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| Course title: | Theories and Principles of Socially Just Policies | |
| Course #/term: | SW 638 001, Winter 2022 | |
| Time and place: | Tuesdays, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM | |
| Credit hours: | 3 | |
| Prerequisites: | Foundation Essentials | |
| Instructor: | Justin D. Hodge, LMSW-Clinical and Macro | |
| Pronouns: | He/him/his | |
| Contact info: | Email: hodjusti@umich.edu | Phone: [(734) 647-8891] |
| | You may expect a response within 48 hours | |
| Office: | 4688 SSWB | |
| Office hours: | By appointment | |

1. Course Statement

a. Course description

In this course, students will be exposed to various theoretical frameworks informing policy development, delve deeply into the role of different institutional actors in the policy process, and gain an understanding of basic economic principles frequently employed in policy debates and discussions. With this knowledge, students will be able to identify, in a more sophisticated and nuanced way, policies that promote social justice and those that do not; understand how certain theoretical frameworks and ideas have been used to oppress and to empower different groups, and identify points of interventions within existing institutions.

This course will cover different concepts of justice, fairness, and equity as they apply to public policy, including Rawls' theory of justice. Students will also interrogate ideas about neoliberalism through an introduction to concepts from economic theory that often used to promote or thwart the development of certain policies. This includes the concepts of supply and demand; market failure; and public goods. Finally, drawing upon various theories of justice, students will examine processes that can be used to promote socially just policy making.

b. Course objectives and competencies

In this course, students will learn how to:

- Identify how economic theories inform public policy debates and describe the consequences for social justice
- Understand the basic nature of supply and demand, markets, public goods, and other economic concepts;
- Describe and identify various theoretical frameworks of social justice and how they relate to public policy;
- Identify and explain processes that would promote socially just policy making;
- Apply the principles of social justice to critically analyze public policies;
- Determine opportunities to advance social justice within existing political and policy institutions;

c. Course design

This course will use multiple methods including but not limited to: lectures, case studies, readings, guest speakers, discussions, written assignments, individual and group exercises. The course will be offered primarily in person, although occasionally materials may be presented online.

d. Intensive focus on PODS

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self-knowledge and self-awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

This course encourages students to develop critical thinking skills so that they can understand the ways in which various economic and political theories are used in the policy process and how those frameworks can promote social justice or can oppress individuals and groups (Critical Contextual Thinking; Critical Awareness). Students will use principles of social justice to examine current public policy debates and to interrogate various institutions and economic models (Critical Contextual Thinking; Critical Awareness; Conflict, Dialog, and Community). Using knowledge gained in the course, students will be able to identify points of interventions within existing institutions to promote socially just policies (Actions Toward Social Justice Vision).

2. Class Requirements

a. Text and class materials

All materials will be provided on Canvas. In order for us to have in-depth and meaningful discussions, students are expected to come to class having read the assigned material. Some of the readings are dense and contain ideas about which you may be unfamiliar- just try your best and come to class with lots of questions!

b. Class schedule

| Date/Time | Agenda | Required Readings & Assignments |
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| Session 1 January 11 | What do we mean by “socially just” in the context of public policy? What are your criteria for “justness?” | Read This: Syllabus |
| Session 2 January 18 | Overview of Western theories informing public policy: utilitarianism; Rawls’ principles; libertarianism; others | Read This: Rawls, “A Theory of Justice” (excerpt) Michael Reisch, “Defining Social Justice in an Unjust World” |
| Session 3 January 25 | Human rights and the capabilities approaches What are the strengths and weaknesses of a human rights-based approach to public policy? How can the capabilities approach be translated into policy? | Read This: United Nations Declaration of Human Rights Batliwala, “When Rights go Wrong” Sen, <i>Development as Freedom</i> , intro and chapter 1 |
| Session 4 | Anti-colonial thought and | Read This: Fanon, <i>The</i> |

