

**GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, COMMERCE AND EDUCATION**

**SOCIAL WORK 2020 (3(3-0-0 UT)
WINTER 2005**

Classroom: A212
Time: 6:00-8:50p.m Wednesdays
Instructor: Gail Zuk
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Office hours: Wednesday, 4:00p.m-6:00p.m; Thursday, 1:00p.m-3:00p.m

Social Welfare and Social Security Programs

Course Outline

Overview:

This is a service course that provides a general knowledge about the history and contemporary workings of different income security programs in Canada. It addresses the political and policy influences shaping the different programs in our contemporary welfare state as well as articulation of the relationship between social work practice, income security, and a variety of social service delivery models. Students will critically examine different income security programs and the implications for future generations of Canadians.

Description:

This course is designed to create an inquiry based approach to the critical examination of income security programs. The purpose of the course is to enable students to form an understanding of different income security programs, their utility and worth in a civilized society, and their potential roles as citizens/ social work practitioners.

Readings, content, and in class processes will provide knowledge and information that students can use to examine dominant influences to social security programs in modern Canadian Society.

Relationship to Other Courses:

SW 2020 will provide a beginning understanding of income security programs in Canada. While this course complements (SW 2010 Introduction to Social Welfare) it is also open to any students interested in pursuing a degree or diploma in social work and

would be of benefit to all students desiring an understanding of income security programs in Canada and the implications for the future of modern Canadian society.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. articulate an understanding of income security programs in Canada.
2. demonstrate the historical and modern trends of these programs and their connection to political and policy perspectives.
3. actively engage in advocacy/actions that challenge aspects of the current delivery of income security programs.
4. apply different theoretical perspectives to income security programs.
5. situate trends in Canada within the Global economy.

Required Text:

Hick, Steven. (2004). *Social Welfare in Canada: Understanding Income Security*. ON: Thompson Educational Publishing.

*additional readings may be distributed in class.

Class Schedule:

Introductions: (Jan.5)

- instructor/student expectations
- course content and process
- assignments/grading
- text material

History and Theory of Social Welfare (Jan 12)

- the rise and decline of the welfare state
- perspectives influencing social welfare programs

(chs 1-3)

Employment and Economy (Jan 19)

- employment terms
- trends in employment
- the labour market
- the Global Economy

(chs 4-5)

Human Rights (Jan 26)

- basic needs
- UN Declaration
- Canada's position
- definitions of need

(ch 5 guest speaker: immigrants and rights in Canada)

Roles and Trends of Women (Feb 2)

- feminization of poverty
- the “super-mom”
- defining family
- health and economic well-being

(ch 6 & 7 video presentation – changing roles)

Understanding Income Security (Feb 9)

- the employment insurance act
- workers compensation
- benefits and penalties
- who qualifies – the means test

(ch 8 guest speaker: EI/WCB consumers)

Canada’s Children (Feb 16)

- children in poverty
- global comparisons
- child tax benefits
- policy impacts

(chs 9 & 10)

The Elders (Feb 23)

- pensions
- poverty
- aging population and women

(ch 11 guest speaker: seniors outreach)

First Nations and Income Security (Mar 9)

- the Federal Response
- Medical Services Branch
- Controlling their programs

(supplementary readings)

The Northern context (Mar 16)

- Income security in northern Canada
- The Southern Metaphor
- Application of critical concepts

(supplementary readings)

Advocacy/Social Action Presentations (Mar 23 / 30)

- Small group presentations – problem statement and action taken – submission of documentation at this time.

Looking Ahead (April 6)

- What can we do?
- What does the future hold?
- Becoming social Activists

Review/Summary (Apr 13)

- Major concepts
- Review of learning
- Looking ahead

Specification of Assignments

Assignments have been designed to utilize the many skills required of a social worker in Canada. The ability to write and communicate to an audience is important in all social worker roles. The assignments reflect this.

1. Group Presentation (30%) Due: March 23/30

Early in the term, students will be randomly assigned to small groups. The task of the group will be to:

- Research a specific income security program
- Consider its impact on an individual, a family, and the local community.
- Figure out an effective and ethical Action/advocacy plan.
- Prepare a class presentation that demonstrates an understanding of the program, its impact, and what the group did to advocate over the course of the term.
- Submit to the instructor, individual papers addressing their own learning through the process (this could be learning about working with others, learning about the plight of people using the particular program, or other types of learning that occurred over the course of the term.

