

Case Western Reserve University

PUBLIC POLICY AND AGING

GERO 496, also
cross-listed as:
Anthropology 498;
Bioethics 496;
Epidemiology and
Biostatistics 408
History 480;
Nursing 479 & 579;
Political Science 480;
Public Health 408;
and Sociology 496.

Spring, 2010
Instructor:
Bob Binstock, Ph.D.

This course meets in the School of Nursing, Room NOA-250, 4:00-6:30 p.m., every Wednesday (with one exception) from January 13 through April 21, 2010. The exception is March 10, during the "Spring Break." The required readings are preassembled for students by the instructor and will be handed out in class.

The instructor is available to meet with students with disabilities to discuss academic accommodations. In addition, the University's Coordinator of Disability Services can be contacted at 368-5230.

The objectives of the course are to enable students to: (1) obtain an introductory sense of social aspects of aging that are relevant to public policy; (2) gain some familiarity with the underlying political processes through which U.S. public policies are adopted and implemented (and not adopted and implemented), and how they shape the substance of policies; (3) learn the political features, implications, and political contexts of the major policies affecting older persons in the United States; (4) have an understanding of the political behavior of older people and old-age-based interest groups, and their impact on politicians and public policy; and (5) become familiar with the major problems and challenges involving old-age policies in the twenty-first century, and the policy options and political issues involved in dealing with those challenges.

There will be a mid-term exam and a final exam. There will not be a term paper. Although only the required readings for the course are listed below, most of these readings contain a wealth of literature references for students who wish to pursue selected topics in greater depth. In addition, the instructor will serve as a resource for additional literature as requested. Material presented in class sessions will complement the required readings. Some concepts and information will be introduced in class, only.

PART I: INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW

Required Reading (2 weeks)

“Preface to the Paperback Edition” (2008), and “Baby Boomers and the Merchants of Doom,” Ch. 1, pp. 1-23, in James H. Schulz and Robert H. Binstock, *Aging Nation: The Economics and Politics of Growing Older in America* (2006).

U.S. Administration on Aging, *A Profile of Older Americans: 2008*, 15 pp.

PART II: POLICIES ON AGING AND THE CONDITIONS THAT THEY ADDRESS

Required Reading (6 weeks)

Week 3

“The Search for Security with Dignity,” Ch. 3, pp. 43-63, in Schulz and Binstock.

“Dealing with Risk,” Ch. 4, pp. 65-86, in Schulz and Binstock.

Week 4

“The Company Pension: Altruism or Self-Interest?” Ch. 5, pp. 87-109, in Schulz and Binstock.

“The Pension Lottery: Personal Pension Accounts,” Ch. 6, pp. 111-135, in Schulz and Binstock.

Week 5

Rix, Sara E., “Employment and Aging” (Ch. 14) in R.H. Binstock & L.K. George, eds., *Handbook of Aging and the Social Sciences*, 7th edition (San Diego: Academic Press, forthcoming 2010), 22 pp.

Clark, R.L., et al., “The Economic Well-Being of Older Americans” (2004), pp. 34-54.

Week 6

Moon, Marilyn, “Organization and Financing of Health Care” (Chapter 21), in Binstock & George, 6th edition (2006), pp. 380-396.

Lieberman, Trudy, “Part D From Outer Space,” *The Nation*, January 3, 2006.

Colliver, Victoria, “Medicare Drug Plans Are Changing – and Costing More,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 8, 2007.

Hoffman, Jan, "Doggedly Persistent, Untying Medicare Knots for the Elderly," *New York Times*, December 18, 2007.

Week 7

Stone, Robyn , "Emerging Issues in Long-Term Care," (chapter 22) in Binstock & George, 6th edition (2006), pp. 397-418.

Golant, Steven M., "The Changing Residential Environments of Older People" (Ch. 15) in Binstock & George, 7th edition (forthcoming 2010), 20 pp.

Week 8

O'Shaughnessy, Carol V., "The Aging Services Network: Broad Mandate and Increasing Responsibilities," *Public Policy and Aging Report*, 18, no. 3 (2008), pp. 1, & 3-18.

Kapp, Marshall B., "Aging and the Law," (Ch. 23) in Binstock & George, 6th edition, pp.417-433.

Greenhouse, Linda, "A Supreme Court Victory for Older Workers," *New York Times*, June 30, 2008.

Coehn, Adam, "After 40 Years, Age Discrimination Still Gets Second Class Treatment," *New York Times*, November 7, 2009.

PART III: THE POLITICS OF POLICIES ON AGING

Required Reading (1 week)

Week 9

"A Gerontocracy? The Politics of Aging," Ch. 9, pp. 201-222, in Schulz and Binstock.

Binstock, Robert H., "Older Voters and the 2008 Election," *The Gerontologist*, 49 (2009), pp. 697-701.

Stark, Karl, "AARP IS Drug Plan Advocate, Marketer: Some See Conflict in Dual Role," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 12, 2007.

Capitol Hill Watch, "Sen. Grassley Questions AARP About Lack of Catastrophic Coverage in Health Plans," *Kaiser Daily Health Policy Report*, November 3, 2008.

Pear, Robert, "AARP Orders investigation Concerning Its Marketing," *New York Times*, November 19, 2008.

Cohn, Gary, and Preston Darrell, "AARP's Stealth Fees Often Sting Seniors with Costlier Insurance," *Bloomberg.com*, December 4, 2008.

PART IV: EMERGENT TRENDS AND ISSUES

Required Reading (5 weeks)

Week 10

Iglehart, John K., "The New Medicare Prescription-Drug Benefit – A Pure Power Play," *New England Journal of Medicine*, 350 (2004), pp. 826-833.

