What lessons can we draw from Sweden’s parental leave policy? Or Bolivia’s pension system which compensates women for their care for children? Or the guaranteed income experiment in Stockton, CA? Welfare policies around the globe offer many lessons – not only for how to address basic needs, but also for building more gender- and race- equitable societies. This course provides conceptual and historical grounding for understanding the origins and impacts of social welfare policies, and how these policies serve as crucial arbiters of gender, race and class relations. We will compare historical and contemporary social policy “regimes” and their impacts on individuals and societies in Europe and the Americas. The course centers on four questions: 1) **How are social policies “gendered”, “raced” and “classed”?** We will consider multiple feminist perspectives and approaches which show how social policies are based on specific assumptions about gender and its intersections with race, class and immigrant status and in turn create or reinforce a particular social order. 2) **Why do welfare policies in different countries look so different?** We will analyze the historical development of welfare policies with specific attention to interactions between states, political parties, unions, firms, and social movements – including women’s movements. Understanding the historical political determinants of current policies can provide clues to appropriate strategies for change. 3) **What lessons can we glean from other countries to promote equity across gender and other forms of inequality?** We will dive into research that measures the impact of specific social policies on equity and consider the appropriateness and transferability of policy ideas across borders. 4) **What are the contemporary challenges to social welfare systems and their ability to promote gender equity?** We will consider stagnating birth rates that threaten the economic solvency of social policy systems; the pressures of refugees and mass migration; and how the global COVID-19 pandemic has both revealed and exacerbated underlying deficiencies in social policy systems.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Develop a deeper understanding of the sometimes-hidden ways social policies create, alleviate, or reinscribe gender, race, and class inequalities
- Evidence-based lessons from around the world on what policies have worked best to reduce gender inequalities and their intersections with other forms of inequality
• Clarity on the major contemporary challenges to social welfare systems and their gendered impacts – from influxes of refugees to the COVID-19 pandemic

• Lessons from history for thinking analytically and strategically about opportunities for pragmatic and transformational social policy change

Canvas Course Website: All assignments will be turned in and graded on the Canvas course website (canvas.umn.edu). We will also set up an informal discussion board on Canvas for students to share resources, advice, and to chat informally to foster community and connection. I will send out announcements about class via Canvas – therefore, please make sure you set course settings to receive course announcements and course conversations (emails) at least the same day. You may change your display name and pronouns in Canvas by following these steps in settings: https://it.umn.edu/services-technologies/how-tos/canvas-set-your-preferred-name-in-your

Class Assignments and Evaluation:

1) Response Papers (30%). You are required to post a response paper to the readings for 6 of class meetings that entail readings (except Jan 18 and March 3), with at least one response paper in each of the six parts of the course. Papers should be about 600 - 900 words (two to three double-spaced pages) and written in the format of an essay. Papers should include the following components: 1) understand descriptively the major points of each reading. This should not be a re-statement of all the arguments, but rather a summary that focuses on the threads that tie the pieces together with emphasis on those points that are most interesting or compelling. DO show that you are working with all (not just one or two) of the readings; 2) critically engage with the readings (e.g. does the author present a convincing argument? Is the evidence sound? Is the methodology appropriate? Is there a blind spot in the author’s reasoning?); 3) relate the argument of at least one reading to the other readings for the day or from previous class meetings (e.g. how does it build on or respond to the other readings?) OR relate to another policy instance– for example the same policy in another time or place or a similar pattern for a different policy; 4) raise 3 effective questions for discussion. These may include one clarification question (e.g. what is meant by decommodification?) and two or three substantive questions that can serve as the basis for discussion (e.g. Do Esping-Anderson’s regime types capture gender distinctions among regimes?). Papers should be posted by 8AM the day of class as an attachment in the discussion thread for the day. Please read your peers’ postings prior to class.

