

H 2440 Social Structures, Social Policy, Social Change

3 hrs per week/7 credits

Global Social Policy: Current Challenges for International Social Work

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At the beginning of the 21st century, global challenges and problems – for example, poverty, social polarisation across the world, irregular migration, transnational terrorism, the marginalisation of certain regions – can be seen as world-wide risks which the sociologist Ulrich Beck (2007) has aptly named the “world-wide risk society”. Global interdependencies require forms of social policy which transcend national frontiers. While the term globalisation focuses on the macro-structural effects of forces around the world, transnationalism, often described as the little sister of globalisation, shifts forms of action and stakeholders into the limelight. In the meantime, a far-reaching discourse has become established in the field of transnational social policy which is intensively related to securing basic and human rights. In contrast, this concept has only begun to attract a great deal of interest in social work in the last few years (see Homfeldt/Schweppe/Schröer 2006).

After considering the theoretical basis, the following questions remain in the centre of attention: How can social work approach these global social problems in practical terms? What changes is social work undergoing in the context of globalisation? Which concepts from the southern hemisphere can enrich social work here in the northern hemisphere? And which transnational players have entered the stage and are relevant to social work?

Examination:

The graded examination consists of a talk.

The examination requirement is to independently collect, organise and present material on a specific theme. The presentations should demonstrate links to other themes discussed in the seminar. Students are also expected to facilitate the following discussion and deal with questions of content and critical contributions to the discussion.

The examination will be held during the semester.

Total workload in the semester: 175 hrs

Contact time: 3 hours per week = 45 hrs

Independent study: 100 hrs

Examination time (including time for revision): 30 hrs