select a cause, program, or pending legislation that is of interest to you. Write a 1-page letter to the appropriate public official at the local, state, or federal level to express your views and to ask for his/her support. Mail the letter and turn in a copy to the instructor. As an alternative, talk personally to this public official about your views. Attach his/her business card to your description of your communication (i.e., main points discussed, official's response). An example letter will be offered in class prior to this assignment. If you want to complete this assignment before the due date—especially if the issue is pending in Congress and you want to act in a timely manner—please see me to discuss.

IV. Final Policy Research and Analysis Paper (35points)

- Select a family policy or social problem in need of policy attention. Review the literature relevant to your topic to identify the historical, social, and political issues which might impact your policy topic (e.g., political movements, social trends, philosophies). Provide a description of the policy and activities associated with it and consider the impact of the policy on families (e.g., consider the intended and unintended consequences of your chosen policy for family functioning and well-being). Use the evaluation tools and family policy impact questions provided in class as a framework for conducting this analysis.
- Your paper should be typed, double-spaced (using 12-point font) and up to a maximum of **15 pages** in length (including title page, abstract, and references). **You are required to use a minimum of 10 professional sources (e.g., refereed journal articles, chapters from edited volumes)*.** It is critical that you cite all sources (including government, think tank, and other related websites); understand what plagiarism means and how to avoid it. All citations should be referenced using APA format (6th edition)—if you are not familiar with this format, see me early on for pointers. This paper should be your own work, not a collaborative effort. Acts of plagiarism—whether intentional or unintentional—will be dealt with following GMU policy.

EXAMPLE Format and OUTLINE:

Below is an example format that your research paper might follow; however, recognize that each topic will most likely require additional or alternative subject headers, etc.

- Page 1: Title page—following APA style guidelines
- Page 2: Abstract (150 word summary)
- Pages 3-14: [You might include some of these elements...]
 - Policy Overview: Brief description of the policy under investigation
 - Review of Literature
 - Theoretical framework relevant to the topic
 - Historical and contextual underpinnings related to policy
 - Changing trends in family life/political climate
 - Family values—perspectives from the Right and Left
 - Analysis: Impact of Policy on Families
 - [Theoretical framework guiding analysis]
 - Research findings related to policy evaluation/family impact assessment—intended and unintended consequences for families
 - Discussion and Recommendations for future
- Pages 15: References in APA format (May be single spaced)

***Examples of professional sources (e.g., refereed journal articles, chapters from edited volumes):**

Bogensneider, K., & Corbett, T. (2010). Family Policy: Becoming a field of inquiry and subfield of social policy. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 783-803.

Anderson, E.A., & Feldman, M. (1993). Family-centered health policy. In S. Price & B. Elliott (Eds.), *Vision 2010: Families & health care* (pp. 38-40). Minneapolis, MN: NCFR.

Bubolz, M. M., & Sontag, M. S. (1993). Human ecology theory. In P. Boss, W. Doherty, R. LaRossa, R. W. Schumm, & S. Steinmetz (Eds.), *Sourcebook of family theories and methods: A contextual approach* (pp. 419-448). New York: Plenum.

Cherlin, A., Frogner, B., Ribar, D., & Moffitt, R. (2009). Welfare reform in the mid-2000s: How African Americans and Hispanic families in three cities are faring. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 621, 178-201.

Coltrane, S., & Adams, M. (2003). The social construction of the divorce “problem”: Morality, child victims, and the politics of gender. *Family Relations*, 52, 21-30.

Gais, T., & Weaver, R. K. (2002). State policy choices under welfare reform (Policy Brief No. 22). In I. Sawhill, R. K. Weaver, R. Haskins, & A. Kane. (Eds.), *Welfare reform and beyond: The future of the safety net* (pp. 317-342). Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.

Huang, Z.J., Yu, S., & Ledsky, R. (2006). Health status and health service access and use among children in U.S. immigrant families. *American Journal of Public Health*, 96(4), 634-640;

Kerschner, P. A., & Hirschfield, I. S. (1975). Public policy and aging: Analytic approaches. In D. S. Woodruff & J. E. Birren (Eds.), *Aging: Scientific Perspective and Social Issues* (pp. 391-408). New York: Van Nostrand.

Mason, M. A., Fine, M. A., & Carnochan, S. (2001). Family law in the new millennium: For whose families? *Journal of Family Issues*, 22(7), 859-881.

Course Topics and Calendar

NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as needed. If changes are made, you will be notified of the changes in class or by your university e-mail address.

