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 be changed to better promote social justice.

Your participation grade will be based upon class attendance (including lack of tardiness) and the quality of your participation in classroom discussion.

It is important to me that this class is, in large part, driven by student interests. Working in groups, you will be responsible for proposing discussion questions and leading classroom discussions on the policy/program areas that we are studying. A sign up sheet will be circulated during our second session.

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:


The coursepack is available at Excel Test Preparation (1117 South University). A copy of the coursepack will also be on reserve at the Social Work Library.

Supplementary required materials provided by the instructor as handouts.

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

3. 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. “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. This assignment will be due February 11th.

B. Research Paper:
Part I. Students are to select a local program that has great interest for you, but not something that is directly part of your field placement. You may use the course content section of this syllabus as a guide for selecting your program area. You are to conduct a field visit and learn about how the program operates, the model on which it is based, the target population, staffing, budget and funding sources. The written assignment requires you to prepare a service program description of 5-10 pages, exclusive of the title page and bibliography, based on the site visit, information obtained from interviews with staff and library research on the program model on which it is based. The program selected for study requires prior approval from the instructor. Part I of the Research Paper is due March 3, 2004.

Part II. The second half of the Research Paper will consist of researching the policy and social work research context for this program model. Topics to be addressed in Part II include:

- What state and federal policies structure and fund this program and guide its objectives and its approach to working with children and families?
- How does the funding structure and policy framework provide both positive potential and problematic constraints on what the program can do?
- What does the evaluation research suggest for the ways such programs should be designed, organized and/or reformed?
- What recommendations do you have for improving the local program that you described in Part I of the Research Paper?


Both sections of the Research Paper should focus on a particular population of color, gender or special needs and should indicate how this group is affected by the problem area or service system chosen. The paper should discuss how to promote a more culturally competent and socially just approach to resolving the problem or providing service.

Library research and the use of references beyond the textbooks and handouts are required. You are encouraged to use the Internet for your research, but the majority of your citations and bibliographic references are to be from books and journals. At least two different professional journals must be cited.

C. A final examination focused on child and family issues in the news over the course of the semester will be distributed at our last class meeting and will be due to later than Wednesday, April 28th at 6 p.m.
1. **Grading Criteria for Written Assignments:**

Written assignments will be graded on the basis of:

- 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.
- The clarity of expression and organization of the paper; is there a logical order to the presentation of your thoughts?
- The appropriate use of references and resources, and the variety of resources referenced.
- The use of proper grammar and the over-all professional presentation of the paper.

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.

1. **Grading Criteria for the Course:**

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

- a) Class Attendance and Participation 15%
- b) “Hallmark” Family Assignment 15%
- c) Research Paper – Part I 20%
- d) Research Paper – Part II 30%
- e) Final Examination – Take Home 20%

The numerical grades earned for class attendance/participation and each written assignment will be translated into letter grades according to the following formula:

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<th>Numerical Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-96</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81-83</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-80</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>&lt;69 (no credit)</td>
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**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 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.

If you need help with writing, please contact the UM Sweetland Writing Center for workshops, tutoring, and online support. The SW Office of Student Services may also be helpful to you.

Any student who feels that he/she may need an accommodation for any sort of disability, please make an appointment with me.

**Course Outline**

**Session 1 – January 7, 2004**  
**Introductions, Course Overview**  
**Handouts:**  
- Course syllabus  
- Readings for Session 2:  

**Session 2 – January 14, 2004**  
**Required Reading:**  
- Textbook (Pecora) chapters 1, 2 & 4, pp. 1-63; 95-127  

**Session 3 – January 21, 2004**  
**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  

**Session 4 – January 28, 2004**
Early Intervention & Child Care

Video: ABC Primetime: “Early Brain Development.”

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

Session 5 – February 4, 2004
Field Work – Students will arrange visits to individual fieldwork locations
Classroom instruction will not be held this evening

Session 6 – February 11, 2004
Family Support Services

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<th>Hallmark Family Assignment is Due</th>
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Required readings:
- Textbook (Pecora) chapter 8, pp. 229 – 261.
- Textbook (CWLA) Section I, pp. 1 – 10; Section IIA, pp. 33-86

Session 7 – February 18, 2004
Youth Development

Handouts for Session 8 (March 3, 2004):

Required readings:

NOTE: There is no class session on February 25 as the School will be on Spring Break.

Session 8 – March 3, 2004
Michigan’s Child Protection Law, Violence Against Children, and Social Policies

Research Paper – Part I is due

Required readings:
• Michigan Child Protection Law
• Textbook (Pecora) chapters 5, 6 & 7, pp. 128-228.
• Textbook (CWLA) sections IIB, pp. 87 – 124.

Session 9 – March 10, 2004
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 17, 2004
Foster Care

Required readings:
• Textbook (Pecora) chapter 10, pp. 297-329.
• Textbook (CWLA) section III, chapters 14-17, pp. 139-176.

Session 11 – March 24, 2004
Kinship Care

Video: Big Mama

Required readings:
• Textbook (Pecora) chapter 11, pp. 330-362.
• Textbook (CWLA) chapter 13, pp. 127-138

Session 12 –March 31, 2004
Adoption

Video: CBS 60 Minutes - “Adopt Me!”

Required readings:
• Textbook (Pecora) chapter 12, pp. 363-405.
• Textbook (CWLA) section IV, pp. 215 – 274.

Session 13 – April 7, 2004
Juvenile Justice & Developing Alternative Community-based Services for Youth

Research Paper – Part II is due

Required readings:
• Textbook (CWLA) Chapter 36, pp. 345-354.
Session 14 - April 14, 2004
Independent Living and Emancipation

Required readings:
• Textbook (CWLA) Chapters 19 – 20, pp. 187-204.

Session 15 – April 21, 2004
Residential/ Group Care

Final Examination will be distributed and is due no later than April 28th at 6:00 p.m.

Required readings:
• Textbook (Pecora) Chapter 13, pp. 406-430.
• Textbook (CWLA) Chapter 18, pp. 177-186 and Chapter 21, pp. 205-214.
Recommended Resources

Selected Social Work Journals

Adoption Quarterly
Children and Schools
Child Welfare
Family Preservation Journal
Social Service Review

Child and Youth Services
Children and Youth Services Review
Crime and Delinquency
Future of Children
Social Work Research

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: