

- Faculté des sciences économiques
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Social Work Theories II (5TS2019)

Filières concernées	Nombre d'heures	Validation	Crédits ECTS
Doctorat en travail social	Cours: 2 ph	Voir ci-dessous	3

ph=période hebdomadaire, pg=période globale, j=jour, dj=demi-jour, h=heure, min=minute

Période d'enseignement:

- Semestre Printemps

Equipe enseignante

Lisa Marie Borrelli, Professor ITTS, UniNE

Contenu

This course examines how power and inequality shape social work theory, institutions, and professional practice. We will. Egin our discussion on the term "power", its definitions and meanings, and how it can be fruitfully applied to social work practice (and your PhD themes). Drawing on classical and contemporary perspectives, participants will explore how social inequalities are produced and reproduced through class, gender, race, migration status, disability, and other social divisions, and how these intersect with welfare institutions and social work interventions. The course introduces key theoretical approaches to power, domination, social reproduction, and intersectionality. Importantly though, it will also discuss resistance (by social work practitioners and individuals facing inequalities). Particular attention will be paid to the ambivalent position of social work as both a profession that can challenge inequality and support social change, and one that may participate in processes of categorisation, normalization, discipline, and exclusion. Participants will critically relate these theoretical perspectives to concrete cases and to their own doctoral research.

Forme de l'évaluation

The evaluation will take place within the course, via a threefold structure:

- 1) Questions and comments need to be sent BEFORE the class on the texts that are discussed in the respective session.
- 2) Each text will have an attributed discussant who should have a critical view on the writing and guide the work with the texts (along the lecturer).
- 3) Brief presentation by participants. These should deepen the general text discussion thematically and will be planned according to participants' interests and fit with the course literature. It is possible to choose themes that are linked to the PhD topics.

Exams and retake exams are organized by the ITTS. The relevant procedures will be explained in class or communicated separately where necessary.

Modalités de rattrapage

In case of a first failed attempt to pass the course the retake will include a presentation (online) and a longer written assignment that builds on the presentation (5 pages).

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Documentation

All documentation will be available on Moodle.

Pré-requis

Registration as a PhD student at the ITTS, a Swiss university or as auditor in the perspective of being a future PhD student of the ITTS.

Registration at messagerie.itts@unine.ch until 15 January 2027.

Forme de l'enseignement

Teaching periods

- Thursday 15.04.2027; 09:15 – 17:15
- Friday 16.04.2027; 09:15 – 17:15

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Social Work Theories II (5TS2019)

- Thursday 20.05.2027; 09:15 – 17:15
- Friday 21.05.2027; 09:15 – 17:15

Venue
Room B29, Av. du 1er-Mars 26, University of Neuchâtel

Objectifs d'apprentissage

Au terme de la formation l'étudiant-e doit être capable de :

- Analyse and evaluate the role of social work in both reproducing and challenging inequalities.
- Compare and justify different theoretical perspectives and their relevance for specific research questions and professional practices.
- Describe and distinguish key theoretical approaches to power, inequality, and social difference in social work and the social sciences.
- Apply and relate theoretical concepts of power, domination, intersectionality, and resistance to concrete social work contexts.
- Explain and interpret how social inequalities are produced, reproduced, and contested through institutions and professional practices.

Compétences transférables

- Formulate and defend theoretically informed arguments in academic discussion and writing.
- Transfer concepts of power and inequality to different research, institutional, and professional contexts.
- Analyse and synthesise complex theoretical perspectives and relate them to empirical material.