USC

Course Outline

Code: SWK401
Title: Critical Social Policy Analysis

School: Social Sciences
Teaching Session: Semester 1
Year: 2020
Course Coordinator: Dr Athena (Tina) Lathouras - tlathouras@usc.edu.au
Course Moderator: Professor Cindy Davis - Cdavis@usc.edu.au

Please go to the USC website for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

1.   What is this course about?

1.1   Description

Social work and human services practice is shaped by social policy as it impacts the welfare of a nation's citizens. Comprising mechanisms for distributing society's resources, social policy is underpinned by values, driven by political objectives and maintained by discursive practices. This course provides a critical theoretical framework for evaluating historical and recent trends in social policy and its impact on people. You will critically analyse at least one specific social policy within its historical, political and welfare context and apply it to their professional practice.

1.2   Field trips, WIL placements or activities required by professional accreditation

Activity	Details
Nil	Nil

2.   What level is this course?

400 level Graduate - Independent application of graduate knowledge and skills. Meets AQF and professional requirements. May require pre-requisites and developing level knowledge/skills. Normally taken in the 4th year of an undergraduate program.

3.   What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

4.   How does this course contribute to my learning?

Specific Learning Outcomes On successful completion of this course, you should be able to:	Assessment tasks You will be assessed on the learning outcomes in task/s:	Graduate Qualities or Professional Standards mapping Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to:
Explain how social policy influences inequality, the structure of Australian society and the well-being of citizens.	1, 2 and 3	Knowledgeable.
Identify central issues in social policy development and analysis.	1 and 2	Ethical.

Specific Learning Outcomes On successful completion of this course, you should be able to:	Assessment tasks You will be assessed on the learning outcomes in task/s:	Graduate Qualities or Professional Standards mapping Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to:
Apply a critical framework to analyse at least one area of social policy.	2 and 3	Creative and critical thinkers.
Communicate research through written and verbal modes.	2 and 3	Empowered.

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the USC Glossary of terms for definitions of "pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites".

5.1 Enrolment restrictions

Nil

5.2 Pre-requisites

16 courses or enrolled in AR707
Note, for Bachelor of Social Work students, this must include:
SCS235
SWK301

Note, while this course is designed within the context of human services and social work practice, its relevance for a wide range of disciplines is clear. Students taking programs other than social work and human services will therefore find the course useful within the context of their own studies, while contextualising it within their own disciplinary framework.

5.3 Co-requisites

Nil

5.4 Anti-requisites

Nil

5.5 Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Nil

6. How am I going to be assessed?

6.1 Grading scale

Standard – High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL)

6.2 Details of early feedback on progress

Students are expected to alert the course coordinator to their particular social policy being examined and gain feedback by Week 1. In Week 4 students will share research undertaken for the first assessment item and gain feedback from a small peer group in the workshop.

6.3 Assessment tasks

Task No.	Assessment Product	Individual or Group	Weighting %	What is the duration / length?	When should I submit?	Where should I submit it?
1	Report	Individual	30%	1000 words	Week 6	Online Assignment Submission

2	Oral	Individual	30%	10 - 15 minutes	Weeks 7 -10	In Class
3	Written Piece	Individual	40%	1500 words	Week 13	Online Assignment Submission
			100%			

Assessment Task 1: Discourse Analysis Report

Goal:	To develop critical and discourse analysis skills in relation to a relevant social policy.
Product:	Report
Format:	Policy decisions at various levels impact on the life chances, experiences and abilities of individuals, families, groups, and whole communities. As a social worker, your practice will be contextualised within a social policy framework as it shapes the nature of services you provide to individuals, families, groups, and communities. Using an aspect of professional practice from your own experience either on field placement, or from your own human services-related paid work, you are required to write a discourse analysis report that will: - Critically analyse a relevant policy as it impacts on service users and on social work practices using the template provided, and which employs an approach to critical discourse analysis based on Carol Bacchi's framework; - Analyse the underlying policy agenda from a critical perspective, outlining what assumptions are evident about the nature of social relations or populations within society; - Outline how social policies have impacted on the social service agency policies and practices impacting service users; - Analyse how social workers could practice ethically and transcend the political agendas of government or potentially oppressive social policies. It is suggested that you select a social policy initiative relevant to your current social service work context, or your field education placement agency, however, this is not essential. Choose an area of social policy that interests you, or an area about which you have some prior knowledge. Several social policies will be placed on Blackboard and you may also choose to analyse one of these, if you wish.
Criteria:	Your report will be assessed according to your ability to: - Demonstrate critical awareness of a relevant social policy; its policy discourses and agendas and inherent assumptions; and its impacts on service users and work practices at an organisational level. - Articulate how social work ethics can be drawn upon and demonstrated in practice that could transcend the political agendas of governments or potentially oppressive social policies. - Write with clarity (expression, correct grammar, spelling and punctuation), logically structured, coherently argued analysis, and appropriately supported by relevant published literature.

Assessment Task 2: Simulated Social Policy Advocacy Tutorial Presentation

Goal:	To develop policy advocacy presentation skills.
Product:	Oral
Format:	A fundamental part of the social work role is to analyse and clearly articulate the effects of social policies on various populations with whom social workers practice. Social workers take part in the development of, and advocating for, changes to social policy, utilising their critical analysis skills and an understanding of the direct links between personal experience and structural impediments on the life chances of those

	populations. Draw from your discourse analysis report (Task 1) and distil relevant information for a 10-15 minute presentation that meets the following criteria.
Criteria:	Your tutorial presentation will be assessed according to your ability to: • Demonstrate compassion and empathy for, and an ability to work professionally with your chosen population group; • Through the application of a structural analysis of the policy initiative discuss its impact on service users; • Advocate for at least **one** change that could be made to the social policy that aligns with social work ethics and if implemented by government could potentially transcend oppressive conditions impacting on service users; • Demonstrate high quality oral presentation skills, engaging the audience with compelling *non-scripted* information and respond effectively to questions from the audience; • Present with clarity, demonstrating high quality expression utilising logically structured arguments.

Assessment Task 3: Submission to Policy Review

Goal:	To develop written skills in policy reform advocacy.
Product:	Written Piece
Format:	This task is a submission to a policy review process about the same social policy discussed in the previous assessment pieces. You will write a 3-4 page submission making a case for, **two** specific recommendations about how the social policy should be *reformed, modified or expanded*. A detailed document providing guidelines about the specifics required will be provided to students at the commencement of the course.
Criteria:	Your submissions will be assessed according to your ability to: • Demonstrate comprehension of a critical approach to social policy analysis, by analysing a relevant social policy document as it impacts on service users and on your work practices; • Use relevant evidence, make coherent and persuasive arguments about how the social policy should be reformed and articulate **two practical, succinct and relevant recommendations** about how the policy can be reformed based on arguments made; • Follow the Terms of Reference for the task and cover all sections outlined in the Guidelines document; • Write with clarity (expression, correct grammar, spelling and punctuation), logically structured, coherently argued analysis, and appropriately supported by relevant published literature

7.   Directed study hours

The directed study hours listed here are a portion of the workload for this course. A 12 unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Directed study hours may vary by location. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

Location:	Directed study hours for location:
Sippy Downs	1-Hour Lecture using a flipped classroom 2-Hour Weekly Workshop

8.   What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note that course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Blackboard site. Please log in as soon as possible.

8.1   Prescribed text(s) or course reader

Information regarding prescribed texts or other associated resources will be made available on the BlackBoard site prior to commencement of study.

8.2   Specific requirements

Nil

9.   How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low.

It is your responsibility as a student to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers, and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study. It is also your responsibility to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the online Health Safety and Wellbeing training module for students, and following the instructions of the University staff.

10.   What administrative information is relevant to this course?

10.1   Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Blackboard, are electronically checked through SafeAssign. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work that SafeAssign has access to.

10.2   Assessment: Additional requirements

Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

a)   The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%
b)   The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale
c)   You have not failed an assessment task in the course due to academic misconduct

10.3   Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submission of assessment tasks will be penalised at the following maximum rate:

- 5% (of the assessment task's identified value) per day for the first two days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.
- 10% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the third day
- 20% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the fourth day and subsequent days up to and including seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.
- A result of zero is awarded for an assessment task submitted after seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.

Weekdays and weekends are included in the calculation of days late.

To request an extension, you must contact your Course Coordinator and supply the required documentation to negotiate an outcome.

10.4   Study help

In the first instance, you should contact your tutor, then the Course Coordinator. Additional assistance is provided to all students through Academic Skills Advisers. To book an appointment or find a drop-in session go to Student Hub.

Contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or studentcentral@usc.edu.au

10.5   Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Administration of Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Academic Misconduct
- Students with a Disability

Visit the USC website:
http://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching

10.6   General Enquiries

In person:

- **USC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **USC Moreton Bay** – Service Centre, Ground Floor, Foundation Building, Gympie Road, Petrie.
- **USC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **USC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **USC Fraser Coast -** Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **USC Caboolture -** Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

Tel: +61 7 5430 2890

Email: studentcentral@usc.edu.au