Course Description

This course will critically analyze the various policies and social services that provide developmental, preventive, treatment, and rehabilitative services aimed at children, youth and their families. The role of social services in the broad context of both formal and informal systems that influence the life course of children and youth is addressed. The course will examine how services are articulated at various levels of intervention, and in policies and regulations, and how this affects the ethical practice of social workers and other family and child serving professionals. Particular emphasis will be placed on services provided by community-based agencies, child welfare services, and the juvenile justice system. Students will develop critical frameworks for assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the policies, organization, and delivery of child-oriented social services based on social and behavioral science research evidence and through the lens of multi-culturalism and social justice values. In addition, illustrative cross-national comparisons of services and policies for families with children and youth will be discussed.

Course Content

Substantive service and policy areas addressed in this course are listed below. These topics will be critically analyzed in terms of the four curricular themes: social change and social justice, multiculturalism and diversity, social and behavioral science research.

1. Indicators of the well-being of children and families in the United States.

2. The legal and service delivery frameworks that shape the current system of family and children’s services, including the Indian Child Welfare Act and other statutes and policies relevant to Indian self-determination, and the recently passed Adoption and Safe Families Act.

3. Early childhood interventions, including Head Start and child care.
4. Family support services, including home-visiting programs and family support centers.

5. Programs designed to encourage positive youth development.

6. Services and policies affecting children and youth with special needs (e.g. children with disabilities, gay and lesbian youth) and children in minority and/or non-traditional families.

7. Family violence - child protective services and domestic violence

8. Family preservation, family reunification, and wraparound services for families who have come into contact with the child protective service system.

9. Foster family care and its alternatives, including kinship care, group homes, residential treatment facilities, institutional care, and training schools.

10. Delinquency services and other issues concerned with juvenile justice.

11. Adoption services, including infant adoption, special needs adoption, trans-racial adoption, open adoption, and international adoption.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate in depth knowledge of the policies that govern services to Children & Youth and their Families in Society in the following areas:

   a. Show understanding and critical awareness of the philosophies and ideologies that guide the development of policy instruments and service arrangements for children, youth and their families

   b. Show understanding and the ability to critique how the current policy frameworks (at the federal, state, and local levels) reflect society’s social construction of the child, youth and family (e.g. do not take into account variant family/caretaking forms and structures)

   c. The ability to understand and critique the laws, regulations and judicial interpretations that govern the delivery of social services to children, youth, and families

   d. The ability to understand and critique the outcomes and implications of current policies for children, youth, and families

   e. The ability to understand and critique the funding mechanisms that are available to provide services to children, youth, and families

   f. Demonstrate understanding of how the structure of current policies maintain systems of power, privilege and oppression

   g. Demonstrate critical analysis skills, including the ability to assess cross national comparisons
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the current service delivery system and articulate alternative design possibilities in the field of children, youth, and families to address such problems as:
   a. Lack of attention to the basic needs of families
   b. Lack of prevention as a focus of the service system
   c. Lack of social services attached to concrete provision
   d. Unequal distribution of services based on the current policy framework
   e. Racial and ethnic disparities among those who enter the system and the differential ways in which they are served
   f. Structural discontinuities in the public vs. private provision of services

3. Demonstrate in depth knowledge and potential applications of evidence-based programming in the design and delivery of comprehensive, culturally responsive services to children, youth, and families.

4. Demonstrate skills in policy analysis in one or more of the specific areas of services and policies to children and youth in their families.

5. Describe and critique services affecting children and youth in regard to their scope and effectiveness.

6. Identify and describe alternative strategies for delivery of services to children and youth including those found in other countries.

7. Recognize and articulate concerns related to the differential impact of these services on ethnic minorities and other cultural groups.

8. Understand the importance of advocacy for clients in the children and youth services delivery system, and develop the skills to advocate at the policy and/or direct service level.

9. Discuss typical ethical concerns related to services and policies for children and youth.

Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes

- **Multiculturalism and Diversity** will be addressed through, for example, discussion of the client populations served by the service systems covered in the course; the design of programs so that they will be responsive to the special cultural and ethnic circumstances of their clients; and the special child and family policies related to issues of ethnicity (e.g., the Indian Child Welfare Act, and international and transracial adoption).

