SOCW 551: Indigenous Communities: Practice and Policy

THIS IS A SAMPLE OUTLINE.
ACTUAL COURSE OUTLINE MAY VARY IN STRUCTURE, REQUIRED READINGS, TEXTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Course Description
Critically examines the historical processes of colonization in Canada and resulting barriers embedded in past and current policy and practices that affect Indigenous peoples. Students will deconstruct colonization, race, class and capitalism as embedded in social welfare. Students will have an opportunity to examine their self-location, ideas, values and beliefs about working with Indigenous peoples and to develop a practice framework, based on social justice, for working with Indigenous communities.

Objectives of the Course

- Students will gain an understanding and awareness of historical legislation and polices as they pertain to Indigenous people
- Students will learn and process the importance of critical theory and Indigenous theorizing in relation to Indigenous education and child welfare
- Students will begin to and continue to work toward how to deconstruct systems and re-create for effective change for Indigenous people
- Students will enhance their skills to include an “Indigenous” lens when looking at social policy issues and decolonization systems to facilitate positive change for Indigenous people
- Students will become aware of the importance of a “teaching” and “learning” structure which relates to Indigenous ways of knowing and being
- Students will begin to understand the importance of protocol and respectful mannerisms when working with Indigenous leaders, community members and particularly with elders.

Introduction to the Course
This course is designed to engage students in the process of decolonization in Canada. Students will have an opportunity to explore and analyse historical Canadian policies and legislation that have impacted Indigenous people and the current impacts faced with today. Students will begin to look at the policy development phases with an emphasis on “who” the policy makers are, whom the policies serve, and to critique and analyse how existing policies can be more effective for Indigenous people. While looking at policies implemented for Indigenous peoples, we will look at how Indigenous peoples governed themselves as distinct nations prior to European contact. We will also explore how Indigenous people can continue to implement traditional/contemporary governance systems into the future.
Students will have the opportunity to add depth to their understanding of their decolonization process, as this course continues to deconstruct institutional "isms", specifically racism and sexism. It also examines how colonialism manifests in policy and practice and what this then means to social work practitioners toward decolonizing their practice.

Certain key federal and provincial policies will be explored in relation to social conditions in Indigenous communities. More specifically, this course will begin to identify distinct practice and policy issues of on reserve and off reserve (urban) First Nations communities, current legislation changes to the Indian Act and Supreme Court decisions which are all intended to provide positive change for Indigenous people.

**The Course Process**
This course is facilitated as a teaching and learning circle. The purpose of this process is to equalize power as much as possible by acknowledging that we are all teachers and learners and we all bear responsibility for our learning environment. It is meant to encourage equal participation among all who are present and to acknowledge that learning is not a linear process, that it is a spiritual, physical and emotional exercise as well as a mental one. There are many kinds of Circles used by a number of Indigenous people, and this teaching and learning circle will be predicated upon the principles and values shared by the Anishnabe peoples. These principles and values are simply human in nature and thus are intended to help us to not become good social workers, but to become good human beings. **The success of this will depend on our willingness to practice respect, to listen, to trust, to take risks, and to be open to ideas and beliefs that we might not share. More in class**

**Readings:**
Course Pack – Available online


**Assignments:**
Assignments are due on the dates outlined below at the beginning of class. No extensions will be given on assignments unless worked out with the instructor AT LEAST TWO DAYS PRIOR TO A DUE DATE. Late assignments are deducted 5% per week as stated in the policy guide. As well, due to the content of this class and respect for others in the class, 80% attendance is required to successfully complete the course. NO MORE THAN ONE HALF DAY CAN BE MISSED IN THIS INTENSIVE COURSE.
There are several assignments for this course as follows:

**Assignment One**
- Online discussion (posting and two responses)  20%

**Assignment Two**
- Individual International Virtual Fieldtrip  40%

**Assignment Three**
- Annotated Bibliography  40%

**Required but not graded**
- Online Discussion (posting)

**Fishbowl**

**Assignment # 1- (original posting) and (response posting) Online discussion:**

- Based on readings for this week (and your own experiences), discuss some of the harms that western based research has caused in Indigenous communities and reflect on Indigenous ways of conducting/enacting research that is consistent with Indigenous holistic worldviews, how is this essential to ensure an effective and coordinated interdependent effort to address complex social issues in Indigenous communities which have affected Indigenous Peoples?

