

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
Family Relations & Human Development

Course Outline - Winter 2014

FRHD 4320: Social Policies for Children, Youth & Families

Dr. Denise Whitehead

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Office Hours:

Before Class on Wednesday starting at 6:15

ROZH 103 (our classroom - impromptu or make an appointment)

or

Thursdays 10 - 11 am (MINS 147)

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on current social policies, programs, and services that affect children's development and family well-being. Issues include policies that affect income security, parental effectiveness, social service provision, and community resources.

LECTURES: Wednesday 7 p.m. to 9:50 p.m. ROZH 103

Co-Requisite: FRHD 3040 Parenting and Intergenerational Relationships

Pre-Requisite: 9.5 credits

The FINAL EXAM is scheduled for Monday April 14, 2014 from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm (Location TBA). It is your responsibility to ensure that you do NOT have a conflict with any other course exam. You are not permitted to enroll in this course if you have an exam conflict.

REQUIRED READINGS

There is NO textbook that is to be purchased for this course. Readings are outlined below and copies and links are noted in this syllabus and/or are found on CourseLink. This course focuses on tremendous access to grey literature and commentaries to identify issues, current policies and ideas for reform as well as reading from academic texts to flesh out the concepts and provide background information for understanding the historical and current social-political and policy context in Canada.

COURSE WEBSITE AND EMAIL COMMUNICATION

The course website can be found at <http://courselink.uoguelph.ca>. All components of this course can be found on this website. Marks will be released there. Written assignments will be hand-marked and returned in class. Familiarize yourself with this website and check back multiple times each week to view messages, readings and other materials. **PLEASE select the "NEWS" feature in CourseLink so you are apprised of course updates.** As per university regulations, all students are required to check their university e-mail accounts regularly.

The best method to contact me is through my UG email. This is connected to my phone and I will generally respond to messages within the same day and usually no more than 24hours (except for possibly weekends and holidays).

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course focuses on current social policies, programs and services and existing gaps that affect individuals and families across the life-span with a primary focus on children and parents and family well-being. The course will examine a combination of theoretical perspectives and broad social forces that shape government policies, legislation, agency intervention and community supports. The primary focus will be on federal and provincial/territorial policies in Canada, but international policies will be introduced to showcase alternative perspectives and implementation.

The main objectives of the course are to:

1. Explore the fundamentals of social policy and its relevance for Canadians and their families and YOU.
2. Critically reflect on policy research and practice, particularly with respect to diversity among individuals and groups in Canadian society.
3. To explore the interdisciplinary and historical natures of social policy in Canada and beyond.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND EVALUATION

Critical Analysis

The emphasis in this course is on critical analysis that builds on critical reading, exploration and critical writing. Critical reading means reading a text carefully with particular attention to the stated and unstated assumptions of the author. Understanding where the author is coming from (e.g., historical context, political standpoint, cultural background, gender, class, race, etc.) is important for being able to read the text critically.

Critical writing refers to writing in a way that takes into account and makes transparent your own viewpoint and social locations when analyzing and writing.

COURSE ASSESSMENT

<p>✚ In-class Group Assignment (Policy Fact Sheet) (February 5th, 7 to 9:50 pm) (Mandatory Attendance) (Final product due Monday February 10th by 6pm via DropBox) (See Syllabus or Courselink for Instructions)</p>	10%
<p>✚ 3-5 Minute Presentation on Policy Fact Sheet (Feb. 12) (Mandatory Attendance)</p>	5%
<p>✚ 3 reflections/summaries of course readings</p>	5% each (15% total)
<p>Due at the beginning of class via DropBox (see Syllabus below for the outline of how these will be completed)</p>	
<p>✚ "Beginner" Policy Brief ○ (NO Extensions)</p> <p>➤ Statement of Purpose, Backgrounder & 3-4 References (With a cover page) ➤ Due February 26th, 2014 by 6 pm via CourseLink Drop-box and in Hard Copy at start of class</p>	5%
<p>✚ Final Policy Brief (Due Wednesday March 26th, 6 pm) Instructions, Rubric and Examples on Courselink</p>	35%

 Final Exam (2 Essay-type Questions) (Covers entire course)	30%
Monday April 14th, 2014 1:30 am to 1:30 pm	

TOTAL 100%

WRITING GUIDE & ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

University of Guelph Learning Commons (2011). APA Fact Sheet Series:

Acknowledging print and electronic sources in the social sciences.

http://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/assistance/writing_services/resources/components/documents/apa.pdf.

