# Essay

A#13 – Due: noon, Friday, 12/09/19 (First Submission)

This course explores the development of federal social welfare programming, focussing on policies for management of the workforce and for poverty alleviation, and aims to answer questions concerning four interrelated aspects of these policies’ development:

THEMES

• changes in American workforce and poverty ideologies (social values related to, and understandings concerning methods of, workforce management and poverty alleviation);

• evolution of organizational capacity to mount social welfare programs (the mechanics of policy development, public and private sector);

• partisan politics’ impacts in shaping social welfare policy; and

• social movements’ impacts in shaping social welfare policy.

The course provides you an opportunity to master the chronology of the development of American social welfare policy (economic, ideological, statutory milestones from “English Poor Law” to “Ending Welfare as We Know It”) and to develop your own position on what factors are most significant in driving that development and on the implications of choices in this area for American society. The purpose of your work on this essay is to speed those processes of mastery and position development, by asking you to articulate your reasoning and findings on an issue you select in this field.

## Assignment

Identify and explore a question concerning the U.S. system of “welfare” or “social provision” broadly understood, working within one or more of the four themes listed above. The basic criteria for an acceptable question for this project:

QUESTION

• you are asking an **historical** question

• directed to shedding light on the system of **social provision** in the U.S.

• that is founded in issues raised in **course readings**

• and can be answered using **critical** (i.e., secondary) sources

## Parameters

• 4,000 words (exclusive of notes)

• A minimum of 10 sources, of which –

> A minimum of 3 sources are course readings from different scholars

> A minimum of 5 sources are of your own selection directly relevant to your specific problem

> Acceptable sources are scholarly books and articles (e.g., JSTOR)

> “Background” sources and “ephemeral” sources (newspaper articles, book reviews) may be cited, *in addition* to your ten scholarly sources.

• Adequate citation, correctly presented

Chicago style. See <https://libguides.gwu.edu/c.php?g=258673&p=1727871>

You may also use course syllabus listings as models.

## Format

### Abstract (cover page)

Provide a concise statement of

**1. Scholarly context**

How do the (three or more) course sources that you have relied on in developing your essay understand the USWS ? Consider: what does each scholar have to say about how the system is structured, its underlying values, its goals, its function with the society, factors that influence its shape and development over time. What issues or questions has this work raised for you ?

**2. Analytic question**

(a) What USWS question does your essay explore ? (Please check bullet-point lists, page 1.)

(b) How does this question connect with the scholarly conversation you outline in (1), above ?

(c) What conclusions do you reach ?

(d) How do these conclusions connect with the scholarly conversation you outline in (1) ?

**3. Outline of Argument**

(Suggestion: review your readings from Booth, Chapters 7-9, Sessions 4 and 5)

What analytic points does your essay present in reporting on your project and demonstrating the bases of your conclusions ? State these points here in the order in which you development them in the essay.

### Essay (4000 words, excluding notes)

Provide the following

**1. Presentation of analytic question** (opening ¶ or section)

(a) Statement of question addressed

(b) Statement of connection of this question to the USWS issues raised in the course sources you rely on

(c) Statement of the contribution you make (your conclusions and their connection to the scholarly conversation)

(d) Outline of your argument

**2. Scholarly context**

(a) Your description of the USWS

(b) Your discussion of the understandings of, analytic approaches to, and findings concerning the USWS of at least three scholars among course readings.

**3. Presentation of analysis**

Develop the points of your argument. Check that the order of this development matches your presentation of it in (1.d.)

**4. Reflections, implications**

(a) Summarize your argument

(b) Restate your conclusions

(c) Reflect on your conclusions. Consider, e.g., What is their larger significance ? What do they imply about USWS objectives, functions, outcomes, etc. ? What further questions do your findings raise ?

**Citation**

Adequate citation to document your argument. Chicago style.

# Evaluation

• Essay addresses a course theme (p. 1)

• ideologies

• organizational capacity

• politics

• social movements

• Analytic question conforms to requirements (p. 1)

• **historical** question

• sheds light on the system of **social provision** in the U.S.

• founded in issues raised in **course readings**

• answered using **critical** (i.e., secondary) sources

• Essay abstract is provided which states concisely

• scholarly context

• analytic question

• argument outline

• Essay reflects a basic understanding of the broad outlines of USWS development

• Competent reading of course sources relied upon

• Cogent statement of issues raised by course sources and of the connection between the analytic question dealt with and those issues

• Analytic question which is specific and excludes or directly addresses assumptions

• Competent selection of additional sources directly relevant to the selected problem

• Competent reading of selected sources

• Well-reasoned analysis. Connections between identified effects and asserted causes are specified. Complexity of motive, causation, outcome is recognized. Alternative interpretations are considered where relevant.

• Orderly presentation of analysis

• Conclusions reached provide insight into USWS

• Adequate scholarly support is provided in footnotes using proper Chicago citation.