- Discuss your meaning making of decolonization and regeneration put forth in these articles and how you might apply them in your practice.

- How will your policy development/ analysis be informed by understanding research from an Indigenous perspective?
Format for online Posting(s):

- Students will begin to take notes from the readings in week three of the course in relation to the questions above. Students are expected to answer the above questions in one posting (no less than 700 and a max of 800 words) online within the class discussion forum by Thursday midnight. Please note you must make clear links to a minimum of 5 course content sources such as readings/podcasts/videos in articulating your responses and cite any material you reference.

- In addition, you are required to 'respond' to two of your classmates’ posts. Within these 'response' posts, you are encouraged to make linkages and required to cite two sources from the course materials on Course Spaces. The ‘response posts’ should be approx. 250-300 words in length. Your reply posts must be posted two days after original postings are due - Saturday by midnight.

- Your instructor will provide you with any further instructions or clarify these existing instructions should you require it.

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<th>Grading Criteria – Assignment #1-</th>
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<tr>
<td>Your meaning making and original answer to the questions</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Use of references within each post (min 5 sources per original post &amp; 2 in response posting to others)</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>How this informs your knowledge and/or praxis?</td>
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<td>Clear &amp; Concise writing and 2 reply discussion posts to other people's posting</td>
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Total=20 marks

Assignment # 2 International Virtual Fieldtrip

Virtual Indigenous Policy Tour:

The purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to some of the policy issues faced by Indigenous peoples/communities and how they are transforming them to meet their own needs. Furthermore, you will be introduced to two Indigenous organizations by travelling to two websites. This assignment will also help prepare you for your literature review/annotated bibliography assignment because you can utilize the websites from this assignment in the next assignment (Assignment 2 Annotated bibliography). **You are expected to incorporate 6 sources into the paper.** Students will be graded individually – this is not a group mark. This assignment shows various Indigenous policy organizations locally and nation-wide that are
creating transformation by designing/adapting policies from “within.” These sites represent a compilation of all of the course objectives, including identification of, resistance and renewal strategies of Indigenous people/communities and Nations. Please note these questions are also designed to help you to identify your area of interest for your forthcoming Assignment #2. Students are asked to visit 2 of the websites below, in detail, and provide three answers to questions.

**Question 1:**
What is your Indigenous ‘policy’ area of interest (ie education, child welfare, youth justice etc) and how did the websites inform this area of interest? What are some of the policy issues/struggles witnessed at these two websites?

**Question 2:**
What strategies for social justice, decolonization, transformative action, and/or regeneration in your specific interest area did you witness at 2 of the websites?

**Question 3:**
How will these teachings and information from the websites inform your policy analysis in the future and your social work practice with Indigenous people/communities?

**Tour**

Each student is to virtually travel to two of the below websites which reflect an Indigenous organization. Try to decide based on an area of interest you might have. Your choice to either quickly browse all 6 and narrow your choice of 2 specific, or just pick 2 to start with and tour. (only 2 are required to be incorporated into your answers for all three question, meaning the same 2 websites toured for each question)

- Native Women’s Association of Canada  [http://www.nwac.ca/](http://www.nwac.ca/)
- National Association of Friendship Centers  [http://nafc.ca](http://nafc.ca)
Please Note: The research and analysis that goes into this assignment can be used to inform your Assignment 2 Literature Review. This assignment has been designed to provide a foundation for the forthcoming literature review.

