SOWK 5306 ADVANCED THEORY FOR SOCIAL WELFARE: Social policy

Instructor: Allan Moscovitch  
e-mail: allan.moscovitch@carleton.ca  
Office Telephone: 613 520-2600 ext. 8918  
Office: 623 Dunton Tower  
Office hours: To be announced  
Classroom: Room 509, Dunton Tower  
Classstime: Monday, 2:30 pm to 5:30 pm

Course Description
Core concepts and ideas about the modern welfare state and the Canadian welfare state. The role and nature of social policy in the Canadian political system. Methods of analysis of contemporary social policy. Precludes additional credit for SOWK 5305.

Prerequisite: registration in M.S.W. Year II.

http://calendar.carleton.ca/grad/gradprograms/socialwork/

Course Learning Objectives

1. To develop an understanding of the origins of capitalism and of welfare states.
2. To develop an understanding of the development of the Canadian welfare state.
3. To gain an understanding of the programs constituting the Canadian welfare state.
4. To develop an understanding of the major approaches to social policy analysis.
5. To develop skills in writing social policy analysis.
6. To gain an understanding of the institutions of the state including government, bureaucracy and judiciary in relation to the welfare state.
7. To gain an understanding of the role of policy analysis in government and in the organizations of civil society.
8. To gain skills in writing policy analysis in the context of government and civil society (non-profit) organizations.
9. To integrate an understanding of the political economy of the welfare state with skills in policy analysis.

Course Process
We will begin with discussion about the content and directions for the course. I would like to ensure that the topics, the reading materials, and the organization that I have suggested here suit the students in the course. Once the topics and the organization are agreed, the
course instructor will take responsibility for presenting a major part of the topics. Student presentations, integrated with the course content, will also be an important component of both the fall and winter terms of the course.

**Social Policy**

As the centre of the development of the western liberal industrial state has been the social policies and programs of what has become known as the welfare state.

While tied to the market system, the rules and regulations of the social programs which have been implemented represent an alternative to it.

In the recent past, conservative governments in Canada and elsewhere have made social policy a key focus of their activities. They have been preoccupied with changing the rules and regulations to make them more market oriented, and with limiting or even terminating those programs which are regarded as the most socially oriented with the least regard for the principles of the market. Further, conservative governments have been driven by the desire not only to limit the reach of government but to reduce public expenditures, creating more room for tax reductions.

Welfare state development and welfare state structures provide the agenda for the first few weeks of term.

The first question that we will try to answer in the fall term has to do with the welfare state itself. Why did the welfare state develop and how did that process differ from one country to another? We will also establish the structure of the Canadian welfare state with a particular emphasis on the way Federalism is manifest within it.

A second question following from the first is: what are the policies and programs which constitute the Canadian welfare state? Should we approach them as essentially market processes? If so what are the market methodologies that have been used to analyze social policies and programs? Should we approach them as essentially non market processes? If so, what are the non-market methodologies that have been used to analyze social policies programs?

A third question we will be concerned with in the fall term has to do with the analysis of these policies and programs. How should we approach the analysis of social policies and programs? Should we consider them as essentially following the same rules as market processes? If so what are the market methodologies that have been used to analyze social policies and programs? Alternatively, should we approach them as essentially non market processes? If so, what are the non-market methodologies that have been used to analyze social policies programs?

A fourth question concerns the organizations in Canadian civil society that operate to provide research and policy advice to government. What are these organizations which are often referred to as “think tanks”? How were they established and funded? What are the
methodologies of analysis that they use to make their recommendations for the reform of social policy and programs?

Course Evaluation
In short I would like to focus on social policy analysis in the fall term. To that end I am asking each student to review one or more substantive social policy document(s) (approximately 40-50 pages) and to learn about social policy analysis by deconstructing the methodology on which it is based. The list of documents will be drawn from those prepared by a group of “think tanks,” civil society organizations that offer research and public policy advice to Canadian governments. A list of organizations and a representative list of documents will be provided. Students may choose to put together more than one document from a particular think tank to make up a package of documents on a common theme.

My hope is that students will cover a range of perspectives from the most strongly pro-market (the Fraser Institute) to the most strongly anti-market (the Centre for Social Justice).

The task of the assignment will be to prepare a presentation to the class on the material that each student is reading. The time available for each presentation will be dependent on the number of students in the class. We will aim at having 20 minutes for each presentation. We will begin organizing presentations soon after the start of the term. Each student will be expected to employ Power Point to make their presentation.

