

**Course Number and Title:** SO308 Australian Social Policy

**Instructor/s Name:** Christopher Sheil, Ph.D.

**Course Dates:** Spring and Fall Semesters

**Office Location:** BU Sydney Programs, Australia, a division of BU Study Abroad.  
15-25 Regent Street, Chippendale. NSW

**Course Time:** This course runs for 40 hours across a 7-week teaching session (intensive delivery) and meets twice per week.

**Location:** Classrooms, BU Sydney Academic Centre, Sydney, Australia

**Course and Hub Credits:** 4 BU credits

**3 BU Hub areas Social Inquiry II; Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy; Critical Thinking**

On successful completion of this course, a student will be able to claim transfer of the following 3 Hub areas:

1. Capacity: Scientific and Social Inquiry;  
Area: Social Inquiry II (SO2)
2. Capacity: Diversity, Civic Engagement, and Global Citizenship  
Area: Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy (GC1)
3. Capacity: Intellectual Toolkit  
Area: Critical Thinking (CRT)

**Contact Information:** [chris.s@unsw.edu.au](mailto:chris.s@unsw.edu.au) Cell : 61 2 419436052

**Office Hours:** 10 minutes prior to and following class; or via a scheduled appointment

**Principal Lecturer:** Christopher Sheil, BA (Hons), PhD, Senior Research Fellow in History, School of Humanities and Languages, University of New South Wales, and former senior policy executive responsible for social, economic and intergovernmental policy under six state governments.

**Guest Lecturers:** Professor John Evans, BA, MA, PhD, University of Technology; Prabha Nandagopal, Lawyer and Principal Adviser, Australian Human Rights Commission; Kate Minter, BSc, MSc, Research Director, Unions NSW

**Question-driven Course Description:**

1. What social arrangements should be embodied in public policy?
2. What are the boundaries of social policy and why is it a contested terrain?
3. What distinguishes policy from politics?
4. What is the relationship between social policy and economic policy?
5. What are the most distinguishing historical and institutional features of Australian social policy?
6. How can the policies of different countries be compared and evaluated?
7. What are some of the major current social policy issues in Australia and globally and what is at stake in their resolution?

**The ways students will answer these questions?**

‘Social policy’ is a subject area not a discipline; an area of academic study and government action, generally distinguished by the aim of maintaining and improving social wellbeing, characteristically concerned with social equity, and inherently interdisciplinary. The subject’s challenge, as the eminent historian of social ideas, Daniel T. Rodgers, observed of the formative era of modern social policy, derives ‘not from grand theories chasing too little evidence, but from an abundance of evidence chasing theories too narrow to contain it.’

The lecture program presents a critical synthesis of the main social policy ideas, applied techniques, and research sources, both generally and in specific areas. Students will become familiar with the concepts of public policy and social policy, social welfare and welfare economics, social equity and social justice, and social and economic inequality. Taking into account the historical and institutional context, they will apply the concepts in a range of specific policy areas or issues.

The first part of the course introduces the general ideas and issues that define the field of social policy and distinguish its history and development, both in Australia and internationally. The second part focuses on specific policy areas, plus there is an opportunity to study a social policy area or issue of the student’s choice. Each week will unfold into the next in an increasingly specific line of exposition and study. Although orientated to mainstream approaches to the social sciences and public policy, these are not the only approaches and so the course concludes with

reflections on alternative perspectives. In sequence, students will study:

- (1) the challenges in the meaning and application of the concept of ‘social policy’;
- (2) the national and global policy context that conditions social policies;
- (3) current national and international policies and trends;
- (4) specific policy areas; and
- (5) alternate perspectives.

The lectures are supported by select readings, student research, participation in classroom discussions and ungraded collaborative exercises, the preparation of a short conceptually-based essay, participation in a field day to sites of social policy and policy-making, making a class presentation and submitting a major essay on a particular policy area or issue.

## **Hub Learning Outcomes**

### **Social Inquiry II**

#### **Learning Outcome 2**

Using concepts and techniques associated with evaluating social wellbeing, together with their knowledge of the related social sciences, students will engage with major policy areas and issues, including the minimum wage, social security, inequality, health, human rights, women and work, and policies for Indigenous Australians. The areas and issues entail the intersection of perspectives from different disciplines, requiring an ability to identify the conceptual and empirical bases for various policy claims and their challenges, including connections between history, sociology, economics, philosophy, political science and actual contexts and practices that shape the creation, adoption and evaluation of effective and/or ineffective public policy.

