Course Description

This course will critically analyze the various human/social services and policies that provide preventive, case management, treatment, and rehabilitative services aimed at children and youth. 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 historical and cross-national comparisons of services and policies for families with children and youth will be included.

Course Content

Substantive areas addressed in this course will be critically analyzed and addressed in terms of the four curricular themes: social change and social justice, multiculturalism and diversity, social and behavioral science research, and the continuum of care (promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation). The following topics will be covered in the course:

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 childcare.
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. Child Protective Services
8. The service response to violence against women and other forms of domestic violence.
9. Family preservation, family reunification, and wraparound services for families who have come into contact with the child protective service system.
10. Foster family care and its alternatives, including kinship care, group homes, residential treatment facilities, institutional care, and training schools.
11. Delinquency services and other issues concerned with juvenile justice.
12. 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. Describe and critique services and policies affecting children and youth from historical and cross-cultural perspectives.
2. Assess services to children and youth in regard to their scope (the extent to which they provide necessary and appropriate services to populations in need) and their effectiveness.
3. Identify and describe alternative strategies for delivery of services to children and youth including those found in other countries.
4. Recognize and articulate concerns related to the differential impact of these services on ethnic minorities and other cultural groups.
5. Understand the relevance of advocacy for clients in the children and youth services delivery system and knowledgeably, ethically, and professionally advocate for children and youth at the policy and/or direct service level.
6. 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 discussed 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 trans-racial adoption).
- **Social Justice and Social Change** will be addressed by considering the differential impact of policies and programs on the poor and minorities.
- **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation** will be addressed by examining the continuum of care present 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 families’ life.
- **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.

**Suggested Journals**
- Journal of Poverty
- Journal of Children and Poverty
- Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency
- Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services
- Social Work
- Social Services Review
- Child Welfare
- Young Children
- Infant Mental Health Journal
- Families in Society
- Family Preservation
- Journal of Research on Adolescence
- Children and Youth Services Review

**Required Texts**

A course pack of required readings, available at Dollar Bill’s Copying, 611 Church Street.
Recommended Readings
A set of recommended readings is available on reserve at the SSW Library. In addition, the instructor recommends several free government reports and each student can order their own copies or download them from the web:


To order this free publication, call 1-800-638-8736 or e-mail askncjrs@ncjrs.org


To order these free publications call (202) 512-6000 or e-mail info@www.gao.gov. They may also be downloaded from the GAO website at www.gao.gov.

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

Course Requirements
1. Participation. Students are expected to fully participate in the learning process and to assist in the development of a comfortable, stimulating classroom environment. Attendance is required and students who miss a session are responsible for securing lecture notes from their peers, and handouts from the instructor. Active participation is essential to the success of this course (individually for you and collectively for all the students). This includes coming on time and being prepared, having read the required readings for each session, exercising good listening skills, contributing analytical comments, asking questions, participating in classroom activities, and consulting with the professor outside of class if necessary. Class participation is evaluated on quality as well as quantity. Passive, aggressive, monopolizing, or whiny participation does not carry the weight of constructive participation.

2. Required Readings. All required readings are to be completed before the day to which they are assigned. Required readings are in the course texts, course pack, and handout materials.

3. Coursework Completion. The assignments require students to conduct additional research that builds upon the information contained in both the readings and lectures. Students will be
responsible for completing all written assignments by the due date and in accordance with the guidelines that follow. **Late assignments will automatically lose two points.**

4. **Writing Policy.** Good writing is an important skill for professional social workers. Students are encouraged to consult the section on writing in your *Student Guide to the Masters in Social Work Degree Program*, called “Writing Term Papers…” (p.54). You may also find it instructive to read *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (4th Edition). Students are encouraged to make use of the LSA writing workshop, which provides assistance in writing specific assignments. To take advantage of this free program call (734) 764-0429. The writing workshop is available at 1139 Angell Hall, Room 1003. Student papers will be judged on clarity of writing, clear organization of ideas (headings and subheadings help), ability to incorporate class readings and lectures in the assignment, demonstration of additional research, brevity, and basic grammar. **All written assignments submitted by students should be double spaced in no less than 12-point font. Please page number and proofread your papers.** Margins for written assignments should be no less than 1 inch all around. **Failure to follow these guidelines will cost students points off their grade for the assignment.** Students are strongly encouraged to make and keep a copy of their written assignments as either the instructor or the student may occasionally lose these items.

5. **Writing Criteria.** Written assignments will be evaluated both for content and clarity of presentation using a checklist specific to each assignment, but covering the following criteria.

- **Organization and Clarity:** Is the paper in the requested format? Does the paper follow the syllabus instructions in relationship to font size, etc.? Is the paper well written and organized in a logical manner? Are there appropriate transitions between paragraphs and sections? Are headings and subheadings used to improve organization? Are the sentence structure, syntax, and grammar of appropriate quality for a graduate student? Are the issues addressed in such a way that someone unfamiliar with the topic can understand them?

