COURSE TITLE: Social Work in Educational Settings
COURSE NUMBER: Social Work 642, Section 1
SEMESTER: Fall, 2005
DAY/TIME: Mondays from 1 to 4 p.m. in room 3816
LOCATION: 3816 SSWB
INSTRUCTOR: Mike Woolley, Ph.D., D.C.S.W.
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OFFICE HOURS: Monday 4-5 and Thursday 12-1, or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course presents foundation knowledge and skills essential to effective social work practice in school settings. Topics range from the evolution of social work in schools, school social work theory, assessment, and interventions for use in school settings. Education law, especially as it relates to special education eligibility and services, is a core aspect of the course. Content on multiculturalism, diversity, social justice, and social change are integrated into the course materials as those critical issues relate to practice in schools. Students will learn skills and abilities associated with various school social work roles and responsibilities; recognizing that the roles assumed by school social workers vary from state-to-state, district-to-district, and school-to-school.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
Upon completion of this course, students should have a comprehensive understanding and knowledge in five broad areas. Those five translate in the following goals: (a) knowledge of the history and role of social work in schools, (b) critical policy issues currently impacting education, (c) special education law and procedures, (d) theoretical frameworks for school social work practice, (e) prevention and intervention approaches in schools. These five areas are defined in more detail in the following course objectives.

1. Possess an historical perspective on the provision of social work services in schools.
2. Be aware of school social worker roles and responsibilities, and recognize the multiple levels and systems that school social workers can address in their practice including: individual students and families, groups of students, consultation with teachers and other school staff, classroom and school-level interventions, and coordination and collaboration with youth serving agencies outside the school.
3. Understand current critical issues being debated with respect to public schools, including: school reform, school-based services, competition, accountability, testing, vouchers, magnet schools, testing, charter schools, No Child Left Behind Act, etc.
4. Conceptualize a school as a complex social system, consisting of the interactions between the individuals within the school (students and staff), and individuals and
organizations outside the school (families, neighborhood, community, county/city, state, etc.).

5. Understand conceptual models of social work practice used in the schools, including the ecological, family systems, risk and protection, resilience, and strengths-based approaches.

6. Understand the law, policies, and procedures addressing the provision of educational services to both special education and general education students.

7. Possess foundation knowledge about vulnerable populations of school children for whom school social work services are frequently targeted.

8. Be familiar with school social work professional practice standards and ethics.

9. Be able to identify personal and programmatic evaluative methods useful in school social work practice.

**RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES**

**Multiculturalism and Diversity** are critical issues impacting both schools and the practice of social work in schools. These issues will be presented, discussed and critically analyzed as they relate to practice and policy.

**Social Justice and Social Change** will be central to the topic of various roles assumed by social workers in schools. The focus of the course includes small or microsystem change (individual, families, and groups), and mid-level or mesosystem change (classroom and school), and awareness the issues impacting schools at the state and national level or exosystem level.

**Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation** will be themes reflected in the models and approaches to school social work practice. In addition, this course will emphasize the use of evidence-based prevention and intervention activities.

**Behavioral and Social Science Research** will be presented in this course to support school social work theory and practice methods. Assessment procedures, intervention planning, decision-making and intervention procedures will be directly borrowed from the behavioral and social sciences.

**COURSE DESIGN AND TEACHING METHODS**

The development of a supportive learning environment, reflecting the values of the social work profession, is essential for the success of this class. A supportive learning environment is fostered by listening to the ideas and views of others, being able to understand and appreciate a point of view which is different from your own, articulating clearly your point of view, and linking your experiences to the readings and assignments. We will appreciate your contributions to making this a safe and respectful class for learning and growth.

This course will use a variety of teaching and learning methods, including lectures, PowerPoint presentations, group exercises, case material, role plays, videos, and seminar techniques. The class format is based on the understanding that you are a prepared and active learner. Reading the assigned materials prior to the class session is a prerequisite to getting the most out of each class and successfully meeting the course objectives.
**REQUIRED TEXTS AND COURSE READINGS**
There is one required text book for this course, it has been ordered at the UM bookstore.


All other course readings will be handed out in class or posted on the CTools site for this course. These readings can be downloaded, read electronically, and/or printed.