### **Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy**

#### **Learning Outcome 2**

Students will engage with major public policy issues bearing on social wellbeing, such as the minimum wage, social security, inequality, health, human rights, women and work, and policies for Indigenous Australians. A central concept is ‘equity’, as applied horizontally and vertically, and with respect to gender, over the life-cycle, inter-generationally, and internationally. The engagement will be based on comparative analysis of policies in Australia and the United States, although both will be also be placed in a global context. Lectures and readings will cover the key institutional differences that define the comparative context, with a special emphasis

on the international techniques used to measure differences and the main concepts used for country analysis. Applied techniques, for example, include OECD standardisation methods, purchasing parity pricing, discounting for economies of scale, and the range of inequality and poverty measures. Comparative analytic concepts adopt and critically adapt Gosta Esping-Anderson's welfare models.

The first part of the course introduces the ideas and issues that define the field of social policy and distinguish its history and development, both in Australia and internationally. The second part focuses on specific policy areas. The case studies on health and human rights focus on two mainstream policy areas where Australia and the United States are sharply distinguished and have inverse international reputations (as Australia has a highly regarded universal health insurance policy but no bill or charter of human rights). The case study on women and work will go to a major area of postwar policy changes worldwide, whereas policies for Indigenous Australians are, by definition, culturally unique. Each week will unfold into the next in an increasingly specific line of exposition and study. Although the course is orientated to the mainstream approaches to the social science disciplines and social policy, these are not the only approaches and so the course concludes with some reflection on alternative perspectives.

### **Intellectual Toolkit: Critical Thinking**

**Learning Outcome 1.** Students will study and evaluate major public policy issues, such as the minimum wage, social security, inequality, health, human rights, women and work, and policies for Indigenous Australians. Critical thinking is required to evaluate policies against the general (normative) aim of maintaining and improving social welfare. Expressions of government policy are generally framed to attract public support at least as much as they are to inform, and the major concepts and practices entailed in the study of policy are contested in both the literature and current affairs. Students are instructed to identify as 'policy detectives', and are required to critically evaluate different definitions of 'public policy' and 'social policy', analyse the interaction of social and economic policy, examine the relationship between the goals of equity and equality in both general and specific policy contexts, and appreciate the distinctions between the three major international social welfare typologies (corporatist, liberal and social democratic). This entails continuous critical analysis of the logic of the steps and the strength of the evidence used to justify claims, taking into account, inter alia, the permissible limits of generalisations, the underlying assumptions of cause and effect, and biased, emotional and common fallacious appeals of all kinds.

## **Learning Outcome 2**

Drawing on the skills learned in class, students will critically evaluate the validity of arguments associated with public policy, social wellbeing and specific policies presented in the lectures, literature and media through ungraded group discussions, and present their own research-based arguments in a short essay, in a conference presentation where they are graded according to their ability to persuade and constructively critique their colleagues, in a long essay, and in an essay-style exam covering four topics. They will demonstrate understanding of the major concepts, their application, the associated arguments and evidence, and their respective strengths and limitations, with attention to relevant theory and real case studies.

## **Other Outcomes**

### **Study Abroad Sydney Program Outcome:**

The student will “demonstrate knowledge of Australian culture and society with respect to a combination of the following areas: Australian politics, industry, science and technology, economics, social policy, environmental policy, literature and the arts, film, marketing, advertising, and mass media”.

## **Instructional Format: Lecture, Seminar, Field Trips and Guest Speaker Pedagogy**

*List here the elements of instruction you employ to deliver your course. Add any special teaching tool as appropriate.*

Formal lectures, group discussions, guest lectures, media presentations, a field trip, and participation in a social policy conference have been organised. Attendance at all sessions is compulsory.

Students are expected to join the discussion about identifying and critically analysing current social policy issues, participate in the field trip, make a conference presentation, write one short and one major essay, and sit for an exam. Three special teaching tools are employed: (1) a fundamental emphasis is placed on comparing social policy in Australia and the United States, particularly with respect to the institutional context, health policy and human rights; (2) the principal and guest lecturers are academic specialists and experienced practitioners in their policy fields from a diversity of social

backgrounds; and (3) the field trip is designed to reinforce and enhance the way in which social policy is to be understood as a field of real action in society, as well as a vast area of international social science research. Students will be taken on an instructional tour the site of a controversial and confronting cutting edge of health policy, a government approved Medically Supervised [illegal] Drug Injection Centre, followed by their participation in a conference on the site of the executive decision-making that adopted the 'harm minimisation' policy that led to the centre's establishment (New South Wales Parliament House). Depending on availability, the conference will include meeting a government minister or shadow minister.

