



**MCMMASTER UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

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Office Hours: Mondays, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Tutorial Group 1 Facilitator

SOCIAL WELFARE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

SOCIAL WORK 2B03

WINTER 2013

MONDAYS, 7:00 – 10:00 P.M.

Teaching Assistants:

Robert Cosby

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Tutorial Group 2 Facilitator

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Tutorial Group 3 Facilitator

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Purpose, values underlying development of social welfare programs; Canada's social security system in historical perspective.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objective of this course is to introduce social work and labour studies students to the theoretical approaches, historical lessons and contemporary reality of Canada's social welfare and policy responses. Through examinations of the complex issues of poverty, housing and homelessness, and with an explicit focus on the lived experience of diverse and marginalized people, this course will endeavour to situate social work in a social welfare context.

This course is framed within the McMaster University School of Social Work Statement of Philosophy:

As social workers, we operate in a society characterized by power imbalances that affect us all. These power imbalances are based on age, class, ethnicity, gender identity, geographic location, health, ability, race, sexual identity and income. We see personal troubles as inextricably linked to oppressive structures. We believe that social workers must be actively involved in the understanding and transformation of injustices in social institutions and in the struggles of people to maximize control over their own lives.

By the end of the course you should be able:

- To understand the key concepts and issues concerning social welfare;
- To understand the dynamics and contexts of social policy making;
- To understand the connections between structural forces and the lived experience of individual citizens;
- To develop critical understanding of the unequal effects of the social welfare system on people and communities;
- To explore strategies of pursuing social justice through political advocacy.

COURSE FORMAT

Each class will run for three hours on Monday evenings from 7 – 10 p.m. There will be some lectures that run longer and some weeks where there will be less group time available – the following description is an estimate:

- 1st Hour - Lecture on an identified topic and based on the readings
- 2nd Hour - Discussion groups where reflection questions, guest speakers and films will engage students further in the topic of discussion. Each discussion group will be provided a case study that will engage them through discussions and assignments for the term.
- 3rd Hour - Time for group assignment work

ATTENDANCE

Learning in this course cannot be communicated in written form alone because it requires exposure to ideas, media and exercises presented in a classroom context. Class attendance, therefore, is compulsory. Students attending less than 80% of classes will receive an automatic F grade.

REQUIRED TEXT

Hick, Steven. (2007). *Social Welfare in Canada: Understanding Income Security*. (2nd Edition). Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, Inc.

All other readings and course materials are available online. The websites are indicated in the weekly outline.

COURSE EVALUATION (Assignment outlines will be handed out early in the term)

1) Course Material Reflections (10%) DUE: Ongoing

- In your discussion group sessions, you will be given a short reflection exercise based on the course materials for the week. There will be two and they will be random. The questions will not be about specific elements of the materials (dates, names, etc.) but will be a reflection of your understanding of the material.

2) Changing the Discourse (25%) DUE: February 11, 2013

You will choose a social issue that is connected to your tutorial's case study. In a 4 - 5 page critical reflection you will:

1. Describe the current public discourse on the social issue – what are the main messages? Who are the stakeholders who participate in this discourse? Where is this issue taken up?
2. Based on your understanding in social work and in this class so far, does the discourse need to shift? Why? How?
3. For number three you have a couple of options – choose one:
 - a) For each stakeholder group, identify the mechanism you would use to shift the discourse and why that is the mechanism. Consider academic, policy, creative methodologies.
 - b) Submit a creative work (ideas include series of photos, website home page, video, song, etc.)
 - c) Send a letter to the editor of a newspaper, write a blog post (if you have a blog or can contribute to a blog), write a letter to a politician or some other advocacy effort that works to shift the discourse.

3) Group Presentations (35%) DUE: March 4, 2013

- In small groups, you will recontextualize the case study that your tutorial is following in a different historical time period. You will present to your tutorial group.

4) Three Core Messages (30%) DUE: April 8, 2013

In a 5 – 6 page critical reflection you will:

- Identify the three core messages that you are taking away from the class. You will integrate a number of course materials with your own critical analysis.