Academic misconduct, such as plagiarism, is a serious offence at the University of Guelph and will not be tolerated. **The student is responsible to make her/himself fully aware of the university's definitions and policies associated with academic misconduct/plagiarism.**

Please consult the Undergraduate Calendar at

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml> for offences, penalties and procedures relating to academic misconduct.

The instructor is required to report ALL cases of suspected plagiarism to the Department Chair who then forwards matters to the Dean's office.

USE OF COMPUTERS/CELL PHONES/OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES DURING LECTURES:

A PDF file of the PowerPoint outline for each lecture will be available to view/download prior to class, when possible, via the CONTENT section of the Courselink Webpage. These will not necessarily be complete as they may include blank spaces for filling in information and notes.

Cell phones and other communication devices and software **must be turned off** during lecture time. Please be respectful of this request and of your fellow classmates, instructor and teaching assistants during lectures. **Research has shown that not only is your own learning compromised by such distractions, but that students in your vicinity are similarly affected.**

LATE ASSIGNMENT/PAPERS

1. All assignments/papers are due by 6 p.m. on the dates specified via Courselink Dropbox. You are also required to provide a hard copy at the start of that evening's class.

2. Late assignments will be devalued by 5% per day, including **weekends (the exception is the February 26th delivery of the Statement of Purpose and Backgrounder – this will only be accepted on this day!)**.
3. In special unforeseeable circumstances where due dates cannot be met it is the student's responsibility to provide acceptable written documentation substantiating the reasons for not meeting the deadline (e.g., doctor's certificate, copy of death certificate/obituary, police report, etc.). Students with acceptable documentation must contact Dr. Whitehead no later than 48 hours after the due date to make alternative arrangements. Latecomers without acceptable documentation or those who contact the professor after the 48 hour period will be penalized 5% per day, including weekends. There may be times when it is difficult to assess whether a student should receive an accommodation. Or, the accommodation needs are beyond the typical need. In such cases please take note of #4 below.
4. **If you find yourself struggling to meet the evaluation components of this, or any other course you are taking, due to health, accident, personal or other issues, you are encouraged to seek out the services and advice of your program counselor. If I am uncertain about the need for an accommodation I may also refer a student to their program counselor. This is a confidential service; professors are not told the specific reasons for the accommodation only that the counselor has ascertained a persuasive reason. Please note, I, or any other professor, are merely offered the opportunity to *negotiate* with the student how a student might be accommodated to work towards course completion. For FRHD you may make an appointment with Linda Zehr.**

READINGS

Social policy is an area of study that is usually very new to students. My goal is not to have you learn everything, but to guide you in identifying and understanding the issues and how one might find resources and employ those in evaluating social policy concerns. This is an area of constant change – learning how to identify the issues and seek information to help one form an opinion is the cornerstone of being an educated 'consumer,' active citizen and competent professional.

This course entails a great deal of reading. Familiarizing yourself with the materials as the course progresses will allow you to form a greater understanding of the key concepts, content, issues and how they are interrelated. For the policy brief, and final exam, success in this course is demonstrated by critically analyzing and integrating the materials; not merely quoting from the materials. A quick scan of the readings will NOT be sufficient for students to acquire the necessary understanding to do well in the course. Creating summaries will be an important tool for success!

Below is a general overview of the required readings. NOTE: Other items will be added (primarily news articles) as items of interest appear, often in the form of news items. These will usually appear in the "NEWS" Section of Courselink and will

often be addressed as the “topic of the day” for further discussion or linked to an already existing topic being covered in the course.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Please note this schedule is tentative and may change based-on guest speaker availability and/or pace of material presented in class.

