

## School of Government

# MAPP 555

## SOCIAL POLICY

(15 Points)

Trimester 2 / 2014

## COURSE OUTLINE

---

### Names and Contact Details

**Course Coordinator:** **Dr David Rea**  
Research Associate, Institute for Governance and Policy Studies  
Telephone: 029 770 9000  
Email: [david.rea@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:david.rea@vuw.ac.nz)

**Administrator:** **Darren Morgan**  
Room RH 821, Level 8, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus  
Telephone: (04) 463 5458  
Fax: (04) 463 5454  
Email: [darren.morgan@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:darren.morgan@vuw.ac.nz)

**School Office Hours:** 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday

### Trimester Dates

Monday 14 July – Tuesday 14 October 2014

### Withdrawal from Course

Formal notice of withdrawal must be in writing on a Course Add/Drop form (available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks or from the course administrator). Not paying your fees, ceasing to attend lectures or verbally advising a member of staff will NOT be accepted as a formal notice of withdrawal.

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before **Friday 25 July 2014**.

2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is **Friday 26 September 2014**. After this date, students forced to withdraw by circumstances beyond their control must apply for permission on an '*Application for Associate Dean's Permission to Withdraw Late*' including supporting documentation. The application form is available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks.

## **Class Times and Room Numbers**

This course is delivered in a weekly format over the whole trimester.

**Class Times:** Tuesdays, 5.40pm – 7.30pm

**Dates:** Starting 15 July (first class) to 19 August 2014  
Mid-trimester break (no classes) = 26 August and 2 September 2014  
Resuming 9 September to 14 October 2014 (final class)

**Location:** Room RWW 315, Level 3, Railway West Wing, Pipitea Campus.  
The timetable is also available to view on the Victoria University website at [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/timetables](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/timetables) .

## **Prescription**

The course examines various aspects of social policy, with particular attention given to the analysis of social security, poverty, social exclusion, social development, demographic trends, the operation of labour markets and superannuation.

## **Course Content**

The aim of the course is to provide an introduction to the theory, evidence and practice of social policy. The course will provide an overview of the nature and rationale for the welfare state, a description of key social policy problems (e.g. poverty and unemployment), and specific detailed examples of social policy issues.

The course looks at government intervention across a range of social policy areas including income transfers, education, health and justice. Particular attention will be given to the analysis of early childhood intervention programmes, under achievement in education, welfare, active labour market programmes, and superannuation.

The unifying approach is that in all these areas government aims to improve the wellbeing of citizens. However in any area decision makers face uncertainty about the impacts of existing or new interventions, and also need to make trade-offs between competing objectives.

The course sets out how policy analysts can use evidence in the design of 'cures' or 'solutions' to social problems such as poverty, unemployment, discrimination or youth offending.

The course is inter-disciplinary, and will explore insights from a range of disciplines including economics, statistics, psychology, demography, history and political philosophy.

The following gives a broad indication of the scope and sequencing of topics. Guest lecturers will provide detailed analysis of individual topics in the second part of the course.

Lecture 1	Tuesday 15 July 2014	Introduction to the course and social policy (see Blackboard for readings)
Lecture 2	Tuesday 22 July 2014	The nature of the welfare state
Lecture 3	Tuesday 29 July 2014	Models of individual behaviour
Lecture 4	Tuesday 5 August 2014	Evidence (I)
Lecture 5	Tuesday 12 August 2014	Evidence (II)
Lecture 6	Tuesday 19 August 2014	Measures to address poverty
Lecture 7	Tuesday 9 September 2014	Early childhood education and early intervention for at-risk children
Lecture 8	Tuesday 16 September 2014	Schooling, education and training
Lecture 9	Tuesday 23 September 2014	Youth transitions, obesity
Lecture 10	Tuesday 30 September 2014	Minimum wages and labour market regulation
Lecture 11	Tuesday 7 October 2014	Retirement income
Lecture 12	Tuesday 14 October 2014	Class presentations

## **Course Learning Objectives**

By completion of the course, students should:

- have a high level overview of the nature of government and be able to articulate a broad understanding of the costs and benefits of government intervention
- be able to analyse social policy problems and solutions in a structured scientific manner
- have a detailed understanding of what is appropriate evidence for social policy and how this is developed
- have developed a detailed knowledge of the nature of social policy problems, and the efficacy and trade-offs associated with particular public policy interventions in a range of key areas.

## **Course Delivery**

This course is delivered in a weekly format over the whole trimester, consisting of twelve 2-hour classes. There will be a number of guest lecturers on specific topics.

