COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course deals with practice theories and techniques for working with children and adolescents and their parents. The course will provide grounding in attachment/transactional, developmental, psychodynamic, and ethnic/cultural perspectives. We will address major clinical concepts, including: assessment, treatment planning, treatment process, intervention techniques and work with parents. The course is organized in terms of the sequence of development and we will discuss clinical issues and treatment approaches relevant to each developmental stage. We will look at intervention approaches appropriate to different mental health problems, and several classes will be devoted to topics especially relevant to social work practice, including treatment of foster children, physically and sexually abused children, developmentally disabled and chronically ill children, severely disturbed children and adolescents and delinquent adolescents. The aims of the course are to deepen the student's clinical understanding and skills; to teach the usefulness of a developmental perspective; and to increase the student's knowledge of normal development and psychopathology in childhood and adolescence. The course format includes lectures, videotapes, class discussions, and guest presenters.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

1. Describe the primary tasks and characteristics of each developmental stage in the following areas: sense of self, relation to reality, cognitive characteristics, defenses and coping mechanisms, and play.

2. Assess the impact of temperament and parental reactions to temperament on the development of the child.

3. Summarize the role of attachment across child and adolescent development, including: transactional patterns of attachment during infancy, difficulties in attachment, working models of attachment as a template for expectations of relationships, and attachment as a perspective on reactions to loss, divorce, entry into foster care and adoption.

4. Assess the balance of risk and protective factors for a child or adolescent, and their family, utilizing concepts of stress, resiliency, coping mechanisms and developmental level.

5. Identify developmentally appropriate techniques for engaging child and adolescent clients and their families.
6. Describe and apply a number of evaluation procedures including: direct observation of the child, play interviews, developmentally appropriate interviews with adolescents, parent interviews, family interviews and collateral interviews with teachers, caseworkers and other professionals.

7. Discuss how methods of assessment and intervention may be affected by issues in the treatment relationship (including the impact of race, ethnicity, gender, social class, sexual orientation, power and privilege), and by special issues presented by the client (including physical and sexual abuse, foster care, developmental disability, chronic illness, severe psychiatric disturbance, adolescent risk taking, substance abuse and delinquency).

8. Develop intervention plans relevant to the needs of children, adolescents, and their caretakers (including sensitivity to developmental level, gender, race, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation and special abilities).

9. Select and apply appropriate interventions from the following approaches: parent-child/adolescent therapy, play therapy, parent guidance, parent training, wraparound, and group treatment.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES

- **Multiculturalism and Diversity** will be addressed through discussion of worker-client differences and power/privilege differentials based on culture, ethnicity, race, gender, and social class, in the context of case presentations.

- **Social Justice and Social Change** will be addressed through discussion of differences between problems responsive to interpersonal practice interventions and problems—such as poverty, discrimination, disenfranchisement—which require systemic as well as individual interventions. Advocacy for disadvantaged, victimized, and inappropriately served children, youth and their families will also be emphasized in case presentations.

- **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation** will be addressed through discussion of early intervention, parent guidance, and advocacy as methods of preventing or mitigating later developmental problems. Intervention theories and techniques which support the child’s or adolescent’s developmental potentials will also be discussed.

- **Behavioral and Social Science Research** will be addressed in relationship to the selection, monitoring, and evaluation of intervention, with specific emphasis on current research in the areas of developmental psychopathology, attachment, risk, resiliency and coping, trauma, and maltreatment.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO SOCIAL WORK ETHICS AND VALUES

Discussions will explore social work ethics and values regarding confidentiality, self-determination, and respect for cultural and religious differences when working with children, adolescents and their families. In addition, we will discuss the complexities of decision making in cases where children and adolescents are at risk, and will explore how the Code of Ethics can guide our thinking and decision-making.
Papers

Two papers are required. All students will do Assignment #1. Assignment #2 offers three choices, depending on your experience. Students beginning field placements this term will probably want to do Assignment #2A, which focuses on evaluation and treatment planning. Students who have been in placement longer may prefer to write Assignment #2B which deals with ongoing treatment. Students who are not seeing child or adolescent clients and/or do not have past clinical experience on which to draw may do Assignment #2C.

Although the assignments are quite detailed in their expectations, I recognize that not all cases will "fit" the assignment. I am willing to modify the assignments to match the realities of your practice. If you need to alter or reformulate the assignments to reflect the particular work you are doing, please discuss with me before writing the papers.

To preserve client confidentiality, please disguise your case material, by using pseudonyms for all family members, omitting or changing specific geographical information and avoiding mention of details that identify clients.

Assignment #1  Research Assignment: Intervention
Due: June 12, 2006
Counts 45% of Course Grade

Choose a problem, diagnosis or treatment approach discussed in lecture or readings that you would like to learn about in more depth. Examples: infant-parent psychotherapy, play therapy with abused children, group treatment of children or adolescents, social skills training for school age children, work with parents of children with chronic illness, treatment of adolescent depression, etc. Any topic related to intervention with children, adolescents, and their families is acceptable; however, it will be important to narrow the topic in order to achieve a focus that goes deeply enough.

Read 10 current, peer reviewed articles or book chapters on the problem, diagnosis, or treatment approach you've selected. Research the topic by reading at least 10 current primary peer-reviewed journal articles or book chapters. (Internet sources do not meet these criteria.) In order to be current, these sources should have been published in the last fifteen years. One of the references must be a case study or an article that provides detailed examples of the clinical presentation of individuals with the problem or diagnosis and must provide a concrete illustration of an intervention approach.

1) Present a brief discussion of the problem or diagnosis.
2) Discuss the range of intervention approaches presented in the research literature.
3) Present a brief case example, either from your own practice or readings, which illustrates behaviors and/or emotional symptoms that are features of the diagnosis or problem as well as an intervention approach in a specific case.
4) Please remember to include an introductory and concluding section.

Bibliography: Include a bibliography of the references you have cited. Please use APA bibliography format. For books, include author, date of publication, title, place of publication, and publisher. For example:


For chapters in edited volumes, include author, date, title of chapter, editor, title of book, page numbers of chapter, place of publication, and publisher.
For example:


For journal articles, include author, date, title, name of journal, volume # of journal, and inclusive page numbers. For example:


Length: 10 pages.

Grading will be based on organization, following the terms of assignment, clarity of writing, and accurate application of concepts.

Assignment #2: Clinical Assignment
Due: July 24, 2006
Counts 45% of course grade

Do Alternative #2 A, B, or C. The aim of this paper is to give you a chance to reflect on your clinical work or casework in a concentrated and organized manner.

Alternative #2A: Choose a child or adolescent (and parents) with whom you have begun to work. Write a detailed summary of an assessment (and, if relevant, the early treatment work) that includes:

1) Precipitant for referral, presenting problem and psychosocial/family history. Include also a discussion of protective factors, risk factors and environmental issues.

2) Formulation of a clinical hypothesis (or hypotheses) which takes into account developmental, psychodynamic, and family/interactional issues.

3) Treatment plan, in terms of treatment format and specific goals of treatment. Indicate your rationale for choosing the approach you did. The relationship between the clinical hypotheses and treatment plan should be clearly stated. If relevant, describe components of the treatment plan which involve case management, as an adjunct or alternative to clinical work, such as referral for other services, coordination with other professionals, etc. If multiple systems (such as foster care, juvenile court, medical personnel, school personnel, day care, etc.) are involved with the client, discuss your plans for interacting with these other parties and indicate any need you see to intervene with or assist these systems and individuals.

4) Description of your beginning relationship with the clients--both child or adolescent and parents. Describe some critical incidents that illustrate the initial relationship, and discuss any transference and countertransference issues that appear to be emerging. Describe any racial/ethnic/class issues that may influence the relationship, if relevant. Assess the family's motivation for treatment by discussing strengths and weaknesses in the clients and their circumstances that may promote or impede successful intervention.

5) Describe your feelings regarding the prognosis for successful intervention and analyze the reasons for your point of view.

Alternative #2B: Choose a child or adolescent (and parents) with whom you have worked during this year. I would prefer you write about a different client from the first paper. If you need to write about the same client, please discuss with me. Write a case review that includes:

1) Precipitant for referral, presenting problem and brief psychosocial/family history. Include also a brief discussion of risk factors and environmental issues.

2) Formulation of a clinical hypothesis (or hypotheses) which takes into account developmental, psychodynamic and family/interactional issues.
3) Treatment plan. Indicate your rationale for choosing the approach you did.
4) Describe the treatment relationship in terms of attachment and transference issues.
Note countertransference and ethnic/cultural issues, if relevant.
5) Descriptive account of the treatment process, including critical incidents in treatment,
and an assessment of the client's progress in terms of the objectives of the treatment plan.
Though the focus of this part should be on the treatment process with the child or adolescent,
also include an account of work with parent(s). This section should be the bulk of the paper.
6) Brief account of case management issues (if relevant) and contacts with others
involved with the child/adolescent, e.g. school personnel, foster care worker, day care provider,
probation officer, etc.
7) Plans for continuing treatment, termination or transfer. If ongoing treatment is needed,
note future treatment goals.
8) Conclude with a brief personal statement of why this case has been a valuable
learning experience.