Week	Topic	Readings, Notes, Assignments
#1 Jan 8	<p>Welcome! Introductions</p> <p>Overview of the course</p> <p>What is social policy?</p> <p>Social Policy in action: The costs and consequences of post-secondary education</p> <p>COME PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE ISSUES, THE CHALLENGES AND THE CONSEQUENCES</p> <p>Social Determinants of Health</p>	<p>Format, topics, and assessment.</p> <p>Westhues, Anne. <u>Becoming Acquainted with Social Policy</u> (pp. 5-24). In Westhues, A. (ed.). <i>Canadian Social Policy: Issues and Perspectives</i>, 4th ed. 2006. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier Press. Available as PDF on Courselink.</p> <p>Shaker, E. & Macdonald, D. (2013, September). <i>Degrees of uncertainty: Navigating the changing terrain of university finance</i>. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Available at: http://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2013/09/Degrees_of_Uncertainty.pdf</p> <p>Tal, B. & Enenagor, E. (2013, August 26). Degrees of success: The payoff to higher education in Canada. CIBC Economics. Available at http://research.cibcwm.com/economic_public/download/if_2013-0826.pdf</p> <p>"Here's a thought: The Canada Skill Grant" Available at the Caledon Institute at http://www.caledoninst.org/Publications/PDF/1030ENG%2Epdf</p> <p>Visit Federal website: Employment and Social Development Canada for information on Student Financial Assistance for types of funding options and paying it back! See http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/jobs/student/index.shtml</p>
#2 Jan 15	<p>What's new in SP this week?</p> <p>What is family policy?</p>	<p>Bogenschneider, K. & Corbett, T. M. (2010) Family policy? Becoming a field of inquiry and subfield of social policy. <i>Journal of Marriage and the Family</i>, 72(3), 783-803.</p> <p>Review Westhues chapter from week 1.</p>

	<p>Policies in Canada: Roles of Federal, Provincial/ Territorial governments</p> <p>Who is responsible for Canada's children?</p>	<p>Visit Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/index.aspx</p> <p>Eibach, R. P. & Mock, S. E. (2011). Idealizing parenthood functions to justify policy neglect of parents' economic burdens. <i>Social Issues and Policy Review</i>, 5, 8-36 (available through library e-journals)</p> <p>What does it cost to raise a child? <i>McMahon, T. (2013, Sept. 30). Million-dollar babies. Maclean's Magazine.</i></p> <p>Margaret Wentz (Dec. 8, 2012). 'More babies please' – but how? Available from Globe and Mail on line at http://www.theglobeandmail.com/commentary/more-babies-please-but-how/article6115867/</p>
<p>#3 Jan 22</p>	<p>What's in the news?</p> <p>Income security: Why money matters to child development and the impact of "segregation of experience": Social inclusion/social exclusion</p> <p>The importance of examining how policy impacts the social determinants of health Tonight's Popcorn Feature: <i>Waging a Living</i></p>	<p>Let's talk about brain development: How poverty affects the core of our being</p> <p>Lareau, Annette (2011). <u>Chapter 2: Social structure and daily life (pp. 14-32).</u> From: <i>Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family life</i>. CA: University of California Press. Available on Courselink.</p> <p>Battle, K. (2007). <u>Child poverty: The evolution and impact of child benefits (pp. 21-44).</u> From R.B. Howe & K. Covell (Eds.). <i>Children's rights in Canada: A question of commitment</i>. Available on Courselink</p> <p>Raphael, D. (2011). Poverty in childhood and adverse health outcomes in adulthood. <i>Maturitas</i>, 69, 22-26. Available on-line via library e-journals.</p> <p>Campaign 2000: Needed: A federal action plan. Available on-line at http://www.campaign2000.ca/reportCards/national/C2000ReportCardNov2012.pdf</p> <p>Ellery, R. & Muruvi, W. (2013, October). <i>A living wage for Guelph & Wellington</i>. Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination.</p>

