Course Description:
This advanced level methods course in the Children and Youth in Families and Societies concentration builds upon the foundation level practice methods course and prepares students for employment in the many human service delivery systems which address the needs of children, youth, and their families. This cross-cutting skills course encompasses both direct/micro (i.e., assessment, intervention, prevention) and indirect/macro (program design, evaluation, administration, community organization, policy analysis) practice methods used to address problems presented by or to children and youth in a variety of contexts. The development of social work skills applicable to promotion, prevention, remediation and social rehabilitation activities with diverse child and youth populations at all levels of intervention will be emphasized.

Course Content:
Effective social work practice with children and youth requires a holistic and multi-leveled approach, an emphasis on prevention and early intervention, and the involvement of families, other primary caretaking adults, and involved professionals, in the identification, development, delivery, and evaluation of services. In addition to being able to assess and intervene with children and youth, social workers must also develop the skills necessary to assess the resources and the risk factors which may exist in the child’s or youth’s family, neighborhood, community, and in the larger social environment. In this course the emphasis of intervention is as much on the context as on the individual. Intervention strategies focus on ways to bring about change at levels such as the classroom or school, the peer group, and the community or population, as well as at the individual level. Indirect practice skills covered in this course are aimed at promoting interpersonal competence, self-esteem, self-efficacy, achievement, and moral development in children and youth by making the contexts within which they develop more responsive to their developmental needs.

Throughout the course, cultural competence and sensitivity to differences among families and the impact of worker/client differences in values, experiences, and power will be emphasized. In addition, the student will learn to understand the significance of “multiple identities” (the interaction of factors such as age, ability, personality, environmental conditions, ethnicity, citizenship and immigration status, social class, gender, sexual identity and religion) in shaping the uniqueness of families and individuals.

Course Objectives:
Upon completion of the course, students will have demonstrated advanced-level skills in translating and applying a developmentally sensitive, resiliency focused, collaborative,
multisystems intervention perspective in working with diverse populations of children and youth, families and communities. In addition, students will have demonstrated advanced skill in using evidence-based prevention, intervention and rehabilitation practice guidelines to develop micro, mezzo and macro interventions that address child, youth, family and community goals and priorities.

Specifically, students will be able to:

1. Effectively communicate with and establish developmentally sensitive, culturally appropriate collaborative relationships with children, youth, their families, and other significant members of their social environments in every level of social work intervention.
2. Apply collaboration building and consultation skills within and across child and youth serving organizations to strengthen families and organize communities in response to the program practice and policy needs of diverse populations of children and youth in different child-serving settings.
3. Assess risks, protective and promotive factors that contribute to child and youth safety, health, security and well-being.
4. Effectively seek out needed information and become familiar with formal and informal resources available to meet the diverse needs of children, youth and their families.
5. Develop evidence-based change interventions that build on child, youth, family and community strengths and resources at the micro, mezzo and/or macro system levels.
6. Incorporate social work values and ethical principles in planning and implementing interventions for children and youth and their families.
7. Use relevant child, youth and family policy initiatives, laws and judicial decisions to advocate for improvements in the delivery of interventions that support the strengths of diverse child, youth, family and community systems and promote social justice.
8. Evaluate the usefulness of current knowledge, research and evidence based practice methods in work with diverse populations of children, youth and their families who live in communities where they experience discrimination and oppression due to gender, sexual identity, race, ethnic background, language, age, ability, religious preferences and poverty.

**Course Design:**
The course instructor will select readings and design assignments for the course. Various classroom teaching strategies may be used, including lecture, multimedia presentations, small and large group discussion, presentations by students and guest lecturers, role plays, and experiential exercises. Student’s experiences in the field will be used as much as possible in assignments and case presentations and discussions.
Relationship to curricular themes:

a. **Multicultural and diversity issues** will be emphasized throughout this course, not only in relationship to direct intervention with children and youth and their families and communities, but also in regard to the need to develop and maintain effective collaborative relationships with other community resources and service providers. Students will learn to recognize the existence of group differences in a number of areas (such as nonverbal communication, individual and family values, family and community structures, preferred and accepted responses to crisis, response to exclusion or oppression) and how these may impact intervention relationships with children, youth, and their families.

b. **Social change and social justice issues** will be addressed in relationship to children and youth as populations who experience vulnerability due to developmental and status factors (i.e., age and dependence), in addition to other impacts they may experience due to membership in other groups which encounter exclusion and discrimination. In recognition of this, abuses of power within the family (i.e., domestic violence, physical and sexual abuse and exploitation) will be addressed as issues related to social justice and human rights, and not just as indicators of individual and family psychopathology. Advocacy for children and youth, especially those whose families and communities are particularly impacted by social inequality and social injustice, will be emphasized at individual, family, organizational, community, and policy levels.

