Children and Youth Services and Policies

SW 633, Section 004                  Winter, 2003
Wednesday, 6 – 9 P.M.                Instructor:  Barbara MacKenzie
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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). Students should use this list to select research paper topics:

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 child care.

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.


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 transracial adoption).

• **Social Justice and Social Change** will be addressed by considering the differential impact of policies and programs on the poor and minorities; identifying mechanisms in these policies and services that support privilege and oppression; and developing awareness of means to promote social justice goals within these systems.

• **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 life of families.

• **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.
Class Requirements

1. Class Participation:

Student attendance is expected at every session of the class. However, if circumstances arise that require you to be absent, please provide me with an explanation by means of e-mail, fax or telephone. Students are responsible for securing lecture notes, class exercises, and handouts when circumstances may require a student to be absent.

Students are responsible for assisting in the creation of a learning environment that promotes professional socialization, helps broaden our mutual awareness of human differences and diversity. Students will be encouraged in this class to examine how the structure of services and policies for children, youth, and families could better promote social justice.

Your participation grade will be based upon class attendance (including lack of tardiness), the quality of your participation in classroom discussion, and the completion of five one-page session reflection comments.

Turn in a "session reflection comments" page the week after the session you choose to discuss in your one page paper. You are to review the readings, class discussion, and class materials for that topic and write about what you learned, what further things you would like to know about this topic, any critique you have about the readings or ideas presented in the class, handouts, etc. Schedule these as best you can over the course of the term, but be sure to complete five of them. They should not cover the same topic as your research paper.

2. Required Readings:

All required readings are to be completed prior to the class session for which they are assigned. Required readings will be found in the textbooks, coursepack, and handouts. The reading assignments are outlined in this syllabus. The textbooks for this course, available at Ulrich's, Michigan Book and Supply, and Michigan Union Bookstore (and on reserve in Social Work Library), are:


3. Supplementary required materials provided by the instructor as handouts

4. Recommended Readings, listed here for your further information on children and youth services and social policies:
• At the end of the Syllabus is a comprehensive but selected reference list of Social Work journals and books that may be useful for research for your written assignments.

• Several free government reports and online journals
  - All articles that appear in any issue of The Future of Children can be downloaded from the web at www.futureofchildren.org
  - Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent and Chronic Juvenile Offenders. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U. S. Department of Justice. NCJ 153681. To order this free publication, call 1-800-638-8736 or e-mail: askncjrs@ncjrs.org
  - Child Welfare: Early Experiences Implementing a Managed Care Approach (October, 1998). The publication number is: HEHS-99-8. Washington, DC: United States General Accounting Office. To order this free publication, call 202/ 512-6061 or e-mail: info@www.gao.gov
  - Social Services Privatization: Expansion Poses Challenges in Ensuring Accountability for Program Results (October, 1997). The publication number is: HEHS-98-6. Washington, DC: United States General Accounting Office. To order this free publication, call 202/ 512-6061 or e-mail: info@gao.gov.

4. Written Assignments:

All written assignments are to be presented with a title page on which you are to include the title of the paper, the course and section number, the date on which it is being submitted, and your name and school mailbox number. All papers are to be typewritten (or word processed) using 12 point font. All papers are to be in narrative format and are to be double-spaced. Please remember to number your pages. Please review the section in your Student Guide to the Master’s in Social Work Degree Program for guidance on writing papers; see pages 54 through 67 in particular. All papers are to use proper grammar and bibliographic style. The style to be followed is that set forth in: The Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (4th Edition). An abbreviated version is available through the Social Work Library at: http://www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/Social.lib/apa_style.html

A. Reaction Paper to the MLK 2003 presentation by Dr. Alvin F. Poussaint.
Dr. Poussaint will be presenting on the issue of family in modern America as part of the Martin Luther King Symposium on Monday, January 20th. Students are to attend this presentation and write a critical review of his remarks focusing on issues of policy relating to children and families. Class will be cancelled during the week of January 20th to permit you to attend the symposium session and also meet your other obligations.

B. “Hallmark” Family Assignment. This “research” assignment will require students to consider the construction of family in American society and its implications for policy and
practice. There is a separate handout for this assignment which will be distributed in class.

C. Research Paper:

Students are to write one Research Paper of ten to twelve pages in length, exclusive of the title page and bibliography (typed, double-spaced, 12-pt. font). The Research Paper is to be submitted on April 17. The Research Paper is to focus on a specific child welfare, family services, or juvenile justice policy issue that is of interest to you. Use the course content (on pp. 1-2 in this syllabus) as a guide for selecting a topic. A part of your research paper is to focus on a particular population of color, gender, or special needs and how this group is affected by the problem area or service system in your chosen topic. The paper should attend to the challenges of increasing awareness of these issues and should conclude with attention to how to promote more culturally competent and socially just policies and services. There is a separate handout for this assignment which will be distributed in class.

Library research and the use of references beyond the textbooks and handouts are required. In fact, it is expected that your research paper will make minimal use of assigned readings. Additionally, you are encouraged to use the Internet and to cite material from at least two different professional journals. The majority of your citations/bibliographic references are to be from books and journals. Professor MacKenzie must approve of your research paper topic in advance. You can send the information by email or meet with me about it.