		<p>Available at http://gwpoverity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Living-Wage-Report-FINAL2.pdf</p> <p>Dodson & Albelda: How youth are put at risk by parents' low-wage jobs. Available on-line. http://cdn.umb.edu/images/centers_institutes/center_social_policy/Youth_at_RiskParents Low Wage Jobs Fall 121.pdf</p>
<p>#4 Jan 29</p>	<p>What's in the news?</p> <p>'Doing' social policy in the real world: Child Care and Kindergarten</p> <p>Guest Lecture: Valerie Trew, Supervisor, Child Care Services for Halton Region</p>	<p>Adamson, P. & Bennett, J. (2008). The child care transition (Report Card 8). UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.</p> <p><u>The Evolution in Public Policy Surrounding Child Care</u> (October 20, 2013). Available at http://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/parenting/raising-babythe-evolutionin-public-policy/article14954547/</p> <p>Ontario Early Years Policy Framework (2013) (20 pages) http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/OntarioEarlyYear.pdf</p> <p>The \$17.5 billion question: Has the Universal Child Care Benefit given families "choice in child care"? (7 pages) http://www.childcarecanada.org/publications/briefing-notes/13/10/175-billion-question-has-universal-child-care-benefit-given-famili</p> <p>Macleans: Why full-day kindergarten is failing our children (2 pages) http://www2.macleans.ca/2013/10/31/why-full-day-kindergarten-is-failing-our-children/</p> <p>Visit Ontario Ministry for Education http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/</p>
<p>#5 Feb 5</p>	<p>In Class Group Assignment (10%): Policy Fact Sheets (Mandatory Attendance!!)</p> <p>7 to 9:50 pm</p> <p>Individuals randomly assigned</p>	<p>Reading for this week: Krull, C. (2011). Chapter 1: <u>Destabilizing the nuclear family ideal (pp. 11-29 - which is 22-40 of the electronic copy)</u>. In C. Krull & J. Sempruch (Eds.). A life in balance? Reopening the family-work debate. Vancouver: UBC Press. <i>This chapter is available electronically via UG library ebrary services. You will have to sign in if you are accessing remotely off-campus.</i></p> <p>What benefits and supports are available? Eligibility? What's the cost? Benefits? Criticisms? Supporting statistics? **You will be working in randomly ASSIGNED groups tonight to explore various programs, policies and income replacement programs. Each group</p>

	to groups. Check CourseLink prior to class to find out the NUMBER of the group to which you have been assigned.	<p>will be assigned a topic at the beginning of class. One page FACT SHEET due Monday February 10th by 6 pm via DropBox.</p> <p>Bring your computer for on-line access to information. More details in this syllabus.</p> <p>Topics may include such policies/programs as: Maternity leave benefits, Parental leave benefits, National Child Benefit, Child care in Quebec, Child care subsidies in Ontario, Universal Child Care Benefit, Compassionate Care Benefit, Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, CPP, OAS/GIS etc.</p>
#6 Feb 12	Policy Presentations Blitz (5%) (Mandatory Attendance!!)	3-5 minute presentations on the policy Fact Sheets that each group prepared. Fact Sheets Posted on CourseLink for all to view/retrieve. These will be organized and presented in a "cradle to grave" framework.
NO Class on Feb 19	Reading Week Feb 17 th to 21 st	<p style="text-align: center;">R E A D I N G W E E K !</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reminder: "Beginner" policy brief due next week for 5%.</p>
#7 Feb 26 "Beginner" Policy Brief Due VIA DROPBOX BY 6 PM AND IN HARD COPY AT THE START OF CLASS – NO extensions !!!	<p>Work, family and life: A complicated mix? How does one fix?</p> <p>Tonight's Popcorn Feature from Doc Zone: "Generation Jobless"</p>	<p>Review FACT SHEETS on the types of work and family policies available to families. Come prepared tonight to work in groups to discuss the challenges that families face and whether the policies, programs and supports are sufficient. Will they be sufficient for the next generation? What do we need to focus on?</p> <p>Bianchi S.M. & Milkie M. A. (2010). Work and family research in the first decade of the 21st century. <i>Journal of Marriage and the Family</i>, 72(3), 705-725. (Available online through UG library eJournals)</p> <p>Slaughter, Anne-Marie (2012, June 13). Why Women Still Can't Have it All. <i>The Atlantic</i>. Available at http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/07/why-women-still-cant-have-it-all/309020/</p> <p>Buck, Naomi (2012, September 27). One mom's maddening search for childcare. <i>Toronto Life Magazine</i>. Available online at http://www.torontolife.com/informer/features/2012/09/27/take-my-kids-please/</p>