Week/Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments DUE
MODULE 1: FAMILY LAW & PUBLIC POLICY: INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL UNDERPINNINGS			
WEEK 1: May 18- May 24	<p>MODULE 1: INTRODUCTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AN OVERVIEW OF US FAMILY LAW AND POLICY IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM: Marriage, divorce, child custody, remarriage, stepfamilies, third party visitation, nontraditional families... HISTORICAL UNDERPINNINGS GOVERNMENT & FAMILY RELATIONS— Review of relationship between federal and state governments AND families <p>TO DO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please read over syllabus carefully and ask questions for clarity as needed Test browser, discussion boards, email Introduce yourself to class Review lecture notes and instructor posts. Read/Explore... Post and discuss questions posed on Blackboard (2 entry minimum). Identify policy topic (tentative) 	<p>READ: Syllabus</p> <p>Bogenschneider, pp. ix-80; 121-157; 223-242</p> <p>Mason et al. (2001) article (on BB)</p> <p>EXPLORE: US Constitution: http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution.html VA Constitution: http://constitution.legis.virginia.gov/</p>	<p>DUE 5/24: Post 1 and Response to Post 1</p> <p>DUE 5/24: TENTATIVE POLICY TOPIC—Consider professional interests/goals and the policies and laws that may relate to your interests...forecast what issues will confront future families...</p>

MODULE 2: FAMILY VALUES , SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH, & THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

WEEK 2: May 25- May 31	<p>MODULE 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THE POLITICS OF FAMILY VALUES AND THE STATE’S ROLE IN RELATIONSHIPS: How do values inform family law and policy? • RESEARCH & THEORY AS IT APPLIES TO POLICY: Theoretical frameworks to guide policy development and analysis; Challenges to research-based policymaking <p>TO DO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review lecture notes and instructor posts. • Read/Explore... • Post and discuss questions posed on Blackboard (2 entry minimum). • Complete abstract and paper outline. 	<p>READ: Bogenschneider pp. 191-222 (Optional: Bogenschneider pp. 81-118)</p> <p>Trzcinski, “An ecological perspective on family policy” (on BB)</p> <p>EXPLORE: Policy Institute for Family Impact Seminars</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.familyimpactseminars.org/CLASP.org • http://www.clasp.org/ • http://www.urban.org/ 	<p>DUE 5/31: Post 2 and Response to Post 2</p> <p>DUE 5/31: ABSTRACT AND PAPER OUTLINE ABSTRACT (150 WORDS) Include statement of significance, statistics related to topic, proposed method of analysis, anticipated results, implications for future policymaking</p>
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MODULE 3: FAMILY POLICY EVALUATION AND IMPACT ANALYSIS

WEEK 3: June 1- June 7	<p>MODULE 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAMILY IMPACT ANALYSIS (FIA) <p>TO DO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review lecture notes and instructor posts. • Read/Explore... • Take Midterm Exam • Begin to conduct YOUR policy analysis—Conference with instructor 	<p>READ: Bogenschneider pp. 158-187, 245-293</p> <p>EXPLORE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of FIA <p>National Conference of State Legislatures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.ncsl.org/ 	<p>DUE 6/7: MIDTERM EXAM</p> <p>**Conferences either in-person or via Skype to discuss paper topic and approach (email to make an appointment)</p>
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MODULE 4: VALUING ALL FAMILIES UNDER THE LAW?

APPLYING FIA TO ASSESS INTENDED AND UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF LAWS AND POLICIES FOR ALL FAMILIES

WEEK 3-4:

June 1- June 7

June 8- June 14

MODULE 4: Review examples of FIA:

- **FIA:** Marriage: Influence of the Women's and Gay Rights Movements
- **FIA:** Alternatives to marriage: Domestic partnerships and civil unions
- **FIA:** Divorce and relationship dissolution
- **FIA:** Child rearing and caring: ECE and Head Start; Foster care and kinship care; ICWA
- **FIA:** Immigration and family policy
- **FIA:** Family care: ECCE, family leave, labor standards
- **FIA:** Family care: Aging, Medicaid/ Medicare, and long-term care in America
- **FIA:** Family, community, environment and health outcomes: Social determinants

TO DO:

- Review lecture notes and instructor posts.
- Read/Explore...
- **Draft your policy research paper**

READ:

Polikoff—Entire book

WATCH:

FILM: TYING THE KNOT

EXPLORE websites:

- Unmarried Equality:
<http://www.unmarried.org/>
- US Supreme Court Amicus Briefs on Gay Marriage:
<http://www.supremecourt.gov/ObergefelIHodges/AmicusBriefs/>
- National Conference of State Legislatures:
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/civil-unions-and-domestic-partnership-statutes.aspx>
- Institute for Women's Policy Research: <http://www.iwpr.org/>
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services: <http://www.cms.gov/>
- RWJF:
<http://www.commissiononhealth.org/WhatDrivesHealth.aspx>

DUE 6/14: FIRST DRAFT POLICY RESEARCH PAPER

Feedback on first draft papers will be given ASAP.

