

MENA 320: Perspectives on Social Policy in Jordan

Syllabus

Credit Hours: 3 credit hours

Contact Hours: 45

Course Duration: 1 semester

Location: Amman, Jordan

Aims and Objectives of the Course:

- Introduce key concepts in social policy
- Develop skills essential to the policy making process
- Review economic, political and cultural factors that shape social policies in the Arab region in general and in Jordan more specifically
- Analyze Jordanian social problems and critique policies that address them

Course Description:

This course examines theories, concepts and major contemporary issues in social policy. It aims at providing students with an understanding of the principal areas addressed in the study of social policy such as social services, social problems, social disadvantage and the systems necessary to address them. It looks into how social disadvantage, services, and problems are usually addressed predominantly by governments, but also by some partners that have become increasingly important for governments to work with, such as NGOs and communities. The course reviews the major areas included in social services (such as health administration, education, social protection); social problems (such as disability, unemployment, and old age); and social disadvantage (such as gender and poverty). Using the Jordanian context, it looks into the legal framework used to address such issues as well as how the various players attempt to contribute to human well-being. This would enable the students to examine social policies within their actual context. The course will be delivered through short lectures and through using interactive teaching tools to help students become active learners, develop their analytical and evaluative skills, and encourage them to go beyond initial reactions to complex issues. This will be enhanced with lectures by guest speakers from relevant organizations and a field visit to an NGO.

Learning outcomes for the course

By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the impact of policy on vulnerable groups
- Identify and analyze the main components of social policies
- Have a clearer understanding of social problems in Jordan
- Discuss the current scope of Jordanian social policies

Knowledge

This course is designed to assist students to acquire and demonstrate knowledge about:

- The policy process and basic analysis of policies
- Social and economic justice issues in policymaking
- The implications of social policies and their unintended consequences
- Vulnerable groups and the dynamics whereby such groups come to be oppressed and discriminated against, using the Jordanian example

Skills

This course is designed to assist students in acquiring or enhancing the following skills:

- Applying critical thinking skills (within the context of social policy)
- Comparing and contrasting different points of view (within the domain of social policies)
- Critically analyzing the effectiveness of social policies and the impact of those policies on the vulnerable or disenfranchised, such as women and children, the aged, the homeless, disabled or mentally ill

Attitudes

This course is designed to encourage development of the following attitudes:

- A strong sense of social justice
- Respect and appreciation of the needs of vulnerable groups
- Appreciation of cultures different from one's own and the needs of diverse groups within cultures

Required Reading

- Ababsa, Myriam (ed). 2013. Atlas of Jordan: History, Territories and Society. Beirut: Institut Francais du Proche-Orient.
- ACTED & AWO. 2016. Exploring the Relationship between Gender-based Violence and Radicalization in Jordan. Amman: Act for Change Invest in Potential (ACTED) and Arab Women's Organization (AWO), haqqi.info/check_1.php?t=research_paper&f=HRIDJR500...En_2016
- Alcock, Pete. 2012. Poverty and Social Exclusion. In Alcock, Pete, Margaret May and Sharon Wright (eds). 2012. The Students' Companion to Social Policy (Fourth Edition). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. pp. 180-186.
- Azour, Jihad. 2014. Social Justice in the Arab World. New York: United Nations.
- Bochel, Hugh. 2012. The Policy Process. In Alcock, Pete, Margaret May and Sharon Wright (eds). 2012. The Students' Companion to Social Policy (Fourth Edition). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. pp. 195-200.
- Cammack, Perry, Michele Dunne, Amr Hamzawy, Marc Lynch, Marwan Muasher, Yezid Sayigh and Maha Yahya. 2017. Arab Fractures: Citizens, States and Social Contracts. Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. <http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/02/01/arab-fractures-citizens-states-and-social-contracts-pub-66612>
- Connor, Phillip. 2016. Middle East's Migrant Population More than Doubles since 2005. PewResearchCenter.
- Dawwas, Maha. 2015. Poverty in Jordan. Geneva: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.
- Dean, Hartley. 2012. Social Policy (Second Edition). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Economic and Social Council. nd. Female Labour Participation in Jordan – Policy paper. esc.jo/PDFDownloader.aspx?FileName=43505216-7efd-4a1d-9aa9-9a663f810f64...
- El Feki, S., Heilman, B. and Barker, G., (Eds). 2017. Understanding Masculinities: Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) – Middle East and North Africa. Cairo and Washington, D.C.: UN Women and Promundo-US. <http://imagesmena.org/en/>
- **Human Rights instruments:**
 - Universal Declaration of Human Rights
 - Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
 - Convention on the Elimination of all kinds of Discrimination against Women

- Convention on Rights of the Child
 - <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CoreInstruments.aspx>
- Karmel, E.J. **nd**. Securing Inclusive Education Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities: Cost-Effective Steps for Addressing Gaps between Legislation and Implementation. Amman: Identity Center.
- Kendall, Jeremy. 2012. Voluntary Welfare. In Alcock, Pete, Margaret May and Sharon Wright (eds). 2012. The Students' Companion to Social Policy (Fourth Edition). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. pp. 228-232.
- Manning, Nick. 2012. Social Needs, Social Problems and Social Welfare and well-Being. In Alcock, Pete, Margaret May and Sharon Wright (eds). 2012. The Students' Companion to Social Policy (Fourth Edition). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. pp. 19-25.
- Mehtap, Salime, Yazan Jayyousi, Njood Gammoh, and Ahmad Al Haj. 2016. Factors Affecting Women's Participation in the Jordanian Workforce. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, Vol. 6, No. 10, October 2016. pp. 790-792.
- **Phenix** Center for Economics and Informatics Studies. 2014. Improving the Quality of Primary Public Education in Jordan. Policy Paper.
 - www.phenixcenter.net/uploads/en_phenixcenter.net_635440421456559882.pdf
- Pickvance, Chris. 2012. The Impact of Social Policy. In Baldock, John, Lavinia Mitton, Nick Manning and Sarah Vickerstaff. 2012. Social Policy (Fourth Edition). Oxford: Oxford University. pp. 419-436
- Rand Corporation. 2014. Youth in Jordan: Transitions from Education to Employment. www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/.../RAND_RR556.pdf
- Talal, Basma bint. 2004. Rethinking an NGO: Development, Donors and Civil society in Jordan. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Tarawneh, Mohamed and Abdel Hakim Al Husban. 2011. Rural Poverty in Jordan: Assessment and Characterisation. *Anthropology of the Middle East*, Vol. 6, No. 2, Winter 2011: pp. 94-107.
- UNDP & MOPIC. 2012. Thinking Differently About the Poor: Findings from Poverty Pockets Survey in Jordan. Amman: United Nations Development Programme and Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.
- UNHCR. 2017. Background Note on Gender Equality, Nationality Laws and Statelessness.
- UNICEF. 2014. Jordan Country Report on Out-of-School Children. www.unicef.org/jordan/150512_Jordan_Summary_English_Small.pdf
- USAID. 2015. The 2014-2015 CSO Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index for the Middle East and North Africa. <https://www.usaid.gov/middle-east-civil-society>.
- WANA Institute and Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung. 2017. From Politics to Policy: Building Regional Resilience in West Asia and North Africa. Amman: West Asia-North Africa Institute and Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung Jordan and Iraq.
- Zureiqat, Ghaith and Abu Shama, Hadeel. 2015. Social Protection and Safety Nets in Jordan. Downloaded from IDS website [PDF] [Social Protection and Safety Nets in Jordan](#).

Assessment Overview

| Description | Weight | Due Date |
|------------------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Engagement | 10% | Continuous |
| Task #1 (Paper): Social Problem Identification | 15% | Week 5 |

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| Task #2: Leading classroom discussions | 20% | Varies |
| Task #3 (Paper): Policy Paper | 25% | Week 14 |
| Final Exam | 30% | Week 15 |

Attendance and Engagement

Students are expected to attend all regularly scheduled classes and come prepared to participate fully in class activities. Students are further expected to be on time for all classes. Arriving late for class is disrespectful of both the instructor and fellow students. Please refer to the official Amideast Attendance policy for more information

Assessment Tasks

Task #1 (Paper): Social problem identification (15% of total grade)

Length of paper: 1000-1500 words, exceeding the word limit will result in reduction of the grade.

In this paper, students will identify one social problem/issue in Jordan that interests them. This problem can serve as the basis for Task 3.

This paper should cover the following:

- A description of the problem (15% of grade)
- Explain why you chose this problem in particular (15% of grade)
- Discuss what causes this problem (25% of grade)
- Discuss how this problem could impact people (25% of grade)
- A reference list, including names of interviewees and date of interview whenever applicable (10% of grade)
- Students will make a 10-minute presentation of this paper during class on Week 5 (10% of grade)
- For purposes of submission, the papers should be sent electronically as Word documents, using Times New Roman font size 12

Task #2: Leading classroom discussion (20% of total grade)

Each student will sign up to lead one or more classroom discussion/s. The student should briefly introduce the topic, followed by asking questions to spark discussions about the readings and facilitating an active discussion.

Task #3 (Paper): Policy Paper (25% of total grade)

Length of paper: 3500-4000 words, exceeding the word limit will result in reduction of the grade.

Using the social problem identified in the first paper or any other social problem that exists in Jordan, each student will write a policy paper that targets not only government decision-makers but also the general public, including stakeholders. The paper should be practical and action-oriented, focusing on the problem and its social, economic and political dimensions. It should also be analysis-driven, evidence-based and offer viable recommendations. Make sure all the sections and arguments are well-structured, logically-developed and focused on the topic.

