



Course title:	Theories and Principles of Socially Just Policies
Course #/term:	SW 638 Section 3 – Winter 2022
Time and place:	Wednesdays 2pm-4:50pm SSWB B798
Credit hours:	3
Prerequisites:	Foundation Essentials
Instructor:	Leonardo Kattari, MSW
Pronouns:	[he/him or they/them]
Contact info:	Email: lkattari@umich.edu You may expect a response within 48 hours
Office:	N/A
Student hours:	Following class or 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

The class will be very hands-on and will also utilize innovative resources in teaching content, including videos, podcasts, and guest lectures (live or recorded). Skills will be learned, practiced, and applied in class-based and project-based experiences.

Additionally, this course is an advanced level course with adult learners. Thus, the expectation is that students take charge of their own learning, their own participation and their support for the learning of their colleagues in the classroom. The class will consist of a combination of mini-lectures, guest lectures and direct application of skills in small groups as well as in assignments. Students must come prepared to fully engage in order to get the most out of this class. Additionally, this class does not approach education from the “banking” perspective. Everyone in the classroom has expertise and experience to offer into the learning space. Thus, students will be asked to bring and share examples and root the larger theories of change in their own background and experience.

d. Course Relationship to P.O.D.S.

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).

e. Anti-Oppression Statement

As a community, we encourage each other to critically examine issues related to power, privilege, and oppression. These issues; therefore, are integrated into each classroom experience. As a result, there will be class discussions that may be difficult or challenging. In order to have the most supportive environment possible, we must all commit ourselves to fostering an inclusive, anti-oppressive space in which each person takes responsibility for their own language, actions and interactions. It is important that we listen to each other about how our words and actions are affecting one another and the learning environment. We share the task of negotiating the dual priorities of authentic free speech and active regard for one another, being open to diverse perspectives and ideas. We recognize that microaggressions happen; however, overt slurs in relation to race, age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion/world view, immigration status, size, nationality, dis/ability, marital status, political affiliation, or any other identities, will be addressed directly. Throughout the course, we will negotiate other guidelines about class discussions.

2. Class Requirements

a. Text and class materials

There is no assigned textbook for this course. 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 (subject to change)

Date/Time	Agenda	Required Readings & Assignments
Session 1: January 11	What do we mean to be “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	<p>Read This:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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?	<p>Read This:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - United Nations Declaration of Human Rights - Batliwala, "When Rights go Wrong" - Sen, Development as Freedom, intro and chapter 1
Session 4: February 1	Anti-colonial thought and social justice	<p>Read This:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, chapter 1 - Bassett, "No Justice, No Health" <p>Watch This:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Black Panthers and Social Policy
Session 5: February 9	Pedagogy of the Oppressed and Policy	<p>Read This:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, chapters 2 & 4 <p>Watch This:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theater of the Oppressed NYC
Session 6 February 15	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	<p>Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applying Theory to Current Events - Part 1 <p>Read This:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wheelen, "The Power of Markets" - Friedman, "Capitalism and Freedom" (excerpt)

	spend 2 sessions examining some of the fundamental principles of microeconomics.	Watch This: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recorded Lecture on Canvas by Professor Kristin Seefeldt
Session 7 February 22	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?	Read This: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “What if the Federal Deficit Actually Didn’t Matter?” Watch This: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interview with Darrick Hamilton Recorded Lecture on Canvas by Professor Kristin Seefeldt
MARCH 1 - SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS		
Session 8 March 8	Feminist Thought and Policy	Read This: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender Budgeting - 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”
Session 9 March 15	Queer Theory and Policy	Read This: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ian Buchanan, “The Dictionary of Critical Theory - Queer Theory” - What About the Rest of Us An Overview of LGBT Poverty Issues and a Call to Action.pdf
Session 10 March 22	Visioning Just Policies	Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applying Theory to Current Events - Part 2 Read This: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Martin Winiecki, “Dreaming Beyond Capitalism: A Culture Without Fear” - Walidah Imarisha, “To Build a Future Without Police and Prisons, We Have to Imagine It First” - Anne Price, Jhumpa Bhattacharya and Dorian Warren, “Centering

		Blackness: The Path to Economic Liberation for All”
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 Socially Just Policy
Session 14 April 19	Class presentations/ discussions on final projects	

c. Assignments

Submission of 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
Participation & Engagement	Ongoing	10%
Apply Theory to Current Events	2/15 & 3/22	50% total, 25% each
Proposal for Socially Just Policy	4/12	30%
Present Your Proposal for a Socially Just Policy	4/12 & 4/19	10%

Engagement: Includes engaging with the content during class and on Canvas, completing discussions, assignments, activities, etc. In addition to attending class, you are expected to arrive having reviewed assigned materials and be prepared to actively participate in the learning process. There will be a series of ungraded activities, discussion prompts, and in

class group work to help you take in the content; these will be factored into the engagement grade. If you can not attend a class session, you are expected to complete the readings/videos and watch the session lecture and discussion. You may also submit a reflection (in a format of your choosing) or schedule student hours with the instructor that connects our session content with the session readings for full engagement credit for that week.