## **Expected Workload**

The learning objectives set for each course are demanding and, to achieve them, candidates must make a significant commitment in time and effort to reading, studying, thinking, and completion of assessment items outside of contact time. Courses vary in design but all require preparation and reading before the first day of the course and regular reading is also necessary. Students who leave everything to the last moment rarely achieve at a high level.

In accordance with University guidelines, one point should equate to 10 hours of work (inclusive of class meetings), so the expected workload for this 15-point course is 150 hours, spread evenly throughout the trimester.

## Readings

There is no set text for the class, but useful background reading is set out below:

- Atkinson, A.B. and Stiglitz, J. (1980) Lectures on Public Economics, McGraw-Hill
- Barr, N. (1999) Economics of the Welfare State, various editions.
- Bardach, E (2012) A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving, 4th Edition, Sage.
- Castles, F. et al (2010) The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State, Oxford University Press.
- Thaler, R. and Sunstein, C (2009) Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness, Penguin.

More detailed reading lists will be given out in advance of each lecture.

**Blackboard** is Victoria University's online environment that supports teaching and learning by making course information, materials and other learning activities available via the internet through the myVictoria student web portal.

To access the Blackboard site for this course:

1. Open a web browser and go to [www.myvictoria.ac.nz](http://www.myvictoria.ac.nz) .
2. Log into myVictoria using your ITS Username (on your Confirmation of Study) and password (if you've never used the Victoria University computer facilities before, your initial password is your student ID number, on your Confirmation of Study, Fees Assessment or student ID card – you may be asked to change it when you log in for the first time).
3. Once you've logged into myVictoria, select Blackboard (from the options along the top of the page) to go to your Blackboard homepage.
4. The "My Courses" section displays the courses you have access to – select the appropriate link to access the course-specific Blackboard site. Please note that only courses that are actually using Blackboard and have been made available to students by their respective course coordinator will be displayed.

**You are recommended to ensure that your computer access to Victoria University's computer facilities, such as myVictoria and Blackboard, is working BEFORE your course starts.** If you have any problems, you should contact the ITS Service Desk on (04) 463 5050 or [its-service@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:its-service@vuw.ac.nz) . See [www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/) for more information.

## Materials and Equipment

No additional materials or equipment are required for this course.

## Group Work

Students will form groups to prepare for the joint seminar presentation on 15 October 2013. Contribution to this presentation is part of the mandatory requirement for the course.

## **Mandatory Course Requirements**

There are three mandatory requirements for the course:

- attending 75% of the lectures;
- completion of two essays;
- class presentation.

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat) .

## **Assessment**

From Trimester 1, 2014, a revised Assessment Handbook will apply to all VUW courses: see [www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf) .

In particular, there will be a new grade scheme, in which the A+ range will be 90-100% and 50-54% will be a C-.

The course is internally assessed and there is no final exam.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Policy Brief 1	Tuesday 19 August 2014	2,500 words	40%
Policy Brief 2	Tuesday 7 October 2014	2,500 words	40%
Class presentation	Tuesday 14 October 2014	20 minute group presentation with PowerPoint slides	20%

**Topics: To be announced at first lecture, see Blackboard and distributed in lectures.**

**Please submit ALL assignments IN HARD COPY to:**

Post Experience Programmes,  
School of Government,  
Victoria University of Wellington,  
Level 8 Reception,  
Rutherford House,  
23 Lambton Quay,  
P.O. Box 600,  
Wellington 6140.

Assignments submitted by post are given two days grace to allow for delivery time, while assignments that are submitted in person should be placed in the secure box at School of Government reception (Level 8, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus, office hours = 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday) by the due date/time. The assignment box is cleared daily, and assignments will be date stamped.

**Students should keep a copy of all submitted work and be able to email it to Dr David Rea on request if required (partly so that he can use Turnitin if the need arises).**

## **Penalties**

The ability to plan for and meet deadlines is a core competency of both advanced study and public management. Failure to meet deadlines disrupts course planning and is unfair on students who do submit their work on time. It is expected therefore that you will complete and hand in assignments by the due date.

Penalties will be incurred for late submission of work, or for work submitted that is excessively long. Late assignments will have their mark reduced by 0.5 marks for each day it is overdue unless there is a very good reason why it was late. If there are out of town students, then two days is allowed for postage. Assignments will not be accepted that are over a week late, unless an extension has been granted by the Course Coordinator.

Assignments excessively exceeding the word limit will have 3 marks deducted or returned to the student for pruning.

If ill-health, family bereavement or other personal circumstances beyond your control prevent you from meeting the deadline for submitting a piece of written work or from attending class to make a presentation, you can apply for and may be granted an extension to the due date. You should let your course coordinator know as soon as possible in advance of the deadline (if circumstances permit) if you are seeking an extension. Where an extension is sought, evidence, by way of a medical certificate or similar, may be required by the course coordinator.