The second task of the assignment is to prepare a written review of the document or documents. The due date for each written review is the class following the presentation. This way each student has the same amount of time to complete their written review after their presentation. Students undertaking the presentation early in the term have more time for their final paper. Those presenting later in the term have more time to prepare for the presentation and written paper but less time for the final paper.

The third task of the assignment is to prepare a piece of analysis of one of the issues raised in the articles or monographs which you have now reviewed. For example, if child benefits are a major issue in the document reviewed then the final paper will provide you with the opportunity to develop your analytic skills in relation to this theme. The classes will be aimed at ensuring that everyone has a firm understanding of the different ways of doing policy analysis.

Fall Term Evaluation
Here in summary form is what I am proposing as a fall term assignment. The assignment is in three parts. Each part builds on the previous part.

1. Prepare and present a review of one or more documents – 20%
   
   Each student will have about 30 minutes for a presentation based on a review of one or more documents. A list of suggested documents will be available soon after the
beginning of term. You may want to work with a document or documents not on the list. Please discuss this possibility with me before beginning work. I will provide you with a framework of questions with which to interrogate the material.

Presentations can begin early in the term. Time will be set aside in the latter part of each class. A schedule will be established soon after the start of the term. The schedule will be adjusted to suit the numbers of students in the class. I would like to see presentations begin in Week 5 and continue to Week 10. I will provide you with a guide for the evaluation of the presentations and a written evaluation after your presentation. I also like to meet with presenters immediately after the presentation to provide some feedback to you.

2. Prepare a written review of the document or documents on which the presentation was based – 35%

The written review should be up to 2500 words. (10 pages double spaced, 12 point type). I will provide a guide to the evaluation of the written paper. The written review is due one week after your presentation.

3. Write a major essay – 45%

The third task is to write an extended analysis on one social welfare policy issue raised in or by the document that you have reviewed. The full essay should be approximately 4000 words in length plus bibliography. I will provide you with a framework for the evaluation of the final paper. The final paper will be due the last day of classes.

Class Participation
Although I do not give grades for participation, I do expect that students attend all classes. Family responsibilities, illness, and major commitments may occasionally interfere with a student’s ability to attend class. Please e-mail or leave me a voice mail message to indicate that you are unable to attend class.

Text Books
Course books have been ordered from Octopus Books, located off campus on Third Avenue, just to the west of Bank Street in the Glebe. I have ordered the following books:


I also use some material from:

The text for the section on the market is

I will also use some material from the following which is also available online:

Paul Phillips, *Inside Capitalism: An Introduction to Political Economy* (Also available in an online edition)

[http://www.octopusbooks.org/home](http://www.octopusbooks.org/home)

**Websites**
You will see that I have placed many documents on the Course Outline which are available on websites. I have verified all of the websites as of September 2013.

**Library Reserves**
All books on this suggested outline will be available on Reserve at the circulation desk on the ground floor of the Library.
Outline of Sessions

In what follows I have divided the fall term of the course into four modules, based on the presentations all taking place in the middle of the term. Module I is introductory and may provide something of a review of major themes in social welfare and the welfare state. It includes sessions on the development of capitalism and the welfare state, on the contemporary Canadian welfare state and on the impact of federalism on state welfare. I have not included a session on welfare state theory nor on the history of the Canadian welfare state. Any of these subjects and others could be included in the introductory sessions. I invite discussion on whether a different combination of topics would better respond to the interests and needs of students in the class.

Module II is an opportunity for each student in the class to make a structured presentation based on a review and analysis of the work of a policy analyst of your choosing.

Module III is focused on market analysis and how it is used to understand social policy. Why have I chosen to privilege this material? It is this form of analysis that dominates in government, in many of the think tanks, and in the media. To understand it is to be a position to understand a large amount of the public and private discourse on social policy in contemporary Canada. For this section I am suggesting a recent textbook on contemporary economics, a book which is critical of market approaches, and some other supplementary texts and articles.

Module IV is focused on non-market analysis and how it is used to understand social policy. In one non-market approach the key issue is need – the nature of need and its measurement. The same approach is concerned with the design and operation of social programs. How do programs actually work and who receives benefits from them? In an alternative version of non-market analysis, the key question is power: social, political and especially economic power. Who has power, how do they get it and what do they do with it. Who has the power to implement what social program, why do they implement social programs and to whose benefit? What alternatives are possible both intellectually and politically?
Module I

Introduction to Policy Analysis

1. September 9, 2013:
Introductions. Discussion of the course, the suggested assignments, and the suggested topics for the term. The following is a suggested outline for the fall term.

Readings:


A. Moscovitch, “Notes on Canadian Think Tanks,” September 2013.

Supplementary: