School of Social Work
MSW Program

COURSE OUTLINE

SOWK 5700
EURR 5201
WGST 5901
(Cross-listed course)

Comparative Social Policy:
Canada and the European Union

FALL 2013

Time of class: Wednesday 2:30 – 5:30 PM

Location: Room 517 Dunton Tower

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to comparative social policy by focusing on Canada and member states of the European Union (EU). The course is designed so that students will have the opportunity to: learn some of the fundamentals of comparative social policy; understand the issues and complexities involved in comparative research; and be able to apply some of this to their own research. An important aspect of this course is to help students develop skills in critical analysis of comparative social policies in Canada and European Union member states.

The course is divided into two broad sections. The foundation section will include the relevance of comparative social policy to social work, issues and dimensions involved in doing comparative research, methodological and theoretical issues in comparative studies, basic information on the structures of welfare states in Canada and the EU, and discussions of the current economic environment. A second section of the course will focus more specifically on social policy issues and social policies in Canada and the EU with a view of critiquing, comparing and contrasting the policies. In this section of the course students will present their work.

The course will be conducted as an interactive seminar where student participation is central.

### OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course students should:

- have developed a solid understanding of the relevance of comparative policy studies in the general field of social policy;

- have a good knowledge of the methodological issues related to comparative policy studies;

- understand the historical and contemporary relevance of the European Union to Canada;

- have a good understanding of comparisons of selected social policies/social issues between Canada and countries of the European Union;

- be able to develop a critical comparative analysis of a selected social policy/social issue between Canada and one or more countries of the European Union.
COMPULSORY READINGS

A course pack of required readings has been assembled for this course and is available for purchase. In addition to these readings you also are required to download some electronic material as indicated in the readings for the weekly sessions.

Course packs are available for purchase at Allegra Printing, 1069 Bank Street (Bank at Sunnyside). (Tele: 613-730-3000). Students also can access the readings electronically through Carleton’s reserve system, Ares.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In addition to the required course pack and on-line readings, the following books, journals and web sites may be useful supplementary readings for your assignments.

Books

Clasen, Jochen (1999). *Comparative Social Policy: Concepts, Theories, Methods*. Oxford: Blackwell. **Note: On reserve at MacOdrum.** To preview, see:  
http://books.google.com/books?id=0wz4MkDpc3UC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false


Kennett, Patricia (2004). *A Handbook of Comparative Social Policy*. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd. To preview, see:  
http://books.google.com/books?id=OvS6VOO3rFsC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false


Journals

*CCPA Monitor*
ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENT 1 – leading class discussion – 10%

Due: in first half of the term (dates variable)

Each of you is expected to lead a formal class discussion on at least one of the weekly readings. This involves developing a strong familiarity with the article, preparing a short handout (2-3 pages) and developing two or three relevant questions for class discussion that you will lead. You will be assigned your reading in the first few weeks of class.

You must prepare enough handouts for everyone in the class.

You are expected to attend and actively participate in all of the weekly sessions in this course. Please be prepared to discuss all of the readings for the course.

ASSIGNMENT 2 – Outline of presentation/paper topic and annotated references – 20%

Due: Week 6, October 16

The next three assignments (a. outline, bibliography & annotations, b. presentation, and c. final paper) involve a process of building on each other. For the final assignment (#4) you will prepare a paper that compares and contrasts a selected social policy or policy issue from Canada with a similar issue from one of the member states of the EU. In the assignment under discussion here (assignment #2) you are asked to begin this process by developing a solid and well-advanced outline that will constitute, for the most part, the structure of your
final paper (assignment #4) and form the information base of what will become your presentations (assignment #3).

To complete this assignment (#2) successfully, you will have to have begun the process of researching your topic. You must have a clear topic, and an idea of how the topic will be structured. The outline is expected to identify some pertinent information and must go beyond general headings.

For this assignment you must also prepare a preliminary bibliography of at least 6 sources; these sources must include references that deal with the policy issue in Canada and the other nation involved in the comparison.

You are further required to include three (3) annotated references (no more than a half page each) of academic articles or books that are central to the final paper. These three annotations can be part of the bibliography for this assignment and your final paper.

These three piece—a developed outline, the bibliography, and three annotations—together comprise this assignment. This assignment should be between 4-6 pages in length.

**ASSIGNMENT 3 – Presentation to the class – 25%**

**Due: You will be presenting your research between week 9 (November 13) and week 12 (December 4)**

Each of you will make a presentation to the class (following from the above assignment #2) which will become the basis of your final paper. Please note that, for the most part, you are asked to select a policy area from among the weekly lists identified in the course outline. Students’ areas of interest will be discussed in class and attempts will be made to match you with your area of interest but please be aware that you may be reassigned to another topic if there is an imbalance in the topics that people choose.

The length of the presentation will be determined by the number of students in the class and will be established in the first few weeks of classes.