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| <p>February 1</p> | <p>social justice</p> | <p><i>Wretched of the Earth</i>, chapter 1</p> <p>Bassett, “No Justice, No Health”</p> <p>Watch This: The Black Panthers and Social Policy</p> |
| <p>Session 5 February 8</p> | <p>Pedagogy of the Oppressed and Policy</p> | <p>Read This: Freire, <i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i>, chapters 2 & 4</p> <p>Watch This: Theater of the Oppressed NYC</p> |
| <p>Session 6 February 15</p> | <p>Understanding economic theory. Efforts to promote social justice are often constrained or hampered by economic systems. Moreover, public policy in much of the Western world is deeply influenced by economic theory. We’ll spend 2 sessions examining some of the fundamental principles of microeconomics.</p> | <p>Due: Applying Theory to Current Events - Part 1</p> <p>Read This: Wheelen, “The Power of Markets”</p> <p>Friedman, “Capitalism and Freedom” (excerpt)</p> <p>Watch This: Recorded Lecture on Canvas by Professor Kristin Seefeldt</p> |
| <p>Session 7 February 22</p> | <p>Alternative Economic Views Modern Monetary Theory (MMT) and Stratification Economics are two alternative views of macro and micro economic functioning- do these views do a better job of promoting social justice?</p> | <p>Read This: “What if the Federal Deficit Actually Didn’t Matter?”</p> <p>Watch This: Interview with Darrick Hamilton</p> <p>Recorded Lecture on Canvas by Professor Kristin Seefeldt</p> |

| March 1: SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS | | |
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| Session 8 March 8 | Feminist Thought and Policy | <p>Read This: Gender Budgeting</p> <p>Parker West, "Soccer Moms, Welfare Queens, Waitress Moms, and Super Moms: Myths of Motherhood in State Media Coverage of Child Care during the Welfare Reforms of the 1990s"</p> |
| Session 9 March 15 | Queer Theory and Policy | <p>Read This: Ian Buchanan, "The Dictionary of Critical Theory - Queer Theory"</p> <p>What About the Rest of Us An Overview of LGBT Poverty Issues and a Call to Action.pdf</p> |
| Session 10 March 22 | Visioning Just Policies | <p>Due: Applying Theory to Current Events - Part 2</p> <p>Read This: Martin Winiecki, "Dreaming Beyond Capitalism: A Culture Without Fear"</p> <p>Walidah Imarisha, "To Build a Future Without Police and Prisons, We Have to Imagine It First"</p> <p>Anne Price, Jhumpa Bhattacharya and Dorian Warren, "Centering Blackness: The Path to Economic Liberation for All"</p> |

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| Session 11 March 29 | Transformative Policy Processes | Read This: Olin Wright, "Real Utopias I Social Empowerment and the State" |
| Session 12 April 5 | Wrap-up | Read This: Guy Feldman, "Making the Connection Between Theories of Policy Change and Policy Practice A New Conceptualization" |
| Session 13 April 12 | Class presentations/ discussions on final projects | Due: Proposal for a Socially Just Policy |
| Session 14 April 19 | Class presentations/ discussions on final projects | |

c. Assignments

Assignment instructions can also be found on Canvas in the "Assignments" section. Assignments are due by 11:59 PM on the date listed.

| Assignment | Due date | Percent of overall grade |
|--|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Apply Theory To Current Events | 2/15/2022 3/22/2022 | 60% total, 30% each |
| Proposal for a Socially Just Policy | 4/12/2022 | 30% |
| Present Your Proposal for a Socially Just Policy | 4/12/2022 or 4/19/2022 | 10% |

Applying Theory to Current Events - Part 1

This assignment has two parts, each worth 30 points, for a total of 60 points. Students will write a 3-6 page (double-spaced) essay or record a 6 to 12-minute audio/video

recording that applies theories and frameworks we have read about and discussed in class to a story from the news.

For this assignment, you will apply Capabilities; Human Rights; Anti-Colonial; and/or Freire to "Native Americans Reliant on Hospital Feel Abandoned by U.S. During Pandemic." (Article is found on Canvas)

Students may structure the essay in any format they choose. The essay should highlight:

- Instances that illustrate the theoretical perspective(s) in action;
- Examples of how the theoretical perspective or the authors we read would respond to the story;
- Other reactions or critiques that demonstrate an ability to make connections between theory and the story/event.