- **Social Justice and Social Change** will be addressed by considering the differential impact of policies and programs on the poor and minorities; identifying mechanisms in these policies and services that support privilege and oppression; and developing awareness of means to promote social justice goals within these systems.
• Promotion, Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation will be addressed by examining the continuum of care present or ideally needed in the programs and services provided to children, youth, and families. Thus, neighborhood based or community-based programs will be contrasted with approaches that target families at risk or services recommended for families once they are referred to protective services, services that are court ordered, or other services that are available only once the state has intervened into the life of families.

• Behavioral and Social Science Research will be addressed through review of studies and academic literature on, for example, the changing demographics that affect demand for services, and comparative legal and administrative policies and services and their impacts on families. Finally, program evaluations that can inform child and family welfare policies and service delivery are discussed.

Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values

This course covers the complexities of ethical dilemmas as they relate to services and policies for children and youth populations, as well as the ways in which the professional Code of Ethics may be used to guide and resolve value and ethical issues. In particular, the course will review the ethics and values related to confidentiality, self-determination, and respect for cultural and religious differences. The course includes consideration of the social worker’s responsibility to promote the general welfare of society (e.g., the prevention and elimination of discrimination, equal access to resources, services, and opportunities, and advocacy for changes in policy). In addition, ethical concerns of special importance to social work with children and youth are considered, such as the child’s ability to report and understand at various levels of development, conflicts between the child’s best interest and the family’s best interest, and ethical issues related to treatment of minors.

Class Requirements

1. Class Participation:

   Student attendance is expected at every session of the class. However, if circumstances arise that require you to be absent, please provide me with an explanation by means of e-mail. Students are responsible for securing lecture notes, class exercises, and handouts when circumstances may require a student to be absent.

   Students are responsible for assisting in the creation of a learning environment that promotes professional socialization, and helps broaden our mutual awareness of human differences and diversity. Students will be encouraged in this class to examine how the structure of services and policies for children, youth, and families could better reduce inequalities and promote social justice.

   Your participation grade will be based upon class attendance (including lack of tardiness) and the quality of your participation in classroom assignments and discussion.
2. Required Readings:

All required readings are to be completed prior to the class session for which they are assigned. Required readings will be found in the textbooks, electronic coursepack, and handouts. The reading assignments are outlined in this syllabus. The textbooks for this course, available at Shaman Drum Bookshop, 311-315 South State, (and on reserve in Social Work Library), are:


From time to time throughout the semester video presentations, field trips, and/or speakers will be utilized.

A coursepack will be available online at: http://mirlyn.lib.umich.edu/F/?func=file&file_name=find-b

3. Any supplementary required materials will be provided by the instructor as handouts.

4. Recommended Readings, listed here for your further information on children and youth services and social policies:

   - At the end of the Syllabus is a comprehensive but selected reference list of Social Work journals and books that may be useful for research for your written assignments and in-class group presentation.

   - Several free government reports and on line journals

     All articles that appear in any issue of The Future of Children can be downloaded from the web at www.futureofchildren.org


Social Services Privatization: Expansion Poses Challenges in Ensuring Accountability for Program Results (October, 1997). The publication number is: HEHS-98-6. Washington,
DC: United States General Accounting Office.
http://www.gpoaccess.gov/gaoreports/search.html

Information about a new policy initiative that creates asset accounts for children
http://seed.cfed.org/about/initiative.html

Information on comparative social policies and the comparative state of children and families in western countries can be found at: www.childpolicyintl.org

Publications from the Center for Law and Social Policy can be found at www.clasp.org/

Publications from the Census Bureau can be found at www.census.gov

Publications form the USDHHS, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation can be found at http://aspe.hhs.gov/

5. Written Assignments:

All written assignments are to be presented with a title page on which you are to include the title of the paper, the course and section number, the date on which it is being submitted, and your name and school mailbox number. All papers are to be typewritten (or word processed) using 12 point font. All papers are to be in narrative format and are to be double-spaced. Please remember to number your pages. All papers are to use proper grammar and bibliographic style. The suggested style to be followed is APA, in: The Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (5th. Edition).

There will be two written papers required for this course. The first paper will be an analysis of a child welfare policy or a piece of legislation that impacts children and families. You may select any federal or state policy/legislation corresponding to any child welfare service we cover in class, such as adoption, foster care, kinship care, child protective services, etc. and using the policy analysis framework beginning on page 58 in the Pecora text, analyze that policy. Please follow the headings outlined in the policy analysis framework. Your paper may not exceed 10 pages. This assignment is due at the beginning of class on February 22.

