Course Title: Social Work in Educational Settings
Course No: Social Work 642, Section 001
Semester: Fall, 2006
Day/Time: Mondays from 1 to 4 pm
Location: 105 FAC
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course presents foundation knowledge and skills essential to effective school social work practice. Topics range from the evolution of social work services 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 to the following goals: a) knowledge of the history and role of school social workers in school, 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. A historical perspective of school social work services in schools
2. Awareness of roles and responsibilities of school social workers, including confidentiality and ethics and recognition of the multiple levels and systems that school social workers can address in their practice, including “micro-level” interventions with individual students, families and small groups, participation on multi-disciplinary teams, consultation with teachers and other school staff, “macro-level” interventions and collaboration/coordination with outside agencies.
3. Understand current critical issues being debated with respect to public schools, including school reform, school-based services, vouchers, magnet schools, charter schools, choice, high school graduation requirements, No Child Left Behind, etc.
4. Conceptualize a school as a complex social system, consisting of interactions between individuals within the school and individuals and groups outside the school.
5. Understand the law, policies and procedures addressing the provision of educational services to special and regular education students.
6. Understand conceptual models of school social work practice, including ecological, strength-based, risk and protection, resilience approaches.
7. Working knowledge of school social work assessments, including special education evaluations, goals and objectives, functional behavioral assessments, positive behavioral support plans, manifestation determinations and other tasks commonly performed by school social workers.
8. Foundation knowledge of vulnerable populations of students for whom school social work services are frequently targeted.
9. Ability 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 school social work. 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 roles of school social workers as agents of change at the building, district, state and national levels and the roles of school social work associations in advocacy for social justice and social change will be highlighted.

*Promotion, Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation* are incorporated at all levels of practice in educational settings and will be presented, discussed and analyzed as the class explores school social work roles and strategies for prevention and intervention.

*Behavioral and Social Science Research* will be presented to support social work theory and practice methods. Assessment procedures, intervention planning, decision-making and intervention procedures will be based in the behavioral and social sciences.
COURSE DESIGN & 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 different from your own, articulating your point of view clearly and linking your experiences to the readings and assignments. We appreciate your contributions to making this a safe and respectful class.

This course will use a variety of teaching and learning methods, including lectures, PowerPoint presentations, group exercises, case materials, guest speakers 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 meeting the course objectives.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

I invite any student who has a disability that may affect his or her participation in this course to let me know. We can discuss possible accommodations or needed supports.

POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS AND INCOMPETES

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 date noted in the course outline. Late assignments will be reduced one letter grade for each day they are late. Please plan to have your work completed on time and keep me informed if any problems arise.

REQUIRED TEXT AND COURSE READINGS

There is one required text for this course, it has been ordered at the U-M bookstore.


The MASSW Reference Manual for School Social Workers: A Basic Guide to Practice, Secor, D., (Ed.), (2005) Michigan Association of School Social Workers. This manual is recommended and will be available for purchase in class. Copies will also be on reserve in the SW Library or may be borrowed from the instructor.

All other course readings will be handed out in class, on reserve in the library or available electronically.
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

Several methods will be utilized to assess your learning and progress towards the class objectives. You will have some choice as to what combination of assignments you complete. These methods will include attendance and participation, a quiz, two papers and a group presentation.

Class Attendance & Participation 15%
Quiz 25%
Paper 1 15%
Paper 2 20%
Group Presentation 25%

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 or are unprepared for class. Please try to let me know in advance if you are going to miss class.

PAPERS

Two papers will account for 35% of your grade in this class. These papers are described below. Please type or word process your papers, with one inch margins, double spaced and use #12 font. Use the APA style for references.

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

Paper #1: Due October 2nd, 3-5 pages, 15% of course grade
My School Experience: This paper is a personal exploration of your experience as a K-12 student. 1) Briefly describe your school district/s and schools in terms of location, size, socioeconomic status of the students, etc. 2) Describe your experience with reference to teachers and other staff, peers, and any extracurricular activities, commenting on both positive and negative experiences. Note in particular any event/s or incident/s that you may have perceived as traumatic during your k-12 career, such as moving to a new school, the death of a classmate, etc. 3) Conclude by discussing how your school experience may inform your practice.

Paper #2: 5-7 pages 20% of course grade
Option #1:
School/Classroom Observation: This paper is a report of your visit to a school that will include a “systematic observation” of a student in one of the classrooms in that school and a brief interview of a school staff member. Please describe the school and any of your observations of the school environment or climate, the classroom environment and activities (25%). As part of your observation, utilize a format from the MASSW Practice Manual or from Constable, Chapter 21, to report on your observations of the student and any impressions regarding the student in his or her learning environment (25%). Briefly interview a teacher, administrator, school social worker, school psychologist or counselor regarding the school’s process for addressing a significant academic, social or behavioral concern about a student (25%). Please cite the source of your format and 2 references relating to this assignment such as on school or classroom climate, observation, teaching and learning, school teams, etc. (25%).

Option #2 - 5 pages – 20% of course grade
School Social Work Practice in Other States:
Research the practice of school social work in three states other than Michigan and preferably in different areas of the country. You may use the internet, books or articles, make email contact with school social worker leaders, their state departments or university schools of social work or individual school social workers to obtain your information. Use and cite at least two sources. Please see me in advance regarding the states you select and for any other assistance in how to go about your investigation.

Write a paper that includes a description of what you were able to learn, utilizing approximately one page for each state. Include the credentials for school social work practice in that state, the numbers of school social workers believed to be employed, any information about their state school social work association, their roles in special education, if any, typical roles in regular education, reimbursement or funding sources, including Medicaid., etc. Also include anything else that you found to be interesting or particularly different from what you have learned about Michigan school social work. You will be graded on the process of your investigation, information obtained and the organization/presentation of the information.

QUIZ

The quiz will have two components and will be used to assess your learning in terms of the history of school social work, roles and responsibilities of school social workers, legal issues and school law, special education legislation, rules and procedures and current issues. It will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. It will be open book and you may use any resources you choose. You will write and submit 2 multiple choice questions and one short answer question related to one of the quiz topics. The questions will count for 5% of your grade. Additionally, if your questions are selected you will know the correct answers!
GROUP PRESENTATION

Groups will be graded on content, analysis, handouts, participation of all group members and use of references, where appropriate. Presentation length should be five minutes per group member and 10-15 minutes for questions/discussion. Groups may use a variety of formats including powerpoints, role plays, “talk show”, etc. Please be sure that group topics are cleared with me.

Option #1
Special Education/School Social Work Tasks Case Presentation:

Please select a student that a group member is working with who is potentially eligible for special education as an E.I., ASD or OHI (ADHD) student or see me for a case example. Each group member should present on one aspect of the special education process/procedures for that student. As part of the presentation, select one or two behaviors of the students that are a concern and write a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan.
1) Evaluation Report including the procedures used, the relevant eligibility criteria and recommendations (including school social work services, if appropriate.).
2) Write a statement of the student’s Present Level of Academic and Functional Performance (PLAFP), based on the evaluation. Recommend any IEP accommodations to the student’s learning environment, one or two “measurable” goals for school social work services and two objectives for each goal.
3) Complete and present a proposed IEP for student that includes the above components.
4) Write and present a Functional Behavioral Assessment addressing one or more behaviors of concern.
5) Write and present a Behavioral Intervention Plan or Positive Behavior Supports to address the behaviors.

Please provide the class with written copies or summaries of the evaluation report, the PLAFP, goals and objectives, the IEP and FBA/BIP. Please point out the special education rules related to each area and the source of any formats or guidelines utilized to complete the tasks. The presentation will be graded on their reflection of understanding of special education procedures, quality and clarity of the various reports and plans, the written handouts and the citation of sources used.

Option #2
Vulnerable Student Population

Prepare and present to the class on a population of students that are vulnerable to poor school outcomes and are therefore the focus of school social work services. For example, immigrant, refugee or ESL students, students from low income families, students who are members of discriminated race/ethnicity groups, students who are traumatized or grieving, students with various cognitive, learning, physical or psychological/emotional/behavioral struggles, etc. This list is not exhaustive, please see me about another group of students your group may be interested in.
The presentation should define and describe the central concepts and issues related to the specific population of vulnerable students (25%) and present either a more in-depth analysis or prevention/intervention strategies for school social work practice. One group member should present 3-5 minutes of “testimony” that could be given to a school board, legislative committee or other group to advocate for this population (25%). Provide the class with handouts related to your presentation (25%). The content should draw from a minimum of one journal article per member (25%). Please provide a reference list.

COURSE OUTLINE

Class 1) September 11 – Course Introduction
Introductions, Syllabus and Assignments
Overview and History of School Social Work
School Social Work Certification
School Social Work Professional Associations

Reading 1) Constable, Chapter 1
Reading 3) The First School Social Worker and Her Principal (Distributed in class).

Additional Reading:

Class 2) September 18 – School Social Worker Roles and Responsibilities
Roles of School Social Workers
Confidentiality and Legal Issues, Child Abuse Reporting

Reading 1) Constable Chapters 4, 7 & 25
http://www.socialworkers.org/sections/credentials/school_social.asp
**Additional Reading:**

**Class 3) September 25 - School Reform & Legislative Issues**
School Reform: School-based Services, Vouchers, Charter & Magnet Schools, High School Graduation Requirements
ESEA: No Child Left Behind
Michigan Special Education History:
   Guest Speaker: Dr. Richard Baldwin, Retired State Director of Special Education, author and person with a disability.

**Reading 1)** Constable, Chapters 9-10
**Reading 3)** No Child Left Behind Act - Executive Summary
**Reading 4)** "Initiative Petition to Make Special Education Mandatory: Give the Handicapped a Hand", including the language of P.A. Act 198 of 1971.
   (Handed out in Class)
Additional readings will be assigned for school reform topics.

**Class 4) October 2 - Paper 1 Due**
**Special Education Overview**

Rights of Students with Disabilities
IDEA 2004
The Role of School Social Workers in Special Education
Section 504
Inclusion/Response to Intervention

**Reading 1)** Constable, Chapters 11, 12, 23
**Reading 3)** The New IDEA, CEC’s Summary of Significant Issues.
**Reading 4)** MASSW Practice Manual, Section 6, Section 504 Guidelines and Sample Forms

Additional Reading:
Special Education in Michigan Fact Sheet, Michigan Department of Education,

Class 5) October 9 – Quiz Questions Due
Special Education Procedures
Eligibility, IEPs, PLAFPs, Goals & Objectives, FBA, BIP, Due Process, Manifestation Determination

Reading 1) Constable, Chapter 24
Reading 2) IDEA 2004 – IEP Model Form
Reading 3) MASSW Practice Manual, Section 7, Procedural Safeguards, Functional Behavioral Assessments and Behavioral Intervention Plans, Sample Forms and Formats

Class 6) October 23 - Quiz
School Social Work Assessments
Special Education Evaluations – ASD/EI/OHI
Review of School Records
Systematic Observations
Social/Developmental Histories
Rating Scales
Clinical Interviews
Reporting: verbal and written reports
Re-evaluations

Reading 1) Constable, Chapter 21
Reading 2) MASSW Practice Manual, Sections 4 - 6, School Social Work Assessments, Autistic Impairment, ADHD Assessment
http://www.state.tn.us/education/speced/TEIS/training/module10/9th_1section_Module%2010.pdf#search='Janice%20Fialka%20It%20Matters'
Additional Readings:

Class 7) October 30 – School Social Work Interventions
Theoretical Models
Ecological Perspective/Strength-Based
Interdisciplinary Teams and Collaboration/Consultation/Advocacy
Medication and School Social Work

Reading 1) Constable: Chapter 17 & 20
Reading 4) MASSW Practice Manual, Section 9, Psychopharmacology

Additional Reading:

Class 8) November 6 - Paper #2 is due.
Interventions with individual students, families & small groups.

Reading 1) Constable, Chapter 27, 33 & 35

Additional Readings:

Class 9) November 13, 2006 School wide Interventions/Vulnerable Populations
School Climate, Bullying & Violence Prevention, Crisis Intervention Vulnerable Populations/Economically Disadvantaged Students
**Reading 1)** Constable, Chapter 36


**Additional Readings:**

**Class 10) November 20 – Special Populations/Group Presentations**
- Depression & Suicide Assessment, Attendance/School Phobia, ADHD, Austistic Spectrum Disorder, Substance Abuse

**Reading 1)** Constable, Chapter 29 & 31

**Additional Readings:**

**Class 10) November 27 - Vulnerable Student Populations/Group Presentations**
- LGBT Students
  - Guest Speaker: Mari Brunner, U-M undergrad and founding member of the Forest Hills Central Gay Straight Alliance.

**Reading 1)** Dealing with Legal Matters Surrounding Students’ Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, American Association of School Administrators.  [http://www.nsba.org/site/docs/34600/34527.pdf](http://www.nsba.org/site/docs/34600/34527.pdf)
**Reading 2)** From Teasing to Torment: School Climate in America, A Survey of Teachers and Students. Harris Interactive & the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education  [http://www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)
Reading 3) The 2003 National School Climate Survey: Key Findings
http://www.glsen.org

Class 12) December 4 – “Voices from the Field”
  School Social Work Panel
  Evaluation of Practice

Reading 1) Constable, Chapter 6

Class 13) December 13 – Transition/Termination Issues & Course Wrap-Up

  Brooks/Cole.
Reading 2) MASSW Practice Manual, Section 1) Sample School Social Work
  Interview Questions