Syllabus

Course Description

Course Title	Fundamentals of Social Work and Social Policy
Course Code	51121
Course Title Additional	
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	GSPS-05/A
Language	English; German
Degree Course	Bachelor in Social Work
Other Degree Courses (Loaned)	
Lecturers	Prof. Dr. Urban Nothdurfter, Urban.Nothdurfter2@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/education/academic-staff/person/17145 Dr. Teresio Poggio, Teresio.Poggio@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/education/academic-staff/person/32847
Teaching Assistant	
Semester	First semester
Course Year/s	1
CP	11
Teaching Hours	66
Lab Hours	0
Individual Study Hours	209
Planned Office Hours	33
Contents Summary	The course introduces the foundations of social work and social policy. FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL WORK: This module introduces key concepts, theories, and ethical foundations of social work. It focuses on social work as a profession and academic discipline, its functions, mandates, and

	fields of action, as well as questions of professionalization and the political dimension of social work. SOCIAL POLICY: This module aims at introducing students to the fundamentals of the welfare state, its developments in a comparative perspective, its recent trends and current dilemmas. The interplay of family, market and state in welfare provision is also comparatively addressed. The main areas of social policy are introduced.
Course Topics	SOCIAL POLICY Part 1 – Fundamentals: Social problems, their stratification in society and during the life course. Rationale for public intervention and for the welfare state. Historical developments of the welfare state in Western Europe. The interplay of family, market and the state in welfare provision. Different national trajectories and welfare regimes. Recent trends and major challenges. Part 2 – Introduction to the main social policy areas: Care and long-term care; Education; Family; Health, Housing; Labour market; Pension system; Poverty & Income Maintenance; Social assistance; Social Exclusion. Part 3 – Cross-cutting themes: Gender and generations in contemporary welfare systems; Not-for-profit sector; Globalization and welfare systems; Social and political sustainability of the welfare state.
Keywords	Social Policy, Welfare Regimes, Welfare State.
Recommended Prerequisites	
Propaedeutic Courses	
Teaching Format	Frontal lectures, short exercises and case studies, discussion in class.
Mandatory Attendance	In accordance with the regulation
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes	See the individual course modules
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning	Knowledge and understanding: Basic knowledge and understanding of social work as a profession

Outcomes (additional info.)	and discipline, its mandates, theories, and scientific as well as ethical foundations. Basic understanding of fundamental social policy fields and issues; knowledge of welfare arrangements, traditions, and models; main current developments and challenges. Applying knowledge and understanding: Application of the acquired knowledge when dealing with social issues and policy challenges, as well as concerning the practice of social work. Making judgments: Development of professional analysis and reflection skills, as well as the ability to critically assess how social (policy) issues are dealt with and managed in social work. Communication skills: Development of language and skills for professional and academic communication and argumentation. Learning skills: Systematic acquisition of the fundamentals in social work and social policy; and their utilization in reflexivity and discussion. Ability to address new themes in these fields, using reference resources.
Assessment	SOCIAL POLICY Two different assessment routes are offered for the module Social Policy: 1. Standard assessment (all students), in two steps: 1.1. Individual project work (50% of the final marks): 3-4 pages mini-essay, with critical reflections, to be delivered not later than 7 days before the exam. The theme can be selected by the students from a list of subjects prepared by the instructor (with a couple of short related readings). The list will be available in the Reserve Collection at the start of the course; 1.2. Final written test (50% of the final marks): 30-40 minutes test that includes closed-ended multiple choice questions and a few short open-ended questions. 2. Attending students (who has attended 50% of the lectures at least), may choose the following 3 steps assessment procedure: 2.1. Individual project work (50% of the final marks), as specified

	for the standard assessment; 2.2. Final written test (25% of the final marks): 30-40 minutes test as specified for the standard assessment; 2.3. Active participation in class (25% of the final marks). It includes the discussion of a few preparatory readings and case studies. Important notes both the assessment routes: A positive evaluation of both the individual project and the final written test is needed in order to pass the exam, irrespective of the overall weighted average marks attained. Please also note that – given the mentioned educational objectives and the simple tasks required in the development of the final project work – the use of generative artificial intelligence tools is not allowed. The lecturer reserves the right to complement the assessment procedure with an oral discussion in order to assess the real contribution of the student to the materials submitted for assessment.
Evaluation Criteria	SOCIAL POLICY In general, what is evaluated is the acquisition of the module contents as well as their understanding and reflexive application in relation to current questions and problems. Evaluation criteria are as follows: 1. In the individual project's mini essay, attention is paid to: 1.1 proper reference to specialist literature and the module contents, and to the ability to summarise the texts considered in the project and other contents (40% of the evaluation); 1.2. the ability to offer a critical discussion of the texts considered – and of possible other reference literature - and to link the latter to other contents of the module (40% of the evaluation). 1.3. the ability to write with a logical structure and clear argumentation (20% of the evaluation). 2. In the written test (closed-ended and open-ended questions) attention is paid to knowledge of the module key themes and concepts, on the accuracy and the ability to evaluate alternative understanding of concepts, as shown in the ability to correctly answer the test questions (100% of the evaluation).

	3. Attendance is a prerequisite for participation in class. In active participation, attention is paid to: 3.1. contribution to the critical discussion in class of a few preparatory readings (25% of the evaluation); 3.2. contribution to the crititcal discussion in class of a few case studies (25% of the evaluation); 3.3. contribution to the critical discussion in class on the module topics and key concepts, in general (25% of the evaluation); 3.4. the ability to make connections between themes and concepts discussed in the module (25% of the evaluation). 4. An oral discussion, may complement the assessment of the project's mini essay. The evaluation would be driven by the criteria discussed at point 1 and would be focused on assessing the authorship and originality of the miny essay submitted.
Required Readings	see module description
Supplementary Readings	
Further Information	Please refer to the module dedicated Open Learning Environment (OLE) for further module resources and information. Handouts for each lecture will be available soon after class.
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	No poverty, Good health and well-being, Peace, justice and strong institutions, Decent work and economic growth, Reduced inequalities, Gender equality

Course Module

Course Constituent Title	Fundamentals in Social Work
Course Code	51121A
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	GSPS-05/A
Language	German
Lecturers	Prof. Dr. Urban Nothdurfter, Urban.Nothdurfter2@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/education/academic-staff/person/17145
Teaching Assistant	
Semester	First semester

CP	6
Responsible Lecturer	
Teaching Hours	36
Lab Hours	0
Individual Study Hours	114
Planned Office Hours	18
Contents Summary	FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL WORK: This module introduces key concepts, theories, and ethical foundations of social work. It focuses on social work as a profession and academic discipline, its functions, mandates, and fields of action, as well as questions of professionalization and the socio-political dimension of social work practice.
Course Topics	The course offers a foundational introduction to social work as a profession and academic discipline, equipping students with knowledge and skills for critical engagement and theory based reflection on key themes and core challenges. First, the course addresses definitions and concepts, developments, functions, mandates, and recurring tensions in social work. Students gain an overview of developmental trajectories, professionalisation processes, and fields of practice, learning to understand social work as both a professional activity and a scientific field. A further focus lies on the theoretical and academic foundations of social work, including its key theories, the role of related disciplines, and questions of knowledge forms, as well as the critical and participatory production and application of knowledge in professional contexts. The course also introduces the ethics of social work, addressing normative foundations and ethical principles, highlighting different ethical approaches, and fostering ethical reflection and decision making as core aspects of professional competence. Special emphasis will be placed on fostering an awareness of the political dimension of social work. Course content will be critically examined within the broader context of social issues and social