**APA FORMAT AND ACADEMIC HONESTY**
Please refer to the *American Psychological Association Publication Manual* (often called the APA Style Manual) in the preparation of your writing assignments. The current edition is the fifth, but using an earlier edition is acceptable. You can find out more at:

http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html

There is a four page PDF guide to APA writing style and format on the Main UM Library website at:
http://www.lib.umich.edu/ugl/research/citationguide/APA5thed.pdf

There is also a brief guide on the SSW Library website:
http://www.lib.umich.edu/socwork/apastyle.html

Other web sites provide useful, on-line APA writing style and format information:
http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html  (APA style for electronic references)
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_apa.html  (general information about documentation using APA style, 5th Ed.)

It is critical to reference all sources of information or ideas you use in your writing, to do otherwise is academic dishonesty. Direct quotes in particular should be identified as such. Situations of apparent plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be reported and handled according to University policy.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**
I invite any class member who has a disability that may affect his or her participation in this course to let me know. We can discuss possible modifications or accommodations in instructional format, assignments, etc.

**POLICY ON INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS**
A grade of “Incomplete” will be given in extenuating circumstances and in accordance with SSW and University policy. Assignments are due *in class* on the day as noted in the course outline. Late assignments, i.e., those not handed in to me in class on the day due, will be reduced one letter grade for each day they are late. Please plan your work to have things completed on time and keep me informed if any problems arise.
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Several methods will be utilized to assess your learning and progress toward the class objectives. You will have some choice as to what combination of assignments you complete. These methods will include participation, a quiz, 2 papers, a debate, and a group presentation. The relative weight of each assignment will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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CLASS PARTICIPATION

Participation counts for 15% of your final grade. Points will be deducted if you do not participate in class discussions and activities, miss class, come late, or are unprepared for class. Please try to let me know in advance if you are going to miss class.

QUIZ

There are two components of the quiz. The first is the quiz itself, which will be 20% of your final grade. The quiz will be used to assess your learning in the areas of the history of school social work, school law, special education processes and procedures, and current policy issues. The quiz will be take-home and consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. The quiz will be open book, you may use any resource you choose to gather information to complete the quiz. The second component is you will write two multiple choice and one short answer question related to one of the quiz topics. This will count for 5% of your final grade and your specific topic will be discussed in class. Writing a good question is to your benefit as if it makes it onto the Quiz, you will know the right answer.

PAPERS

Two papers will account for 30% of your grade in this course. These papers are described below. Please type or word process your papers, with one inch margins, double spaced, and use 12 font. Use APA style for references, please see the section on APA style above.

Paper #1: Due September ____, 3-5 pages, 10% of course grade, two options

Option 1 - My School Experience - This paper is a personal exploration of your experience as a student K-12. Divide that experience into three categories: Peers, Teachers, and Other Activities. Then describe the best and worst of your experience with respect to each category. For Other Activities, think of clubs, sports, specialists (such as: school social workers, art or music teachers, band, sports, principals, school psychologists, counselors, the janitor, etc.). Conclude by discussing how your school experience may inform your school social work practice.
Option 2 - My Ideal School Social Work Position – Describe your ideal job as a school social worker. Where that would be, what grade levels you would serve, what services or activities you would spend your time providing, what populations of students and families you are most interested in working with, what you bring to that position that would make you effective, and what knowledge and skills you feel you will need to develop to be most effective in that position. Include 2 citations from articles or books that have informed your evolving conceptualization of yourself as a school social worker.

Paper #2: Due December ___, 6-8 pages, 20% of course grade, two options

Option 1: Assessment and School Social Work Service Plan

Choose a student and family you are working with in your field placement if you are in a school. In the form of a BioPsychoSocial assessment describe the student, the student’s social environment, and the presenting problem. Then present a plan/strategy for providing services to that client(s) with respect to the presenting situation. You may use any resources (people, literature) available to you to construct your plan. Articulate at least 2 goals with objectives for that student, which might be included in the student’s IEP. Additionally, discuss the individuals, agencies, and referrals you would consult or collaborate with in the implementation of the plan. Please reference at minimum two relevant articles or books.