### Courseware

[www.bu.edu/learn](http://www.bu.edu/learn)

This is an active online link to all materials including the course outline, criteria sheets, due dates of assignments, secondary sources, online links, and announcements. From time to time, there is contemporary material posted on blackboard learn.

### Assessment and Grading

Assessment	Due Date	Weighting
Short Essay: 1000 words on a designated question	Wednesday Week 4, 8pm	15%
Presentation: As part of the field trip in week five, an all-day policy conference will be held when students will present 10-15 minutes work in progress papers on their major essay topics. Course Participation	Monday, Week 5 during fieldtrip	20% (15% for presentation)
Major Essay: 2500–3000 words on a designated question, or on a question of your own choice selected <i>in consultation</i> with the course co-ordinator. Students will nominate their major essay questions in week four.	Monday, Week 7 8pm	40%
Exam	Tuesday, Week 8	25%

### Course Assignment Criteria/Rubrics

Please see appendices at the end of this syllabus.

### **Resources/Support/How to Succeed in This Course:**

•There is the opportunity for students to meet professors face-to-face either ahead of or following class times; students can also make contact for longer meeting times via email, are encouraged to submit questions or any queries via email and are welcome to discuss urgent matters on the phone. Drafts of the major essay may be submitted for guidance, provided this is in timely fashion.

•The way to succeed in this course is to attend to the progressive structure of the course, gather some familiarity with the text book and browse the readings generally as you go, and to focus closely on the readings and your own research that relates to the major essay topic that you choose.

•The BU Blackboard Learn site provides an annotated mix of short and often snappy readings, which are easily digested by all students, and more in depth and professional scholarship and research material to assist with the major essay topics. The BU Sydney library has books and visual material for research.

•When writing or presenting, it is crucial that students are guided by the Grading Criteria Sheets and Guidelines provided as a means to successful navigation of requirements.

Professors are notified of students with documented disabilities or special needs ahead of first classes and offer assistance in line with BU policy.

### **Course Required Reading List**

#### **Required Text book for this course:**

McClelland, A. and Smyth, P. (eds) (2014), *Social policy in Australia: understanding for action*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

#### **Other recommended books and general background reading:**

Althaus, C., Bridgman, P. and Davis, G. (2007), *The Australian policy handbook* (fourth edition), Allen & Unwin, Sydney (probably the most popular Australian policy textbook).

Dye, T. R. (2012), *Understanding public policy* (fourteenth edition), Upper Saddle River, Longman (the standard US policy textbook).

Head, B. and Crowley, K. (eds) (2015), *Policy analysis in Australia: the state of the art*, Policy Press, Bristol (the latest major overview).

Macintyre, S. (2009), *A concise history of Australia* (third edition), Cambridge University Press, Melbourne (a history book for foreigners).

Piketty, T. (2014), *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, Harvard/Belknap, Cambridge (Mass) (the international best-seller on inequality).

Sheil, C. (ed.) (2001), *Globalisation: Australian Impacts*, UNSW Press, Sydney (a wide ranging survey at the peak of the international debate, encompassing finance, transport, telecommunications, media, corporations, unions, governance, industry, environment, education, health, social security, rights and democracy).

Yeatman, A. (ed.) (1998), *Activism and the policy process*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney (an alternative and challenging approach to social policy).

There are numerous relevant academic journals, including the *Australian Social Policy Journal*, *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, *Agenda - A Journal of Policy Analysis and Reform*, *Australian Journal of Political Science*, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, *Journal of Australian Political Economy*, *Medical Journal of Australia*, *Health Affairs*, and many others.

An annotated selection of readings for each lecture will be posted on blackboard learn.

### **Detail of Class Meetings: Date, Topic, Readings Due, Assignments Due.**

Although the schedule is intended to be final, it may, from time to time, be necessary to alter it. Should changes be needed, students will be given adequate time to accommodate them. In all such cases, students will be notified individually and a message will be posted on blackboard learn. Any student missing class without verifiable extraordinary reasons will be penalized through grade deduction in fairness to those who do attend. This includes any guest speaker sessions, and field trips. There are also grade penalties for late submission of written work or missing a final examination. Late work attracts a penalty grade deduction of 5% per day of the grade; missing an examination is generally considered as an omission of that grade weighting from the student's overall mark. In both these cases, however, should the student show just cause (illness, extraordinary circumstance) for their late submission or missing of an exam, the Sydney Program Academic Director will give due consideration to their case.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**



## **Lecture Program — Part I: General ideas and issues**

### **Week 1: Introduction and overview**

This week is about gently introducing the subject and the issues involved in defining social policy. Is policy-making necessarily a positive concept? Why is social policy such a contested domain? Where are the subject's boundaries? What is the difference between politics and policy? What do social wellbeing, social welfare, social equity and social justice mean? What does John Rawls mean by the 'Veil of Ignorance'? What is the difference between social policy and economic policy? There are many definitions of social policy, but is this a weakness or a strength? How can we differentiate between the many definitions?