The second written assignment is to select a controversial child welfare service in which you have interest. The service may be one available at your field placement or one provided by another agency with which you have access and the opportunity to fully understand the service. The service should be one covered in this course. The assignment is to select a topic and explain why it is controversial, develop a Logic Model of the service, including the programs underlying values, current situation, needs, goals, objectives, activities, and expected outcomes. Then present arguments both pro and con regarding the ethics, efficacy, and professionalism of the service. The pro and con arguments must be substantiated by evidence or research studies published in professional sources. Library research and the use of references beyond the textbooks and handouts are required. You are encouraged to use the Internet and to cite material from at least two different professional journals. The majority of your citations/bibliographic references are to be from books and journals. Finally you will
develop your own conclusion and recommendations for future action. This paper is to be limited to 10 pages. This paper is due at the beginning of class on April 19.

The third assignment is to bring a newspaper article and your corresponding Letter to the Editor to class regarding any aspect of child welfare policy or services that you read about and responded to during the semester. You may collect the article(s) at any time throughout the semester, but bring them to class on April 12. Students should be prepared to summarize the article for the class, and discuss it’s relevance to family and children’s policy and/or services. Staple the article to a copy of the Letter to The Editor that you wrote in response to the original newspaper article. You may also staple a copy of your published Letter to the Editor.

The fourth assignment is a small group assignment to research, develop and make a presentation to class on February 15 regarding national indicators of child well-being. Specific indicators will be identified in the first class session and small groups will be formed. Each small group will produce three products; a 3 to 5 page report detailing your findings regarding one indicator of child well-being, a bibliography of sources used and/or cited in your report, and a 15 to 20 minute presentation to class explaining the findings on your paper regarding the selected indicator of child well-being.

Grading

1. Grading Criteria for Written Assignments:

   The two written papers will be reviewed according to:

   a) The quality of the analysis and depth of understanding of the concepts, ideas, and information presented. I will be looking for objective documentation in support of stated opinions or conclusions.
   b) The clarity of expression and organization of the paper - is there a logical order to the presentation of your thoughts.
   c) The appropriate use of references and resources, and the variety of resources referenced.
   d) The use of proper grammar and the over-all professional presentation of the paper.

2. Grading Criteria for the Course:

Each written assignment will be given a letter grade. The criteria I use are as follows:

A or A-
Mastery of subject content, demonstration of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in completion of assignment. The difference between A and A- is based on the degree to which these skills are demonstrated.

B+
Mastery of subject content beyond expected competency, but has not demonstrated additional critical analysis, creativity or complexity in the
completion of the assignment.

B  Mastery of subject content at level of expected competency – meets course expectations
B-  Less than adequate competency, but demonstrates student learning and potential for mastery of subject content.
C or C-  Demonstrates a minimal understanding of subject content. Significant areas needing improvement to meet course requirements.
E  Student has failed to demonstrate minimal understanding of subject content.

Please understand that grading is a subjective process. I use these criteria and read and evaluate your papers anonymously. If, after you read my feedback, you have further questions, please see me about them.

The student’s final grade for the course will be based upon the following:

a)  Class attendance, participation  10%  
b)  Newspaper article and class presentation  10%  
c)  Policy paper  30%  
d)  Service Paper  30%  
e)  Group project  20%  

Communications with Instructor

I will be available prior to class each week. Please contact me for an appointment to confirm availability. I am also willing to make appointments at other times. You may contact me by email at jjmartin@umich.edu

If you need help with writing, please contact the UM Sweetland Writing Center for workshops, tutoring, and online support. The SW Office of Student Services may also be helpful to you.

Any student who feels that he/she may need an accommodation for any sort of disability, please make an appointment with me.

Please be aware of the Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct contained in the Social work Student Handbook.

Course Outline

From time to time throughout the semester we will invite speakers to class to inform us about current activities and services regarding the class topic. Additionally, we will view and discuss relevant videos as appropriate.
Session 1 – January 11, 2005

Introductions,
Course Overview, and
Child Well-Being Indicators

Video: Women of Hull House – (time permitting)
Student photographs

Handouts:
• Course Syllabus & Class Assignments

Session 2 – January 18, 2005

Policies for Families: An Analytic Overview, Legal
and Service Delivery Frameworks in Child Welfare.

