

Travel Dates March 16 – 24, 2019 travel to Edinburgh, Scotland

Pre-Trip Course Meetings Feb. 6, Feb. 20, Mar. 6 @ 6PM

Professor Dr. Eric Hardiman (hardiman@albany.edu)

Office Hours Richardson 213, by email appointment.

Category Elective or Advanced Policy

To request that this course count toward your Advanced Policy requirement in the MSW program, please provide a written request to the Associate Dean's Office via the SSW Help Desk, once you are registered for the course.

Description

This course offers students the opportunity to develop an understanding of international social welfare problems, policies, and programs, as seen through the lens of Scotland. Students will have the ability to focus their study experience on a specific Scottish policy, public/community issue, or social problems. Visits to social services agencies, educational institutions, and government offices will immerse students in Scotland's national and local social welfare policies, practices, and program initiatives. The course is designed to build on the knowledge and skills that students developed in the foundational social welfare policy and practice courses. It will focus on the knowledge and skills needed to competently analyze Scottish social policy and gain an understanding of issues related to Scottish social work policies and interventions. Students will complete independent scholarly research projects that will demonstrate their ability to engage in policy analysis with an emphasis on social work practice-related issues in Scotland. Students will also be given the opportunity to network with and learn from students and faculty at the University of Edinburgh.

Travel to Scotland

The trip to Scotland will be a full week centered in Edinburgh, the capital city. Students will work closely with Dr. Hardiman as well as faculty and students at the University of Edinburgh. Students will visit social welfare agencies, shadow social workers in Edinburgh, visit local government offices, attend a session of Scottish Parliament, and meet with the Scottish Association of Social Workers. Students will develop an understanding of social work practice systems, social problems, and social policy in the United Kingdom through the lens of Edinburgh.

Required Readings

To be assigned in class. All readings will be located on the Electronic Reserves page of the course Blackboard site.

Initial Resources

Learn about Scotland

<http://www.scotland.org/about-scotland>

Scotland Policy: Getting It Right For Every Child

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>

Edinburgh Social Care and Health

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20015/social_care_and_health

Course Readings

To be assigned and distributed via electronic reserves page on the course Blackboard site.

Course Objectives.

1. To understand the different dimensions of social policy in Scotland.
2. To understand the organization and structure of social work services in Scotland.
3. To understand the different roles and functions for social workers in Scotland.
4. To understand the historical background of social welfare policies and programs in Scotland.
5. To understand the social, political, economic, and ideological contexts of Scottish social welfare policies and the role of values in social welfare policy formulation, modification, monitoring, and evaluation.
6. To develop an awareness of implications from the study of Scottish social welfare policy, using a comparative framework with the United States.
7. To understand the differential impact of various social welfare policies and programs upon diverse groups in Scotland, particularly at-risk populations.
8. To understand the organization and delivery of social work interventions and social programs in Scotland, using a comparative framework with the United States.

Course Assignments

Assignment 1: Scotland Social Policy (or Social Problem) Analysis

20 page paper, APA format, double-spaced

- At least 10 references, preferably from peer-reviewed academic journals or official governmental reports/documents.
- Due April 26 @ 5PM.
- Choose a topic related to either a social policy or social problem/issue of interest in Scotland. *Topics need to be approved by instructor prior by March 1, 2018.*
- **What to include in your paper:**
 - Overview and description of the policy, problem area, or social issue.
 - Brief history of the policy, problem area, or social issue.
 - Discussion of all important contextual factors impacting the policy, problem area, or social issue.
 - Description of interventions, programs, solutions etc. currently in place

- Who are the various stakeholders impacted by the policy or problem/issue, and what values, perspectives, and interests do they have?
 - Effectiveness of the current policy and/or intervention approach?
 - How does the policy or problem/issue affect specific population(s) at risk?
 - How does the policy or problem/issue impact social work practice?
 - What are the cultural considerations in understanding this policy?
 - What is the public discourse regarding this policy or problem/issue?
 - What alternative policies might be proposed?
 - How is the policy being evaluated? If not, how might it be?
- Given what you have learned about the Scottish policy (or problem area), what are the implications of the policy for similar social problems in the United States?
 - Suggested structure of paper (may be modified):
 - I. Introduction and purpose
 - II. Background/context
 - III. Literature Review
 - IV. Policy or problem/issue exploration + analysis
 - V. Discussion/implications (for both U.S. and Scotland)
 - VI. Conclusion
 - Finally, develop a **comprehensive set of specific discussion questions** related to the policy or problem/issue that you have selected for your paper. You will bring these questions to Scotland to use during the trip as you meet Scottish social workers, managers, and policy makers. Please spend time thinking about the scope and substance of your questions. Questions should be reviewed by the instructor prior to the trip.
 - For literature, please prioritize the use of peer-reviewed journal articles or official Scottish/UK government documents. Other websites or informal resources can supplement your research, but should not be your primary sources.
 - Please consult with the “Elements of a Good Policy Analysis” section below.

Assignment 2: Reflection Paper

Length: 3-5 pages double-spaced APA format

Due Date: May 3 @ 5PM

This paper provides you with an opportunity to reflect upon and integrate what has been learned from the first paper with the experience of traveling to Scotland and participating in the study abroad program. The paper should demonstrate critical thinking, self-awareness and the ability to articulate connections between Scottish social policies and your own professional development in social work practice.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR PAPER

Characteristics of a Good Policy Analysis

- ❖ Offers a systematic approach to the analysis.
- ❖ Is sensitive to all relevant contexts.
- ❖ Uses rational methods of analysis, which are reliable and evidence-based.
- ❖ Is thorough, clear and explicit.
- ❖ Demonstrates an understanding of commitment to greatest good at smallest cost.
- ❖ Takes into account unintended consequences and implications.
- ❖ Considers alternative policies and use of resources.
- ❖ Examines potential impact of policy on the public, on other policies, and larger constituencies.
- ❖ Is explicit about value preferences.
- ❖ Is grounded in practice experience and implications for impacted populations.

Barusch's (2009) Questions for Policy Analysis From a Social Justice Perspective

- ❖ What are the costs and/or benefits under consideration?
- ❖ Who bears the cost, who receives the benefits, and what is the relationship between these two entities?
- ❖ Is anyone who is affected by this policy being labeled 'other', and does everyone affected by this policy have an equal voice?
- ❖ What are the rules, both formal and informal, that govern who receives and who pays?
- ❖ Is this policy fair?

Considerations for International Policy Analysis

National variables (need similar variables and measures to allow comparison)

- Culture
- Political structure
- Economic system (capitalist, socialist)
- Population characteristics (demographics)

Factors influencing policy development in a country

- Interest groups, political pressures
- Needs (explicit and implicit)
- Resources (can they finance social welfare?)
- Goals (general direction regarding objective)
- Means (delivery system)
- Outcomes (social indicators provide macro-level information about output of a social welfare system)