Course description: Welfare states now receive considerable attention in political science due to their continued prominence among state functions in an age of globalization, and because of the fiscal and demographic pressures they face. They are the focus of some of the most interesting theoretical and empirical debates on the comparative politics of industrial societies and in scholarship about Canadian politics. This course examines recent trends in Canadian social policy in light of this scholarship, and compares them with trends in other affluent democracies.

The first substantive seminar addresses the legitimacy of the welfare state from the perspective of political theory. Section A then reviews leading themes in the comparative study of welfare states in industrial societies, with one week devoted to the application of this literature to Canada. Section B reviews the case study literature on some of the most prominent aspects of Canada’s welfare state.

Format: This is a seminar course; classroom sessions will be devoted to the discussion of the readings assigned for that session. Students are expected to complete the readings required of them, even when they are not submitting a paper or making an oral presentation.

Readings: There are four articles listed under ‘required readings’ for each week of the course. All four of these readings are in fact required for graduate students, and must be incorporated into submitted essays. Undergraduate students are required only to read three of these readings each week, and to write about those three when preparing a paper. (I recommend that undergraduates read the first three readings listed as required, but they may choose to do otherwise).
**Required readings:** Readings not recently published in journals are available in a course pack. Recent journal articles, indicated below with the expression *on-line*, are available on-line to U of T students.

**Grading Scheme and Course Requirements:**

**Pol 439H:**

- 4 short essays (4-5 pages each) 75%
  - (each is worth 20%, except your worst, which is worth 15%)
- 1 oral presentation 10%
- Oral participation 15%

**Pol 2139H:**

- 5 short essays (5-6 pages each) 75%
  - (each essay is worth 15%)
- 1 oral presentation 10%
- Oral participation 15%

**Written and oral assignments:** The most important responsibility for students in the course is to prepare four 4-5 page (1000-1250 words) (undergraduate) or five 5-6 page (graduate) (1250-1500 word) papers during each term, based on the assigned readings. *Students will sign up for essay topics during the second week of the course.* There is considerable flexibility regarding which topics you write on, but at least one paper *must be submitted by October 18th* to comply with the university’s course-drop decline. These essays will be expected to accomplish two tasks: [a] they should provide a clear review of the main arguments made by each of the readings assigned for that week; and [b] they should make an argument, by pointing to a major issue or theme addressed in the readings, comparing what the different authors have to say about this question, and evaluating these different perspectives. Needless to say, papers should be written in good standard English, and with appropriate references to the sources used.

Essays are due in class, at the beginning of the class, on the date when their topic will be discussed in the seminar. Because the seminar discussion should serve to clarify the readings for all participants, it would not be fair for me to accept papers submitted late without significant penalty. Consequently, *late papers will be subject to a penalty of 10% during the first 24 hours after they are due, and of 20% thereafter.* The 10% penalty will rise to 20% for a second or subsequent one-day-late assignment. *Please note that all term work must, according to University regulations, be submitted by December 6th.*

In conjunction with one of these essays, each student will also make one 10 minute presentation of their argument, in class. Presentations should *not* simply summarize the readings. They should be argumentative, and provide a cogent analysis of
a theme relevant to the readings. The presenter should assume that other seminar participants are familiar with the readings.

Finally, students will be graded for participation. Five marks will be assigned based on attendance at class. Only documented medical grounds will be accepted as an explanation of non-attendance. Students will lose one per cent of their term grade for each class missed without evidence of such grounds. (If more than five classes are missed, further grades will be deducted). The other ten marks will be based on the quality and quantity of each student’s involvement in oral discussions. It is not essential that you be talking all the time. But I do expect each student to make an effort to contribute to each week’s seminar discussion. In evaluating this participation, I am particularly interested in the extent to which the oral contribution shows a correct understanding of the readings, and gives evidence that the student has reflected upon them. Particular emphasis will be attached to each student’s contribution during weeks when they are not submitting an essay.

**Seminar themes and readings:**

**[1] September 14: Introduction to the Course**

**[2] September 21: Is the welfare state justifiable? If so, how, and what should it look like?**

*Required Readings:*


*Additional Readings:*


**Section A: Comparing Welfare States in Industrial Societies:**


*Required Readings:*

Gøsta Esping-Andersen, “Power and Distributional Regimes,” *Politics and Society*, vol. 14, no. 2 (1985), 223-256 [on-line; use Scholars Portal]


Additional Readings:

[4] October 4: Canada: A liberal welfare state, an anomaly, or a bit of each?

Required Readings:


Addition Readings on Canada & Liberal Welfare States:

[5] October 11: Gender and the Welfare State: How are gender relations shaped by, and how do they shape, welfare states?

**Required Readings:**
- Catherine Bolzendahl, “Making the implicit explicit: Gender influences on social spending in twelve industrialized democracies, 1980-99,” *Social Politics*, vol. 16, no. 1 (2009), 40-81 [on-line; use Scholars Portal]

**Additional Readings:**


### 6] October 18: Poverty and Social Mobility: What Variations Exist among Countries? Why?

**Required Readings:**


**Additional Readings:**

Vincent Mahler, “Economic Globalization, Domestic Politics, and Income Inequality in the Developed Countries,” *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 37, no. 9 (2004), 1025-1053


Required Readings:


Additional Readings:


[8] November 2: Multiculturalism and Immigration: What is the relationship between ethno-cultural diversity and the welfare state?

Steffen Mau and Christoph Burkhardt, “Migration and welfare state solidarity in Western Europe,” *Journal of European Social Policy*, vol. 19, no. 3 (2009), 213-229 [on-line; use Scholars Portal]

Markus Crepaz, and Regan Damron, “Constructing tolerance: How the welfare state shapes attitudes about immigration,” *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 42, no. 3 (2009), 437-463 [on-line; use Scholars Portal]


Diane Sainsbury, “Immigrants’ social rights in comparative perspective: welfare regimes, forms in immigration and immigration policy regimes,” *Journal of European Social Policy*, vol. 16 no. 3 (2006), 229-244 [on-line; use Scholars Portal]

Additional Readings:


Section B: Cases in Canadian Social Policy and Politics

[9] November 9: Health Insurance:

Required Readings:


Additional Readings:


**[10] November 16: Social assistance and income redistribution:**

**Required Readings:**


**Additional Readings:**


**[11] November 23: Pensions**

**Required Readings:**


**Additional Readings:**

**[12] November 30: Child Care and Related Measures**

**Required Readings:**

**Additional Readings:**

**Residual themes (which we won’t be able to cover …)**

**[A] Business and the Welfare State**

**Primary Readings:**

**Additional Readings:**


[B] Is Something Wrong with Europe?

*Primary Readings:*


*Additional Readings:*


[C] Do Parties Matter?

*Primary Readings:*


Additional Readings:

[D] The Fiscal Basis of the Welfare State

[E] Canada’s Gendered Welfare State
Bashevkin, Sylvia, Welfare Hot Buttons: Women, work, and social policy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), chs. 5 & 6