NOTES ABOUT ASSIGNMENTS

- Please submit all assignments on the date they are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments will incur a 5% penalty per day (including weekends). Late assignments may be submitted to the School of Social Work office. The date stamp will be used to confirm the date the paper was handed in. We will only accept printed copies of assignments – electronic submission will not be accepted.
- All assignments must be typed and double spaced. A set of instructions will be provided for each assignment before they are done.
- If you have any situations requiring special accommodation, please talk to the instructor in advance.
- Students should use the American Psychological Association (APA) style for their written work. A guide is available at <http://library.mcmaster.ca/guides/apa-style-guide>.
- In addition to your mark, if you would like feedback on your assignment, please indicate it clearly on the front of your paper. If you do not indicate that you would like feedback, we will only assign a grade.
- Students are reminded that a C+ (67%) is required for successful completion of the Social Work 2B03 course.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

Students are expected to contribute to the creation of a respectful and constructive learning environment. Students should read material in preparation for class, attend class on time and remain for the full duration of the class. A formal break will be provided in the middle of each class, students are to return from the break on time.

In the past student & faculty have found that non-course related use of laptop computers and hand-held electronic devices during class to be distracting and at times disruptive. Consequently, students are expected to only use such devices for taking notes and other activities directly related to the lecture or class activity taking place.

Audio or video recording in the classroom without permission of the instructor is strictly prohibited.

PRIVACY PROTECTION

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. direct return of materials to students in class;
2. return of materials to students during office hours;
3. students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
4. submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that result or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is the student's responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3 at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>. The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- a) plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained;
- b) improper collaboration in group work; or
- c) copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

AVENUE TO LEARN

In this course we will be using Avenue to learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on

the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Student Accessibility Services offers group and individual consultation about effective learning strategies, essay writing, and study habits; accommodations, assistive technology, advocacy and support for students with disabilities; and personal counseling. If you believe these services may be helpful to you, contact (905) 525 9140 x 28652; sas@mcmaster.ca

EMAIL POLICY

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Email Forwarding in MUGSI: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/emailforward/emailfoward.html>

*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link

WEEKLY OUTLINE

Week One: Introduction to Social Welfare - January 7	
In this class we will look at how the whole course will run. We'll also explore the questions – what is social welfare and why should I care?	<u>Read:</u> Social Welfare in Canada - Steven Hick Chapter 1 – Introducing Social Welfare (Pages 1 – 24)
Week Two: History of Social Welfare - January 14	
This week, we will look at where we've been, in terms of social welfare, to understand where we are today and where we are headed. We will explore the major historical impacts and events relevant to social welfare study.	<u>Read:</u> Social Welfare in Canada - Steven Hick Chapter 2 – The History of Social Welfare (Pages 25 – 54)

Week Three: Shaping Social Welfare - January 21

We will look at the key factors that shape the social welfare context nationally, provincially and locally. We'll talk about theoretical approaches, values, politics, economics and the media.

Read:

Social Welfare in Canada - Steven Hick
Chapter 3 – Social Welfare Theory (Pages 55 – 78)

Week Four: Social Inclusion and Anti-Oppression – January 28

This week, we will explore one particular theoretical framework for approaching social welfare – social inclusion. We'll also look at the role Anti-Oppression plays in the social welfare discourse.

Read:

Bleeding Hearts and Heads (Op Ed in Toronto Star) - Caledon Institute, Sherri Torjman and Ken Battle

Find it here: www.caledoninst.org/Publications/Detail/?ID=957&IsBack=0

Social Inclusion, Citizenship and Diversity - Anver Saloojee

Find it here: www.ccsd.ca/subsites/inclusion/bp/as.htm

Social Inclusion: The Foundation of a National Policy

Find it here: www.ccsd.ca/subsites/inclusion/bp/mn.htm

Week Five: Lenses and Populations – The Complexity of Social Issues and Policy Responses - February 4

This week, we'll explore the various lenses through which social policy responses get articulated – lenses such as gender, health, inclusion, economic, rights-based. We'll talk about how different communities, identities and populations experience social issues differently and how we need to pay attention to that diversity in our responses.

Read and Watch:

Housing Vulnerability and Health: Canada's Hidden Emergency - Holton, E., Gogosis, E. and Hwang, S. (Pages 1 – 12)

Find it here: www.homelesshub.ca/housingvulnerabilityandhealth

More Than Bricks and Mortar: A Rights Based Strategy to Prevent Girl Homelessness in Canada - Czapska, A., Webb, A. and Taefi, N. (Pages 6 – 19)

Find it here: www.justiceforgirls.org/publications/pdfs/jfg_housing_web.pdf

Justice for Aboriginal People: It's Time - Public Service Alliance of Canada

Find it here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5DrXZUIinU&feature=related

Week Six: Introducing Poverty – February 11

❖ Shifting the Discourse Reflection Due

This week we will begin exploring poverty. How do we define it? What is the prevalence of poverty locally compared with provincially or nationally?

Read, Watch and Complete:

Social Welfare in Canada - Steven Hick
Chapter 9 – People Living in Poverty (Pages 205 – 230)

“Being Poor”

Find it here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4lpifCgRQ4

Do The Math Campaign – The Stop Community Food Centre
Find and complete it here: www.dothemath.thestop.org

Reading Week: No Class – February 18

Week Seven: Eliminating Poverty - Income Security and Employment – February 25

In our last look at poverty, we will talk about the income security and employment-based social policy solutions to the issue. We’ll also look at the role of the non-profit, grassroots and activist sector in anti-poverty work. Through guest speakers, we’ll explore the lived experience, the community development perspective and the perspective of someone who supports people who live in poverty.

Read and Watch:

Social Welfare in Canada - Steven Hick
Chapter 10 – People in the Labour Force (Pages 231 – 250)
Chapter 11 – People Living in Poverty (Pages 251 – 280)

Brighter Prospects: Transforming Social Assistance in Ontario
Highlights of Proposed Reforms
Find it here: on Avenue to Learn

Social Assistance Review Response
Find it here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=wy-Z0zSMOuU

If you are interested:

What if the Minimum Wage was a Living Wage? – Trish Hennessy
Find it here: www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/commentary/what-if-minimum-wage-was-living-wage

Week Eight: Presentations – March 4 ❖ Presentations Due	
Each group will present to their tutorials.	No readings
Week Nine: Homelessness and Housing Insecurity – March 11	
This week will focus on homelessness. In particular, we will explore what is meant by homelessness, who is impacted by homelessness and how they are impacted. We will pay particular attention to the unique experiences of Aboriginal people, youth and women experiencing violence in the home.	<p><u>Read and Review:</u></p> <p>On Any Given Night: Homelessness Indicators Report (2010) - The City of Hamilton (Pages 1 – 16) Find it here: www.hamilton.ca/HealthandSocialServices/SocialServices/Homelessness/</p> <p>Examining the Housing and Homelessness Environment in Hamilton - City of Hamilton Find it here: www.hamilton.ca/housingactionplan</p> <p>“David Hulchanski: Toronto’s Three Cities” Find it here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-9cTmhZJ0</p>
Week Ten: Housing Insecurity – The Lived Experience – March 18	
This week we will watch a video – Invisible City	<p><u>Review and Read:</u></p> <p>“Down But Not Out (My Homeless Experience)” Find it here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=29_Z5J1a5mA&feature=related</p> <p>Talking to People about Housing and Homelessness in Hamilton Find it here: www.hamilton.ca/housingactionplan</p>
Week Eleven: Homelessness and Housing Responses – March 25	
Following up on our conversation about homelessness, we will look at housing as a solution. In particular, we’ll	<p><u>Read and Review:</u></p> <p>National Housing Day 2012 – 3 Important Things all Canadians Should Know! Find it here: www.wellesleyinstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/National-Housing-Day-2012.pdf</p>

explore housing policy and programs.	At Home/Chez Soi Website Find it here: http://athome.nfb.ca/#/athome
Week Twelve: Disability, Accessibility, and Inclusion – April 1	
This week will focus on disability. We'll look at definitions of disability and who it impacts. To understand solutions to lack of inclusion for people with disabilities, we will look at the policy responses to make communities more universally accessible.	<u>Read and Watch:</u> Social Welfare in Canada - Steven Hick Chapter 13 – Disability and Social Welfare (Pages 307 – 329) David Lepofsky – Accessing Accessibility (On Steve Paikin's 'The Agenda') Find it here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ocRbsLQC_y4&feature=fvwk Father and Son Pierce Autism's Veil: Photo Documentary - Jane Gross Find it here: lens.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/11/05/son-and-father-pierce-autisms-veil/?ref=nf
Week Thirteen: Course Wrap Up – April 8 ❖ Final Paper Due	
In this final class we will reflect on the question, so what? We will talk about how we retain hope in the face of social policy uncertainty.	

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.