2) In-class participation (20%). This course will be run seminar-style. Discussion will be our primary mode of learning in our weekly meetings. For this to work well, students are expected to carefully read each of the assigned readings before class and come prepared to contribute to discussion. Your response papers will help you to prepare, but active participation goes beyond what you have prepared prior to class – including being ready to change your mind, considering alternative viewpoints, and helping to create a respectful environment where everyone feels they have something to contribute, no matter their background or ideological persuasion.
3) **Design an ideal work-family policy (20%) (5690 students).** Choose a U.S. state or a country with work-family policies that you believe can be improved. Draw on course readings and additional research to design a work-family policy, or set of policies, that best addresses key dimensions of well-being covered in the course (e.g. decommodification, defamilialization, demothering). See Canvas for full instructions.

4) **Policy Brief: How has COVID changed or impacted social policy? (20%) (5690 students).** Choose a country or a U.S. state and focus on one or more related social policies. How these have been impacted by COVID-19? What have been the implications of the pandemic for broader societal relations of gender, race, class and other structural inequalities in this policy area? Develop a proposal for policy avenues forward towards greater equity. See Canvas for full instructions.

5) **Video Pitch (10%)** Develop a Flip Grid video pitching the recommendations of your policy brief to the class. Full instructions on Canvas.

**Alternative assignments for doctoral students in 8690:**

1) Response papers, as above (30%)
2) Participation in class, as above (20%)
3) Research paper on a topic related to gender and welfare (50%) (20-25 pages, full details on Canvas).

**Assignment Due Dates:**

Feb 17: Selection of state/country and policy(ies) for Policy Design paper by 1PM on Canvas.
March 3: Introduction & Outline of Policy Design paper due by 8AM on Canvas.
March 16: Final Policy Design paper due by Noon, on Canvas.
March 31: Submit place and policies of focus for COVID Policy Brief by 1PM on Canvas.
April 19: Draft COVID Policy Brief due to workshop paper partner(s) by 5PM on Canvas.
April 27: Flip Grid video pitch by 5PM.
May 4: Final COVID Policy Brief due at Noon on Canvas. Research papers due for those in 8690.

**Attendance:** It should go without saying that you are expected to attend every class. Attendance is especially important in small discussion-based classes like this one. We cover a lot of information each week and much of what we learn comes from in class interactions. That said, I do understand that emergencies happen.

**Course Readings:** The course reading load will range from between 100 and 150 pages a week, generally four to five book chapters or journal articles per week, split into two days. The course materials blend feminist theory with empirical case studies of policy implementation and formulation.
Two required books are available at the university bookstore:


All other readings are on library electronic reserve, with direct links on the course Canvas site. You can access our Canvas site through your MyU portal (http://www.myu.umn.edu).

**Grading:** This course uses the Humphrey School grade definitions, which are as follows:
- A = superior work
- B = satisfactory graduate-level work
- C = below Graduate School standards, but worthy of graduate credit
- D = unsatisfactory work; no graduate credit
- F = fail/no credit given
- S = satisfactory (grade of S must be level of C- or above)
- N = non-satisfactory/no credit given

Individual assignments will be graded on the following grading scale: A: 100-94 | A- 93-90 | B+: 89-87 | B 86-84 | B- 83-80 | C+: 79-77 | C 76-74 | C- 73-70 | D+: 69-67 | D 66-64 | D- 63-60 | F Below 60

**Late Policy:** Unless prior arrangements have been made with me, late work will be penalized by a three-point deduction immediately, followed by an additional 3 points for every additional 48 hours late after the due date.

**Student Honesty and Academic Integrity:** Students are responsible for upholding and maintaining academic and professional honesty and integrity per the Student Conduct Code, available at: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf If you are unsure how to avoid plagiarism, cheating or academic misconduct, please see me and we can talk about ways to avoid these and succeed in this course.

**Universal Access:** It is important to me that all students are able to participate fully in this course. Please let me know if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or evaluation procedures in order for you to participate fully. The Disability Resource Center https://disability.umn.edu/ might be a source of support to you. *If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact the DRC at 612-626-1333 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations. You can also learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at: http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu.*
COVID Concerns and Policies: If you need specific accommodations related to COVID, please contact the Disability Resource Center. Our classroom will follow university guidelines with regard to COVID, which currently includes a mask mandate. It is advisable that you remain physically spread out in the room. Should we need to pivot to online format, a Zoom link for the course is available on Canvas. I will do my best to accommodate students that may need greater flexibility during the semester should illness occur, but unfortunately Zoom access to a discussion-based course is technologically very difficult, so will not be offered.

Tennessee Warning Notice Pursuant to MN Department of Administration’s Data Practices
Should we need to pivot to an online format: To make this class more accessible to all enrolled students, I may record class lectures and discussions. Since your audio/video may be part of those recordings we are informing you. These recordings will be shared with only the students enrolled in the class during this semester, in accordance with FERPA regulations.

Course Schedule:

I. Conceptual Foundations

Jan 18: Introduction to the Course: Gender, Intersectionality and Social Policy
(No Response Papers Today)


Jan 20: Classical Approaches and Left/Right Debates
(Start response papers today if you wish)


Jan 25: Feminist Approaches


Suggested for further reading (not required):


II. Origins of early social policy systems

Jan 27: Traditional Theories


Suggested for further reading (not required):


Feb 1: Gender, Maternalism and Early Welfare states: Europe and Latin America


Feb 3: A Deeper Dive into Gender and Social Policy Histories: The USA
Suzanne Mettler. 1998. Dividing Citizens: Gender and Federalism in New Deal Public Policy. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Preface; Ch1, Ch 2, Ch 4, Ch 5, Ch 9.

Suggested for further reading (not required):

Europe


USA


**Latin America**


### III. Types of Welfare Regimes

**February 8: (Class)ifying European Welfare Regimes**


**Suggested for further reading (not required):**


**February 10 Gendering Welfare Regimes**


**Suggested for further reading (not required):**


February 15: Global South Welfare Regimes


Suggested for further reading (not required):


IV. What Policies Work Best? Work-Family Policies

February 17: Family Policy: Women in the Labor Force
*Choose the state/country and policy(ies) upon which you plan to focus your work-family policy design paper. Submit on Canvas.*


*Suggested for further reading (not required)*


**February 22: Family Policy: Men and Work**


**Suggested for further reading (not required)**


February 24: Family Policy in the United States


March 1: Family Policy in Latin America

Suggested for further reading (not required)


March 3: Innovations in Work Family Policy
No response papers today please. But do read the article for today. Introduction and outline of Work-Family Policy Design paper due on Canvas by 8AM. Be prepared to discuss in class.


SPRING BREAK – MARCH 8 and 10 No Class

V. What Policies Work Best? Gender, Poverty and Inequality

March 15: Cross National Variation in Poverty and Inequality, OECD and USA


Suggested for further reading (not required)


Policy Design papers due tomorrow, Wednesday March 16 by noon.

March 17: The Promise of Universal Basic Income?


March 22 Cash Transfers in Brazil


Suggested for further reading (not required)

March 24: Guaranteed Income in the USA: Stockton and St Paul


March 29: Gender and Pension Policies


Suggested for further reading (not required)


VI. Current Social Policy Challenges

March 31: COVID 19 and Women’s Labor
Submit place and policies of focus for COVID Policy Brief on CANVAS by 1PM today.


April 5: COVID 19 and Childcare


April 7: NO CLASS TODAY
Asynchronous time to work on COVID Policy Brief

April 12: COVID in Latin America

April 14: Moving beyond Gender Binaries?


APRIL 19: Falling Birth Rates
*Draft COVID Policy Brief due to workshop paper partner(s) by 5PM today*


https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/pjf3n.

Suggested for further reading (not required)
https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12128.


April 21: Workshopping of COVID Policy Briefs In class today

April 26: Challenges of Migration


https://doi.org/10.1093/sp/jxx002.

Flip Grid Videos Due Wednesday, April 27 by 5PM.

April 28: Video Presentations in Class today

Final COVID Policy Brief due Wednesday, May 4th at Noon.