		<p>Visit Employment and Social Development Canada for information on Employment Insurance at http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/jobs/ei/index.shtml</p>
<p>#8 March 5 (NOTE: 40th Class Day is Friday March 7th - Last Day to drop this course)</p>	<p>Child Welfare & UN Convention on Rights of the Child</p> <p>Tonight's Popcorn Feature: <i>Wards of the Crown</i></p>	<p>Chapter 1: Cameron, G., Freymond, N., Cornfield, D. & Palmer, S. (2007). <u>Positive possibilities for child and family welfare: Expanding the Anglo-American child protection paradigm (pp 1-77)</u>. From, G. Cameron & N. Coady (Eds.). <i>Moving toward positive systems of child & family welfare: Current issues & future directions</i>. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier Press. Available on CourseLink.</p> <p>See Canadian Coalition for the Rights of the Child UN Convention on Rights of the Child http://rightsofchildren.ca/wp-content/uploads/convention-in-pdf-format.pdf</p>
<p>#9 March 12</p>	<p>Caregiving: The wave of the future</p> <p>Dr. Donna Lero will be guest lecturing</p>	<p>Dr. Whitehead will be away this week. No office hours! Only emergency emails answered. You may contact our course TA, Valerie Trew, with any pressing questions.</p> <p>This week's readings are REQUIRED for the course.</p> <p>Tonman, S. (2011). Policy Challenges: The caregiver/care receiver relationship. The Caledon Institute of Social Policy. http://www.caledoninst.org/Publications/PDF/952ENC.pdf</p> <p>Dixbury, Higgins & Schroeder. (2009). Balancing paid work and caregiving responsibilities: A closer look at family caregivers in Canada. Canada Policy Research Network (CPRN). <i>(Please Read the Executive Summary and Introduction - pages 7-22)</i>. Available at http://www.cprn.org/documents/51061-EN.pdf</p>

#10 March 19	Relationships: Partnering and Dissolution Common-law versus Marriage: Is there a social difference? Is there a legal difference?	Ambert, Anne-Marie (2009, 3 rd Edition). <i>Divorce: Facts, Causes and Consequences</i> . Available at http://www.vifamily.ca/sites/default/files/divorce_facts_causes_consequences.pdf Chapman, F. (2014). <u>Chapter 6: Family Law (pp. 144-182)</u> . From: Introduction to Legal Studies. Toronto: Nelson Education. Available on CourseLink as a PDF (Note: the file is too big to upload as one file so look for Parts 1 and 2)
#11 Mar 26 POLICY BRIEF DUE Via DROP BOX by 6 PM <u>AND</u> in hard copy at start of class (35%)	Impact of divorce and separation on children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parental Alienation ▪ Shared custody 	No additional readings this week. Use this time week to catch up on past readings and finish your policy brief which is due today!! "The Squid and the Whale" Young adult's experiences of shared custody: Transitions, relationships and fairness
#12 April 2 FINAL CLASS! Discuss Final Exam	Retirement: You are never too young to plan	How will you 'afford' retirement: RSPs, CPP, OAS, GIS? Review appropriate Fact Sheets. Tamagno, E. (2007). Strengthening the foundations of Canada's pension system: A review of the old age security system. Caledon Institute. http://www.caledoninst.org/publications/pdf/660eng.pdf Ambachsheer, K. & Waitzer, E. (2011). Saving pooled registered pension plans: It's up to the provinces. C.D. Howe Institute. http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/ebrief_128.pdf Proposal to enhance CPP and why provinces and feds can't agree. What do you think? Canadian Associated Press. (December 15, 2013). CPP reforms tops agenda as financial ministers meet. Available at http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/cpp-reform-tops-agenda-as-finance-ministers-meet/article15976200/

		<p>Curry & Morrow. (December 16, 2013). With no consensus on CPP reform, Ontario pledges to go its own way. Available at http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/no-consensus-on-cpp-reform-as-provinces-decry-ottawas-stall-tactic/article15987267/</p> <p>Maurino, R. (January 3, 2014). Is 25 too young to save? Not if you want to retire on time. Globe & Mail. Available at http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-investor/personal-finance/retirement-rrsps/is-25-too-young-to-save-not-if-you-want-to-retire-on-time/article16169357/#dashboard/follows/</p> <p>McKenna. (2013, December 22). Ottawa can't afford to ignore long-term challenges. Globe & Mail. Available at http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/economy/ottawa-cant-afford-to-ignore-long-term-challenges/article16087481/#dashboard/follows/</p>
MONDAY APRIL 14th, 2014 TIME: 11:30- 1:30	FINAL EXAM 30%	LOCATION: TBA ****Please bring your student card**** 2 essay-type questions. Personal summaries of course readings, lectures and fact sheets allowed. Must be uploaded into DropBox to be allowed in exam. Further details/instructions to be discussed in class.