Remember that a good policy paper should include a statement about whether the proposed policy (or policies) is consistent with human rights.

The sections are:

- Executive summary (5% of the grade)
- Context of the problem: (This section should introduce the general socio-economic background to the social problem being addressed; any previous research on the issue should be reviewed here.) (40% of the grade)
- Existing policies (10% of the grade)
- Policy options with a critique (20% of the grade)
- Policy recommendations (Your personal recommendation with a strong argument for why you chose it rather than any other) (10% of the grade)
- A reference list (5% of the grade)
- Students will make a 15-minute presentation of this paper during class on Week 14 (10% of grade)
- All papers should follow the Harvard Referencing System. For purposes of submission, the papers should be sent electronically as Word documents, using Times New Roman font size 12.

Final Exam (30% of total grade)

This will be an open-book exam in which you will have one and half hours to demonstrate what you have learned in the course. It will draw on the contents of class discussions as well as class readings, and it will be graded on content, clarity and applying critical thinking skills.

The exam will consist of five short essay questions from which you may choose three to answer (60%). You will also be required to analyze a social problem, or a social policy, based on what you have learned (40%).

Course Schedule

| Week | Class Work | Homework |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week | <i>Orientation Week</i> | |
| Week 1 | Holiday - No Class | |
| Week 2 | Introduction to the course Expectations Why study social Policy? Course content, assignments, grading | |
| Week 3 | Overview of current social conditions in the Arab world | - Carnegie Foundation: Arab Fractures, 2017, pp. 7-14, 18-20 - WANA Institute: From Politics to Policy, 2017, pp. 14-17, 34-49 - El Feki et al., 2017, pp. 14-20 - UNHCR Background Note, 2017 |

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| Week 4 | <p>Social Policy</p> <p>Relevant social concepts</p> <p>Social problems</p> <p>Social Justice</p> | <p>- Dean, 2012, Chapter 2</p> <p>- Manning. 2012. In Alcock et al. (eds). Chapter 3, pp. 19-24.</p> <p>- Azour 2014 , pp. 1-11.</p> <p>- Start reading Chapter 2 of Rethinking an NGO, pp. 41-93, to be completed by week 9</p> |
| Week 5 | <p>Overview: Population, economy and social disparities in Jordan</p> <p>Presentation of Task 1</p> | <p>ATLAS OF JORDAN, 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population trends (255-258, 268-273, 276, 279, 281, 283) Jordan's rentier economy (287) Social disparities, poverty alleviation and employment policies (331, 341, 344-347, 349-351, 354-360, 363-367, 335-339) |
| Week 6 | <p>International treaties and conventions relating to social policy</p> | <p>Four human rights instruments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Convention on the Elimination of all kinds of Discrimination against Women; Convention on Rights of the Child. |
| Week 7 | <p>Refugees in Jordan</p> <p>(Guest speaker)</p> | <p>- Connor, 2016, pp. 1-17.</p> <p>-Start reading Zureiqat, and Abu Shama, pp. 1-49, to be completed by week 9</p> |
| Week 8 | Fall Break - No Class | |
| Week 9 | <p>Social Policies and services in Jordan</p> | <p>- Phenix Center, 2014, pp. 1-6.</p> <p>- Karmel, n.d., pp. 9-13.</p> <p>- Mehtap et al. 2016, pp. 790-793.</p> <p>- ACTED & AWO, 2016</p> |
| Week 10 | <p>The policy process</p> <p>Policy analysis</p> | <p>- Bochel. 2012, In Alcock et al. Chapter 28, pp. 195-200.</p> <p>- Pickvance. 2012, In Baldock et al., Chapter 18; pp. 432-435 only</p> |
| Week 11 | <p>Social Inequality and vulnerable groups (Guest speaker)</p> | <p>- UNICEF Jordan Country Report, 2014, pp. 1-7.</p> <p>- Economic and Social Council, n.d. pp. 1-10.</p> <p>- Rand 2014, pp. 1-30.</p> |
| Week 12 | Field visit to ZENID | |

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| Week 13 | <p>Poverty and poor relief</p> <p>Social policy, the state and civil society</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alcock. 2012. In Alcock et al. Chapter 26, pp. 180-185. - UNDP & MOPIC, 2012, pp. 16-22 - Tarawneh and Al Husban 2011, pp. 94-107. - Dawwas, 2015, pp. 2-7. - Kendall. 2012, In Alcock et al. (eds). Chapter 33, pp. 228-232. - USAID, 2014-2015 (pp. 32-40) |
| Week 14 | Presentation of Task 3 | |
| Week 15 | Final Exam | |
| Week 16 | Reflection Session | |