Critical Policy Studies (m)

2 credit – Winter 2019

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Course description
In this course students learn how to critically examine policy development, practices and goals, with particular focus on gender in global politics. Besides introducing students to methods for critical policy analysis, the course asks how ‘gender’ (as a policy and goal) has influenced global politics. This course encourages students to think both conceptually and practically about the implementation of gender norms, concepts, and frameworks in global policy, and gives them the tools to be able to critically review and assess policy frameworks. As such, this course applies feminist principles and theories to critically examine policy issues. As well as learning critical policy analysis as a method, students can expect some historical and theoretical overview of how global policy is formed, the primary institutions involved in global governance and policy formation, and how to analyze global policy through feminist and gender frameworks. These aims are achieved through exploration of some key issues in gender and global politics, such as violence against women and girls, international development programming, migration and feminist foreign policy.

Learning Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of this unit students will be able to demonstrate:
1. The capacity for balanced and reasoned analysis (in spoken and written form) of key issues and controversies in forming gender-sensitive global policy.
2. The ability to examine and evaluate global policies on gender, as well as gender-blind policies for their gendered assumptions and impacts.
3. The ability to connect theory and case study to real-life situations.
4. An understanding of the relationships between states, key international institutions and global civil society in processes of political and economic governance.
5. An understanding of key conceptual and empirical debates on global governance.

Assessment
Attendance and participation = 20%
Leading class discussion = 10%
Blog posts (x2) = 40%
Critical policy analysis = 30%

All written assessments are to be submitted via the links on Moodle.

Attendance and participation – 20%
This is a seminar based course and as such your attendance and active participation, which demonstrates your familiarity with the material, is expected. You should come to each seminar having done the readings and prepared to engage in discussion, ask questions, and reflect on the week’s themes.
Leading discussion – 10%
You will each be assigned one seminar in which you are to lead class discussion. This consists of providing a brief summary of the readings, a very brief insight or analysis from you (these parts together should take no more than approximately 5-7 minutes), and formulating 2-3 discussion questions or discussion points for the class. Depending on the size of the class, some weeks there may be 2 people appointed as class discussant, in which case you will need to work together in order to develop the summary and discussion question, portioning the work between you equally. You will be graded separately.

Blog posts – 20% each (2)
You must submit two blogs during the semester of no more than 800 words each, based on seminar themes. The first is due by the end of Week 5, the second by the end of Week 9.

The aim of this assessment is to practice writing for a different medium/audience. Both academics and practitioners frequently communicate their research findings via blogs to access a wider audience, and as a way to influence policy discussions. The writing style is different to a research essay and speaks to a more generalized audience. These are concise pieces that generally offer a concrete recommendation or outline a limitation. The piece should still be fully referenced and provide a bibliography. I have provided links to some popular blog sites in relevant areas which provide examples.

Critical policy analysis – 30%
This piece is a research essay, of 2,000 words (+/- 10%) that uses a critical policy approach (broadly understood) on a topic related to the areas considered in the class (weeks 3-11 inclusive). Select a theme that has interested you – different to your blog posts – and develop an essay that focuses on one policy issue or aspect within this area. If you would like to develop a paper on something outside of the seminar themes, please come and speak to me. It should be independently researched and appropriately formatted, with citations and a bibliography. Broadly, you should seek to examine how gender has been understood and formalized in policy, and/or how policy can transform or reinforce normative gender concepts – that is, you should use the frames discussed in the first few weeks of the course.

This piece is your opportunity to write an academic reflection piece and provide a depth of analysis on one of the topics that has interested you. You should consider a range of themes and issues we have covered in the course in your essay – such as relevant actors and institutions; conceptual assumptions, strengths and limitations; policy intention versus outcome; and so on.

Reading schedule

Week 1: Introduction


Week 2: Global social policy and governance


Week 3: What are we studying when we study policy?


Week 4: States and sex equality


Week 5: NGOs and non-state actors


UN General Assembly (UNGA) 2004, We the peoples: civil society, the United Nations and global governance, United Nations, New York, pp. 7-12.

Week 6: Feminist change in neoliberal times


**Week 7: Gender mainstreaming**


**Week 8: Security policy – or have as 1325 and CRSV**


NATO 2016. NATO Policy for the protection of civilians. Endorsed by heads of state and government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw 8-9 July 2016 [https://www.nato.int/cps/ua/natohq/official_texts_133945.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/ua/natohq/official_texts_133945.htm)


**Week 9: International development**


2016 Commission on the Status of Women, ‘Women’s empowerment and the link to sustainable development,’ UN Women.


**Week 10: Austerity and economic policy**


Week 11: Governing migration


Week 12: NO CLASSES – Sarah at International Studies Association Conference