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 Objectives

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

- Apply an ecological perspective to social work practice with children and youth.
- Effectively communicate with and establish collaborative relationships with children and youth, their families, and other significant members of their social environment.
- Apply collaboration building and consultation skills to strengthen families and organize communities in response to the needs of children and youth.
- Assess risks to the child’s or youth’s safety, health, security, and well being, and identify the strengths and resources available in the child’s environment to address these concerns.
- Plan or plan and demonstrate micro and macro interventions that are based on identifiable goals and priorities in a culturally sensitive and culturally competent manner.
- Incorporate social work values and ethical principles in planning and implementing interventions for children and youth

Format of Course

The objectives of the course will be pursued through lectures, discussions, demonstrations, case studies, guest lectures, videotapes and role-plays. There will be two examinations of short essay format, one at mid-term and one at the final session. The examinations will integrate both class materials and readings. Students are expected to attend all classes and excessive absences will result in the lowering of the students grade.

Course Requirements and Grading

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term examination, short essay format (June 24, 2002)</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service evaluation paper (July 22, 2002)</td>
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Child/Youth Service Delivery Paper  (due: July 22, 2002)

Based on your field placement or your professional areas of interest, select a particular service delivery system that addresses the needs of children and/or adolescents (e.g., schools, juvenile justice, protective services, mental health, public policy, etc…).

For this assignment you will need to describe the nature of the service delivery program you select and review the research/literature related to the development, goal and objectives, effectiveness, and future needs of this delivery system. This paper should be between 9-12 pages in length.

In your paper you will need to discuss the following:

- The nature of the service delivery program; description of the service, its history, purpose, goals, population served. (20%)
- Review and description of the empirical literature evaluating the effectiveness of interventions and services used in this program (You should cite at least 8-10 references and use APA format). (30%)
- Discussion of the effectiveness of the service delivery program. (15%)
- Discussion of the limitations of the service delivery program. (15%)
- Your impressions of future needs and areas for future research. (20%)

**Relationship of the Course to the Four Curricular Themes**

*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.

*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 whose families and communities are particularly impacted by social inequality and social injustice, will be emphasized at individual, family, organizational, community, and policy levels.

*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 context. 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.

*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 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 or 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 children and youth; social work values and ethics, 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.

Topics and Required Reading Assignments

All readings will be on reserve in the School of Social Work Library.

A. Children and Families


B. Adolescents and Families


C. Children, Youth and Schools


D. Juvenile Delinquency and the Courts


E. Practice Issues


F. Abuse, Neglect and Protective Services


G. Homelessness and Poverty and the Effects on Children