c. **Promotion and prevention** are particularly important for child and youth populations, due to the increased likelihood of negative outcomes as services or interventions are delayed, and the “time-limited” nature of childhood and youth. These areas are addressed in the direct practice areas through family life education, family preservation activities, screening early identification of children at risk, and family and community based early intervention with children and youth in a variety of contexts. At the indirect practice level, program development and evaluation, staff and professional training, fiscal and economic issues and policy analysis addresses the relationship between policy decisions and risks to children and youth.

d. **Social science knowledge** is presented as the necessary basis for conducting empirically grounded assessment, intervention and evaluation practice at all levels of intervention. Course materials draw upon research knowledge from a variety of social sciences, as well as other professions and disciplines (i.e., social work, medicine, psychology, sociology, economics, law, etc.), and emphasize the need for multidisciplinary collaboration and communication around issues related to children and youth. Social science research concepts and methods are described in relationship to both evidence-based social work practice and program evaluation processes.
**Relationship of this course to Social Work Ethics and Values:**
Practice with children and youth requires considerable attention to issues of ethics and values, due to the special challenges these populations offer the social work practitioner. For example, confidentiality cannot be maintained when suspected child abuse or neglect must be reported, and issues of self-determination and autonomy often arise when an adolescent discloses important information that has not been shared with a parent or other responsible adult. Social work values and social science knowledge may also conflict with the child-rearing beliefs and practices of some cultural or religious groups. Resource limitations or lack of training or sensitivity may result in inappropriate treatment for some children or youth and their families, and others may be excluded entirely. Finally, social policy decisions significantly affect the lives of children and youth, the stability of their families and communities, and their access to resources and services. Although this course emphasizes, in relationship to each of the substantive areas outlined above, the importance of examining the complexities of ethical and value issues as they apply to the problems of diverse children and youth; social work values and ethics, privilege, oppression and social justice as outlined in the professional Code of Ethics, are presented as the necessary and appropriate guidelines for practice when ethical dilemmas arise in social work practice.

**Intensive Focus on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS):**

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self knowledge and self awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

**Required Books**
The 3 required textbooks are available at Ulrich’s Bookstore.


The following book is recommended but not required for the course:


SW 696 Fall 2005
**Additional Required Readings**
The course has required journal articles that can be accessed on-line through the University of Michigan Course Reserve system under SW 696. The web location is: http://mirlyn.lib.umich.edu. Click on course reserves, course name and section.

**Accommodations**
If you need or desire an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Many aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities and the way that the course is taught can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress throughout the semester. The earlier that you make me aware of your needs; the more effectively we will be able to use the resources available to us, such as the services for Students with Disabilities, the Adaptive Technology Computing Site, and the like. If you do decide to disclose your disability, I will (to the extent permitted by law) treat that information as private and confidential.

Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

**Assignments and Grading**
Since this is an advanced practice area methods course, a course portfolio based learning approach will be used to assess learning. The course portfolio process challenges you to be a pro-active learner by helping you to integrate the learning from the course and provide opportunities to demonstrate learning. The portfolio will be collected for review and feedback from the instructor three times during the semester. (Oct. 13, Nov. 10 and Dec. 8). In your submission on Oct. 13, you need to include at a minimum, the statement of your learning goals, the weekly reflections and Assignment 1. When you submit your portfolio on Nov. 10, you will continue to add the weekly reflections and Assignment 2. Your final submission (Dec. 8), needs to include all the assignments including Assignment 3 and the artifacts. You will have a chance to respond to the instructor feedback from the first two reviews prior to your final submission. You will be graded on the quality of your work. Typically course portfolios are kept in a 3-ring binder but use what works best for you.

The **course portfolio is worth 75% of your final course grade.**

Include the following content in your course portfolio:

1. A clear **Statement of Your Learning Goals** for the course and how it relates to your career goals. Include both substantive learning as well as personal learning goals in this statement. (1 -2 pages)
2. **Ongoing Weekly Reflections** on the readings, class discussions, and relevant links to your field work experiences. (1-2 pages, each week)
3. **Assignment 1: Key Informant Interviews and Write Up:** Using the Redressing the Emperor text as a guide, conduct key informant interviews (at least 3) to 1.) Better understand system syndromes and tensions in one child-serving system (e.g., school system, child welfare, developmental disability service system, juvenile justice system), 2.) To examine measurement of outcomes in that system and 3.) To suggest solutions to identified tensions. Write a brief summary of each
key informant interview (1-2 pages). After summarizing each interview, discuss what you learned overall from the key informant interviews. Link this discussion to the readings and highlight key themes/tensions and possible solutions/change areas. (4-5 pages)

4. **Assignment 2: Resource Briefs:** Develop a minimum of 5 resource briefs that examine evidence-based or promising practices that target a particular group of children and their families. Each resource brief needs to address the following: 1.) a description of the evidence-based intervention or program and the training and skills needed to carry out the intervention; 2.) the evidence base that supports this intervention/program, 3.) the appropriateness of the intervention/program for the target population and 4) a list of references that you used to prepare the resource brief. Each resource brief should be 2-3 pages.

5. **Assignment 3: Taking a Position and Advocating for Change:** After reading the text, *Shame of the Nation*, formulate your own position on what is happening in schools and your concerns for children and adolescents. Write a letter to one of your congressional representatives or write a letter to the editor articulating your position about the current state of the American education system. Provide supporting documentation to support your position. (2-3 pages).

6. **Include any artifacts of your learning (brochures, articles, class handouts, intervention manuals, photos, trainings that you attended, anything that helps you tell the story of your learning in this course.** Describe briefly the importance of the artifact to your learning.

7. **Summary of Your Learning:** Include a brief summary of your learning in this course, linking to your initial statement and identifying next steps for continued professional development in this area. (2-3 pages)

In addition to the course portfolio development, you will be asked to share your course portfolio learning in class sessions through panel presentations and small group discussions.

**Class participation is strongly encouraged and is worth 25% of your final grade.** Participation includes being present, on time, active and prepared for class and group discussions. More than 2 unexcused absences will result in a reduction in the final grade.

**Grading**

Grades are earned by successfully completing the course portfolio and participating in class sessions.

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**PLEASE NOTE:**
• Incompletes are not granted unless it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the normal limits of the course. The student must formally request in writing an incomplete with the instructor prior to the final week of class.

• All assignments are to be completed by the date due. Exceptions will be granted with the permission of the instructor in advance of the due date for the assignment. Assignments submitted late without such permission will be downgraded.

• Students are to use APA “citation format” for each of the assignments. Each assignment needs to include appropriate attribution of authorship for paraphrases or ideas acquired from another source or appropriate citations, including page numbers, for direct quotes. Please review the Student Guide section on “Ethical Conduct in the University Environment.” This section specifically addresses plagiarism and the possible consequences for engaging in this behavior. The University of Michigan Library system has an on-line resource that can assist you in preparing proper citations for assignments using APA format. Go to: (http://www.lib.mich.edu/ug/research/citation guide/AP5thed/pdf)

• No other aspects of the APA style guide will be used. Instead, students are expected to prepare all assignments as “professional reports,” i.e., single-spaced, generous use of headings & sub-headings, underlining, italics, bold, etc.
Course Schedule and Readings

This course addresses micro, mezzo and macro practice interventions. Each class session, will explore knowledge and skill issues at multiple levels and examine the impact on the interventions/programs for working with diverse groups of children and families.

Sept. 8

Understanding the Child/Adolescent, Family, School and Community Context
Exploring Risk and Protective Factors –Net Vulnerability
Unacknowledged Race, Gender, Sexual Identity, Age, Ethnicity and Religious Preferences in Child Serving Systems
Systems of Care
Understanding course portfolio development

Sept. 15

Social Justice, Cultural Issues and Disproportionality in Child Serving Systems
Partnership Building with Families

Readings:


Sept. 22-29

Examining the Children’s Public Mental Health System – Improving Services – Total Clinical Outcomes Management Approach

Readings:

Lyons, J.S. Redressing the Emperor: Improving our children’s public mental health system (Chapters 1-7)


Oct. 6

Moving from Best Practice to Evidence Based Practice in Child Welfare System

Readings:


**Oct. 13 -20- 27**

**Multisystemic Therapy and Neighborhood Partnerships- Reducing Adolescent Violence and Substance Abuse**

Readings:

Swenson, C.C., Henggeler, S.W., Taylor, I.S. & Addison *Multisystemic therapy and neighborhood partnerships (Chapters 1-12)*


**Nov 3-Nov. 10**

**Advanced Skill Development Sessions (Micro, Mezzo and Macro Levels)**

**Nov. 17**

**Prevention Practice in Child Serving Systems**
Readings:


**Nov. 24 (Thanksgiving Break)**

**Dec. 1**

**Panel Discussion of The Shame of the Nation: the restoration of apartheid schooling in America**

Readings:

Kozol, J. *The Shame of the Nation: the restoration of apartheid schooling in America*

**Dec. 8**

**Emerging Issues in Practice with Children, Youth and Families**

Course Evaluation

Portfolio Presentation