The White House, "America's Seniors and Health Insurance Reform: Protecting Coverage and Strengthening Medicare," Retrieved from <http://www.healthreform.gov/reports/seniors/index.html> on November 16, 2009.

Blumenauer, Earl, "My Near Death Panel Experience," *New York Times*, November 15, 2009, p. 12wk.

Harris, Gardner, "A Heated Debate Is Dividing Generations in AARP," *New York Times*, October 4, 2009.

Calmes, Jackie, "AARP Says Its Chore Is Educating Members on Bill's Benefits," *New York Times*, October 14, 2009.

Eggen, Dan, "AARP: Reform Advocate and Insurance Salesman," *Washington Post*, October 27, 2009.

Turner, Grace-Marie, "AARP's Tacit Endorsement of Medicare Cuts Lines Its Pockets, But Shortchanges Seniors," *chicagotribune.com*, November 5, 2009.

Montgomery, Lori, "Proposed Long-Term Insurance Program Raises Questions," *Washington Post*, October 27, 2009.

Week 11

"Framing Issues for an Aging Nation," Ch. 10, pp. 223-235 in Schulz and Binstock.

Wehner, Peter H., "Some Thoughts on Social Security," memorandum from the President's Director of Strategic Initiatives to conservative allies, January 3, 2005 (Retrieved January 7, 2005, from <<http://www.talkingpointsmemo.com/archives/004348.php>>

Krugman, Paul, "The Iceberg Cometh," *New York Times*, January 11, 2005, p. A27.

Pear, Robert, "In Ads, AARP Criticizes Plan on Privatizing: Campaign Focuses on Social Security," *New York Times*, December 30, 2004, p. A14.

Wall Street Journal editorial, "AARP's Tax Increase," (January 5, 2005), p. A11.

Munnell, Alicia H., "A Bird's Eye View of the Social Security Debate," *Issue in Brief* No. 25 of the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, December 2004.

Ball, Robert M., "The Social Security Protection Plan: How We Can Cope – calmly – with the System's Long-Term Shortfall," January, 2006.

Week 12

Greider, William, "Looting Social Security," *The Nation*, February 11, 2009

Walker, David M., "The Peterson Foundation Responds," *The Nation*, February 13, 2009.

Greider, William, "William Greider Responds," *The Nation*, February 13, 2009.

Grim, Ryan, "Bernanke Channels Willie Sutton in Assault on Social Security: 'That's Where the Money Is,'" *Huffington Post*, December 3, 2009.

Calmes, Jackie, & Hulse, Carl, "Top Democrats Are Pushing for New Strategies on Federal Deficit," *New York Times*, November 1, 2009, p. A25.

Hulse, Carl, "Baucus: Don't Outsource My Committee," *New York Times*, December 10, 2009.

Povich, Elaine S., and Pianin, Eric, "Support Grows for Tackling Nation's Debt," *Washington Post*, December 31, 2009.

Greider, William, "Looting Social Security, Part 2," *The Nation*, January 4, 2010.

Pérez-Peña, Richard, "Sourcing of Article Awkward for Paper," *New York Times*, January 6, 2010.

Week 13

Agnew, Julie R., Szykman, Lisa, Utkus, Stephen P., and Young, Jean A., ""Do Financial Literacy and Mistrust Affect 401(k) Participation?" *Issue Brief* No. 7-17, Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, November, 2007.

Walsh, Mary Williams, "U.S. Insurer of Pensions Has Lost \$82 Billion," *New York Times*, October 23, 2008.

Munnell, Alicia H., Aubry, Jean-Pierre, and Muldoon, Dan, "The Financial Crisis and Private Defined Benefit Plans," *Issue Brief* 8-18, Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, November, 2008.

Munnell, Alicia H., and Muldoon, Dan, "Are Retirement Savings Too Exposed to Market Risk?" *Issue Brief* No. 8-16, Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, October, 2008.

Pear, Robert, "U.S. Ruling Backs Benefit Cut at 65 in Retiree Plans," *New York Times*, December 27, 2007, p. A1.

Milt Freudenheim, "Two Insurers Increase Bet on Medicare," *New York Times*, December 5, 2007.

Duhigg, Charles, "Scrutiny for Insurers of the Aged," *New York Times*, October 3, 2007.

Savage, Terry, "Long-Term Care Insurance Rises: Hikes By 3 Top Firms Shaking Up Market," *Chicago Sun-Times*, September 18, 2008.

Glickman, Howard, "The Role of Private Insurance in Financing Long-Term Care," *Issue Brief No. 7-13*, Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, September, 2007.

Glickman, Howard, "How Can We Improve Long-Term Care Financing," *Issue Brief No. 8-8*, Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, June, 2008..

Week 14

Callahan, Daniel, "Setting Limits: A Response," *The Gerontologist*, 34 (1994), pp. 393-398.

Binstock, Robert H., "Age-Based Rationing of Health Care," in David Eckerdt, ed., *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Aging* (New York: Macmillan Reference, 2003), pp. 24-28.

Mehlman, Maxwell J., Binstock, Robert H., Juengst, Eric T., Ponsaran, Roselle S., and Whitehouse, P.J., "Anti-Aging Medicine: Can Consumers Be Better Protected?" *The Gerontologist* (2004), Vol. 44, pp. 304-310.

Juengst, E.T., Binstock, R.H., Mehlman, M.J., & Post, S.G., "Antiaging Research and the Need for Public Dialogue," *Science*, vol. 299 (2003), P. 1323.