Applying Theory to Current Events - Part 1: This assignment has two parts, each worth 25 points, for a total of 50 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 25 points, for a total of 50 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.
- **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 page length for Part 2 is 1-2 pages double spaced.

Part 3

- 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.

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. Participation and engagement is broadly defined and includes class time as well as other forms of engagement - including showing up on time/posting/submitting assignments on time and returning from breaks on time/responding to questions or comments in a timely manner. Participation also includes asking questions, applying course concepts to questions about your own experiences, contributing to the learning of others, providing accurate and respectful feedback to others, identifying any unique learning needs or problems to the professor, and utilizing student hours/email communication when necessary to ask for clarification or assistance in fulfilling course expectations and assignments. Class contributions should focus on relevant course concepts and professional practice experiences. Monopolizing space or contributing off topic is not considered participation.

This course has no formal attendance policy recognizing there is a multitude of challenges for many students to show up in this capacity each week. Each class lecture will be recorded

and posted on Canvas within 24 hours of the class session. Students who do not attend the session are still expected to watch the lecture and complete any corresponding pre-week materials or in-class activities. You may submit a reflection (in a format of your choosing) or schedule student hours with the instructor that connects our session content with the session readings for full engagement credit for that week.

For more information, please see the [Policy on Class Attendance](#) found in the MSW Student Guide.

e. Grading

It is important to keep in mind that ***you are not your grade!*** Students come to graduate school with a wide range of academic experiences and preparedness. Thinking and writing about complex issues and abstract concepts can be very challenging for many students. If you are satisfied with the level of effort you have invested in the course, and you earn a grade of B or better, I hope you will feel very good about your performance.

Excellent Work

Excellent work is work that is above course expectations. Grades in the 94 to 100 range constitute an A which translates to a 4.0. Grades in the 91 to 93 range constitutes an A minus which translates to a 3.7. Students display excellent work (***beyond course expectations***) in several ways: evidence that additional readings, beyond what is assigned, have been completed and integrated into written or in class presentations/participation; superior written work; evidence of critical thinking; demonstration of advanced practice skills applied to practice; and creativity and innovation in conceptual as well as practice-related thinking are frequently seen in the student's work.

Good Work

Good work is work that meets course expectations. Grades in the 88 to 90 range constitute a B plus which translates to a 3.3. Grades in the 84 to 87 range constitute a B which translate to a 3.0. Grades in the 81 to 83 range constitute a B minus which translates to a 2.7. Students display good work in several ways: basic mastery of course material is evident in written or in class presentations/participation; solid development of practice skills fitting with concentration-year expertise is evident; and creativity and innovation are noted but to a lesser degree and less frequently than that in the "excellent" category.

Work Minimally Meets Course Expectations

Marginal work is work that meets minimal course expectations. Grades in the 78 to 80 range constitutes a C plus which translates to a 2.3. Grades in the 74 to 77 range constitute a C which translates to a 2.0. Grades in the 71 to 73 range constitute a C minus which translates to a 1.7. Students display marginal work in several ways: through evidence that course readings have not been covered, as observed in written or in class presentations/participation; conceptual confusion and difficulty with critical thinking are

evident in written and verbal work; and through work that lacks an integration of theory and practice.

Failing Work

Grades in the 0 to 70 range constitute an F which translates to a 0.0

Student demonstrates poor or unacceptable work during the course in several ways: inadequate understanding of course content, poor quality written work, plagiarism, and poor or unethical demonstration of practice skills.

Assessment Classification	Range	Grade
Excellent Work (above course expectations)	94-100	A
	91-93	A -
Good Work (meets course expectations)	88-90	B+
	84-87	B
	81-83	B-
Poor Work (meets minimal course expectations)	78-80	C +
	74-77	C
	71-73	C -
Failing Work	70-0	F

More information on MSW Student Guide policies on [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#) as well as [Student Grievance procedures](#) and the [policy for grading in special circumstances](#). Here are some resources around [testing and grading from CRLT](#).

