



Faculty of Social Sciences

SOPM17, Social Policy in Europe, 15 credits

Socialpolitik i Europa, 15 högskolepoäng

Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

Details of approval

The syllabus is an old version, approved by Faculty Board of Social Sciences on 2011-12-15 and was last revised on 2011-12-15. The revised syllabus applied from 2012-09-03, autumn semester 2012.

General Information

The course is offered as an elective course on the second cycle level within the Bachelor of Science in Social Work (SGSOC). The language of instruction is English.

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Main field of studies

Social Work

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Depth of study relative to the degree requirements

A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

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Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, the student shall be able to

Knowledge and understanding

- demonstrate knowledge and deeper understanding of theories relevant to social work and social policy
- locate and demonstrate a deeper understanding of the varying processes within social policy development.

Skills and abilities

- critically reflect on the use of theories in a social policy and social work setting and apply these theories in a European context

- actively apply the professional (academic, policy making and social work) skills in analysing and acting on theories of social work and social policy

Making judgements

- make assessments of the professional role when acting in contentious arenas
- demonstrate insight of various actors within the field and demonstrate an awareness of the ethical implications of academic analyses, policy implementation and social work intervention.

Course content

The aim of the course is to provide students with analytical tools that enhance their abilities in exploring and explaining policy making within social policy and its ties to practices of social work and social services. Both bottom up and top down perspectives are thoroughly discussed. In the course, the processes within social policy in social life are central. In particular, the course deals with theoretical discussions of varying modes in which social policy deals with social change at different levels.

This course consists of two major parts: one theoretical and one oriented at ongoing changes in current welfare states.

The first part of the course deals with theoretical discussions on social policy and social inclusion/exclusion (regimes, models, typologies) and notions such as recognition/redistribution/representation.

We examine how established models of social policy can be contrasted to new forms of social marginalisation at different levels (subnational, national, regional, European). Parallel to the transformation of the social structure, the nation state as the main provider (or regulative framework) for social policies is being rescaled at various levels, and at the same time non-public actors increasingly carry out the provision of welfare. Here, the emphasis is on changes in the governance of the provision of social policy, above all the interaction of the national and the European level.

The second part of the course will discuss ongoing social policy reforms, in Sweden and in a European perspective. Social policy in general and social work in particular is commonly defined by its handling of social consequences from the capitalist society's ways of working. The term social problem is often used to describe a state requiring some form of action. How the consequences are experienced, defined, and assessed differs by who is offered to provide an opinion as well as by who has the ability of controlling a situation. In this context, the residualizing of social problems to individuals' or groups' problems is supported by one end of an ideological policy direction, while social rights as collective responsibilities are on the other. An ambition is therefore to let people, active in various levels of organizations in the field, provide challenging focuses to the questions of social welfare; consumers, welfare and case managers, welfare entrepreneurs, policymakers, and voters. Another ambition is to support students in comparative analyses of social policy development, in Sweden and elsewhere.

Course design

The course presents a variety of pedagogical tools making the course student-centred, thus enhancing student participation in the creative process of learning. The course consists of a combination of lectures, workshops and seminars. The lectures have an interdisciplinary focus and students are encouraged to search, analyse and present literature themselves. Students give oral and/or written presentations of the literature and the specific topics in seminars. Participation in seminars and workshops are mandatory.

Examination will be based on

- active participation in seminars and workshops
- oral presentations, individually and in groups
- course papers and critical reflections on the course literature.

Re-examination is offered after the end of the course. If necessary, a second re-examination is arranged at a later date.

Assessment

Subcourses

1101 Social Policy in Europe, 15,0 hp Grading scale: Fail, Pass

Grades

Marking scale: Fail, Pass.

The grades awarded in examinations are Pass or Fail. To receive Pass the student must fulfil the learning outcomes specified for the course.

Entry requirements

This course belongs to the Specialisation Block. In order for the student to be able to continue to the Specialisation Block (181-210 credits), the student must have completed the Basic Block (1-90 credits) and at least 60 credits within the Continuation Block (91-180 credits).

Further information

The course replaces SOPM07 Theories of Social Work and Social Policy in European Policy Making, 15 credits.