**Grading / 40**

Answer the three policy questions above with examples from the two websites and your own original policy analysis. Furthermore, incorporate in text citations and APA references for 6 sources (websites, readings, podcasts/videos). Each question should be 1 page in length and in 12 font, either double spaced or 1.5 spaced, plus a cover page and reference page and an intro/conclusion. Total length of paper should be 7-8 pages (max. 9 pages). Please identify the beginning of each question by writing a short heading at top of the page i.e, question 1, 2, or 3

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
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<td>In text citations and APA references appearing in text and on the reference page. Response is one page in length in a 12 font</td>
<td>/10</td>
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<td>In text citations and APA references appearing in the reference page. Response is one page in length in a 12 font (six sources needed overall)</td>
<td>/15</td>
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<td>Structure of paper, intro/conclusion</td>
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<td>/5</td>
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<td><strong>Letter Grade</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total /40</strong></td>
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Introduction to Assignment Three

This assignment can be done individually or in groups of two. Based on the virtual fieldtrip, class discussions and readings, students will explore a specific policy issue that pertains to the lives of Indigenous people. The policy issue explored must have an emphasis on how it impacts Indigenous people – see below. Students will keep in mind the policy framework development phases, historical policies and legislation in conjunction with traditional and cultural structures of how Indigenous people governed their communities.

Suggestions of broad policy topics could include:
- Child Welfare
- Justice
- Governance
- Health
- Community Development
- Education
- Your choice

Assignment 3 - Annotated bibliography (written report) 40%

This assignment will prepare you in your professional/educational experiences with proposal writing, compiling research and enhance your methodological approach to identifying Indigenous policy development and analysis. You are to proceed with this assignment as new learning, or you can link this assignment to an initiative in your workplace, practicum or community volunteer work with Indigenous people.

Your literature review could take place in a library, on the Internet, and through personal dialogue with other Indigenous social workers. You are to analyze the information through a critical lens and present your findings in a clear and concise way. This assignment will provide you with an opportunity to challenge your existing beliefs, while providing you with a depth of understanding about what it means to do Indigenous research.

The page length for this assignment is 9-11 pages with a minimum of 6 sources if done individually. If you are doing this in pairs, the expected length shall be 16-17 pages with a minimum of 10 sources. More details on this assignment to be provided.
Online discussion 2

Unit 5 & 6 online Discussions- One online discussion will be required based on the readings for Week 4. Students will be formed into two discussion groups:

Indigenous Women: Laura, Carla, Christie, Shannon, Amber, Kristie, Alyx, Lindsay
Indigenous Education: Sarina, Ejemin, Vania, Jenna, Carly, Flora, Eric, Jon

- Students will begin to take notes from the readings in week four of the course in relation to the questions above. Students are expected to answer the above questions in one posting (no less than 700 and a max of 800 words) online within the class discussion forum by Thursday midnight. Please note you must make clear links to a minimum of 3 course content sources based on your theme above which can include readings/podcasts/videos in articulating your responses and cite any material you reference.

- In addition, you are required to 'respond' to two of your classmates’ posts. Within these 'response' posts, you are encouraged to make linkages and required to cite two sources from the course materials on Course Spaces. The ‘response posts’ should be approx. 250-300 words in length. Your reply posts must be posted two days after original postings are due-Saturday by midnight.

If you are in the group with Indigenous Women, here are your questions:

- Key Question- Identify traditional women’s roles in the well being and governance of Indigenous Nations, and within social policy- how they have been eroded and how they are being reclaimed.

- How will you practice differently based on the articles reviewed?

If you are in the group with Indigenous Education, here are your questions:

- Based on the ‘educational revolution’ of the 1980’s by Maori people in New Zealand, identify how Indigenous people are gaining control over the educational policies within all levels of academia.

- How will you practice differently based on the articles reviewed?

Fishbowl

Students will be provided with a sign-up sheet (in class) which will correspond to dates below titled “fishbowl.” You will sign up for the inner circle for that date. Inner circle participants are expected take notes on the readings for that particular class. Inner circle participants will maintain a discussion on the questions posed for 45 minutes. After a short break, the outer circle is expected to ask questions, based on the readings and points raised by the inner circle and that
discussion will last 40 minutes. Everyone will be participating equally in the ‘inner’ and ‘outer’
circles. You can prepare typed speaking notes with your name on it:
The 3 questions I am asking you to reflect on are:
1) What stood out for you in the readings and why?
2) What did you not understand or wish was expanded upon?
3) How does this influence your emerging social work practice/policy analysis?