Grading

1. Grading Criteria for Written Assignments:

Reaction and the research paper will be graded on the basis of:
   a) The quality of the analysis and depth of understanding of the concepts, ideas, and information presented. I will be looking for objective documentation in support of stated opinions or conclusions.
   b) The clarity of expression and organization of the paper - is there a logical order to the presentation of your thoughts.
   c) The appropriate use of references and resources, and the variety of resources referenced.
   d) The use of proper grammar and the over-all professional presentation of the paper.

2. Grading Criteria for the Course:
Each written assignment will be given a letter grade. The criteria I use are as follows:

**A or A-** Mastery of subject content, demonstration of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in completion of assignment. The difference between A and A- is based on the degree to which these skills is demonstrated.

**B+** Mastery of subject content beyond expected competency, but has not demonstrated additional critical analysis, creativity or complexity in the completion of the assignment.

**B** Mastery of subject content at level of expected competency – meets course expectations

**B-** Less than adequate competency, but demonstrates student learning and potential for mastery of subject content.

**C or C-** Demonstrates a minimal understanding of subject content. Significant areas needing improvement to meet course requirements.

**E** Student has failed to demonstrate minimal understanding of subject content.

Please understand that grading is a subjective process. I use these criteria and read and evaluate your papers anonymously. If, after you read my feedback, you have further questions, please see me about them.

The student’s final grade for the course will be based upon the following:

a) Class Attendance and Participation (including reflection papers) 15%

b) Poussaint Reaction Paper 15%

c) “Hallmark” Family Assignment 20%

d) Research Paper 50%

**Communications with Instructor**

I will be available after class each week. I am also willing to make appointments at other times. It is important to meet with me on your paper topics and group presentation, to make sure I am aware of your topic selections, that you are on the “right track” with preparing these assignments, and to consult with me on any questions you have.
Course Outline

Session 1 – January 8, 2003
Introductions, Course Overview

Session 2 – January 15, 2003

Required Reading:
- Textbook (Pecora) chapters 1, 2 & 4, pp. 1-63; 95-127

Session 3 – January 20, 2003

Class Session 3 will be held on Monday, January 20th at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium at 12 noon at the Towsley Center for the Presentation by Dr. Alvin F. Poussaint.

Session 4 – January 29, 2003
Legal and Service Delivery Frameworks in Child Welfare; Components of a Socially Just Children and Youth Services Policies

Required reading:
- Textbook (Pecora) chapters 2 & 3, pp. 21-94

Poussaint Paper is due at the beginning of class.
Session 5 –February 5, 2002
Early Intervention & Child Care

Video: ABC Primetime: “Early Brain Development.”

Required Readings:
- Textbook (CWLA) section V, pp. 275 – 320.

Session 6 – February 12, 2003
Family Support Services

Required readings:
- Textbook (Pecora) chapter 8, pp. 229 – 261.
- Textbook (CWLA) section I, chapter 1, pp. 1 – 10; Section IIA, pp. 33-86

Session 7 – February 19, 2003
Youth Development

Required readings:
- Textbook (CWLA) chapters 33 and 34, pp. 321 – 336.

NOTE: There is no class session on February 26 as the School will be on Spring Break.
Session 8 – March 5, 2003
Michigan’s Child Protection Law, Violence Against Children, and Social Policies
Required readings:
- Michigan Child Protection Law
- Textbook (Pecora) chapters 5, 6 & 7, pp. 128-228.
- Textbook (CWLA) sections IIB, pp. 87 – 124.

Hallmark Family Assignment is due at the beginning of class.

Session 9 – March 12, 2003
Family Preservation

Video: “Understanding Family Preservation” – with Bill Moyers.

Required readings:
- Textbook (Pecora) chapter 9, pp. 262-296.
- Textbook (CWLA) section I, chapters 2 & 3, pp. 11 – 32.

Session 10 – March 19, 2003
Foster Care

Required readings:
- Textbook (CWLA) section III, chapters 14-17, pp. 139-176.

Session 11 – March 26, 2003
Kinship Care

Required readings:
- Textbook (CWLA) chapter 13, pp. 127-138
Session 12 – April 2, 2003
Juvenile Justice & Developing Alternative Community-based Services for Youth

Required readings:

Session 13 – April 9, 2003
Adoption, Independent Living, Emancipation

Video: CBS 60 Minutes - “Adopt Me!”

Required readings:
- Textbook (Pecora) chapter 12, pp. 363-405.

Session 14 -- April 16, 2003
Residential/ Group Care, Last Class

Required readings:
- Textbook (CWLA) Chapter 18, pp. 177-186.

Research Paper is due at the beginning of class.
Recommended Resources

Selected Social Work Journals

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<tr>
<th>Adoption Quarterly</th>
<th>Child and Youth Services</th>
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<tr>
<td>Children and Schools</td>
<td>Children and Youth Services Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Welfare</td>
<td>Crime and Delinquency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Preservation Journal</td>
<td>Future of Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Service Review</td>
<td>Social Work Research</td>
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Selected Bibliography

Child Welfare – General:


Child Development and Child Care:


School Social Work:


Family Support:


Children in Historical Perspective:


Child Protective Services:

Family Preservation:

Kinship Care:

Foster Care:


Adoption:


Freundlich, Madelyn.  (2000).  *Adoption and Ethics: Adoption and Assisted Reproduction*  


Youth Development:


Runaway, Homeless, and Abandoned Youth:

Juvenile Justice: