

196-751 Social Policy for Social Work Practice 1

Credit Points:	12.500
Level:	Graduate/Postgraduate
Dates & Locations:	2008, This subject commences in the following study period/s: Semester 1, - Taught on campus. On campus
Time Commitment:	Contact Hours: 24 contact hours (8 x 1 hour lectures, 8 x 2 hour seminars) Total Time Commitment: 24 contact hours 16 hours of class preparation and reading 24 hours of assessment related tasks = 64 hours total time commitment = 8 hours total time per week
Prerequisites:	n/a
Corequisites:	None
Recommended Background Knowledge:	None
Non Allowed Subjects:	None
Core Participation Requirements:	It is University policy to take all reasonable steps to minimise the impact of disability upon academic study and reasonable adjustments will be made to enhance a student's participation in the University's courses. Students who feel their disability will impact on meeting this requirement are encouraged to discuss this matter with the Course Coordinator and the Disability Liaison Unit.
Coordinator:	Dr Winsome Roberts
Subject Overview:	<p>This subject will give students a foundational understanding of the policy context in which they live and practice and develop their capacity to critically read, analyse and evaluate the impact of policy in everyday lives. It will introduce the domain of public policy making and sensitise students to the inherently contested nature of political decision-making regarding the allocation and distribution of resources. It will give an overview of the current workfare paradigm and regime and place this in international and historical perspective. It will introduce key concepts and intellectual debates in contemporary social policy and provide a framework for policy analysis that can be used in grounded policy assessment. Social work has a unique role in social policy development. Whether working with individuals, groups and communities, social workers need to be aware of the influence of the broader policy environment and committed to advocating change in that environment where there are adverse social impacts.</p> <p>Subject objectives</p> <p>The aims of this subject are to introduce students to the principles and concepts by which they can decipher and read contemporary social policy so as to understand the way government decision making changes the distribution of supports and opportunities across different groups in society and how this ultimately affects human lives. The course aims to highlight the value basis of policy decisions and the inherently political nature of social policy analysis, practice and advice. In addition, the course aims to demonstrate the unique role of social work for social policy development both because of its professional commitment to the principles of social justice as well as its integrated practice methods. At the end of the course students will demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # A clear understanding of what social policy is and why it is contested # Knowledge of the values and principles of alternative paradigms of political economy that determine the allocation of supports and opportunities # An understanding of how this distributional allocation in turn affects human lives and the importance of a critical approach to social policy by social workers # Knowledge of the current workfare paradigm and welfare regime from a national and international perspective # Knowledge of the historical foundations of social policy development in Australia and the rationale for 'the welfare state' # Understanding of key concepts and intellectual debates in welfare service provision

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Understanding of the institutions of the public policy-making environment # Knowledge and use of a framework for social policy analysis # The role of evaluation in assessing the way policy impacts on everyday lives and an appreciation for social work's unique role as policy practitioners in reading 'policy from below'
Assessment:	Written essays of 2,000 words (40% due mid semester) and 3,000 words 60% (due end of semester)
Prescribed Texts:	n/a
Breadth Options:	This subject is not available as a breadth subject.
Fees Information:	Subject EFTSL, Level, Discipline & Census Date, http://enrolment.unimelb.edu.au/fees
Generic Skills:	<p>Students who complete this subject should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # critically analyse texts and practices; # understand recent developments in social work contexts of practice; # link theory to practice; # competently communicate in ways relevant to both academic and practice contexts; # undertake independent research.
Links to further information:	http://www.socialwork.unimelb.edu.au/
Notes:	The disciplines of Nursing and Social Work are now co-managed within the Faculty of Medicine Dentistry and Health Sciences. At the time of publication Social Work subjects are under the administrative management of the School of Nursing.