	policy dynamics, with a focus on the challenges inherent in professional practice at the intersection of political entanglements and the pursuit of social justice.
Teaching Format	Lectures, exercises, discussion
Required Readings	Selected chapters from the following books: Kessl, F., Kruse, E., Stövesand, S., & Thole, W. (2017). *Soziale Arbeit: Kernthemen und Problemfelder*. UTB. Cloos, P., Lochner, B. & Schoneville, H. (2020). *Soziale Arbeit als Projekt: Konturierungen von Disziplin und Profession.* Springer VS. Graßhoff, G., Renker, A. & Schröer, W. (Hrsg.) (2018). *Soziale Arbeit: Eine elementare Einführung.* Springer VS. Thole, W. (Hrsg.) (2012). *Grundriss Soziale Arbeit: Ein einführendes Handbuch.* Springer VS, 4. Auflage. Lambers, H. (2023). *Theorien Sozialer Arbeit. Ein Kompendium und Vergleich.* UTB. Hammerschmidt, P. & Stecklina, G. (2022). *Klassische Theorien Sozialer Arbeit.* Beltz Juventa. Hammerschmidt, P., Aner, K. & Weber, S. (2019). *Zeitgenössische Theorien Sozialer Arbeit.* Beltz Juventa. Hölscher, D., Hugman, R. & McAuliffe, D. (2023). *Social Work Theory and Ethics.* Springer. Gray, M., Midgley, J., Webb, St. A. (eds.) (2012). *The SAGE Handbook of Social Work.* SAGE. Healy, K. (2022). *Social work theories in context: creating frameworks for practice.* Bloomsbury. Fargion S. (2009). *Il servizio sociale. Storia, temi e dibattiti.* Laterza, Fazzi, L. (2017). *Teoria e pratica del servizio sociale: un'introduzione.* Franco Angeli. Sanfelici, M. (2024). *Fondamenti del servizio sociale anti-oppressivo.* Carocci. Further readings will be provided during the course.

Supplementary Readings	

Course Module

Course Constituent Title	Social Policy
Course Code	51121B
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	GSPS-05/A
Language	English
Lecturers	Dr. Teresio Poggio, Teresio.Poggio@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/education/academic-staff/person/32847
Teaching Assistant	
Semester	First semester
CP	5
Responsible Lecturer	
Teaching Hours	30
Lab Hours	0
Individual Study Hours	95
Planned Office Hours	15
Contents Summary	The module Social Policy aims at introducing students to the fundamentals of the welfare state, its developments in a comparative perspective, its recent trends and current dilemmas. The interplay of family, market and state in welfare provision is also comparatively addressed. The main areas of social policy are introduced.
Course Topics	Part 1 - Fundamentals: Social problems, their stratification in society and during the life course. Rationale for public intervention and for the welfare state. Historical developments of the welfare state in Western Europe. The interplay of family, market and the state in welfare provision. Different national trajectories and welfare regimes. Recent trends and major challenges. Part 2 – Introduction to the main social policy areas: Care and long-term care; Education; Family; Health, Housing; Labour market; Pension system; Poverty & Income Maintenance;