Alternative #2C: This option is open only to those students who are not seeing child or
adolescent clients and/or do not have past clinical experience on which to draw. (If you are
currently seeing clients, or have past clinical experience on which to draw, please complete the
assignments 2A or 2B).

For assignment #2C, complete one or two of the observational or interview exercises found at the
end of each of the Davies' text practice chapters. You may do one or more of these exercises to
add up to a 9-page paper. Some students will chose to write a 9 page paper based on one of the
exercises, while others do two, using two exercises focused on different levels of development
(e.g. toddler and school age.) Please remember to write an introductory and concluding section. If
you choose this option, please let me know in your paper which observation/interview exercise(s)
you have selected.

For Assignment #2 A, B, or C:

Length: 9-10 pages

Grading will be based on clarity of expression, following the terms of the assignment, and quality
of understanding of clinical issues.

Small Group Assignment
Due: Sign up sheet
Counts 10% of course Grade

On the second week of class, I will hand around a sign up sheet so that you may choose what
week to lead a relevant class discussion focused either on the readings or a case presentation
pertinent to our weekly topics. Your small group may lead a large class discussion, break our
class into small groups, or present case materials that spark class participation. Your group will
be responsible for providing written discussion questions and facilitating a 20-30 minute class
discussion. Due to class size and time constraints, your group is responsible for the date you sign
up for. If, due to illness or other emergency, you must make a change, it is up to you to arrange
to switch with your classmates and to notify me at least one week prior to your assigned date.
This assignment will be graded on a pass-fail basis.

ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION AND READING
All these are expected. Class attendance is important because lectures and discussion will focus on the details of how to practice. Frequent absences are not acceptable and will result in a lowering of the course grade. If you are unable to attend class, please call or E-Mail me in advance. Although weekly participation is not factored in as a percentage of the course grade, active participation will make a difference if a student’s work is at the border between two grades.

TEXTS and HANDOUTS

1) Texts (available at Shaman Drum Bookshop, 313 South State).


2) Throughout the semester, I will be passing out a number of additional required readings and handouts on developmental and clinical topics.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND READING SCHEDULE**

**May 8, 2006**

**Topic**: Introduction to Interpersonal Practice with Children and Youth; Culturally Competent Practice

**Required Readings**

Davies: Preface, pp. xi-xiii; Introduction (Part 1); Chapter 1


**May 15, 2006**

**Topic**: Evaluation Process; Assessment of Risk; Ethical Practice With Children and Youth Video "Refrigerator Mothers"

**Required Readings**

Davies: Chapter 3 and 4; Introduction (Part II).


Handout: NASW Code of Ethics

**May 22, 2006**
**Topic:** Infant Mental Health Models of Assessment and Treatment; Clinical Applications of Attachment Theory

**Required Reading**

Davies, Chapter 1 (Review), Chapter 5 and 6


**May 29, 2006 - No class**

**June 5, 2006**

**Topic:** Toddlers and Preschoolers: Normative Development and Clinical Issues in Work With Young Children and Their Parents.

**Required Readings**

Davies: Chapter 7-10


**June 12, 2006  Paper #1 Due**

**Topic:** Autism Spectrum Disorders

**Required Readings**


**June 19, 2006**

**Topic:** Middle Childhood: Typical Child Development, Ages 6-12; Clinical Issues in Work With School Age Children.

**Required Readings**

Davies: Chapters 11 & 12

June 26, 2006 (Guest Presenter) Constance Conklin,

Topics: Wraparound and Outcome-Based Intervention with Children and Families

Required Readings

July 10, 2006

Topic: Trauma: Assessment and Treatment

Required Readings
Davies: Chapter 13

Chapter 2 and 4


July 17, 2006  Guest Presenter: Vickie Smith

Topic: Adolescent Development: Assessment and Treatment; Assessment and Treatment of Eating Disorders

Required Readings
Steiner, *Treating Adolescents:* Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, 4, and 5

July 24, 2006  Paper #2 Due

Topics: Working with Adolescents; Evaluation of Change/Progress in Children and Adolescents; Evidence for the Efficacy of Different Therapeutic Approaches

Required Readings
Steiner: Chapters 6 and 9

Davies, Chapter 13 (Review)