**Participation**

Due to the nature of the material covered in this class, an assessment of knowledge gained,
particularly from an Aboriginal perspective on policy is essential. Your understanding of policy
as it relates to First Nations through readings, class lectures and guest speakers will be explored
in the class and through your class participation.

NOTE: The University of Victoria Calendar and the School of Social Work's Policy and
Procedures Manual and the School's Student Handbook contain pertinent regulations regarding
attendance and grading. Please consult the appropriate sources. **Students are required to
attend 80% of class and attendance will be made note of each week.** No extensions will be
given unless students maintain an on going and open dialogue with instructor.

**Class Schedule**

**Introductions, Working in Circle, Course outline review and Indigenous Philosophies &
Traditions-Morning**

- Students will have an opportunity to introduce themselves, their expectations of the course
  and identify what their learning needs are for this course. Instructor will share expectations
  and approaches in class.
- Newspaper analysis and discussion or video
- Indigenous philosophies/ traditions

**Historical Considerations and Policies/ The Policy Cycle- Afternoon**

*Key Question- What are the key differences between Indigenous and European worldviews (this includes a description of traditional practices prior to contact that would/ could be interpreted as social policy)?*

- Oppressive Indigenous Policies
- Discussion on the 4 Aboriginal Policy tables in BC
Introduction to the Policy Cycle
Sign up for “Fishbowls” and discussion on Fishbowl assignments

Guest Speaker: Paul Lacerte- former Executive Director BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centers

Colonialism & Social Policy: The Federal Government, National Interest and Indian Policy - Morning

Key Question: What is the role and function of social policy and how does this apply in an Indigenous context?

- What is meant by the National Interest and Indian policy? Circle discussion based on Boldt article
- What is Social Policy and Public Policy?
- Lecture addressing how the Policy Cycle is structured and looking at how the policy development phases impact Indigenous peoples. The policy cycle theme will be incorporated into the remainder of class dialogue and will be a critical factor for writing and presenting assignments for this course.
- Virtual Fieldtrip particulars
- Introduction to the Annotated Bibliography

Connecting theory to practice – Afternoon SWEATLODGE

Connecting Research, Indigenous Policy/ Practice (online)

Key question - How can Social Work practitioners conduct ethical research with Indigenous people, communities, Nations?

Strength and Resiliency of Indigenous Women - Online

Key Question - Identify traditional women’s roles in the well being and governance of Indigenous Nations, and within social policy- how they have been eroded and how they are being reclaimed.

Indigenous Theorizing and Critical Theory in relation to Education - Online

Key Question: Based on the ‘educational revolution’ of the 1980’s by Maori people in New Zealand, identify how Indigenous people are gaining control over the educational policies within all levels of academia.
• This class will explore how traditions and Indigenous knowledge inform Indigenous policy in the area of child welfare and education.

• Dr. Graham Smith, Maori scholar by Youtube. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H56PYMyOruk

Indigenous Justice-William Head visit-developing your praxis


Policy – (Fishbowl) Morning

• Students will look at how legislation and policies impede on the lives of Indigenous families and how the effects of imposed policies affect, social, spiritual, mental and emotional aspects of individuals. Students will have an opportunity to dialogue how other factors become critical to child welfare such as education, justice, health, economics
• Discussion on the Ministry for Children’s ‘Strategic Plan’ – its history, current status, what next?
• Students will explore self-governance initiatives and how they pertain to Child Welfare in Canada and British Columbia. Students will also look at beginning phases of First Nation’s Child Welfare Delegation and become aware of the complexities of this process
• Students will discuss recommendations that will enhance Child Welfare for Indigenous peoples
• Video- TBA

Indigenous Policy at the International Level and Envisioning Freedom Afternoon

• Key Question: Describe how traditional political philosophies and world-view informs Indigenous governance and explore the role and responsibility of non-Indigenous people in decolonization. (Fishbowl)

• Identify how Indigenous governance is an ongoing process of honoring and renewing individual and collective relationships and responsibilities.

• Provide strategies on how you can be an ally to Indigenous movements/strategies for transformation on a practical and policy level. (closing circle)