INTEGRATIVE AND CRITICAL THINKING WRITING ASSIGNMENT: THE POLICY BRIEF

Policy briefs are used in governments and organizations to help inform leaders on a variety of topics. Policy analysts write brief memos to summarize the content and highlight the policy issues on the topic in question. The topic may be associated with any policy issue covered relevant to the course. Below are topic ideas.

The learning objectives of this assignment are:

- To further develop your critical thinking
- Develop skill in taking a position and arguing your reasons in a succinct manner
- Research a topic of interest to you
- Develop writing skills

The Policy Brief outline and rubric as well as additional tips for writing a Policy Brief and examples are available on CourseLink!!

This policy brief, should ideally, be constructed in three stages to facilitate student learning in how to write a brief.

1. **Policy Brief Topic:** No due date, no grade, but are you thinking about what topic you might like to write about (see broad topic suggestions below). Do you want to speak to the instructor about the ideas you are mulling? Do you need help narrowing in on a topic? Do you need to talk it out? Do you need guidance for source of references? **See Dr. Whitehead before or after class or during office hours for input and feedback.**

2. **“Beginner Brief”:** The purpose of this phase of the policy brief is allow students, who are new to writing a policy brief, to have the opportunity to receive input and feedback prior to the final paper. Students will submit their working title, their draft Statement of Purpose, and draft Background which should incorporate some of the 3-4 references that will be listed in the developing References section. Ultimately your paper should contain 6-8 quality references.

***This is worth 5% of you final grade (or 5% of the total 40% for this paper). If you do not hand in the “Beginner” brief you will NOT earn the 5%.

Due February 26th by 6 pm via Drop Box and in hard copy at the start of class

THERE WILL NO EXTENSIONS ON THIS ASPECT, FOR WHATEVER REASON.

These “Beginner” briefs will be reviewed for scope of topic, jurisdiction (Canadian – provincial/territorial, federal) whether topic is too broad/too narrow and generally whether you are on the right track. Feedback will be given to assist you in writing the final brief. The 5% will be awarded for complying with the above criteria. It is expected that students will put forth an honest effort and the 5% is awarded for complying with the expectations. In other words, this phase of the brief is not “graded” but rather this is an incentive to plan early and hone your brief for the best outcome when the final brief is written. That being said, the instructor and the TA reserve the right to award NO marks or only partial marks where it appears that the “beginner” brief was not undertaken in good faith or the content lacks a real attempt to comply with the above noted expectations. Every attempt will be made to return these during the following class.

3. FINAL COPY of Policy Brief is Due via electronic Drop Box by 6 p.m. Wednesday MARCH 26th, 2014 AND in Hard Copy to the instructor at the start of class at 7 p.m.

Keep a reliable back-up copy of your assignments: You may be asked to resubmit your work at any time. Technical problems that result in loss of files will not be accepted as an excuse for missing deadlines. If you have problems associated with accessing the on-line course webpage or uploading your assignment to the Dropbox you need to contact Coureselink technical support right away at courselink@uoguelph.ca

Possible Policy Brief Topics

The following are suggestions of topics you might want to pursue. These are very broad topics and part of your research will be to narrow them down.

- Work and family (including precarious work, low-wage, retirement, non-retirement, work-family integration)
- Domestic Violence
- Disabled Children
- Homelessness/Affordable Housing
- Poverty/Income Security
- Father Involvement
- Food (In)Security
- Separation and divorce and policies/supports for families/children
- Gay and Lesbian rights
- Special Education
- Juvenile justice
- Education (choose one: elementary, secondary, or post-secondary)
- Aboriginal Rights (youth, families, seniors)
- Health (mental, physical, social or spiritual)
- Child Welfare (children in need of protection)/Foster Care/Grandparents as caregivers/foster parents
- Adoption
- Other topics with professor's written approval

Group Assignment & Presentation: Social Policy FACT SHEETS (10%)

All members of the class will be randomly assigned to a group via CourseLink. PLEASE check the website prior to class to find out the NUMBER of the group to which you have been assigned.