Continue working on your paper, attending to APA style guidelines (see the [Online Writing Lab](#))

Make sure you meet the peer-review journal article requirements. See the syllabus for specifics.

MODULE 5: PARTICIPATING IN THE POLICY PROCESS

WEEK 5:
June 15- June 20

MODULE 5:

- **PARTICIPATING IN THE POLICY PROCESS**

Influencing the future of family law and policy—The role of educators/advocates

TO DO:

- Review lecture notes and instructor posts.
- Read/Explore...
- **Finalize research Paper**
- **Write a letter to a policymaker**
- **Evaluate the Course**

READ:

Bogensneider pp. 324-391

EXPLORE:

[Council on Contemporary Families](#)

[National Council on Family Relations](#)

Letter writing websites:

<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Letter-to-the-Mayor-of-Your-City>

<http://usgovinfo.about.com/od/thepoliticalsystem/a/meetreps.htm>

DUE 6/20: Final Policy Research Paper

DUE 6/20: Letter to a Policymaker

DUE 6/20: Course Evaluations

HDFS 401
Assignment Rubric for Final Paper (35 points possible)

NCFR Content Area: Family Law and Public Policy, to include an understanding of the legal issues, policies, and law influencing the well-being of families.

Name:

	No Evidence	Beginning (Limited Evidence)	Developing (Clear Evidence)	Accomplished (Clear, convincing, substantial evidence)	SCORE
CRITERIA					
I. Policy Overview: Provides a comprehensive overview of the selected family policy topic and relevant historical, social, political, economic climate surrounding policy. Student should use a minimum of three separate sources in this section (2-3 pp.) (8 points)	Does not include a comprehensive overview of policy topic (0)	Includes some discussion of the policy topics as defined but uses fewer than three sources (1-3)	Provides a discussion of the policy topic as defined and cites at least three peer-reviewed empirical articles. However, section may not be well-integrated or necessary details are not included. (4-6)	Provides a well-integrated, thoughtful discussion of the policy topic and policy climate and cites three or more peer-reviewed empirical articles. (6-8)	
II. Utilizes family theory or conceptual framework to guide investigation: Applies at least one family theory or conceptual framework in guiding policy analysis, using at least one theory-related source (1-2 pp.) (5 points)	Does not discuss any family theories or conceptual frame (0)	Attempts to apply family theory and/or uses less than one source (1-2)	Applies one family theory or conceptual frame using less than one source to explain the issue (3-4)	Successfully applies one or more family theories or conceptual framework using 1-2 sources to explain the issue (4-5)	

III. Using FIA, examines the intended and unintended consequences of policy for family well-being: Provides a clear analysis of impact of policy on family well-being. Uses 1-2 additional sources (2-3pp.). (7 points)	Does not provide an analysis of policy impacts(0)	Attempts to discuss policy impacts but includes limited discussion and/or uses fewer than one additional source (1-2)	Provides some discussion of policy impacts and/or uses fewer than two additional sources. (3-5)	Provides an in-depth discussion of policy impacts and uses two or more additional sources. (5-7)	
IV. Explores policy alternatives: Provides a clear discussion of possible policy alternatives to ameliorate unintended outcomes of policy for families and to promote family well-being. Uses a minimum of 1-2 additional sources (2-3pp.). (7 points)	Does not discuss any family policy recommendations (0)	Attempts discuss family-based policy alternatives and/or uses less than one source (1-2)	Provides some discussion of policy alternatives using less than one source to explain the issue (3-5)	Successfully provides an in-depth discussion of family policy alternatives using 1-2 sources to explain the issue (5-7)	
V. APA formatting: Student cites all articles used using correct APA formatting for both in-text citations and reference list. (5 points)	Does not provide references and/or in-text citations (0)	References and in-text citations are not in APA format (1-2)	References and in-text citations are in APA format but they include more than two minor errors (3-4)	References and in-text citations are in APA format and they contain no more than two minor errors (4-5)	
VI. Grammar and Spelling: Student's paper is error free. (3 points)	Contains more than 10 errors in spelling and grammar (0)	Contains five to ten spelling or mechanical errors (1)	Contains three to five spelling or mechanical errors (2)	Contains less than two spelling or mechanical errors (3)	

Total points _____