Required Readings:
• Textbook (Pecora) chapters 1 - 3, pp. 1-94
League of America, 55-107. COURSEPACK
in America. New York: Oxford University Press, 3-11; 171-177. COURSEPACK
70 (3), 451-463. COURSEPACK
• Duquette, Donald N., Sandra K Danziger, Joan M. Abbey, and Kristin S. Seefeldt.
(1997). “We know better than we do: a policy framework for child welfare reform.”
University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform 31 (1), 93-157. COURSEPACK
• Greenberg, M.H., et al. (2002). The 1996 Welfare Law: Key Elements and

Session 3 – January 25, 2005

Early Intervention & Child Care

Speaker – Jenny McAlpine

Required Readings:
• Textbook (CWLA) section V, pp. 275 – 320.
• Helburn, Suzanne and Barbara Bergmann. (2002). America’s Childcare Problem:
The way out. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1-85. COURSEPACK
• Berrick, Jill Duerr, Barbara Needell, Richard Barth, and Melissa Jonson-Reid.
(1998). The Tender Years: Toward developmentally sensitive child welfare services
for very young children. New York: Oxford University Press, 1-27. COURSEPACK
• Fuller, B., et al., (2002). Welfare Reform and Child Care Options for Low-income
Families. The Future of Children, 12 (1), 97-120.
Session 4 – February 1, 2005
The Economic Security of Families and its Impact on Children
Speaker – Trenda Rusher

Required readings:
- Textbook (Pecora) chapter 4, pp. 95 – 127.

Session 5 – February 8, 2005
Family Support Services

Required readings:
- Textbook (Pecora) chapter 8, pp. 229 – 261.
- Textbook (CWLA) section I, chapter 1, pp. 1 – 10; Section IIA, pp. 33-86

Session 6 – February 15, 2005
Youth Development

Group Presentations regarding indicators of child well-being

Required readings:
- Textbook (CWLA) chapters 33 and 34, pp. 321 – 336.

ASSIGNMENT # 1 DUE FEBRUARY 22


Speaker – Connie Jones

Required readings:
• Michigan Child Protection Law. HANDOUT
• Textbook (Pecora) chapters 5, 6 & 7, pp. 128-228.
• Textbook (CWLA) sections IIB, pp. 87 – 124.

There is no class on March 1 during Spring Break.

Session 8 – March 8, 2005 Family Preservation

Video: “Understanding Family Preservation” – with Bill Moyers.
Speaker – Cathi Kelly

Required readings:
• Textbook (Pecora) chapter 9, pp. 262-296.
• Textbook (CWLA) section I, chapters 2 & 3, pp. 11 – 32.

Session 9 – March 15, 2005 Foster Care

Video: “Orphan Train” “Multiple Transitions” A Young Child’s Point of View on Foster Care and Adoption

Required readings:
• Textbook (Pecora) chapter 10, pp. 297-329.
• Textbook (CWLA) section III, chapters 14-17, pp. 139-176.

**Session 10 – March 22, 2005**

**Kinship Care**

**Video:** “Big Mamma”

**Speaker** – Virginia Boyce

**Required readings:**
- Textbook (CWLA) chapter 13, pp. 127-138

**Session 11 – March 29, 2005**

**Adoption, Independent Living, Emancipation**

**Video:** CBS 60 Minutes - “Adopt Me!”

**Speaker** – Marianne Bach

**Required readings:**
- Textbook (Pecora) chapter 12, pp. 363-405.

Session 12 – April 5, 2005
Residential/ Group Care

Field Trip: HELP SOURCE – Donovan Neal and Pam Bobyan

Required readings:
• Textbook (Pecora) Chapter 13, pp. 406-430.
• Textbook (CWLA) Chapter 18, pp. 177-186.

Session 13 – April 12, 2005
Juvenile Justice & Developing Alternative Community-based Services for Youth

Newspaper presentations

Required readings:
• Textbook (CWLA) Chapter 36, pp. 345-354.

Session 14 -- April 19, 2005

Last class: in-class review, evaluation, and feedback

Second paper due
Recommended Additional Resources

Selected Social Work Journals

- Adoption Quarterly
- Children and Schools
- Child Welfare
- Family Preservation Journal
- Future of Children
- Social Service Review
- Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal
- Children and Youth Services Review
- Crime and Delinquency
- Families in Society
- Journal of Children & Poverty
- Social Work Research

Selected Bibliography for Written Assignments

Child Welfare – General:


Child Development and Child Care:


School Social Work:


Family Support:


Children in Historical Perspective:


Child Protective Services:

Family Preservation:

Kinship Care:

Foster Care:


Adoption:


Youth Development:


Runaway, Homeless, and Abandoned Youth:

Juvenile Justice: