Social Policy Minor

Social policy is the study of policy solutions to the problems of education, inequality, poverty, crime, and other issues faced by society’s families and children. It is an interdisciplinary field to which the disciplines of economics, sociology, and political science contribute in equal measure. It is a basic-science field with a strong applied research focus that can prepare students for careers in government, non-profits, and the private sector. Because it motivates students to think about how fundamental knowledge translates into real-world problem solving, it is an appropriate specialization for young people who plan to attend law school, programs in public health, or graduate school in the constituent social science fields.

A social policy minor is offered jointly by the Departments of Economics, Political Science, and Sociology. To complete the minor, students must take an introductory course, Introduction to Social Policy and Inequality: Baltimore and Beyond; a 300-level social policy elective in one of the three departments; an intensive semester in either Baltimore or Washington; and a senior capstone course to be taken after the intensive semester is completed. The preferred sequence is for students to take the introductory course in their sophomore year, the elective in the fall of their junior year, the intensive semester in Washington or Baltimore in the spring of their junior year, and the capstone course in their senior year. However, modifications in the sequence will be considered. The intensive semester in Washington or Baltimore will involve course work focusing on urban and national social policy problems coupled with an internship in a governmental agency or non-governmental organization that is involved with some aspect of social policy, or as a research assistant to a faculty member conducting research on social policy. The capstone course will involve discussion and research among students who have completed the intensive semester and is intended to build up experiences in that semester.

Enrollment in the intensive semester will be limited to 30 students and requires application and admission. The social policy minor is grounded in the three disciplines and priority will be given to students who are majoring in economics, political science, or sociology, but other students who are not majors and who have taken a large number of social science courses will be considered.

The program was launched with the Introduction to Social Policy course (AS.360.247) in fall, 2013. Details of the rest of the program are still under development. The list of courses includes the introductory course and a partial list of electives in the three departments (including 200-level social policy courses) but does not include the intensive semester or the capstone course. Students interested in the minor should speak to an advisor in the Economics, Political Science, or Sociology departments.

Faculty

Professors

Andrew Cherlin
Benjamin H. Griswold III Professor (Sociology).

Robert Moffitt
Krieger-Eisenhower Professor (Economics).

Associate Professors

Stefanie DeLuca
Associate Professor (Sociology).

Adam Sheingate
Associate Professor (Political Science).

Steven Teles
Associate Professor (Political Science).

Assistant Professors

Nicholas Papageorge
Assistant Professor (Economics).

Daniel Schlozman
Assistant Professor (Political Science).

Senior Lecturer

Barbara Morgan
Senior Lecturer (Economics).