Winter Semester Note: This semester will continue to pose many challenges to our physical and emotional wellbeing. We are still living through a pandemic and have a rapidly shifting political environment. Considering the stress and distress these factors will contribute to our daily lives throughout the semester, I encourage you to think about your capacity and strive for showing up the best you can and not for perfection. Please communicate often with your instructor with any barriers or issues that come up throughout the semester so we can collaboratively support your success in this course.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

You are expected to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics, UM's Academic and Professional Standards of Performance, the criteria for student evaluation and review found in the MSW Handbook, and the University rules concerning academic misconduct, found in the University's Honor Code.

The University's definition of Academic Misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Plagiarism, including any representation of another's work or ideas as one's own in academic and educational submissions.
- Cheating, including any actual or attempted use of resources prohibited by the instructor(s) or those that a reasonable person would consider inappropriate under

- the circumstances for academic submissions, and/or any actual or attempted effort to assist another student in cheating.
- Double submission, including any submission of an academic work for more than one course without expressed permission.
 - Fabrication, including any falsification or creation of data, research or resources to support academic submissions.

Grade Contestation: We strongly discourage grade grubbing of any kind regarding your papers. Grade grubbing is defined as begging, pleading, arguing, bribing, crying, or in any way asking for a higher grade. Instead, we encourage you to discuss why you lost points and what you can do to improve for the future. If, however, you feel strongly that you have a valid dispute about a grade on an assignment, you should submit a statement in writing explaining the mistake you think has been made and what alternate grade you suggest. Make an appointment with your professor to discuss the grade in person. Note that re-reading an assignment submission can result in either a lower or a higher grade and that this grade will be final.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you need an accommodation for a disability please let me know as soon as possible. Many aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and teaching methods can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress throughout the semester. I will make every effort to use the resources available to us, such as the services for Students with Disabilities, the Adaptive Technology Computing Site, and the like. If you chose to disclose your disability, I will (to the extent permitted by law) treat that information as private and confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, (734) 7633000 or go to <http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/> Note: I am committed to moving towards universal design for learning (UDL). If you have suggestions for how I can improve our classroom space, activities, and/or assignments to be more accessible now or in the future, please do not hesitate to let me know!

Health and Wellness Services: Health and wellness encompasses situations or circumstances that may impede your success within the program. The Office of Student Services offers health and wellness services that are directed to the MSW student body. Feel free to contact Health and Wellness Advocates Lauren Davis (laurdavi@umich.edu) or Nyshourn Price-Reed (ndp@umich.edu), 734-936 0961, regarding any health, mental health or wellness issue. This could include need for advocacy and referral to University or community resources, financial resources or counseling. Also contact Health and Wellness using ssw.wellness@umich.edu. The MSW student Guide to Health and Wellness can be found at http://www.ssw.umich.edu/current/Health_Wellness_Guide.pdf 16

Dependent Care Resources: For students with child or parenting/elder care responsibilities, feel free to consult the Students with Children website (<http://www.studentswithchildren.umich.edu>). This site is dedicated to the needs of students at UM who juggle parenting/elder care, study, and work. Resources include child care, financial assistance, social support, housing, and health care information. The website was created by the former Committee on Student Parent Issues (COSPI). For additional information on work/life support please also visit the Work/Life Resource Center site

(<http://www.hr.umich.edu/worklife/>) and the UM Child Care gateway (<http://www.hr.umich.edu/childcare/>).

Religious Observances: Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class attendance, community participation or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

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

Other Policies

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.

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.

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.

Inclusivity Policy

Social and economic justice is one of the key themes of social work practice, research, and education. As a social work community, we must encourage each other to critically examine issues related to power, privilege, and oppression. As a result, there will be class discussions, activities, or assignments that may be difficult or challenging. In order to have the most supportive environment possible, we must all commit ourselves to fostering an inclusive, anti-oppressive space in which each person takes responsibility for their own language, actions and interactions. It is important that we actively *listen* to each other about how our words and actions are affecting one another and the learning environment, knowing the impact is more important than intent. It can be difficult to navigate the dual priorities of supporting authentic free speech, and holding active regard for one another being open to diverse perspectives and ideas. I recognize that microaggressions happen (by all of us, to all of us); however, overt slurs in relation to race, sex, age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion/world view, immigration status, size, nationality, dis/ability status, marital status, political affiliation, or any other identities, will be addressed directly. Throughout the course, we will negotiate other guidelines about class discussions. Please bring your best selves to our classroom space.
