University of Guelph
Department of Family Relations & Applied Nutrition
FRHD*4260 Social Policy and Gerontology
Winter 2014

COURSE OUTLINE

Instructor: Kimberley Wilson
Office: MINS 133E / MINS 123
Phone: 519-824-4120, ext. 56325
Email: kwilso01@uoguelph.ca

Class meetings: Wednesday 7:00 – 9:50 p.m. MINS Room 103

Office Hours: By appointment

Calendar description: An examination of aging and adult development in relation to social policy with special reference to families.

Course objectives:
In your future careers as gerontologists and specialists in human and family development, it will be beneficial to have an understanding of how social and health policies influence the lives of older adults and families. This course, then, has four purposes:

1. To increase knowledge about social policy and aging and an understanding of application of policy in 'real life' contexts.
2. To critically explore social policy from a social determinants of health perspective.
3. To become familiar with the current key local, provincial, and federal social policies and their impact on aging.
4. To develop policy analysis skills and the ability to critique and offer solutions to policy dilemmas.

Prerequisites: FRHD 2060

Required Textbook: There is no required textbook for this course. Readings will be posted (or hyperlinked) on CourseLink. Although there is no text it is essential you complete the readings online and stay abreast of relevant policy issues in the news.

Appeals Procedure: Please consult the undergraduate Calendar pages 28-30

Drop & Add Procedure: Please consult the undergraduate Calendar pages 32/37. The last date to drop this course without penalty is March 7th, 2014. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Course, please review the undergraduate calendar.
Email and classroom etiquette: As per university regulations, all students are required to check their uoguelph.ca email account regularly: email is the official route of communication between the University and Students.

Please use discretion when emailing. You will receive a response within 48 hours (not including weekends) if your email is sent from a uoguelph email address. You will not receive a response if your email is sent from a Hotmail, Gmail, or similar web-based account. Please do not email questions related to the course content; these questions are more appropriate for CourseLink.

Given the nature of the class, participation is an expectation. Our goal together should be to create an open environment that promotes discussion and fosters critical thinking. Respectful debate is encouraged. Please offer your colleagues the same respect and maturity you hope to be given when sharing your thoughts both in the classroom and in online discussions.

Learning and Writing Services are there to help
Specially trained Peer Helpers and professional staff in Learning and Writing Services can help you achieve your academic goals. Get personalized assistance in appointments or walk-in sessions, or stop by the Learning Commons (1st Floor Library) for free handouts and workshop information. Visit online at www.learningcommons.uoguelph.ca or call ext. 53632.

When you cannot meet course requirements: When you find yourself unable to meet in-course or online requirements due to illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing with your name, id # and e-mail contact. Where possible, this should be done in advance of the missed work or event, but otherwise, just as soon as possible after the due date, and certainly no longer than one week later. Note: if appropriate documentation of your inability to meet that in course requirement is necessary, the course instructor, or delegate, will request it of you. Such documentation will rarely be required for course components representing less than 10% of the course grade. See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

Academic Integrity & Misconduct:
It is the responsibility of every student to review the Academic Integrity policy at the University of Guelph found at the following link: http://www.academicintegrity.uoguelph.ca/

Please also review the Academic Misconduct Policy detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar: http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-aminconduct.shtml

Course format:
This course is made up of weekly lectures that are seminar-style. Seminars are intended to foster debate, analytic thinking about the research literature and policies, and to provide a preparatory forum for graduate work. Class discussions will build on required readings, current events, lectures and guest speaker presentations. Students will be expected to be active participants in the course and demonstrate critical thinking expected of senior undergraduate students.

The course is founded on the principle that a combination of theoretical perspectives and an understanding of applications of policy are vital aspects for understanding the impact of policy
decision at the individual and system levels. Students will be challenged to show independent and
creative thought throughout the duration of the course. A keen awareness of current events will be
important for success.

Methods of Evaluation:
**Please note: detailed grading information is available on CourseLink. Reviewing these in
advance of your assignments is crucial for success.

Seminar participation: 15%
Students are expected to be conscientious contributors to all seminars. This includes an
expectation that students will do the assigned readings, and actively engage in classroom
discussion. As a fourth year student, there is an expectation of independent learning and students
will be challenged to put forward for debate answers/commentary and ask questions/commentary
on their own initiative.

