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 микро and indirect macro practice methods used to address problems presented by or to children and youth in a variety of contexts. This course teaches 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. This course stresses the child and youth in context, and interventions based on this context. Intervention strategies focus on ways to bring about a change at various levels of the child’s ecosystem. The aim of the course is to promote interpersonal competence, self esteem, self efficacy, achievement, and moral development in children and youth by making the contexts within which they develop, more responsive to their developmental needs.

Students will be taught assessment skills to be able to identify special needs, abuse and neglect, family violence, substance abuse, and circumstances of extreme stress, danger or deprivation. The students will learn how to design individual programs of intervention that are based on clearly articulated goals and priorities. Throughout the course, cultural competence and differences among families will be stressed.

The course format will combine lecture with multi media presentations, guest lecturers, and in-class student presentations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

1. Apply an ecological systems perspective to social work practice with children and youth
2. Effectively communicate and establish collaborative relationships with children and youth, their families, and other significant members of their social environment.

3. Apply collaboration building and consultation skills to strengthen families and organize communities in response to the needs of children and youth.

4. Assess risks to the child’s and youth’s safety, health and well-being and identify the strengths and resources available in the child’s environment to address these concerns.

5. Demonstrate an ability to conduct culturally sensitive and competent practice, which recognizes diversity across and within groups and the uniqueness of each individual and family.

6. Critically evaluate and monitor practice, programs and services provided to children and youth, their families and communities, involving, whenever possible, children and youth, their families and other care taking adults, their communities, and other service providers in the evaluation and monitoring of services.

7. Select, implement and justify research supported interventions, which are based on identifiable goals and priorities and a thorough evaluation of children, youth and families involved.

8. Describe roles, characteristics and responsibilities of the significant public and private agencies, which provide services to children, youth and their families.

Relationship to curricular themes:

a. 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.

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

c. **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 contexts. 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.

d. **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 of 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.

COURSE DESIGN AND EXPECTATIONS

This course will use a combination of lecture, class discussion, case material, role-plays, group discussion and video material as appropriate. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. The instructor must be notified in the event of a possible absence due to illness or emergency. More than two unexcused absences will result in a reduction in the final grade. Assignments are expected to be on time. **Class participation is strongly encouraged and is worth 10 % of your final grade. If for cultural or other personal reasons you find class participation to be difficult, please see me.**

Grading:

The requirements listed below are the **minimal** expectations for class assignments, and if followed precisely will result in an “A-” grade for the assignment. A grade higher than “A-” will be given to work that has gone above and beyond the minimal qualifications. This would reflect more thorough, thoughtful and thought provoking work on your part. This will be discussed in detail in class. Feel free to ask questions about this policy!

Assignments that are turned in late will result in an automatic reduction in the grade.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS

Progress in this course will be assessed by three assignments. The aim of the assignments is to give you an opportunity to focus on your own specific area of interest, or explore new areas that may not be covered in detail in the class. My hope is that you will draw from your personal experience and choose topics that will aid you in your current internship placement, or a specific personal interest related to children and youth that you hope to pursue professionally in the future. Hopefully, the more personally interesting to you, the more effort you will put into these projects. **All papers are to be typed, double spaced, and written in professional, clinical style.**
Assignment 1:

This assignment is a self assessment and is confidential. Think back to a time when you were a child or adolescent and you were, or might have been, the “client” of a mental health professional. Please write a 2 to 3 page assessment (not including the Genogram and ecomap) and include the following information about you.

1. Precipitating event
2. Environmental stressors
3. Family dynamics
4. What were your needs?
5. What were your strengths?
6. What were your abilities?
7. What would have helped you?
8. 2 to 3 generation Genogram
9. your ecomap at the time

The purpose of this assignment is to help you to think about interventions with children and youth from the point of view of the “help-ee,” rather than the helper.

This assignment is worth 10% of your grade and is due on September 13, 2002.

Assignment 2:

This assignment is a group presentation involving 3 to 4 people. Your task is to identify a child or adolescent “client” from the media. You will be creating an assessment of this “client” and then creating an intervention plan. The information you will present to the class is:

1) Basic psychosocial history, including presenting problem, symptomatology
2) Family information: life cycle stage, Beaver's Scale Level, risk factors, resources, family dynamics
3) Client’s strengths, needs, abilities, preferences
4) Genogram
5) Ecomap
6) Interventions from 3 different levels: micro, mezzo, macro

Please be prepared to show a video clip of your “client” to the class. Your group should form a treatment team of social workers with different interventive philosophies. You will design interventions for the “client” you have chosen, and if desired for the family or other members of the client’s environment.

This assignment is worth 30% of your grade and the due date will be determined on the second day of class.
Assignment 3:

This is a cumulative assignment utilizing a case study that will be distributed to you in class. The goal of the assignment is to relate the concepts presented in class readings and lectures to the client in your case study. Depending on your particular client, certain of the topics presented will not be relevant. This paper will be turned in on the last day of class and should include:

1. A brief description of the client
2. A description of how the following concepts pertain to the client:
   a. Gender
   b. Attachment issues
   c. Social Justice issues
   d. Level on the Beavers Scale
   e. Abuse, shame and trauma issues
   f. Divorce, single parenting, or other family composition issues
   g. Domestic Violence, or power and control issues
   h. Educational Issues
   i. Criminal Justice issues
   j. Adoption or Foster Care issues
3. A description of how the following intervention strategies would be applicable to your client:
   a. Case management
   b. Wraparound Approach
   c. Multisystemic Therapy
   d. Treatment Foster Care
   e. Mentoring
   f. Family Education

This paper should be typed, double spaced and written in professional clinical style. It should be sub-headed with each of the various required elements. Paper length is not as important as thoughtful application of the concepts.

This assignment is worth 50% of your grade and is due on Friday, December 6, 2002.

REQUIRED READING MATERIALS

Burns, Barbara J., and Hoagwood, Kimberly, Community Treatment for Youth, Oxford University Press, New York, 2002

Coursepak of related readings available at Excel, 1117 S. University, Ann Arbor.
COURSE OUTLINE AND READING SCHEDULE

September 6, 2002
Introduction to Course: expectations, format, etc.
Social Workers: Possibilities and Limitations

September 13, 2002
Assessment
Assignment: self assessment
Genogram, ecomap
Readings:
Text: Chapters 1 and 2

Assignment 1 due today.

September 20, 2002
The Child as Individual and in Context
Gender Factors
Readings:
Text: Chapter 3

September 27, 2002
Attachment
Readings:
Text: Chapter 4
Coursepak:
The Role of Attachment in Personality Development pp. 270-287
Human Attachments and Trauma pp. 288-303
Attachment vs. Trauma Bonds pp. 304-307

October 4, 2002
Social Justice
Social Class, Poverty, Racism
Readings:
Text: Chapter 5
Coursepak:
Anatomy of Resilience pp48-56
October 11, 2002

Families: Resources and Risks
Parenting

Readings:
Text: Chapter 8
Coursepak:
Whatever Happened to Huckleberry Finn? Pp1-28
Raised in Jeopardy pp28-47
Facing the Problem pp101-125
Do Kids Need Prozac? Pp126-127

October 18, 2002

Child Abuse, Childhood Trauma and Shame

Readings: Coursepak
Checklist for Determining Likelihood of Sexual Abuse pp176-186
Normal Child Sexual Development pp187-192
Magic Fingers pp193-198
Children as Victims of Violence pp199-208
Children and Guns pp209-214
Shame-Guilt Contrast pp308
Behaviors Associated with Shame pp309-310
The Signs of Psychological Trauma pp311-335

October 25, 2002

Divorce and Single Parent Families

Readings:
Text: Chapter 7
Coursepak:
Identifying and Understanding Parental Alienation pp246-262
High Conflict Issues pp262-264
Confessions of a Stepmother pp265-269
**November 1, 2002**

Domestic Violence

Readings:
Text: Chapter 10
Coursepak:
The Faces of Hedda Nusbaum pp130-133
Anatomy of Violence pp134-142
The Film Makers and the Abuser pp143-151
It’s A Community Affair pp152-159
Inside the Heart of Marital Violence pp160-169
What is Battering? Pp170-175
Prevalence and Effects of Child Exposure to Domestic Violence pp221-230
Impact of Federal and State Laws on Children Exposed to Domestic Violence pp232-245

**November 8, 2002**

Educational Issues

Readings:
Text: Chapter 9
Coursepak:
Teaching Kids to Care pp57-66
The Tornado Inside pp99-100

**November 15, 2002**

The Criminal Justice System

Readings:
Text: Chapter 12
Coursepak:
The Resounding Silence pp77-87
The Youngest Inmates pp215-220
November 22, 2002

Foster Care and Adoption

Readings:
Text: Chapter 6
Coursepak:
The Patterns that Disconnect

November 29, 2002

NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING BREAK

December 6, 2002

To be determined

Assignment 3 due today