Applying Theory to Current Events - Part 2

This assignment has two parts, each worth 30 points, for a total of 60 points. Students will write a 3-6 page (double-spaced) essay or record a 6 to 12-minute audio/video recording that applies theories and frameworks we have read about and discussed in class to a story from the news.

For this assignment, you will apply Economic Theory, Feminist and/or Queer Theory to "The Conservative Case for Paid Family Leave." (Article is found on Canvas)

Students may structure the essay in any format they choose. The essay should highlight:

- Instances that illustrate the theoretical perspective(s) in action;
- Examples of how the theoretical perspective or the authors we read would respond to the story;
- Other reactions or critiques that demonstrate an ability to make connections between theory and the story/event.

Proposal for a Socially Just Policy

Part 1

Develop an alternative or new public policy that would address an issue in a socially just manner. In doing so, you will need to:

- Describe the issue, why it needs attention, and why and how it is socially unjust
- Describe your socially just alternative
- Reference at least three of the theories explored throughout the semester and how they relate to this policy issue
- Be conscious of how the policy cuts across race, ethnicity, ability status, socioeconomic status, gender identity, and sexual orientation
- Articulate why this proposal promotes social justice

Examples of this type of product can be found on Canvas.

Expected length 4-6 pages double spaced (may also have appendices)

Part 2 - Option 1

Next, imagine it is 50 years in the future (2070) and we have continued moving down a path towards liberation and justice as a nation. Write a journal entry or use another medium to reflect on life now, commenting on how different things are as a result of the policy you developed having been in place over these last 50 years.

Part 2 - Option 2

Describe your experience and process in developing your proposal. Questions you may want to consider include:

- Why did you choose the selected theories?
- What challenges did you experience in developing your proposal?
- What did you learn by completing this assignment?

Expected length 1-2 pages double spaced

Our final two class sessions will be spent on students sharing their Socially Just Policy Proposals. This is not designed to be a formal presentation. It is primarily an opportunity for discussion and reflection.

Applying Theory to Current Events - Extra Credit

For extra credit, you may complete one additional modified version of the "Applying Theory to Current Events" assignment. However, instead of being provided with a current event and a theory as with the other assignments, you will select them on your own.

d. Attendance and class participation

Both class attendance and active purposeful participation in class discussion and activities are paramount for the successful completion of this course. This course covers a content domain that is extensive, and given the time frame of the course each class moves quickly in discussing information.

e. Grading

Please review the MSW Student Guide policies on [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#) as well as [Student Grievance procedures](#).

Final grades will be determined on the basis of performance. Letter grades will be allocated as follows:

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| 100+ | A+ | 77-79 | C+ |
| 93-100 | A | 73-76 | C |
| 90-92 | A- | 70-72 | C- |
| 87-89 | B+ | 67-69 | D+ |
| 83-86 | B | 63-66 | D |
| 80-82 | B- | 60-62 | D- |
| | | <60 | E |

f. Class Recording and Course Materials

Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording being done. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. If the instructor chooses to record a class, they will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on the course management website. On days when classes are recorded, students will be notified a recording is occurring. Class recordings and course materials may not be reproduced, sold, published or distributed to others, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the instructor.]

g. COVID-19 Statement

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. By returning to campus, you have acknowledged your responsibility for protecting the collective health of our community. Your participation in this course on an in-person/hybrid basis is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including maintaining physical distancing of six feet from others, and properly wearing a face covering in class. Other applicable safety measures may be described in the [Wolverine Culture of Care](#) and the [University's Face Covering Policy for COVID-19](#). Your ability to participate in this course in-person/hybrid may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the [Office for Institutional Equity](#). If you are unable or unwilling to adhere to these safety measures while in a face-to-face class setting, you will be required to participate on a remote basis. I also encourage you to review the [Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) and the [COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

h. Health-Related Class Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of

any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a doctor's note) for medical excuses is *not* required.

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: <https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources>. They include:

- *Safety and emergency preparedness*
- *Mental health and well-being*
- *Teaching evaluations*
- *Proper use of names and pronouns*
- *Accommodations for students with disabilities*
- *Religious/spiritual observances*
- *Military deployment*
- *Writing skills and expectations*
- *Academic integrity and plagiarism*