If you are not in a school placement you could alternately arrange to spend a couple hours observing middle school students during unstructured time at a school: lunch, in the hallways between classes, before school starts, after school lets out, on the bus, etc. Observe and take notes about social interactions between students, and between students and staff. Look for patterns in those observations. Write your paper about what you learn about the life of middle school students at that school. During your analysis, think about your understanding of child development, school climate, and systems or group dynamics. You may be creative in your presentation of the material. For example: write it from the first person perspective of a student who may be in need of social work services, or write it as a school climate needs assessment. Finally, identify a specific need for social work services at the individual, group, or school level and outline an intervention or program plan to address that need. Incorporate at least 2 references of journal articles, chapters, or books which describe programs or intervention techniques that can be incorporated into the plan.

Option 2: Write a School Social Work Policy

Choose a potential school crisis or problem. Research approaches and strategies for responding to such a crisis or problem in a school. For example, search the literature, inquire with schools about policies that may exist, review local, state, or federal related policy, and/or identify a situation/crisis reported in the media and use that for as an example of what to do and what not to do. Describe the important aspects and concerns in such a situation. Finish with a draft of a comprehensive policy focused on the school social work aspect of an effective response in such a situation that outlines a step-by-step response at the school and/or individual student level. School problems/crises that would be appropriate include: student suicide or suicide risk, suspected abuse or neglect, staff suicide, pervasive teasing/bullying, school shooting, school refusal/phobia, drug use/dealing, aggressive/violent student behavior, etc.
Group Project: 25% of Course Grade, Two Options

Option 1 - Vulnerable Student Populations

Prepare and present to the class on a population of school students that are vulnerable to poor school outcomes, and are therefore the focus of social work services in schools. For example, such student populations include: immigrant, refugee, or ESL students, students from low income families, students who are members of discriminated race/ethnicity groups, or students with learning, cognitive, physical or psychological/emotional/behavioral struggles. This list is by no means exhaustive, if you have a vulnerable population of students in mind please get with me to discuss whether it is an appropriate group topic. These groups may include 3-5 students. You may be given class time to work on this project during the semester, but will be expected to meet outside of class to prepare. Below is a list of the group project expectations, which will also serve as the grading criteria:

1. Class presentation – The presentation should be five minutes in length per group member, followed by 10-15 minutes of class questions/discussion. The presentation may take on varied formats, PowerPoint, Role Play, Talk Show, School Meeting, etc. The presentation should define and describe the central concepts and issues related to the specific population of vulnerable students (25%), and then present either a more in-depth analysis of the issues or intervention/prevention strategies or practice principals for school social workers (25%). Provide the class with handouts related to your presentation (25%). Please provide me with materials from the preparation of your presentation such as: slides, speaker notes, handouts, etc.

2. One journal article per group member – The content of the presentation should draw from a minimum of one journal article per group member (25%). Please provide me with a reference list.

Option 2 - Policy Debate

Stage a debate in class that addresses an important policy issue impacting education in America today. Each debate team should include 2-3 members, so a debate group should be 4-6 members. I will try to give debate teams some time in class to prepare, but you should expect to need to meet outside class. The debates will be conducted in class and should last for about 45 minutes. Each group should prepare a brief - one page or so - handout to include basic information about the issue and making a case for the team’s position on the issue. The debates can be moderated by me. The basic format will be:

Each team will be given 5 minutes to make an opening presentation which makes a case for their position. Then each team will be given 2 minutes to respond to the other team’s opening presentation. Next, each team will be given the opportunity to challenge or ask the other team a question. The questioned team will be given 2 minutes to respond to that challenge/question. The each team will be given one minute to follow-up on the topic of that question. The audience will then be given the opportunity to ask both teams questions. Finally, each team will be given 2 minutes to make a final statement.