Each group will be assigned a different policy/program to research and prepare a one-page summary (in electronic format).

Each group will have the entire class to research and prepare a one-page Fact Sheet on the topic assigned to their group. NOTE: These fact sheets will be posted on CourseLink for your classmates to review and from which to learn.

You are encouraged to complete as much of the assignment as possible before the end of class, but the official due date is **MONDAY FEBRUARY 10, 2014 by 6 pm via DropBox.**

- Make the Fact Sheet eye appealing, clear and informative, and accurate. Use graphics and text boxes/headings to off-set information. Include footnotes (smaller text) with the relevant Reference info you have used.
- I refer you to the Vanier Institute of the Family (http://www.vanierinstitute.ca/home_page) who create “fact sheets” and Infographics (Look under “Resources” for these examples). Ideally some combination of this approach would make a good fact sheet. Aim to be creative, but also comprehensive enough to help your classmates have a good understanding of the information they need to adequately understand the program/policy.
- I expect that you one of your primary resources will be government related websites
- For comments/criticisms helpful sources will be policy “think” tank websites such as
 - Caledon Institute
 - Canadian Policy Research Network (CPRN)
 - Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
 - Vanier Institute of the Family

Aspects to include:

What is the name of the policy/program called?

Is there a website with information that can be included?

- Why was this program/policy introduced? Find and list at least 3 positive reasons/benefits for the introduction of said policy/benefit/program

What are the eligibility criteria?

What kind of benefit is available (e.g., cash, tax credit, etc)? How much? If cash, is it a taxable benefit?

- Find and list at least 2-3 criticisms for the policy/benefit/program (e.g., amount, who isn't served, eligibility features that lead to exclusion, cost of the program and other foregone opportunities etc.)

FACT SHEET PRESENTATION (5%)

- The following week each group will provide a 3-5 minute overview on the key points related to the program/policy/service
- You may elect a spokesperson(s) or each member of the group can speak to a particular element of the policy
- Your fact sheet will be posted overhead by the instructor to save time so that we can move the presentations quickly and informatively
- Grades will be based on clarity and accuracy of information presented and presentation skills re volume, pace, engagement, style of delivery.

COURSEWORK REFLECTIONS/SUMMARIES

Every student will complete 3 summaries for 3 different weeks of course work/readings. The student may choose any 3 of the following 7 classes listed below (at least one of which must be completed for Jan 15, 22 or 29th). The summary must encompass all of the readings assigned for that week. These are to be done INDEPENDENTLY and submitted via Drop Box BEFORE the designated class by 6 pm. There is a DropBox for each topic. These are EACH worth 5% of your grade (for a total of 15%). These will serve as great preparation for the final exam that will comprise two essay-type questions. You will be permitted to bring your summaries to the exam (this will include summaries you complete for marks as well as summaries you complete for the other readings). THERE ARE NO EXTENSIONS. IF YOU MISS THE DROPBOX DEADLINE YOU WILL HAVE TO ATTEMPT THE SUMMARY FOR THE FOLLOWING WEEK.

Summaries will NOT be returned, so please keep your own copy. Grades will be released on Courselink generally a week following. If you handed in a summary for a particular week, but don't see your grade please contact Dr. Whitehead ASAP as it may have gotten overlooked.

January 15: What is family policy?

January 22: Income Security

January 29: Child care & Kindergarten

February 26: Work, Family & Life

March 5: Child Welfare

March 12: Caregiving

March 19: Relationships: Partnering and Dissolution

- You may use bulleted points
- For your information (and mine!) include title and author (you will want this information when you reference points in the final exam or in your policy brief)
- Summarize facts/thesis/important points
- Apply critical thinking to the readings – how does it tie into other readings/topics? What linkages are you seeing both within a week's readings and across weeks?
- What questions arise for you?
- Marks are assessed based on clarity of presenting the material, the completeness of the summary, reflects summation (rather than repetition)
- Page limit: 2 pages total (for ALL of the readings in each particular subject). Double spaced, one inch margins, 12 pt font.