

PUBP 814: Social Policy—An Interdisciplinary Perspective

University of Saskatchewan Campus	
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Office Hours:	Thursday, 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM
Office Location:	Diefenbaker 150
Term:	Term 2 (winter)
Room:	Diefenbaker Theatre
Time:	Thursdays, 5:30 to 8:30 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This interdisciplinary graduate course will offer a comparative and historical discussion of major social policy concepts and issues. More specifically, the course will provide comparative insight on key aspects of the Canadian social policy experience. Such a comparative approach will draw on the best available scholarship to make the students aware of major similarities and differences between Canada and other advanced industrial countries. Finally, the course will explore issues like population aging and “new social risks” that shape contemporary social policy debates in Canada and abroad. Overall, the course will seek to integrate a review of the best literature on social policy development with a balanced overview of key Canadian and international debates on welfare state reform.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- 1) To adopt a comparative and historical perspective on social policy development;
- 2) To discuss the emergence and the current transformations of the modern welfare state;
- 3) To explore the role of social programmes in Canadian politics and society;
- 4) To stimulate critical thinking and writing skills for public policy research and administration.

EVALUATION

% of the final grade

Briefing Note (due date: 11/02)

15%

Write a 1000-1200 word briefing note on the contemporary EI (Employment Insurance) debate in Canada. Longer briefing notes will be rejected. Detailed instructions about how to write a briefing note will be posted on PAWS.

Group Presentation (25/02)

10%

Provide an overview of the debate on EI reform in Canada by discussing the briefing notes that you and your two group members submitted two weeks earlier. Each group will speak for ten minutes, followed by a short question period.

Policy Report (due date: 01/04)

40%

Prepare a policy report on pension reform in Canada. Focusing on the pension debate that has taken place since the 2008 financial crisis while providing relevant comparative, historical, and institutional background information, the report should define a major pension problem we face (e.g. demographic aging, limited private pension coverage), explain what the available policy alternatives are and, finally, make a systematic case for one of these alternatives. Write between 3000

and 3500 words, including notes and references. Longer reports will be rejected. The bibliography must contain at least six references. The paper must be typed, but cannot be submitted electronically; staple or paper clip pages together.

“Take-Home” Synthesis (due date: 12/04) 30%

Two essay questions dealing with key issues discussed in class. Write no more than 1200 words per question.

Informed Participation 5%

Students must attend the lectures regularly, read the assigned material before each lecture, and participate in class discussion.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Without compelling reasons, late assignments will not be accepted and will result in a mark of zero.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

All students who have special needs are encouraged to register with Disability Services for Students (DSS). Access to most services and programs provided by DSS is restricted to students who have registered with the office. Once you have registered, please contact the professor to discuss accommodations.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND CONDUCT

Ensuring that you understand and follow the principles of academic integrity and conduct as laid out in the University of Regina’s Graduate Calendar and the University of Saskatchewan’s Guidelines for Academic Conduct is vital to your success in graduate school. Ensuring that your work is your own and reflects both your own ideas and those of others incorporated in your work is important: ensuring that you acknowledge the ideas, words, and phrases of others that you use is a vital part of the scholarly endeavour. If you have any questions at all about academic integrity in general or about specific issues, contact your course instructor and to discuss your questions.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week 1 (07/01): What is Social Policy?

Readings: O’Connor, 2002; Rice and Prince, 2000: 1-53.

Week 2 (14/01): Social Policy in Canada: An Introduction (1)

Reading: Rice and Prince, 2000: 54-156.

Week 3 (21/01): Social Policy in Canada: An Introduction (2)

Reading: Rice and Prince, 2000: 157-256.

Week 4 (28/01): Understanding Welfare Regimes

Readings: Esping-Andersen, 1990: 9-34; Bonoli, 1997; O’Connor et al., 1999: 1-28.

Week 5 (04/02): Public *and* Private?

Readings: Béland and Gran, 2008; Hacker, 2004; Street, 2008.

Week 6 (11/02): Political Institutions and Social Policy: The Case of Federalism

Readings: Obinger et al., 2005: 1-46; Théret, 1999; Noël, 1999. ****Briefing note due*

Week 7 (18/02): Reading Week (No Lecture)

Week 8 (25/02): The Politics of Retrenchment: Unemployment and Social Assistance

Readings: Bashevkin, 2000; Hale, 1998; Boychuk, 2006. ***Group presentation

Week 9 (04/03): Development and Social Policy in the Global South (Michael Kpessa)

Readings: Kwon et al, 2009; Adésinà, 2009; Mkandawire, 2001.

Week 10 (11/03): A Comparative Perspective on Retrenchment and Restructuring (1)

Reading: Gilbert, 2002: 3-98.