- Class 1: Monday *What is public policy?*

Reading: Dye (2011: ch. 1); McClelland & Smyth (2014: ch. 1)

- Class 2: Thursday *What is social policy?*

Reading: McClelland & Smyth (2014: chs 1-3); Titmuss (1974: ch. 1); Rawls (1999:118-23).

### **Week 2: The Australian policy context**

What are the most distinctive features of the institutional context within which Australian social policy has been defined and implemented? What are the major events in the field of Australian social policy over the past 200 or so years? We will grapple with the key concepts of 'equity' and 'equality', review the Australian history, and look at what has been happening recently and the issues at stake.

- Class 3: Monday *The history of Australian social policy*

Readings: McClelland & Smyth (2014: chs 4-6); Macintyre (1985: ch. 1); Deeming (2013).

- Class 4: Thursday *Recent policies and current trends*

Readings: McClelland & Smyth (2014: chs. 6 & 7); Saunders & Deeming (2011).

### **Week 3: The international policy context**

How do we compare the policies of different countries? We will focus on the basic

comparative techniques, the role of global institutions, and the key organising concepts that are applied in the critical analysis of policies at the international level. The emphasis on finding market-based solutions to improving social welfare has shaped policies in most fields over recent decades. It has also led to, or at least been accompanied by, growing economic inequality, particularly in the United States but also in Australia and elsewhere. The first part of the course will conclude with the current social policy issues associated with economic inequality in Australia, the U.S.A. and the world at large.

- **Class 5: Monday** *Australia, the US and Europe compared*

Readings: McClelland & Smyth (2014: chs 6 & 7); Esping-Anderson (1990: ch 1); Goodin et al. (Ch. 4).

- **Class 6: Thursday** *Globalisation, the market and inequality*

Readings: Sheil (2001: ch. 1), Sheil (2015), Sheil & Stilwell (2016), Sheil (2018), Sheil & Stilwell (2019).

## **Lecture Program — Part II: Policy case studies**

### **Week 4: Hospital services and health care**

The first policy case study is health care, a major mainstream social policy area and a major point of difference between Australia and the U.S.A. We will begin with hospital care, the costliest health service and a prime example of the application of market principles in a social policy setting. We will then turn to Australian health policies generally, principally the universal insurance and pharmaceutical benefits schemes.

- **Class 7: Monday:** *Australian hospital care*

Readings: McClelland & Smyth (2014: ch. 12), Glover (2016), Muller (2018: ch. 9), Baum et al. (2016)

👉 *Short essay deadline: 8.00 p.m. Wednesday this week* 👈

- **Class 8: Thursday** *Australian health policy generally*

Readings: McClelland & Smyth (2014: ch. 12), Glover (2016), Duckett (2015); Woolf & Laudan (2013), OECD (2017).

👉 *Topic for major essay to be nominated in class: Thursday this week* 👈

### **Week 5: Harm minimisation, human rights & Indigenous Australians**

This week features a field trip to a cutting edge of health policy: 'harm minimisation'. This will be followed by a conference at NSW Parliament House that will include a lecture on human rights, another mainstream social policy area and another major point of difference with the U.S.A., for Australia is the only democratic country with a fully developed modern economy that does not have a bill or charter of rights. Closely related to both health policy and human rights, this week will also feature policies for Aboriginal Australians, by definition a unique policy area, and a deeply troubled area.

- Class 9: Monday *All day field trip: harm minimisation, Policy conference, human rights*

Readings: van Beek et al. (2004), Bessant (2005), Harris (2009), Tazitreiter (2017), Sheil (2008).

- Class 10: Thursday *Indigenous Australians*

Readings: (2014), Edwards (2010), Grant (2018).

### **Week 6: Women & work: Alternative policy approaches**

The final case study focuses on women and the workplace. The postwar movement of women into the workplace has presented major policy challenges for all countries and they are ongoing. The course is orientated to the mainstream approaches to social policy, but these are not the only approaches. By way of conclusion, we return to the general definition of social policy and consider alternatives approaches.