- **Completeness and Thoroughness:** How fully have the issues been addressed? Has the student sufficiently researched the issue using library resources, interviews, and other means in order to gain differing perspectives and full knowledge of the issue? Does the paper leave the reader with the impression that major questions are unanswered? Is the quality of issue/problem analysis at graduate level? Has the paper been carefully proofread?

- **Referencing:** Are there a sufficient number of references? Has the theoretical and empirical literature on the subject been incorporated into the paper? Are references well integrated in the text of the paper? Are opinions/ideas supported by cited sources? Has referencing been done appropriately?

- **Originality and Creativity:** Has the student used his or her analytical skills in a way that suggest more than a restatement of what others have said about the issue? Has the student compared, contrasted, and integrated different viewpoints and material on the subject in a way that shows s/he has a through understanding of the issue? Has the student suggested points that have not been addressed by others?
Grading

All grades will be numeric and relate to the maximum number of points an assignment is worth as listed below. All assignments are due by the end of class on the due date. Late assignments automatically lose two points. Your final grade in the class will be calculated by adding up your scores on the individual assignments. Final grade determinations are based upon the following point distribution:

- 90 -100 = A
- 89 - 80 = B
- 79 -70 = C
- 69 - 60 = D

Grades of A are reserved for student’s meeting all the above course requirements and whose work not only demonstrates excellent mastery of content, but undertakes complex or new issues and tasks, applies critical thinking skills to the assignments and in-class activities, and demonstrates creativity in their approach to the assignments. Grades of B are given to students whose work is judged to be very good and demonstrates a more than competent understanding of the material, who undertakes complex or new issues and tasks, applies critical thinking skills to the assignments and in-class activities, and demonstrates creativity in their approach to the assignments. A grade of C is given to student’s whose work is less than adequate and reflects only moderate grasp of content, fails to meet minimum standards for assignments and does not apply critical thinking skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>on-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter to the Editor</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>on-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readings Reaction Memorandum</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Area Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>March 5, 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Hearing Testimony</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>April 16, 2001</td>
</tr>
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**Attendance & Participation:** Students must attend the entire session every week and participate in the classroom discussions. Students receive credit for clipping and bringing to class two newspaper articles from reputable and credible publications (not USA Today) about child and family policy twice during the course of the semester. Students will describe the article to the class for comment and discussion. One article should be presented before winter break, the other after the break, but before the last week of the term.

**Letter to the Editor:** Students will select one newspaper article they brought to class for use in writing a letter to the editor of that newspaper in response to the article’s content. The assignment should be in letter format (double-spaced, no more than three pages) and addressed to the newspaper’s editorial page editor or the paper’s publisher. The grade for this assignment depends on how well the student’s supports their arguments using facts from sources cited (APA style).
Service Area Paper: This self-directed learning opportunity allows students to delve into the children, youth, or family service area that interests them through the preparation of this ten to twelve page research paper. This document should not only describe the state of the art in the selected service area (i.e., Infant Mental Health, Wraparound Services, Multi-systemic Therapy), but should also describe the history/development of this service. Students should cite at least ten diverse research sources beyond the assigned class readings. All citations should be in proper APA style. Appropriate sources include print journals and books, internet sources, interviews with service providers or service recipients, program site visits, and program procedural manuals. **Students should be prepared to describe their selected service area for this paper in class the week of February 5, 2001.** The following questions should be used as guidelines for developing this assignment.
1. What is the historical background of this service model, when and where did it begin?
2. What problem or issues lead to the development of this service?
3. What is the theoretical or philosophical basis for the service model?
4. What is the status of this service and what is the need for this service?
5. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this service based on evaluation and research results?
6. How does this service compare with other service models designed to impact the same problem or issue?
7. What are the emerging issues around this service?

Public Hearing Testimony: Students are to write public hearing testimony on a topic of their choice. Students have considerable flexibility in what they choose to focus on for their public hearing testimony, but it must be related to child and family policies and services. Students are to identify a specific piece of legislation either at the federal, state, or local level that they wish to focus on for their testimony. Testimony is not to exceed six pages of text. Additional pages for graphs or tables are allowed. Students will have an opportunity to present their testimony in a simulated public hearing. Students will receive sample public hearing testimony. The grade for this assignment depends on how well the student’s supports their arguments using facts from sources cited (APA style), and the completeness of the content. Content should include the following.
1. The policy’s legislative history.
2. The ideological or value base of the policy.
3. The policy’s strengths and weaknesses, and any unintended consequences as indicated by research and evaluation.
4. The service delivery structure and practices driven by the policy.
5. Funding streams effected or required to implement the policy.
6. Recommended changes and the pros and cons of these recommendations.
7. Relevant cross national policies.
**On February 19, 2001, students should be prepared to describe the policy or practice topic they have chosen for their public hearing testimony. This overview should also describe why this topic was selected and where the issue is at in the policy process.**
Readings Reaction Memorandum: Students will be assigned a week during which they may choose one reading and write a two-page reaction memorandum about that particular reading. Students must think critically about the article and how it relates to child and family policy, child and family practice, and the social work profession. The memorandum should be a succinct commentary describing your response to a particular chapter/article’s viewpoint and the issue it discusses. The reaction paper is not to be a summary of the article. **THIS IS NOT A BOOK REPORT.** Students should adhere to the prescribed format: 1) provide in one paragraph the topic of the chapter/article, its author(s) and title. 2) a brief summary of the reading (one to two paragraphs), and 3) your reaction to the article addressing the following questions.

