SOCIAL POLICY
(SW) {MSSP}

Master of Science in Social Policy Courses (MSSP)

SM 514. (PSCI414) Comparative Politics of the Welfare State.

This class explores the origins, development, and possible futures of social policy regimes in the industrialized countries, in the context of broader political and historical trends. Topics include pensions, health care, and poverty alleviation; "families" of welfare states; the relationship between labor markets and social policy; feminist and Marxist critiques of welfare states and welfare state studies. Open to graduate students and qualified undergraduates with permission of the instructor.

628. Policy: Analysis of Issues, Strategy and Process. (C) Prerequisite(s): Enrolled in MSSP program or permission of instructor.

Policy analysis requires an understanding of social problems/social issues and the processes by which policy is developed and implemented. Critical skills in many policy frameworks include: problem definition and analysis, review of relevant research, identification of possible actions, implementation and evaluation, and fiscal analysis. Competency in written and oral communication is also essential. To develop these and related skills, this course utilizes as a base a dynamic social problem analysis framework that addresses issues of equity, equality and adequacy. It also examines multiple theoretical and analytical perspectives. Through the review of contemporary and historical social policy debates and provisions, selected case examples and policy briefs, this course provides students with an understanding of the policy roles of the legislative and executive branches of government, including goal setting, policy rulemaking and enactment, allocation of resources, financing, regulation, and implementation. The policy process at state and local levels of government will also be addressed. The primary focus is on U.S. policy although global policies will be discussed when relevant.

629. Research and Evaluation Design. (B) Prerequisite(s): Enrolled in MSSP program or permission of instructor.

Research and Evaluation Design introduces social research methods in the context of social policy and program evaluation. The course provides a conceptual and practical understanding in the design of experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental research and in the application of quantitiative and qualitative methods. Students learn about the application of the research process and skills in all phases of assessing a social policy and developing a social program, including needs assessment, implementation analysis, and evaluation of policy or program effectiveness. Students learn to be critical and informed consumers of research and to apply quidelines of research ethics in social policy settings.

630. Quantitative Reasoning/Social Statistics. (A) Prerequisite(s): Enrolled in MSSP program or permission of instructor.

The primary goals of this course are (1) to provide students with a solid understanding of the logic of social science research as well as (2) o provide students with an introduction to a broad range of statistical methods commonly used in social science research. The first portion of the semester concentrates on defining research problems, research design (including sampling, measurement, and causal inference), and assessing research quality. The latter portion of the semester focuses upon data analysis including descriptive statistics, measures of association for categorical and continuous variables, introduction to t-tests, ANOVA and regression, and the language of data analysis. Students will learn how to choose and apply statistical tools to data sources, how to interpret quantitative studies, and will gain experience using SPSS - a statistical software package..

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631. Law and Social Policy. (B) Prerequisite(s): Must be registered in Masters in Social Policy program or permission of instructor.

This course introduces students to the basics of the American legal system, focusing on the interplay between litigation and social policy. Students will learn how law, and particularly case law, is made, how to read case law and evaluate precedent, legal reasoning and argument. This course will utilize various teaching methods including introduction to the "Socratic" lecturing method which is frequently utilized in the study of law. Students will also study the structure of court systems at both state and federal levels as well as the litigation process and the role of law and courts in shaping and addressing social policy issues. Students will also learn the basics of several areas of substantive law, with an eye toward consideration of how that law has been, and can be, used to effect social change.

632. Capstone Seminar. (B) Prerequisite(s): Enrolled in MSSP program.

The focus of the Capstone Seminar is three-fold: 1) to enhance student integration of the theory and practice of social policy analysis; 2) to enhance the student's competencies in the written and oral communication processes and procedures necesary for the policy world; and 3) to ensure basic knowledge about federal budget processes, stakeholder roles, and inter-organizational collaboration. Capstone II consists of an intensive, multi-week policy internship that is selected through a consultative process involving the student, MSSP advisors, internship coordinator/advisor, and mentors/supervisors at potential sites. The internship provides an opportunity for the student to expand horizons beyond the academic. It serves as a medium to integrate classroom learning with experiences in policy making activity.

668. Economics for Social Policy. (A) Corequisite(s): Students must register for lecture section (001) and ALL 4 corresponding seminar sections (301-304).

This course provides students with theory and tools from the field of economics that are useful for the field of social policy, such as: 1) critical macroeconomic and microeconomic concepts for social policy formation and anaylsis; 2) information about the Congressional budget process and federal budget, U.S. and global monetary policy, economic measurement indices, and tax policy in relation to social policy values of equity, equality and adequacy; 3) how to apply cost-benefit analysis and/or cost-effectiveness analysis to policy proposals; and 4) the role of nonprofit organizations in the provision of social services and programs that are mandated by federal legislation.

