



Boston University International Programs
London

Boston University British Programmes
Contemporary Issue in British Welfare
CAS SO 321 (Elective A)

Instructor Information

A. Name	Professor John Macnicol
B. Day and Time	Mondays and Tuesdays, 1:15-5:15pm
C. Location	Wetherby room, 43 Harrington Gardens, SW7 4JU
D. BU Telephone	020 7244 6255
E. Office hours	By appointment

Course Aims and Objectives

This course examines some of the key contemporary issues in the British welfare state. It encourages students to adopt an analytical and critical focus upon current controversies which raise important political, social, moral and philosophical dilemmas. The course begins with an overview of the history and structure of the British welfare state, including models of welfare development. It then proceeds to a close examination of current key issues: health policy and the National Health Service; poverty, inequality and the growth of 'social exclusion'; old age, pensions, age discrimination and the welfare state; the feminist critique of welfare states; the question of whether the welfare state has undermined the intact, nuclear family, and the pros and cons of 'workfare' for single mothers on benefits; the contested meanings of 'disability' and 'work disability'. The course is of interest to those who wish to examine current social problems that are being dealt with by the British welfare state. It also provides an important background to the internships that students will take later in their London semester (in which they will often have to deal with the human consequences of these social problems).

Since the academic study of social policy is eclectic, drawing upon several disciplines, these contemporary issues will be explored by reference to their historical, political, social, economic and moral implications. Students should be prepared to understand these approaches: thus while the course will be of prime relevance to those familiar with the disciplines of psychology, sociology and political science, students with other backgrounds should find its interdisciplinary approach stimulating.

Methodology

Teaching is by lectures and class discussions (led by student presentations). A detailed hand-out, will be issued in each session. These will form an important starting-point for study. The course syllabus gives additional reading, which is **essential** if you are writing a paper on a particular topic.

Assessment

Assessment will be by one paper and a final examination. The final grade will be the average of the grades of the paper and the exam. Students will also be required:

- (a) to write a two-page report on the hospital visit; and
- (b) to make one class presentation (with a printed summary).

Both of these assignments will be judged 'pass' or 'fail'. There may be other small class assignments.

No grade is awarded for class participation, but students may be required to complete small class reading assignments. *Attendance is mandatory*. Penalties will be imposed for poor attendance (e.g. the loss of one grade point).

Grading

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria, attendance requirements and policies on plagiarism:

<http://www.bu-london.co.uk/files/images/ACADEMICHANDBOOKFA09.pdf>.

Course Timetable

First session:	Introduction to the course. The structure of the British welfare state Models of welfare development	--
Second session:	The movement for an NHS 1900-48 The NHS, 1948-80s	OECD report on health spending Models of welfare
Third session:	Rationing health care What is health? Social class inequalities in health status	NHS, 1900-48 NHS, 1948-80s
Fourth session:	The NHS in the last ten years and the future: towards a public-private mix?	Health care rationing Social class inequalities in health status
Fifth session:	Concepts of poverty Widening wealth and income inequality	Private medicine & the NHS's future
Sixth session:	Old age & the welfare state Ageism and age discrimination in employment	Poverty Inequality
Seventh session:	Field trip to an NHS hospital	
Eighth session:	The feminist critique of welfare states Lone parenthood	Old age Age discrimination
Ninth session:	Disability	Work-disability

Introductory reading:

Howard Glennerster, *British Social Policy Since 1945* (1995)
 Victor George and Paul Wilding, *Welfare and Ideology* (1994)
 Pete Alcock, Angus Erskine and Margaret May (eds.), *The Student's Companion to Social Policy* (2003)
 Hugh Bochel, Catherine Bochel, Robert Page and Rob Sykes (eds.), *Social Policy: Issues and Developments* (2005)
 Nicholas Timmins, *The Five Giants: a Biography of the Welfare State* (1995)
 Hartley Dean, *Social Policy* (2006)
 David Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State* (1999)
 Robert Page, *Revisiting the Welfare State* (2007)