1. Do you agree or disagree with the author(s), and why?
2. What points of view does the chapter/article not address?
3. What are the implications of the chapter/article for practice and/or policy in the area of children, youth, and family services?
4. Do you foresee any unintended consequences of the policy or practice described in the article?

**Weekly Outline**

**Session 1. January 8, 2001**

**Introductions & Class Overview**

**REQUIRED READINGS:**


**COURSE PACK**


**Handout:**

- Syllabus
- Multi-Cultural Ground Rules for the Course
- Martin Luther King’s “A Christmas Sermon on Peace.”

**Session 2. January 15, 2001**

**No Class** ? Martin Luther King Day

**Session 3. January 22, 2001**

**Policies for Families and Child Well-being: An Analytic Overview and Indicators**

**REQUIRED READINGS:**


**COURSE PACK**


Handout:
- Supplementary Lecture Materials
- Indicators of Family and Child Well-Being

Legal Frameworks for Services and Policies for Children and Youth

REQUIRED READINGS:

COURSE PACK


Handout: Supplementary Lecture Materials

Session 5. February 5, 2001
Frameworks for Service Delivery

- Service Area Paper Topic Overview Due

REQUIRED READINGS:

COURSE PACK


RECOMMENDED READINGS AVAILABLE ON LINE AT www.gao.gov:


Handout: Supplementary Lecture Materials
Session 6. February 12, 2001
Early Childhood Intervention
Guest Speaker: Michelle Strasz, Co-founder Catalyst for Action and www.jumpstartmich.com

REQUIRED READINGS:
Kluger, et al. Section 5.

RECOMMENDED READINGS AVAILABLE ON-LINE AT www.futureofchildren.org:


Handout: Supplementary Lecture Materials

Session 7. February 19, 2001
Family Support & Family Preservation Services
• Public Hearing Testimony Topic Overview Due

REQUIRED READINGS:
Pecora et al. Chapters 8, 9, 11.
Kluger, et al. Section 1.

RECOMMENDED READINGS AVAILABLE ON-LINE AT www.futureofchildren.org:

Handout: Supplementary Lecture Materials

Session 8. February 26, 2001
Spring Break - No Class

REQUIRED READINGS:
Session 9.  March 5, 2001
Family Violence and Child Protection
• Service Area Paper Due
REQUIRED READINGS:
Pecora, et al. Chapters 5,6,7.
Kluger, et al. Section 2.

COURSE PACK

RECOMMENDED READINGS AVAILABLE ON-LINE AT www.futureofchildren.org

Handout:
• State of Michigan Child Protection Law
• Supplementary Lecture Materials

Session 10.  March 12, 2001
Foster Care, Kinship Care & Congregate Care
REQUIRED READINGS:
Kluger, et al. Section 3.

COURSE PACK

RECOMMENDED READINGS AVAILABLE ON LINE AT www.gao.gov
Handout: Supplementary Lecture Materials
Session 11. March 19, 2001
The Indian Child Welfare Act
Guest Speaker: Bill Memberto, Director, Office of Urban Indian Affairs, Family Independence Agency

REQUIRED READINGS COURSE PACK:

Handout: Supplementary Lecture Materials

Session 12. March 26, 2001
Adoption, Independent Living & Emancipation
Guest Speaker: Judy McKenzie, Retired Director, Spaulding for Children

REQUIRED READINGS:
Kluger, et al. Section 4.

COURSE PACK

Handout: Supplementary Lecture Materials

RECOMMENDED READINGS AVAILABLE ON LINE AT www.gao.gov.:
Session 13. April 2, 2001
Youth Development
REQUIRED READINGS:
COURSE PACK:
Handout: Supplementary Lecture Materials

Session 14. April 9, 2001
Juvenile Justice Policies and Services
REQUIRED READINGS COURSE PACK:
RECOMMENDED READING AVAILABLE BY CALLING 1-800-638-8736, OR E-MAIL ASKNCJRS@NCJRS.ORG:
Handout: Supplementary Lecture Materials

Session 15. April 16, 2001
Community Capacity Building
• Public Hearing Testimony/ Presentation Due
REQUIRED READING COURSE PACK:
Handout: Supplementary Lecture Materials

Session 16. April 23, 2001
Finals Week