	Social assistance; Social Exclusion. Part 3 – Cross-cutting themes: Gender and generations in contemporary welfare systems; Not-for-profit sector; Globalization and welfare systems; Social and political sustainability of the welfare state.
Teaching Format	In person teaching: frontal lectures, short exercises and case studies, discussion in class.
Required Readings	1) The following selected chapters from Alcock, P., Haux, T. McCall, V. & May, M. (2022). ***The Student's Companion to Social Policy* 6th edition**. Hoboken (NJ): Wiley & Sons. ISBN: 9781119744870 (thereafter, the **COMPANION**): • Chapter 1 (P. Alcock), *What is Social Policy?*, pp. 5-10 • Chapter 3 (N. Manning), *Social needs, Social Problems, Social Welfare and Well-being*, pp. 18-23 • Chapter 32 (S. Pemberton & G.J. Arriaga-Garcia), *Poverty and Social Exclusion*, pp. 216-221. 2) The following selected chapters from Béland, D., Leibfried S., Morgan, K.J., Obinger, H. & Pierson C. (2021). *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State* 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780198828389 (thereafter, the **HANDBOOK**): • Chapter 6 (G. Hooijer, & D. King), *The Critics of Welfare: From Neoliberalism to Populism*, pp. 52–70 • Chapter 23 (M.G. Schmidt), *European and National Social Policy*, pp. 396–416 • Chapter 28 (K. Hinrichs & J.F. Lynch), *Old-Age Pensions*, pp. 492-506 • Chapter 30 (A. Österle & H. Rothgang), *Long-Term Care,* pp. 524-540 • Chapter 36 (Th. Bahle & K. Wendt), *Social Assistance*, pp. 624-640 • Chapter 43 (J. Hook & L. Ruppanner), *Gendered Outcomes*, pp. 750-766. • Chapter 48 (M. Ferrera), *The South European Countries*, pp. 843–62 3) The following selected chapters from Pierson, C., Castles, F.G. & Naumann, I.K. (eds.) (2014). *The Welfare State Reader*, 3rd edition. Cambridge & Maiden (MA): Polity Press. ISBN: 978-

	0745663685 (thereafter, the **READER**): • A. Briggs, *The Welfare State in Historical Perspective*, pp. 14-27 • C. Crouch & M. Keune, *The Governance of Economic Uncertainty: Beyond the 'New Social Risks' Analysis*, pp. 326-337 • G. Esping-Andersen, *Three Words of Welfare Capitalism*, pp. 136-151 • T. H. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class*, pp. 28-37.
Supplementary Readings	1) **Short readings for discussion in class** (not yet included among the required readings). It would be good if each student could work on a couple of papers (it would count as participation): • M. Daly, *Families, States, and Markets,* pp. 205–221, from the HANDBOOK • J. Habermas, *Europe's Post-Democratic Era*, pp. 388-391, from the READER • K. Offe, *Some Contraddictions of the Modern Welfare State*, pp. 60-69, from the READER • C. Saraceno & D. Benassi, "A Regime Approach" in C. Saraceno, D. Benassi & E. Morlicchio (eds.) *Poverty in Italy: Features and Drivers in a European Perspective*. Bristol, Policy Press 2020, pp. 1-22 2) Chapters non included in the Required readings from the COMPANION, the HANDBOOK and the READER, according to students' own interest and discussion in class 3) **Other optional readings for curious students**: • C. Attias-Donfut & S. Arber, "Equity and solidarity across generations". In *The Myth of Generational Conflict: The Family and State in Ageing Societies*. Routledge, 2000, pp. 1-19 • W.H. Beveridge, *Social Insurance and Allied Services* (the Beveridge Report), 1942 • S. Buchholz et al. , "Life courses in the globalization process: The development of social inequalities in modern societies", in *European Sociological Review*, 25(1), 2009, pp. 53-71 • Pope Leo XIII, *De Rerum Novarum,* 1891 • B. Nolan & C.T. Whelan, "Non-Monetary Indicators", in *Poverty and Deprivation in Europe.* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 11-35.

	• S. Oosterlynck, Y. Kazepov, A. Novy, P. Cools, E. Barberis, F. Wukovitsch, T. Sarius & B. Leubolt (2013), *The butterfly and the elephant: local social innovation, the welfare state and new poverty dynamics*. ImPRovE Discussion Paper No. 13/03. Antwerp: Herman Deleeck Centre for Social Policy – University of Antwerp • T. Poggio, "The first steps into the Italian housing system: Inequality between generational gaps and family intergenerational transfers", in R. Forrest & N.-M. Yip, *Young People and Housing: Transitions, Trajectories and Generational Fractures*. Routledge, 2012, pp. 42-63 • K. Scanlon, M. Fernández Arrigoitia M. & C. Whitehead, *Social Housing in Europe*. European Policy Analysis (Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies) epa n. 17, pp. 1-12 4) Additional optional readings may be provided during the course according to discussion in class, course development, student interests, ...