- Class 11: Monday *Women and work*

Readings: Hodges (2014), Baird & O'Brien (2015).

- Class 12: Thursday *Alternative policy approaches*

Readings: Yeatman (1998: chs 1 & 2); Smyth (2012). Marston (2002).

### **Week 7: Course review**

We will conclude with a review of the course. Where have you done? What have you learned? What use is it? What is the form of the final exam?

- Final class: Monday *Course review*

☞ *Deadline for the major essay: 8.00 p.m. Monday* ☞

## **Community of Learning: Class and University Policies**

1. Course members' responsibility for ensuring a positive learning environment (e.g. participation/discussion guidelines).

**It is the responsibility of both the professor and all student members of the class to ensure a positive learning environment. It is thus understood that any member of the class who demonstrates behavior which undermines this positive learning environment will: firstly, be questioned and counseled regarding this behavior seeking a satisfactory outcome; secondly, upon further recurrence, be brought into the delivery of the class material in an effort to involve them more; lastly, in light of the behavior continuing, the student will be expelled from the learning space for the rest of the class, and receive a grade penalty according to BU Sydney protocols regarding absenteeism.**

2. Attendance & Absences

**Attendance at all designated sessions including those with Guest Speakers and field trips is expected. There are no optional absences from class sessions.**

**Any student missing class without verifiable extraordinary reasons will receive a grade penalty according to protocols set down for BU Sydney by the Program Academic Director.**

3. Assignment Completion and Late Work

**Completion of all reading/viewing/writing tasks is expected. All written work must be submitted in hard copy through the BU Sydney Library by the time set down in the course outline. For some assignments, an additional soft copy emailed to professors may be required, as indicated.**

**Our policy on late submission of work is that, unless there is a verifiable extraordinary reason, there is a grade deduction, imposed amounts to 5% of the assignment grade per day which will be processed by the Academic Director.**

**All written work must be submitted** in hard copy with signed cover sheet through the BU Sydney Library by the time set down in the course outline. For some assignments, an additional soft copy emailed to professors may be required.

•**All students are required to sit examinations** (without exception) but special times and spaces are made available to those students with documented disabilities, and special needs such as Religious Observance, and any other verifiable extraordinary reasons.

**BU Sydney Policy adheres to the general BU campus policy of Religious Observance**, which would fall under “verifiable extraordinary reasons” as mentioned in various places above.

4) Academic Conduct Statement:

**All students attending courses under the auspices of BU Sydney must have read BU’s policy on academic honesty and understand the consequences of cheating or plagiarism. Within this course, all submitted written work is expected to be that of the individual and only class exercises are collaborative efforts, as indicated. Please see BU’s Academic Conduct Statement:**

<https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>

**Students on a BU Program are advised that the penalty for cheating on examinations or for plagiarism may be "...expulsion from the program or the University or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the Dean".**

### **Grading**

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	below 60

### **Blackboard Learn: Readings**

Baird, M., and O'Brien, M. (2015), 'Dynamics of parental leave in Anglophone countries: the paradox of state expansion in the liberal welfare regime', *Community, Work & Family*, 18 (2).

Baum F., Freeman, T., Sanders, D., Labont, R., Lawless, A. and Javanparast, S. (2016), 'Comprehensive primary health care under neo-liberalism in Australia', *Social Science and Medicine*, 164: 43-52.

Bessant, J. (2008), 'From "harm minimization" to "zero tolerance" drugs policy in Australia: how the Howard government changed its mind', *Policy Studies*, 29 (2) :197-214

Deeming, C. (2013), 'The working class and welfare: Francis G. Castles on the political development of the welfare state in Australia and New Zealand thirty years on', *Social Policy & Administration*, 47 (6): 668-91.

Duckett, S. (2015), 'Medicare at middle age: adapting a fundamentally good system', *Australian Economic Review*, 48 (3), 290-97.

Edwards, J. (2010), 'Apologizing for the past for a better future: collective apologies in the United States, Australia, and Canada', *Southern Communication Journal*, 75 (1), 57-75.

Esping-Anderson, G. (1990 ed.), *The three worlds of welfare capitalism*, Princeton University Press: Princeton.

Glover, L. (2016), 'The Australian Health Care System 2016', Commonwealth Fund: New York.

Goodin, R.E., B. Headey, R. Muffels and H-K Dirven (1999), *The real worlds of welfare capitalism*, Cambridge University Press: Melbourne.

