SPSW3001
POLICY AND PRACTICE IN THE HUMAN SERVICES
Course Outline

Semester 1, 2006

Course Coordinator: Alex Beveridge
Room: W315, Level 3 Behavioural Science Building
Ph: (02) 49216772
Fax: (02) 49216933
Email: Alex.Beveridge@newcastle.edu.au

Semester 1 - 2006
Unit Weighting: 10
Teaching Methods
Experience Based Learning
Workshop

Brief Course Description
This course challenges students to apply theory to a critique of contemporary social policy and interventions targeting individuals, families, groups, communities and organisations. Through examining case studies and policy debates students engage with assessing policy and practice issues, devise strategies and practical tools to enter into policy debates, and participate in policy development. Emphasis is placed on influencing policy and programs.

Contact Hours
Workshop for 2 Hours per Week for the Full Term

Learning Materials/Texts
Core Text

**Course Objectives**
Through this course students will be able to demonstrate:

1. A critical understanding of the theoretical frameworks and dominant discourses underpinning the contemporary human services.

2. A comprehension of the differing levels of social intervention and targets of change.

3. An understanding of the interconnection of structural inequalities as well as the interconnection between levels of practice.

4. An ability to evaluate the efficacy of differing social policies and programs.

5. A commitment to ethical practice and the promotion of social justice.

6. An ability to engage in social change both at community and organisational level.

**Course Content**
1. Issues and trends in contemporary policy and practice approaches.
2. Debates about social goals.
3. Professional challenges and ethical. Considerations relating to policy and practice dilemmas.
4. Micro level intervention or programs targeting individuals.
5. Mezzo level intervention or programs targeting families and groups.
6. Macro level or community-based interventions.
7. Organisations as the medium of service delivery and the effects of organisational policy on broader policy implementation.
8. Understanding and participating in social policy making processes.
9. Approaches to policy and program development including an understanding of power issues, transformative strategies to deal with resistance to and promote social change, and anti-discriminatory practice and emancipatory political action.

**Assessment Items**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essays / Written Assignments</th>
<th>2,500 words, due end of semester, worth 60%.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentations - Individual</td>
<td>including discussion paper, 2,000 words, due mid semester, worth 40%.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Assumed Knowledge**
SPSW 1001, SPSW 1002 or equivalent
Callaghan Campus Timetable
SPSW3001
HUMAN SERVICES POLICY AND PRACTICES
Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science
Semester 1 - 2006
Lecture Tuesday 5.00-6.00pm Room W238 Behavioural Sciences Bldg
and Seminar Tuesday 6.00-7.00pm Room W238 Behavioural Sciences Bldg

Plagiarism
University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one's own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

- copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
- using another's ideas without due acknowledgment;
- working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.

Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs.

Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty.

For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link:


The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may:

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

Written Assessment Items
Students may be required to provide written assessment items in electronic form as well as hard copy (this is discuss as follows-see comments re: Turnitin).
Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, as advised in the Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension of time for submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised.

Any student:
1. who is applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment: or
2. whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment;

must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate officer on the prescribed form.

Please go to the Policy and the on-line form for further information, particularly for information on the options available to you, at:


Changing your Enrolment

The last dates to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Dates) are:

For semester 1 courses: 31 March 2005
For semester 2 courses: 31 August 2005
For Trimester 1 courses: 18 February 2005
For Trimester 2 courses: 10 June 2005

Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester and prior to the commencement of the formal exam period. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with the School Office.

To change your enrolment online, please refer to

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/change-enrol.html
Contact Details

Faculty Student Service Offices
The Faculty of Education and Arts
Room: GP1-22 (General Purpose Building)
Phone: 0249 215 314

The Dean of Students
Dr Jennifer Archer
Phone: 492 15806
Fax: 492 17151
resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit:

Alteration of this Course Outline
No change to this course outline will be permitted after the end of the second week of the term except in exceptional circumstances and with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of any approved changes to this outline.

Web Address for Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards

Web Address for Rules Governing Postgraduate Academic Awards

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS
The University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness.

If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies, please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 49 21 5766, or via email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator...
or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester.

For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at:

www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability

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**Policy Statements**

**Online Tutorial Registration:**

Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system:


Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

**Studentmail and Blackboard:** [www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/](http://www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/)

This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

**Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details**

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

**Hard copy submission:**

- **Type your assignments:** All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 or double spacing, and include page numbers.

- **Word length:** The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.

- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.

- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).

- **University coversheet:** All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet: [www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/assess_coversheet.pdf](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/assess_coversheet.pdf)

- **Assignments are to be deposited in the relevant discipline assignment box:**
  - Callaghan students: School of Humanities and Social Science Office, Level 1, McMullin Building, MC127
  - Ourimbah students: Room H01.43

- **Do not fax or email assignments:** Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an
assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse. Assignments mailed to Schools are accepted from the date posted.

Keep a copy of all assignments: All assignments are date-stamped upon receipt. However, it is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in hard copy and on disk.

Online copy submission to Turnitin
In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of the following assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website.

*The following written assessment items are to be submitted to “Turnitin”

a) Assessment Task 1. Seminar Presentation and submission of summary discussion paper.

b) Assessment Task 2. Major Essay

Penalties for Late Assignments
Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted more than ten days after the due date will be awarded zero marks.

Special Consideration/Extension of Time Applications
Students wishing to apply for Special Consideration or Extension of Time should obtain the appropriate form from the Student HUBS.

No Assignment Re-submission
Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

Remarks
Students can request to have their work re-marked by the Course Coordinator or Discipline Convenor (or their delegate); three outcomes are possible: the same grade, a lower grade, or a higher grade being awarded. Students may also appeal against their final result for a course. Please consult the University policy at:

Return of Assignments
Where possible, assignments will be marked within 3 weeks and returned to students in class. At the end of semester, students can collect assignments from the Student HUBS during office hours.

Preferred Referencing Style
In this course, it is recommended that you use the use the **Harvard in-text referencing system** (similar to the APA system) for referencing sources of information used in assignments. Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure.

An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by authors' last names (or by titles for works without authors). Further information on referencing and general study skills can be obtained from:

Infoskills:

Student Representatives
We are very interested in your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Student Representatives are the channel of communication between students and the School Board. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on the School website.

Student Communication
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

Essential Online Information for Students
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at:

Format of SPSW3001
The coursework program is underpinned by a series of thematic readings drawn largely from Dalton et al. (1996) and other critical material emerging from both journal articles and government policy documents.

Students are encouraged to consult the following Journal (available online at the following web address: http://csp.sagepub.com/). The material is a
valuable anchor point for individual assessment tasks and initial background reading.


“Critical Social Policy provides an international forum for advocacy, analysis and debate on social policy issues. It aims to develop an understanding of welfare from socialist, feminist, anti-racist and radical perspectives”.

### Human Services Policy and Practices Program

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Tuesday 21st February</td>
<td>Introductory Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Tuesday 28th February</td>
<td>Frameworks for understanding and participation in social policy making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Tuesday 7th March</td>
<td>Historical and contemporary contextual issues</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Tuesday 15th March</td>
<td>Debates about social goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Tuesday 21st March</td>
<td>Organisation maps and policy making</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Tuesday 28th March</td>
<td>Working in organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Tuesday 4th April</td>
<td>Disputes about policy process: governments, citizens and markets</td>
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### Mid Semester Recess: Friday 14th April - Friday 28th April

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Tuesday 2nd May</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Tuesday 9th May</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Tuesday 16th May</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Tuesday 23rd May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Tuesday 24th May</td>
<td>Policy Forums: presentation of policy research findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Tuesday 30th May</td>
<td>Policy Forums: presentation of policy research findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Tuesday 6th June</td>
<td>Policy Forums: presentation of policy research findings.</td>
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**Core Text**


**Seminar Reading**

**Reading 1**  
**Week 2**  
Dalton et al. (1996). “Toward a framework for understanding and participation in social policy making” chapter 1, pages 3-22

**Reading 2**  
**Week 3**  

**Reading 3**  
**Week 4**  

**Reading 4**  
**Week 5**  

**Reading 5**  
**Week 6**  

**Reading 6**  
**Week 7**  

**Reading 7**  
**Week 8**  
Dalton et al. (1996). “The policy process as power and contest”, chapter 7, pages 105-120.

**Additional Core Resource Material**

(Note: this material is integral to the Second Assessment Task. *Note however, there exists an enormous body of literature which can be applied to this analytic task-this is merely a starting point)

In chapter 3, pages 15-27 Levin interrogates the terms policy and social policy stating that they are employed in different ways by different people. In particular, they mean different things to people in government – politicians and officials, the central participants in the making of policy – on the one hand, and to academic writers, people outside government, on the other.

In chapter 4, pages 28-65 Levin contrasts “thematic” approaches that are found in existing policy literature with a more trenchant critical analytic approach to deconstructing policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. The quest here is to move beyond generalisation to rigorous in depth inquiry. Levin exhorts the social scientist to examine differing discursive practices and the layers of discourse which both produce and (re) produce, particular policies and practices.

Assessment Items: Summary.

♦ Assessment Task [1] Seminar presentation supported by discussion paper 2,000 words, 40% due mid semester.

**Assessment Criteria:**
- Structure
- Relevance and content
- Evidence of wide reading and synthesis of the literature
- Terms and supporting evidence
- Critical analysis and original thought
- Overall presentation
- Correct and consistent in text referencing and reference list


**Students are required to critically analyse a contemporary or proposed social policy initiative. This task provides the opportunity to explore various methods and approaches to policy analysis.** Students are asked to delve beyond the surface-level (the supposed value-neutral, objective, rhetoric and substance of social policy) to examine the contests, power processes, contradictions, and dilemmas, underpinning policy implementation in a practice setting.
Background information to this second task will be provided through seminars and direct consultation with Human Service Practitioners and Researchers. Students are encouraged to identify early in the semester topics and areas of contemporary debate which resonate with personal interests and connect with current research concerns.

**Examples include:**

- Education and Training
- Indigenous Australians
- Immigration Policy
- Health Policy
- Women’s Reproductive Rights/Abortion debates
- Children and Youth Issues
- Child Welfare and Protection
- Families—services for families
- Housing, urban environment and community services
- Gender—heterosexual, gay, lesbian and transgender
- Employment/Unemployment/Underemployment
- Social Inclusion/Exclusion
- Housing, homelessness and social dislocation
- Human Rights, Social Justice and Inequality
- Older Persons: Needs and Rights
- Euthanasia
- Neo liberal economic rationalism and managerialist imperatives
- Community Care
- Mental Health
- Disabilities
- Law and Social Order
- Policing communities and corrective services
- Citizenship: Feminist perspectives and debates
- Violence
- Mixed Economy of Welfare
- Environment and Welfare
- Animal Rights
**Assessment Criteria: Major Essay**

- Structure
- Relevance and content
- Evidence of wide reading and synthesis of the literature
- Terms and supporting evidence
- Critical analysis and original thought
- Overall presentation of argument
- Correct and consistent in text referencing and reference list

**Overview of Assessment Grading Guide: Policy & Practice in the Human Services SPSW3001**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading guide</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49% or less</td>
<td><strong>Fail (FF)</strong> An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable to express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation (spelling, grammar etc). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>50% to 64%</td>
<td><strong>Pass (P)</strong> The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question, shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and adequately referenced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65% to 74%</td>
<td><strong>Credit (C)</strong> The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought. The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>75% to 84%</td>
<td><strong>Distinction (D)</strong> Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised, clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85% upwards</td>
<td><strong>High Distinction (HD)</strong> All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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