



## **CIEE Warsaw, Poland**

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| <b>Course name:</b>              | Social Issues in Contemporary Poland |
| <b>Course number:</b>            | SOCI 3002 WRSW                       |
| <b>Programs offering course:</b> | Central European Studies             |
| <b>Language of instruction:</b>  | English                              |
| <b>Contact Hours:</b>            | 45                                   |
| <b>Credits:</b>                  | 3                                    |
| <b>Term:</b>                     | Spring 2020                          |

### **Course Description**

The lecture covers major social issues related to the transition period in Poland on its way from the centrally managed economy into the market-oriented one and into a parliamentary democracy. The course refers to some historical background, but concentrates on the present situation that requires constant action on the part of the citizens, the state and its institutions that deal with countering or solving the existing social problems. Site visits to institutions dealing with various social issues (mainly unemployment, poverty and social exclusion) are included in the one-day study tour to a local community that will be organized in the course of the semester. The study tour pertains mostly to lectures #5, 8 and 18. The three intended site visits in the local area take place at the following institutions: County Labor Office, Local Social Welfare Center and a local NGO. Students are met by relevant directors/heads, who present the work of their institutions. Knowledge gained in the course of these meetings should be used to prepare for the final presentation and exam.

### **Learning Objectives**

The course aims to present the results of the emergence of a civic society in Poland, as well as the country's collaboration and integration with other EU societies.

### **Course Prerequisites**

Interest in contemporary Poland.

### **Methods of Instruction**

Lectures, class discussions, discussion required reading materials, Q&A

### **Assessment and Final Grade**

The final course grade will be determined based on the following distribution:

- Essays 20%
- Presentations 20%
- Written final test 30%
- Active participation in class 15%
- Quizzes 15%



## **Course Requirements**

### Essays:

Students are expected to write two/three essays throughout the semester on the topics presented during the course.

### Presentations:

Students will be assigned topics for in class presentations. They can will be able to prepare and present them in groups or individually

### Written final test:

The most important component of the final mark is the grade from the final test. I will be a written test based on all the topics presented during the course.

### Active participation in class:

Students should prepare themselves for the classes (read assigned passages, etc) in order to able to participate in class discussions

### Quizzes:

During the course there will be two 15-minute quizzes checking the knowledge of the topics and readings covered in the course so far.

## **Weekly Schedule:**

### **Week 1**

1.1. Topic of Class: . Introduction to the lecture

Description of content: : Poland on the way of the fundamental political, social and economic transformations. Social issues in the transformation process:

- start point 1989/1990
- current changes.

1.2 Topic of Class: Concept of social change

Description of content:

- attitudes and behaviors of the population towards a new political system and market economy
- expectations for state protection. Conflicts, compromises, adaptations to the new situation.

- democratization as a social process, tasks ahead before and after the admission to the EU

## **Week 2**

2.1 Topic of Class: Major trends of the demographic changes      Description of content:

- the family and its structure, changes, functioning, living conditions.
- existing differences among various groups, both socio-economic and regional.
- professional career patterns of women
- changes in the system of values

Reading due on this date: "Social Diagnosis 2003"

2.2 Topic of Class: Social aspects of privatization and re-privatization  
Description of content: Social approvals and social conflicts

## **Week 3**

3.1. Topic of Class: Employment and unemployment in contemporary Poland

Description of content:

- conclusions drawn from the policy of full employment.
- employment tendencies
- unemployment as a new phenomenon in Poland and issues concerning adaptation abilities to the new market economy
- social reaction to unemployment

3.2 Topic of Class: Social issues of the black market (hidden) economy  
Description of content: Social issues of the black market (hidden) economy  
its scale and impact on social life

## **Week 4**

4.1 Topic of Class: Economic security of the population

Description of content:

- definition.
- economic conditions.
- changing expectations of the population

#### 4.2. Topic of Class: Poverty

Description of content:

- measurement methods, dynamics, social and regional differentiation

*Quiz*

#### **Week 5**

##### 5.1 Topic of Class: Social exclusion

Description of content:

- definition, scale and factors of growth
- the role of social policy in reduction of this phenomenon

##### 5.2 Topic of Class: Changes in the health protection system

Description of content:

- the reform of 1999 and its effects
- new health insurance system (draft)
- health protection costs.
- standard of health protection services

*Essay due on this date*

#### **Week 6**

##### 6.1. Topic of Class: Changes in the educational system

Description of content:

- public and private schools, costs of education
- changes in university teaching programs
- regional differentiation of educational conditions

##### 6.2. Topic of Class: Opportunities for the young generation in Poland

Description of content:

- educational opportunities
- professional career
- migration.
- participation in the EU labor market

#### **Week 7**

##### 7.1. Topic of Class: Cultural transformations and contemporary issues of cultural development in Poland

7.2. Topic of Class: The role of religion in social life in Poland

*Quiz*

### **Week 8**

8.1. Topic of Class: Issues of national minorities in Poland. New situation

Reading due on this date: "Social Exclusion and Integration in Poland"

8.2. Topic of Class: Social infrastructure

Description of content:

- local differentiation
- social consequences
- fulfillment of social needs. Social services

### **Week 9**

9.1. Topic of Class: Major transformation features in social and professional structures in contemporary Poland

Description of content:

- tasks for the social policy in the new situation.

9.2. Topic of Class: Developments of NGOs and their cooperation with governmental institutions and local governments.

*Presentation due on this date*

### **Week 10**

10.1 Topic of Class: Social issues of environmental protection

10.2 Topic of Class: Social pathology – the reasons, types and dynamics

*Essay due on this date*

Reading due on this date: "Social Policy as a Factor of Security Issues in Europe nad Complex Security Issues"

### **Week 11**

11.1 Topic of Class: . Social policy – a new philosophy and development of new concepts

Description of content:

- macro- and micro dimensions of social policies.



- implementation options for social policies.

11.2 Topic of Class: The Polish society after accession to the European Union

Description of content: cooperation with societies belonging to the EU

*Written final test due on this date*

### **Week 12**

12.1. Topic of Class: Final Class

Description of content: Summary and discussion of the final test's results

## **Course Materials**

### ***Readings***

Social Exclusion and Integration in Poland, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and UNDP, Warsaw 2006, p. 11-60.

Social Diagnosis 2003, ed. J. Czapiński, T. Panek, The Council for Social Monitoring, University for Finance and Management, Warsaw 2004.

A. Kurzynowski, Social Policy as a Factor of Security Issues in Europe nad Complex Security Issues (ed. by K. Żukrowska), WSE Warsaw 2005, p. 229-238.