1. Introduction
   1. This dissertation is about the role Congress plays in social policy creation. There is a tremendous amount of theoretical understanding of how Congress operates and also how the American welfare state has developed. I think combining some of the Congressional insights with the welfare state insights could advance both our understanding of the legislative process and the American welfare state.
   2. Broadly what I am interested in is how legislators, under changing congressional constraints, are able to create policy and put together winning coalitions. Within that, I think it is important to both look at enacted policy choices in addition to the alternatives that were *not* enacted at a given point and trace how these related policies interact over time and how interests shaped the policy process. While policy enactment is important, the forces that change policies and the evolution of policies over time are also important.
2. Evolution of Thinking in this Project
   1. One constant has been how Congressional constraints shape policy, but what has changed a lot has been the scope and main unit of analysis.
   2. Originally was focused pretty specifically on just hidden polices and how to measure them, some parts on how hiddenness changed over time.
   3. Focus moved to how individual members, interests, and congressional constraints come together to pick a policy from an agenda of policy alternatives.
   4. The distinction between traditional and non-traditional or hidden and non-hidden, while still meaningful as far as describing policy areas go, are not so much the quantity of interest anymore.
3. Goals of project
   1. I think the idea goal is to trace a policy area over time and show which interests and constraints matter at different points in the legislative history of the programs.
   2. This sort of dissertation has the potential to provide a very rich and holistic account of how social policies are made. By identifying key constraints, legislative leaders, and interests that both helped create a policy and tracing how these forces change, or drop out over time (as well as how new forces gain influence), we can really deepen the scholarly understanding of how congress translates preferences into coalitions and into policy.
4. Contributions
   1. I think one major contribution that has already been mentioned is the careful and deliberate merging of the American welfare state literature with the Congressional literature.
   2. A second contribution is examining policies as a group. This has been done a bit in the literature with Jacob Hacker's divided welfare state and a typology for this sort of analysis was in the first Howard book where he compares the hidden and visible versions of the same "type of program." In general though, collecting a priori what we think
5. Issues moving forward: I think the `biggest' issues with the prospectus as it stands are in the research design. While I think the frame work is there for a very rigorous
   1. Measurements
      1. As I've said, earlier drafts of this prospectus focused much more tightly on developing exactly the hidden welfare state was, what the various terms meant, to whom is it hidden, and just how hidden various policies were. I felt it important to develop quantitative measurements with consistent time series to ground that sort of analysis. One thing we might discuss is whether or not these sorts of measurements are still necessary and whether or not I should delve more strongly into a purely qualitative dissertation.
   2. Case selection
      1. The goal of the case selection is to have two groups of cases that both represent the choice structures for that agenda item. I would also like the type of policy to be analogous across policy type. For instance, ADC is direct spending and so is public housing. While it may not seem crucial to have the same tools for both policy areas, I think that having the same policy tool for both policy area increases the external validity of the project and better fits with what Pierson lists (and I relay) as the main ways the federal government creates policy.
      2. There are two issues I currently see with the case selection. The first being that food stamps are not really viewed as an income support policy in the same way the EITC / AFDC are. Both Joe and Andy have suggested moving to the minimum wage for the third program in the income support area, and I like that, but I wouldn't know what would be an appropriate comparison