Grant. S. (2018), 'My grandfather's equality', *Griffith Review*, 60: 134-45.

Harris, B. (2009), 'The bill of rights debate in Australia: a study in constitutional disengagement', *Journal of Politics and Law*, 2 (3) 2-10.

Hodges, J. (2014), 'The role of the International Labor Organisation in balancing work & family in the 21st century', *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 56 (4) 566-76.

Macintyre, S. (1985), *Winners and losers: the pursuit of social justice in Australian history*, Allen & Unwin: Sydney.

Marston, G. (2002), 'Fashion, fiction, fertile inquiry? Struggling with the postmodern challenge and social policy analysis', in Eardley, T. and Bradbury, B. (eds), *Competing Visions: Refereed Proceedings of the National Social Policy Conference 2001*, SPRC Report 1/02, Social Policy Research Centre, Sydney: 298-316.

Muller, J. Z. (2018), *The tyranny of metrics*, Princeton University Press: Princeton.

OECD (2017), *Health at a glance: OECD indicators*, OECD Publishing: Paris.

Rawls, J. (1999 ed.), *A theory of justice*, Belknap/Harvard: Cambridge, Mass.

Read, P. (2014), 'Reflecting on the Stolen Generations', *Indigenous Law Bulletin*, 8 (13): 3-6.

Saunders, P. and Deeming, C. (2011), 'The impact of the crisis on Australian social security policy in historical perspective', *Social Policy & Administration*, vol. 45, no. 4, August, 371-388.

Sheil, C. (2008), 'The Doc, the UN & the UDHR', *Evatt Journal*, 8 (4), November.

Sheil, C. (2015), 'Piketty's political economy', *Journal of Australian Political Economy*, 74:19-37.

Sheil, C. (2018), 'Capital and labour: the Piketty split', *Journal of Australian Political Economy*, 81: 193-202.

Sheil, C. and Stilwell, F. (2016), *The wealth of the nation: current data on the distribution of wealth in Australia*, Evatt Foundation: Sydney.

Sheil, C. and Stilwell, F. (2019), 'The continuing redistribution of Australia's wealth, upwards', *Evatt Journal*, 18 (2), September.

Smyth, J. (2012), 'Policy activism: an animating idea with/for young people', *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 44 (3): 179–186.

Tazreiter, C. (2017), 'The unlucky in the “lucky country”: asylum seekers, irregular migrants and refugees and Australia’s politics of disappearance', *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, 23 (2): 242-60.

Titmuss, R. (1974 edn.), *Social policy: an introduction*, George Allen & Unwin: London.

van Beek, I., Kimber, J., Andy Dakin. A. and Gilmore, S. (2004), 'The Sydney Medically Supervised Injecting Centre: reducing harm associated with heroin overdose', *Critical Public Health*, 14(4): 391-406.

Woolf, S. and Laudan A. (2013), 'The US health disadvantage relative to other high-income countries', *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 308 (8): 771-72.



# **APPENDICES**

- **Field Trip Handout**
- **Presentation Handout**
- **Essay Handout**

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
Sydney Program**



**SO 308 AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL POLICY**

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**Field Trip Handout  
Monday Week 5**

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## OVERVIEW

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The general aim of the field trip is to reinforce and enhance the ways in which social policy can be understood as a field of real action in society, as well as a vast area of academic study.

Students will visit the site of one of the cutting edges of health policy, Australia's only Medically Supervised [illegal drug] Injection Centre, and a major site of executive decision-making, New South Wales Parliament House.

The visit to Parliament House will be combined with a guest lecture on human rights in Australia, a major mainstream area of social policy and one that presents a stark contrast with the United States in that Australia is unique among the world's democracies in not having a bill of rights.

Students will also fulfil the presentational requirements of the course in Parliament House, where a conference room has been booked. Students will present *work-in-progress* papers of 5-10 minutes duration on their major essay topics. Note that the presentations represent 15 per cent of final grades, representing 15 per cent of the 20 per cent awarded for presentations and participation in the course.

## PROGRAM

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### **8.25 a.m.: Meeting Place: World Signpost Kings Cross**

- The World Signpost is next to Kings Cross Fountain (which is officially the 'El Alemein Fountain'), reputed to be Sydney's most well-known tourist landmark after the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House. This means that most people passing by will know what you're talking about if you need to ask for directions.
- From BU, the easiest way to get to Kings Cross is by train, a 7-minute journey. Walk down to Central Station; a train departs from Platform 24 at 8.12 a.m. and arrives at Kings Cross Station at 8.19 a.m. When you get off the train: (1) go up the escalators; (2) take the Darlinghurst Road exit; (3) go up another escalator; and (4) turn left when you get to the road. The Fountain is two (short) blocks, on the other side of the road and it looks like a dandelion of water (see cover). The address is Fitzroy Gardens, corner of Darlinghurst Road and Macleay Street.

## **PROGRAM (cont'd)**

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### **8.25 a.m.: Medically Supervised Injection Centre (MSIC)**

- We will stroll to the MSIC (66 Darlinghurst Road), where we are expected at 8.30 a.m. by our host, Julie Latimore. We have about 45 minutes for the visit.
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### **9.30 a.m.: Breakfast at La Buvette, 35 Challis Avenue, Potts Point**

- We will stroll a couple blocks to La Buvette. We have about 30 minutes for breakfast and our host is Billie Scott.

### **10.00 a.m.: Scenic walk to NSW Parliament House**

- The walk from Kings Cross to Parliament House takes about 20-30 minutes and goes through Woolloomooloo, one of Sydney's oldest working-class suburbs and now also the site of (harbour-side) homes bought by celebrities such as Nicole Kidman and Russell Crowe. We will pass the wharves where the US navy continues to berth (accounting for a good deal of the colour of Kings Cross) and the NSW Art Gallery, cross the Domain and pass the State Library, before arriving in Macquarie Street, Sydney's main (non-shopping) street.
  - As this is 20-30 minutes walking time, please wear **sensible shoes**.
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### **10.30 a.m.: Social Policy Conference, NSW Parliament House**

- The class has been booked into the Jubilee Room as guests of the Hon. Penny Sharp, M.L.C. [i.e., Member of the Legislative Council], the new Leader of the NSW Labor Party and Leader of the Opposition, and the Shadow Minister for the Environment and Heritage and Shadow Minister for Trade. Our contact in Penny's office is Lliam Caulfield, phone: 9230 2741.
  - Student presentations.
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### **12.45 p.m.: Lunch**

We make our own arrangements.

## **PROGRAM (cont'd)**

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### **1.30-2.30 p.m.: Keynote Lecture: Human Rights in Australia**

Guest lecturer: Prabha Nandagopal, Australian Human Rights Commission.

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- Student presentations
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### **Approximately 5.00 p.m.: Conference closes, field trip concludes**

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*Students are requested to dress in a neat casual style, which means no flip-flops, writing on t-shirts, baseball caps or running shoes, etc.*



# PRESENTATION HANDOUT

## SO 308: Australian Social Policy Conference presentations

### Basic requirements

1. Students are required to make a 10-15 minute work-in-progress presentation on their major essay topic.
2. The main aims in this are to: (a) ensure that students begin thinking about their major essays comfortably before the due date; and (b) give the course director an opportunity to help. A subsidiary aim is to assist all students to select areas beyond their essay for attention in preparation for the exam, where four questions must be attempted.
3. Students will not be expected to have already prepared a full essay or mastered their topic, or to have decided upon their answer or completed their research. They will not be expected to 'get everything right'. Nor will students be bound to stick to the lines of their presentation in writing the essay itself. A good presentation will often lead to revisions.
4. There is no essential content nor a compulsory format, apart from adhering to the 10-minute minimum/15-minute maximum rule. Students might wish to present an overview of their topic, or focus on one or two issues, or talk about the topic's problem(s) or difficulties, or critically assess their reading, or present a provisional argument or hypothesis or plan. Likewise, students can make their presentations sitting down or standing up or walking around or standing on their head. They can speak without notes or to headings or read from prepared notes or a script, and/or use powerpoint, distribute handouts, involve their colleagues directly (by, say, asking them questions), and/or whatever.
5. Students with the same topic are required to confer to ensure that their presentations aren't duplicates. Apart from reducing listener tedium, different points of focus are of benefit for the students doing the same question. All topics are amenable to some sort of division, or students can, say, argue for and against a point of view, or combine their presentations in some other way. If you have difficulty splitting a topic for the purpose of the presentation, ask or email the course director, who will happily make suggestions.

### Grading

Twenty per cent of the final grade is awarded for the presentation and course participation. The presentation is worth 15 per cent and students will receive their grade prior to the conclusion of the course. The 5 per cent balance is awarded with primary (but not sole) reference to participation in the conference discussion as an integral part of the final grade.

F – C = Doesn't make presentation.

B- = Makes presentation but doesn't fulfil basic requirements.

B = Fulfils basic requirements.

B+ = Fulfils basic requirements and has clearly begun to think about the essay.

A- = Fulfils basic requirements, has clearly begun to think about the essay and engages colleagues on the issues raised.

A = Fulfils basic requirements, has clearly begun to think about the essay, engages colleagues and leads them to think freshly about the issues raised.

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY**  
**Study Program**

**SO 308 AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL POLICY**

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**Essay Handout**



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*[The error of presuming the very audience agreement that it is really their rhetorical job to earn] happens to be the most persistent and damaging error that most college writers make, and one so deeply rooted that it often takes several essays and conferences and revisions to get them to even see what the problem is. Helping them to eliminate the error involves drumming into student writers two big injunctions: (1) Do not presume that the reader can read your mind — anything that you want the reader to visualize or consider or conclude, you must provide; (2) Do not presume that the reader feels the same way that you do about a given experience or issue — your argument cannot just assume as true the very thing that you're trying to argue for.'*

— David Foster Wallace, 'Authority and American usage' (1999),  
republished in *Consider the lobster and other essays*, Abacus, London, 2007, p.106.



**The short and Long Essay lists will be presented on Blackboard Learn**

## Some guidelines for the essays

An essay is a piece of undergraduate scholarship. Following are some compulsory standards and a few tips.

### *Compulsory standards:*

1. The essay is an answer to a specific question (even if this is not explicitly framed as a question), and the full question you choose to answer **must** be written on your front (or first) page. Students may wish to add their own title, which is perfectly fine, but you must **also** write out the full question.
2. **Don't** write your answer in the first person. Phrases such as 'I think' or 'in my opinion' are inappropriate and superfluous in the context of a scholarly essay. The whole essay is what you think or your opinion and your name is on the front page. Please obey the third person convention.
3. All sources used for writing your essay must be cited in a conventional scholarly way. The preference is footnotes, but endnotes or the Harvard or other systems are equally acceptable. Author, title, publisher, date of publication **and the relevant page number** must be included in the citation.
3. All quotes must be cited, as must your secondary sources. In particular, the sources of facts or statistics that are crucial to your argument or controversial must be cited or the essay **will** be at serious risk of downgrading.
5. For internet sources, the title of the source must be properly cited, or at least described, as well as the URL address. While often accurate and useful, *Wikipedia* is not an authoritative source and generally should be avoided.
6. In the past, students have been caught lifting material directly from internet sources. As you know, plagiarism is forbidden and perilous.
7. You really must include a bibliography or list of the works consulted.
8. Please use double or one-and-a-half spacing with a 12-point font and leave a margin of at least one inch. A word count should be noted at the end.

### ***A few tips:***

1. The essay will be assessed in accordance with conventional academic standards at the relevant undergraduate level.
2. The principal criterion is how well the question is answered; which means (a) how well the issues have been analysed, (b) how well your answer is thought through and structured, and (c) how strongly or comprehensively or tightly the work is argued and supported. Remember, the essay is a reasoned and supported argument based on critical analysis, not an exercise in creative writing or a technical report or a prose description.
3. Don't imagine that there is necessarily a 'correct' answer, which you must find to do well. In particular, don't imagine that must agree with the assumptions in the question, or that you have to agree with the textbook or the lecturer. Essays aren't assessed against a correct 'line'. In principle, all arguments are permissible. The only grading considerations are how well you have reasoned, structured, supported and articulated your argument.
4. One hallmark of a good essay is the extent to which contrary perspectives have been taken into account, whether by subsuming, accommodating, disputing or defeating them. A failure to take into account the perspectives in the relevant readings on the blackboard is a risky practice, particularly if you offer a contrary argument. Students are expected to consult the relevant readings and to have undertaken at least some additional research.
5. It's wise to avoid neutral description and other forms of padding. Unless the material is supporting or adding to your argument in some way, it's likely to be just wasting your words. You're welcome to include description or background types of material (such as chronologies) that you feel are necessary or helpful for your argument as an appendix.
6. The critical analysis, reasoning and evidence are central, but writing also matters. Marks can be lowered for poor expression or raised because of a superior style. Computer programs mean that there is practically no excuse for spelling errors. Distinctively American spelling is perfectly acceptable. Please don't use colloquialisms or slang terms unless you're making a specific point with them. The main point here is that you don't need to be a good writer to get a good grade, but poor writers will usually find it difficult to get the top grades.
7. Read the quote at the front of this handout.