Week 11 (18/03): A Comparative Perspective on Retrenchment and Restructuring (2)

Reading: Gilbert, 2002: 99-196.

Week 12 (25/03): Aging and Pension Reform

Readings: Béland and Myles, 2005; Wiseman and Ycas, 2006; Denton and Spencer, 1999.

Week 13 (01/04): New Social Risks, New Social Policies?

Reading: Bonoli, 2005; Jenson, 2004. ***Policy report due

***Distribution of the questions for the "take home" (due date: 12/04).

READING LIST (underlined books available at the U of S bookstore; journal articles available through the PAWS system; other papers and book chapters available for photocopy in the graduate room)

Adésinà, Jimí O. 2009. "Social policy in sub-Saharan Africa: a glance in the rear-view mirror," *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 18(S1): S37-S51.

Bashevkin, Sylvia. 2000. "Rethinking Retrenchment: North American Social Policy during the Early Clinton and Chrétien Years," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 33(1): 2000: 7-36.

Béland, Daniel and Brian Gran. 2008. "Introduction: Public and Private?" in Daniel Béland and Brian Gran (eds), *Public and Private Social Policy*. Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Béland, Daniel and John Myles. 2005. "Stasis amidst Change: Canadian Pension Reform in an Age of Retrenchment." In Giuliano Bonoli and Toshimitsu Shinkawa (eds), *Ageing and Pension Reform around the World*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing: 252-272.

Bonoli, Giuliano. 2005. "The Politics of the New Social Policies: Providing Coverage against New Social Risks in Mature Welfare States," *Policy & Politics*, 33(3), 431-449.

Bonoli, Giuliano. 1997. "Classifying Welfare States: A Two-Dimension Approach," *Journal of Social Policy* 26: 351-372.

Boychuk, Gerard W. 2006. "Slouching toward the Bottom? Provincial Social Assistance Provision in Canada, 1980-2000" in Kathryn Harrison (ed.), *Racing to the Bottom?* Vancouver: UBC Press: 157-192.

Denton, Frank and Byron G. Spencer. 1999. *Population Aging and its Economic Costs: A survey of the Issues and Evidence*. Hamilton: Quantitative Studies in Economics and Population Research Report Number 340.
<<http://ideas.repec.org/p/mcm/qsepr/340.html>>

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press: 9-34.

Gilbert, Neil. 2002. *Transformation of the Welfare State: The Silent Surrender of Public Responsibility*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hacker, Jacob S. 2004. "Privatizing Risk without Privatizing the Welfare State: The Hidden Politics of Social Policy Retrenchment in the United States," *American Political Science Review* 98(2): 243-60.

Hale, Geoffrey E. 1998. "Reforming Employment Insurance: Transcending the Politics of the Status Quo," *Canadian Public Policy*, 24(4): 429-451.

Jenson, Jane. 2004. "Canada's New Social Risks: Directions for a New Social Architecture." Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks. <http://www.cprn.com/documents/31815_en.pdf>

Kwon Huck-ju et al. 2009. "Introduction: Social Policy and Economic Development in Late Industrializers," *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 18(S1): S1-S11.

Mkandawire, Thandika. 2001. "Thinking about developmental states in Africa," *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 25: 289-314.

Noël, Alain. 1999. "Is Decentralization Conservative?" in R. Young (ed.) *Stretching the Federation: The Art of the State in Canada*. Kingston: Queen's Institute of Intergovernmental Relations.

Obinger, Herbert et al. 2005. "Introduction: Federalism and the Welfare State" in Herbert Obinger et al. (eds), *Federalism and the Welfare State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

O'Connor, Julia S. 2002. "Understanding the Welfare State and Welfare States: Theoretical Perspectives" in Douglas Bear (ed.), *Political Sociology: Canadian Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002: 110-128.

O'Connor, Julia S., Ann Shola Orloff, and Sheila Shaver. 1999. *States, Markets, Families: Gender, Liberalism and Social Policy in Australia, Canada, Great Britain and the United States*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1-28.

Rice, James J. and Michael J. Prince. 2000. *Changing Politics of Canadian Social Policy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Street, Debra. 2008. "Balancing Acts: Trends in the Public-Private Mix in Health Care" in Daniel Béland and Brian Gran (eds), *Public and Private Social Policy: Health and Pension Policies in a New Era*. Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Théret, Bruno. 1999. "Regionalism and Federalism," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 23(3): 479-512.

Wiseman, Michael and Martynas Yčas. 2008. "The Canadian Safety Net for the Elderly," *Social Security Bulletin*, 68(2): 53-67. <www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/ssb/v68n2/v68n2p53.pdf>