You are asked to choose a social policy or policy issue from the designated topics outlined in weeks 8-12 (see the course outline) and develop a comparison of it between Canada and a EU member state. Areas to consider for inclusion in the presentation are: demographic characteristics, politics, ruling party, a bit of history, type of government in power, and the main features of the policy issue. The main focus however must be on the social policy issue and the comparisons that you are making.

In the first few weeks of class we will have a discussion about the assignments; if you have a strong interest in pursuing a policy issue that is not identified in the course outline, this can be discussed in class.

**ASSIGNMENT 4 – Final research paper – 45%**

**Due: week 12, December 4**
The final paper will be a continuation of, and develop from, the presentation. The paper must be done individually and it must include a comparative piece on a social policy or social policy issue in Canada and a country in the EU. Because an important part of this course is about the methodology of conducting comparative research, you are encouraged to include a piece on the methodology of your study and discuss any complexities and conundrums that were encountered in conducting comparative social policy research.

You are asked to develop an individual paper (i.e. no group projects) prepared by you specifically for this course. The paper should be between 4,500 and 5,400 words (or around 15 to 18 pages at 300 words a page with 1.5 line spacing and 1 inch margins) not including references and /or bibliography. Please use a 12-font size.

Aim to include at least six references although the exact number will depend on your topic. Reference guides are available in the reference section on the main floor of the library.

This assignment will be further discussed in class.

**STRUCTURE OF CLASS & PARTICIPATION/ATTENDANCE**

The class will begin at 2:30 and end at 5:30 every Wednesday afternoon this term. Approximately half way through the class, we will take a 15 minute break. Please be punctual.

Because this course is conducted as an interactive seminar, participation is important for its success. You are expected to attend all classes, complete the readings and participate constructively in discussions. An attendance sheet will be circulated for each class and it is your responsibility to sign the sheet. If your name is not on the sheet, you will be marked absent.

After you have missed two classes, you will be deducted 5% per class for additional missed classes, up to a total of 25%. In exceptional circumstances such as illness or family emergency, exceptions can be made if the professor is notified in advance and if a medical or other appropriate certificate is presented to the professor.

**GENERAL REMINDERS**

**STUDENT CONDUCT**

As students at Carleton University you have a clear set of rights and responsibilities that can be found at the following address: http://www6.carleton.ca/secretariat/policies/student-rights-and-responsibilities-policy/. Students in the school of social work are expected to behave in accordance with these policies.

As an institution preparing professional social workers, the School of Social Work has the additional expectation that social work students are also learning to follow the professional ethics outlined in the *CASW Code of Ethics*. Among other things, this means learning to exercise good judgment in the face of complex and competing interests and claims (CASW, 2005).
You are expected to conduct yourselves in a professional manner both in the classroom, in the hallways, and in the community. This includes treating everyone respectfully: colleagues, administrative staff, field supervisors, professors, library staff and others that you come in contact with. Complex and sensitive issues are inherent in the work of social work and we need to know how to deal with these situations. One way to begin this process is to familiarize yourselves with the CASW Code of Ethics and Carleton’s students’ responsibilities document.

The rights and responsibilities document and the Code of Ethics, among other things, are the foundation upon which we at the SSW have developed processes to deal with conflict. If conflicts arise, it is expected that you will address your concerns or complaints directly with the person/people involved in it in a constructive and respectful manner. If the conflict cannot be resolved at this level, it is then appropriate to involve the graduate supervisor who will either deal with the situation directly or refer it to the most appropriate person in the university. At no time is it acceptable to post details of the concerns on-line or on a social media website.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE CLASS ROOM

Please turn off your cell phones during class time. Computers and tablets can be used if their use is restricted to taking notes or other class-related activities. Please respect the class by abiding by this regulation.

STUDENTS REQUIRING ACCOMMODATIONS

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation**: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website at: http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

**Religious obligation**: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website at: http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by the
deadlines published on the PMC website: http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/

ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE IN ON TIME

I expect your papers to be handed in on time. Handing in assignments late can be unfair both to students who hand them in on time and the instructor who must submit grades on time. In exceptional circumstances (illness or family emergency) it may be difficult to meet the deadline and in such cases you must contact me before the paper is due. In these cases extensions to the due date must be justified with a medical or other appropriate certificate.

Work submitted after the final date without prior arrangements with the professor will be deducted one letter grade for each day late, e.g., a paper which has been graded B+ will receive a B for the first day overdue, a B- for the second overdue day etc.

It is advisable to keep a record of your papers. Papers are to be handed in on, or before, the due date before or after class or in the main office (where they are date-stamped). Please do not slip your papers under my door because they can get lost.

A NOTE ABOUT PLAGIARISM

Do not plagiarize.

Plagiarism is a serious offense with serious consequences. It occurs when: (1) you directly copy another’s work without acknowledging it; (2) you closely paraphrase the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledging it; (3) you borrow without acknowledgment, any ideas in clear and recognizable form in such a way as to present them as your own thoughts, where if they were your ideas they would contribute to the merit of your work; (4) when you use direct quotations without quotation marks (or indenting and single-spacing) and references. A description of the regulations regarding instructional offences (including plagiarism) is outlined below:

Instructional Offences: regulations

The Senate of the University has enacted the following regulations for instructional offences. A student commits an instructional offence when s/he:

- cheats on an examination, test, or graded assignment by obtaining or producing an answer by deceit, fraud or trickery, or by some act contrary to the rules of the examination;
- submits substantially the same piece of work to two or more courses without the prior written permission of the instructors from all courses involved. Minor modifications and amendments, such as changes of phraseology in an essay or paper, do not constitute a significant and acceptable reworking of an assignment;
- contravenes the regulations published at an examination or which are displayed on the reverse side of a properly authorized examination booklet;
- commits an act of plagiarism (which for the purpose of this regulation shall mean to use and pass off as one's own idea or product work of another without expressly giving credit to another);
disrupts a class or other period of instruction if he or she: is a registered member of the class or period of instruction; is warned to discontinue any act or behaviour reasonably judged by the instructor of the course or period of instruction to be detrimental to the class.
OUTLINE OF WEEKLY SESSIONS

INTRODUCTION

Week 1 – September 11

Topic: Introduction to the course; review of course outline; course requirements; introduction to the study of comparative social policy.

Required readings:

PART ONE: Foundation for Understanding Comparative Social Policy

Week 2 – September 18

Topics: What is comparative social policy? Why is the international context important? What are some of the issues involved in doing comparative policy studies?

Required readings:


Week 3 – September 25

Topic: An Overview of Social Policy and Social Welfare in the EU

Required readings:


**Week 4 – October 2**  
*Topic:* An Overview of Social Policy and Social Welfare in Canada

**Required readings:**  


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**Week 5 – October 9**  
*Topic:* Concepts, theories and methods in comparative social policy

**Required readings:**  


Extra reading:  

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**Week 6 – October 16**  
*Topic:* Concepts, theories and methods in comparative social policy (cont’d)

**Required readings:**  


**Week 7 – October 23**

**Topic:** Social Policy in an era of globalization

**Required readings:**


*****TERM BREAK: October 28-November 1*****

**Week 8 – November 6**

**Topic:** Gender and Comparative Social Policy

**Required readings:**


**PART TWO: Specific Comparative Social Policies – Student presentations**

For the next three or four weeks (depending on the size of the class) students will be making presentations to the class on their research findings. Students will be expected to research their topics on their own although a list of some relevant readings, including on-line sources, will be distributed in class. Some suggested readings are identified below.

**Week 9 – November 13**

**Topics:** Family Policy: Maternity/paternity leave, child care & long term care for seniors

Maternity/paternity leave & Child care


Care for seniors


Week 10 – November 20

Topic: Work-related policies (women’s employment, pensions, unemployment insurance)

Women’s employment


Online article:  

**Pensions**


Online article:  


Online article (copy and paste link in address bar of your web browser):  
www.yorku.ca/crsp/issue51/issue51-10.pdf


Online article:  
http://heinonline.org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/jrlsasw33&id=363&collection=journals&index=journals/jrlsasw


Online article:  
http://esp.sagepub.com.proxy.library.carleton.ca/content/13/3.toc

**Unemployment insurance policies**


**Week 11 – November 27**

**Topic:** Health Insurance and Social Assistance

**Social assistance**


Online article:  
http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/pscpapers/vol15/iss18/1/
**Online article (copy and paste link in address bar of your web browser):** [www.canadiansocialresearch.net/rrep047.pdf](http://www.canadiansocialresearch.net/rrep047.pdf)

**Online article:** [http://esp.sagepub.com.proxy.library.carleton.ca/content/14/4/371.abstract](http://esp.sagepub.com.proxy.library.carleton.ca/content/14/4/371.abstract)

**Health care**

Frontier Centre for Public Policy May 25, 2009). “Comparing Canada and Europe’s Healthcare Systems,” Interview with Ben Eisen  

**Disability policy**


**Week 12 – December 4**
**Topic:** (a) Other selected social policy issues, (b) Social policy in the wake of the financial crises  


**Online article:** [http://journals1.scholarsportal.info.proxy.library.carleton.ca/details.xqy?uri=/09589287/v13i0001/21_tosiarcaotws.xml](http://journals1.scholarsportal.info.proxy.library.carleton.ca/details.xqy?uri=/09589287/v13i0001/21_tosiarcaotws.xml)


**Online article:**
http://journals2.scholarsportal.info.proxy.library.carleton.ca/details.xqy?uri=/14733250/v01i0004/451_cwoep.xml