In Class Quizzes: 15%
Throughout the duration of the semester there will be 3 brief quizzes (approx. 20-25 questions)
based on the readings for the week’s prior. These are scheduled on January 22nd, February 5th,
and March 26th. You will be notified in advance where to focus your efforts for preparation. Please
come prepared with a pencil for Scantrons. Note: Some students write exams in the Centre for
Students with Disabilities to best meet their learning needs. Should this apply to you, please note
lectures will start at 7:30 p.m. on the evenings when quizzes are scheduled. Students will have a
maximum of 30 minutes to write their quizzes (7:00 – 7:30 p.m.)

Policy Task Force Group Project: 35% (30% instructor assigned; 5% peer assigned)
Intended to simulate the experience of a working on a policy task force, students will be required
to work in a group of approximately 4-6 students throughout the semester. This will be a
phased project, again simulating expectations of a task force in a work environment. Detailed
expectations and timelines are outlined on CourseLink and below.

Briefing Notes: 35% (2 briefing notes)
Students will be required to write two briefing notes throughout the course of the semester. Given
the learning curve involved in writing briefing notes the first will be worth 15% and the second will be
worth 20%. Briefing notes will be discussed in greater length during the first week of classes and
throughout the semester. Briefing notes will be due at the start of indicated classes. Late papers
will be deducted 5% per day including weekends, unless explicit accommodations are granted.

Briefing notes are tools that are used in government and organizations to help inform leaders on a
variety of topics. Given the large portfolios of Ministers and administrators policy analysts are
required to write brief memos to highlight the current issues around a particular topic. Briefing notes
must be short in length with clear succinct messages. They should have an introduction, a
summary of the key historical points, the context and current landscape, a discussion of the key
issue, recommendations for moving forward, a final conclusion with your preferred recommendation. In your first briefing note you will be given up to 6 pages; by your final briefing note you should be able to write your summary in 5 pages. These should be based on a scan of
current literature and should also show independent thought in your recommendations. Emphasis
should be placed on proper spelling, grammar and APA style referencing.
### APPROXIMATE SCHEDULING OF CLASS TIME

Note: this is subject to change given the current policy environment, student input, and guest lecture availability. Any changes will be provided in writing on CourseLink.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Action Items</th>
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| 1    | January 8\(^{th}\) | Welcome & Introductions  
What is social policy  
Why social policy and gerontology?  
Who is responsible for what? |                             |
| 2    | January 15\(^{th}\) | **Guest speaker:** Frank Valeniole, Member of Parliament, Guelph  
*Social Policy & Federal Politics: Considering an aging population in policy decisions.*  
Models & Theories of Social Policy  
A brief history of social policy | Sign up for task force             |
| 3    | January 22\(^{nd}\) | Human rights – focus on late life  
Age and social inequality | Quiz #1  
Submit task force topics        |
| 4    | January 29\(^{th}\) | **Guest speaker:** Siobhan Frank  
*Gender and social policy – considering older women in policy.*  
Using social determinants of health approach to policy in Canada.  
Do policy lenses work? | Briefing note #1 distributed |
| 5    | February 5\(^{th}\) | History of health policy in Canada  
Current health policy and the impact on an aging population | Quiz #2 |
| 6    | February 12\(^{th}\) | Mental health policy – who, what, why?  
How does it affect for older adults? | Briefing note #1 due |
| 7    | February 26\(^{th}\) | Provincial & municipal policies  
- Ontario Seniors Strategy  
- Guelph Older Adult Strategy | Project Charter due |
| 8    | March 5\(^{th}\) | **Guest speaker:** Jacqueline de Guzman  
*Caregiving and the impact of family policies* | Briefing note distributed |
| 9    | March 12\(^{th}\) | Work & Retirement  
**Policy Roundtable** | Policy Roundtable |
| 10   | March 19\(^{th}\) | Financial Security in late life  
Pensions reforms & debates | Briefing note #2 due |
| 11   | March 26\(^{th}\) | Hot topics & international perspectives | Quiz #3 |
| 12   | April 2\(^{nd}\) | Policy implementation  
Summary & Integration | Final Task Force Report due |
Kimberley Wilson

**Weeks 1 & 2 Readings**


**Week 3 Readings**


**Week 4 Readings:**


**Week 5 Readings**


Kimberley Wilson


**Week 6 Readings**


**Week 7 Readings**


**Week 8 Readings**


**Week 9 Readings**

Near Seniors, and Intergenerational Relations. Ottawa, ON: HRSDC.

National Seniors Council. (2013). Older Workers At Risk of Withdrawing from the Labour Force or Becoming Unemployed: Employers’ views on how to retain and attract older workers. Ottawa, ON: HRSDC.


**Week 10 Readings**


**Week 11 Readings**