Here are three suggested debate topics and positions:

An NCLB Debate:

Team 1: NCLB can be Good for Students, It Should Be Improved, Here’s Why and How
Team 2: NCLB is Bad for Students, It Should Be Ended, Here’s Why

A School Choice Debate:

Team 1: School Choice is Good for Students, Should be Expanded, Here’s Why
Team 2: School Choice is Bad for Students, Should be Ended, Here’s Why
An Inclusion Debate:
Team 1: Inclusion Should be Implemented for all Students
Team 2: Inclusion Should be Limited and Special Classrooms and Programs Expanded

Grading for this assignment will include the following areas. Preparation will account for 20%. The coherence and presentation of your position will be 20%. How you respond to the challenges and questions of the other team and the audience will be 20%. Finally, your handout will account for 20% of your group’s grade.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

Class 1) September 12 - Course Introduction
- Topic A) The plan – syllabus and assignments
- Topic B) Overviews of course and school social work
- Topic C) School Social Work Certification in Michigan

Reading 1) Chapters 1 & 2 – Allen-Meares
Reading 2) NASW (2002). *Standards for social work services in the schools.*
  Washington, DC: NASW.

Class 2) September 19 - History and Role of Social Workers in Schools
- Topic A) Origins and evolution of school social work
- Topic B) School social worker roles and responsibilities
- Topic C) School reform, school-based services

Reading 1) Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 - Allen-Meares
Reading 4) NASW (2002). *Standards for social work services in the schools.*
  Washington, DC: NASW.

Class 3) September 26 - Current Issues in Schools
- Topic A) School Funding, Vouchers, Magnets
- Topic B) Testing, Accountability, No Child Left Behind

Reading 3) No Child Left Behind Act:


Class 4) October 3 - School and Special Education Law

- **Paper 1 Due**
- **Topic A)** School Law and Special Education
- **Topic B)** FREAP, EAHCA, BEA, ESEA, 504, EHA, IDEA
- **Topic C)** Inclusion, Confidentiality

Reading 1) Chapters 8 & 10 – Allen-Meares


Class 5) October 10 – SPED and School Law Continued

- **Quiz questions due**
- **Topic A)** IEP, CST, FBA, BIP

Reading 1) (R6-Chapter6) *Students with Special Needs.* School Law for Counselors, Psychologists, and Social Workers. Fischer, L. & Sorenson, G. P.


Reading 3) (R6-Useful) *Creating Useful Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).* Smith, S. W. (2000).

Class 6) October 24 – Assessment in Schools

- **Quiz handed out**
- **Topic A)** Observation, Interviews, Structured Interviews, Self-Report Instruments
- **Topic B)** Special Focus – The School Success Profile

Reading 1) Appendix III – Allen-Meares

Reading 3) (R7-SSP) *Brief Intervention in Schools: The School Success Profile.*

**Class 7) October 31 - Theoretical Models of Intervention in Schools**

**Quiz Day**

**Topic A) Theory Informing School Social Work Practice**

**Topic B) Interventions in School**


**Class 8) November 7 – School Climate**

**Topic A) School climate or environment – theory, research, and applications**

**Topic B) Preventing Teasing and Bullying**

Reading 1) Chapter 7 – Allen-Meares


**Class 9) November 14 - School Meetings, Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Consultation**

**Topic A) Group Presentations**

**Topic B) Strengths-based and solution-focused consultation**

Reading 1) Chapter 11 – Allen-Meares


**Class 10) November 21 – Vulnerable Student Populations**

**Topic A) GLBT Issues in Schools – Film and Discussion**

**Topic B) Group Presentations**

Reading 1) Chapters 5 & 9 – Allen-Meares


Class 11) November 28 – Vulnerable Student Populations Continued
   Topic A) Group Presentations
   Topic B) The Achievement Gap

   Reading 1) Appendices I & II – Allen-Meares
   Reading 2) Chapter 12 – Allen-Meares
   Reading 3) (R13-OpenHearts) Open Hands, Open hearts: Working with Native Youth in the Schools. Garret, M. T., Bellon-Harn, E., Torres-Rivera, E., Garret, J. T., & Roberts, L. C.

Class 12) December 5 – What is School Social Work Really Like?
   Paper 2 Due
   Topic A) Panel discussion with practicing school social workers
   Topic B) Group Presentations
   Topic C) Evaluating school social work practice and school-based programs

   Reading 1) Chapter 13 – Allen-Meares

Class 13) December 12 – Course Wrap-up and Termination
   Topic A) The school year – Day one to Termination
   Topic B) Group presentations