Distribution of marks: presentation: 15% ; self-reflection: 15%

Notes: the use of Creativity is strongly encouraged. Presentations are to be no longer than 20 minutes in length and will provide much of the focus on the action/advocacy taken by the group members to address inadequacies in the program researched. Each presentation will be followed by a 10 minute question and answer period.

****students are strongly encouraged to begin the project work early as the advocacy/action plan could also take some time to implement.*

****each group member will receive the same grade for the presentation. Each group member is expected to actively participate in the presentation.*

2. Individual Paper (30%) (Due: Feb.16)

Each student will prepare a 10 page paper exploring statements about income security and policy. Students are to consider the statements and complete a critical analysis, including their position to the statement in regards to the following:

- What is the author expressing?
- What theoretical perspective is the author taking in her/his position? (provide evidence for this).
- How does this statement connect or not connect to the current trends in income security programs in Canada? Alberta?
- Does the statement reflect the position of the minority or the majority? How so?
- How does the author's sentiments connect to issues of oppression? Diversity? Hope for change? Activism?
- What is your own position in relation to the statement? Do you agree or disagree with the author's sentiments? Why or why not?
- If you were to express your opinion on the same topic, what would you say?

Note: papers will be graded on the ability of the student to demonstrate critical thinking and analysis through their responses to the statement chosen. Students are also strongly encouraged to make reference to text materials, guest speaker presentations, and in-class dialogue.

“We are mothers who have chosen to be the primary care givers of our children and believe that the ability to exercise this choice without the threat of economic penalties is part of the struggle for equality We believe that the work of caring for our children, for our families (however we define them) and our communities must be recognized, respected, and valued. We maintain that until the unpaid work done by women in the home and community is understood and valued as work there will be no real equality for women” (Hick, p.119) www.mothersarewomen.com.

“The oppressors do not perceive their monopoly on having more as a privilege which dehumanizes others and themselves...For them, having more is an inalienable right, a right they acquired through their own ‘effort’, with their ‘courage to take risks’. If others do not have more, it is because they are incompetent and lazy, and worst of all is their unjustifiable ingratitude towards the ‘generous gestures’ of the dominant class. Precisely because they are ‘ungrateful’ and ‘envious’, the oppressed are regarded as potential enemies who must be watched” (Friere, 1970, speaking on why we engage in oppressive practices).

“social policy and program planners have tended to view their own separate northern regions as variations of the south posing some service delivery problems (Zapf, 1999). Hinterland regions continue to be economically exploited, and when their natural resources are depleted, or no longer valued, problems of unemployment, poverty, and limited labour mobility are intensified. Social policies have tended to reinforce metropolis – hinterland power imbalances and inequalities, so much so that some authors refer to areas of northern and rural Canada as a domestic Third World” (Swift, quoting a number of different authors, 2001)

“perhaps the central question for social workers is the extent to which the methods and goals of government and business (aimed at standardization and control) are accepted and continued by professionals in their ways of working with clients” (Woodsworth, 1986).

3. Final Examination (30%)

Students will complete a final examination that will consist of short answer, essay, and multiple choice questions. The examination will be based on text, readings, in class presentations, and other content covered over the course of the term.

4. Participation (10%)

Students will be awarded up to 10% of their term grade through in class participation. Participation means: sharing of ideas, participating in class exercises, listening respectfully when others are speaking, asking expansive questions, and completion of assignments on time. Students will self-evaluate on these criteria at the end of the term.

Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	Percentage Range	Description
A+	4		Outstanding
A	4	95 – 100	Excellent
A-	3.7	90 – 94	
B+	3.3	85 – 89	
B	3	80 – 84	Good
B-	2.7	75 – 79	
C+	2.3	70 – 74	
C	2	65 – 69	Satisfactory
C-	1.7	60 – 64	
D+	1.3	55 – 59	
D	1	50 – 54	Minimal Pass
F	0	Below 50	Fail

NOTE: Assignments are due at the beginning of the corresponding class. Late Assignments will be penalized 25%. No assignments will be accepted beyond one week after the date they were due.