## **Communication of Additional Information**

Additional information will be provided on Blackboard, by email to students, or through lectures.

**NOTE:** Information emailed to you via Blackboard can only be sent to your @myvuw.ac.nz email address (the free email address created for you when you enrol and accessed via the myVictoria student web portal). If you want to receive these emails at your preferred email address (e.g. your home or work email address), it is **essential** that you activate your @myvuw.ac.nz email address before the start of the course and you modify the settings so all emails sent to it are automatically forwarded to your preferred email address. Please go to [www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/FAQs.aspx#Email\\_Forward](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/FAQs.aspx#Email_Forward) for more information.

**You are recommended to ensure that your computer access to Victoria University's computer facilities, such as myVictoria, Blackboard and email, is working BEFORE your course starts.** If you have any problems, you should contact the ITS Service Desk on (04) 463 5050 or [its-service@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:its-service@vuw.ac.nz) . See [www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/) for more information.

## **Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, and the Use of Turnitin**

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not.

'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must still acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- material from books, journals or any other printed source
- the work of other students or staff
- information from the Internet
- software programs and other electronic material
- designs and ideas
- the organisation or structuring of any such material.

Acknowledgement is required for *all* material in any work submitted for assessment unless it is a 'fact' that is well-known in the context (such as "Wellington is the capital of New Zealand") or your own ideas in your own words. Everything else that derives from one of the sources above and ends up in your work – whether it is directly quoted, paraphrased, or put into a table or figure, needs to be acknowledged with a reference that is sufficient for your reader to locate the original source.

Plagiarism undermines academic integrity simply because it is a form of lying, stealing and mistreating others. Plagiarism involves stealing other people's intellectual property and lying about whose work it is. This is why plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria.

If you are found guilty of plagiarism, you may be penalised under the Statute on Student Conduct. You should be aware of your obligations under the Statute, which can be downloaded from the policy website ([www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx)). You could fail your course or even be suspended from the University.

Plagiarism is easy to detect. The University has systems in place to identify it.

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

There is guidance available to students on how to avoid plagiarism by way of sound study skills and the proper and consistent use of a recognised referencing system. This guidance may be found at the following website [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx).

If in doubt, seek the advice of your course coordinator.

**Plagiarism is simply not worth the risk.**

## **School of Government Service Standards**

Good learning and teaching outcomes for students in School of Government courses depend on many factors, including open, transparent and accountable relationships between teaching and support staff, and students in their various activities. The following service standards indicate some of the key expectations that teaching staff and students can have of each other. In all cases, they represent what the School believes should be ‘normal’ practice; exceptional circumstances can and will be negotiated as required.

Please note that there are University-wide policies relating to assessment – including rights of review and appeal. Details may be found in the Assessment Handbook (which is reviewed and updated from time to time – [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications)).

In general terms, any concerns that a student or students may have should be raised with the course coordinator in the first instance. If that course of action is not appropriate, the School’s programme support staff will direct you to the relevant Programme Director/Coordinator.

*Standards relating to staff timeliness of responses to email and phone queries:*

- Email or phone queries from students will be responded to in 48 hours

*Standards relating to availability of course materials:*

- Students on modular or intensive courses will usually have course materials at least 4 weeks before the course starts
- Students on weekly courses will usually have course materials available on the first day of the course

*Standards relating to attendance:*

- It is expected that students will attend all contact teaching sessions for a course. If a student is aware that they will be unable to attend part of a course prior to it commencing, they are required to advise the course coordinator. In such a situation, the student may be declined entry into the course.
- Where a course coordinator approves some non-attendance before the class commences, the course coordinator may set additional item(s) of assessment of learning and teaching objectives for the course for students unable to attend. Advice relating to the submission and assessment of any such additional assessment will be provided by the course coordinator.

*Variations to the assessment details provided in the course outline:*

- Any variation to the assessment details in the course outline will be formally agreed between the course coordinator and students at the earliest possible time, preferably at the beginning of the course.

*Standards relating to assignments – turnaround and feedback:*

- Unless otherwise agreed between students and the course coordinator, items of assessment will be marked within 15 working days of submission.
- Comments on pieces of assessment will allow students to understand the reasons for the mark awarded, relative to the teaching and learning objectives specified in the course outline, and will usually include advice on how the student can improve their grades in future assignments.



## **Student Feedback**

Student feedback on University courses may be found at [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php) .

## **Link to General Information**

For general information about course-related matters, go to [www.victoria.ac.nz/vbs/studenthelp/general-course-information](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/vbs/studenthelp/general-course-information) .

## **Note to Students**

Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation and academic audit. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of VBS programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.

\*\*\*\*\*