670. Education, Society, and Social Policy. (B)

This course is concerned with interrogating the dualism of schools and society that has been an on-going discourse in philosophy, research, and policy. In education policy, in particular, the question of the educative experiences that go on beyond schooling have been slow to be taken up and often relegated to public and social policy. And due to the siloes of policymaking and implementation there has been very little dialogue or collaborative design between education and social policy, leaving major gaps in the experience and process of education and human development. This course will begin by looking at how educational philosophy and theory has taken up this dualism beginning with Nietzche, Dewey, Durkheim, and Marx, through Ivan Illich, Larry Cremin, Jean Lave, Edmund Gordon, and Herve Varenne. Then, we will survey various social and educational research that examine the various spaces outside of schooling that matter for human learning and development including the Coleman Report, and work on poverty, education, and human development. The third part of the course will explore both actual and proposed policy models to address a much broader understanding of education such as Head Start, the Harlem Children's Zone, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, The Broader Bolder Approach, and other supplementary and comprehensive educational services and

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710. Democratizing Data: Analytics for Social Change. (M)

With the advent of digital technologies nad the increasing power of computational analytics, the proliferation and ubiquity of data production has increased at exponential rates enabling new possibilites for social analysis. This course will examine the emergence of democratizing data -- the movement to make government and other data more widely or publicly available and its potential enabling for democratic possibilities. The types of data being made available, through various analytic systems, and the ways in which their accessibility and inaccessibility is contributing to reconfigured power relations, will be described. The paradigmatic tensions and shifts that have emerged in the debates on "Big Data," such as deductive versus inductive reasoning and the challenges posed to statistical sampling theory, will be interrogated. The appropriation of machine learning and predictive analytic algorithms for social analysis will be critically explored. Issues related to the ethical and legal use of administrative data, particularly data related to patient, client, student, and taxpayer information will be considered, as well as from internet-based sources including social media. Potential solutions to data security challenges will be additionally considered.

Methods for web-scraping of data, analysis of web traffic data, and the use of social networking data in the modeling of social phenomena and public opinion will be examined. Students will learn how to make results accessible to non-technical audiences via data visualization tools, such as web-based data dashboards and web-based maps. These topics will be discussed for the analysis of health, education, and social policy as well as their implications for questions pertaining to race, gender, class, sexuality, dis/abilities, age and youth culture. This course will develop students' knowledge of computational and data analytics and its applications for social policy analysis.

741. (SWRK741) Gender & Social Policy. (B) Baker.

Gender and Social Policy develops an advanced understanding of social policies through a focus on social issues and conditions through the lens of gender, economic and critical theory. The specialized focus on gender and social policy provides students with the opportunity to develop more specialized knowledge about how market dynamics and government policies respond to the needs and risks faced by women. Specific emphasis is placed on utilizing theoretical frameworks to evaluate the intersesction between social policy, history and social science in relationship to gender issues. Students are also expected to conduct a policy analysis that includes an evaluation of how current and former social movements surrounding gender issues shaped their policy of interest.

SM 780. (SWRK780) Policy and "Difference" in Postmodernity. Dixon-Roman.

Social constructions of "difference" permeate the institutions, spaces, and assumptions of our society. These social constructions include but are not limited to the racialized, gendered, sexed, classed, and dis/abled constructions of the body. By leaning on postmodern thinkers such as Iris Marion Young, Pierre Bourdieu, Judith Butler, Jacques Derrida, Ernesto Laclau, and Michel Foucault, this seminar course will begin by engaging the questions of what is "difference" and how is "difference" discursively constructed and reproduced in society. Using a postmodern lens, the remainder of the course will engage various social science texts that deal with the varieites of "difference" (i.e. race, gender, class, sexuality) and the explicit and/or implicit policy implications of these works. Thus, we will critically engage policies such as welfare, affirmative action, economic policies of taxation, and same-gender marriage, among others. The underlying questions throughout the course will be to what extend does social policy enable the possibilities of freedom, justice, and democracy for the "Other", the deviant, the abject, the marginalized, those of assumed "difference"? And, to what extent does policy constrain those possibilities at the same time?

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897. Applied Linear Modeling. (B) Prerequisite(s): Introductory Graduate Statistics.

This course deals with the underlying assumptions and applications of the general linear model with social science, education, and social policy related questions/data. The first half of the course begins by covering simple linear regression and the assumptions of the general linear model, assumption diagnostics, consequences of violation, and how to correct for violated assumptions. This will also include methods of incomplete case analysis (i.e. missing data analysis . Then various aspects of regression analysis with multiple independent variables will be covered including categorical explanatory variables (e.g. to estimate group differences), interaction effects, mediating effects (e.g. to estimate the indirect effect of social processes), and non-linear effects. The course will then cover some of the applications of the general(ized) linear model including logistic regression, some elements of path modeling (structural equation modeling), multilevel analysis (hierarchical linear modeling), and longitudinal modeling (growth modeling). The course will be taught using SAS, but students are welcome to use any statistical package of comfort. Pre-requisite: Introductory Graduate Statistics.