COURSE TITLE: Social Work in Educational Settings
COURSE NUMBER: Social Work 642, Section 001
SEMESTER: Winter, 2004
DAY/TIME: Wednesdays, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., January 7th through April 21st
LOCATION: 2816 SSWB
INSTRUCTOR: Mike Woolley, Ph.D., D.C.S.W.
Office: Room 3849, School of Social Work Building
Phone: (734) 763-1540
Fax: (734) 763-3372
Email: woolleym@umich.edu
OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course presents foundation knowledge and skills essential to effective social work practice in school settings. Topics range from the evolution of social work in schools, to evidence-based practice approaches. Content on multiculturalism, diversity, social justice, and social change are integrated into the course materials as those critical issues relate to practice in schools. Students will learn skills and abilities associated with various school social work roles and responsibilities; recognizing that the roles assumed by school social workers vary from state-to-state, district-to-district, and school-to-school.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students should have a comprehensive understanding and knowledge in five broad areas. Those five translate in the following goals: (a) knowledge of the history and role of social work in schools, (b) critical policy issues currently impacting education, (c) special education law and procedures, (d) theoretical frameworks for school social work practice, (e) prevention and intervention approaches in schools. These five areas are defined in more detail in the following course objectives.

1. Possess an historical perspective on the provision of social work in schools.
2. Be aware of school social worker roles and responsibilities, and recognize the multiple levels and systems that school social workers can address in their practice including: individual students and families, groups of students, consultation with teachers and other school staff, classroom and school-level interventions, and coordination and collaboration with youth serving agencies outside the school.
3. Understand current critical issues being debated with respect to public schools, including: school reform, school-based services, competition, accountability, testing, vouchers, magnet schools, testing, charter schools, No Child Left Behind Act, etc.
4. Conceptualize a school as a complex social system, consisting of the interactions between the individuals within the school (students and staff), and individuals and organizations outside the school (families, neighborhood, community, county/city, state, etc.).

5. Understand conceptual models of social work practice used in the schools, including the ecological, family systems, risk and protection, resilience, and strengths-based approaches.

6. Understand the law, policies, and procedures addressing the provision of educational services to both special education and general education students.

7. Possess foundation knowledge about vulnerable populations of school children for whom school social work services are frequently targeted.

8. Be familiar with school social work professional practice standards and ethics.

9. Be able to identify personal and programmatic evaluative methods useful in school social work practice.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES

Multiculturalism and Diversity are critical issues impacting both schools and the practice of social work in schools. These issues will be presented, discussed and critically analyzed as they relate to practice and policy.

Social Justice and Social Change will be central to the topic of various roles assumed by social workers in schools. The focus of the course includes small or microsystem change (individual, families, and groups), and mid-level or mesosystem change (classroom and school), and awareness the issues impacting schools at the state and national level or exosystem level.

Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation will be themes reflected in the models and approaches to school social work practice. In addition, this course will emphasize the use of evidence-based prevention and intervention activities.

Behavioral and Social Science Research will be presented in this course to support school social work theory and practice methods. Assessment procedures, intervention planning, decision-making and intervention procedures will be directly borrowed from the behavioral and social sciences.

COURSE DESIGN AND TEACHING METHODS

The development of a supportive learning environment, reflecting the values of the social work profession, is essential for the success of this class. A supportive learning environment is fostered by listening to the ideas and views of others, being able to understand and appreciate a point of view which is different from your own, articulating clearly your point of view, and linking your experiences to the readings and assignments. We will appreciate your contributions to making this a safe and respectful class for learning and growth.

This course will use a variety of teaching and learning methods, including lectures, PowerPoint presentations, group exercises, case material, role plays, videos, and seminar techniques. The class format is based on the understanding that you are a prepared and active learner. Reading the assigned materials prior to the class session is a prerequisite to getting the most out of each class and successfully meeting the course objectives.
REQUIRED TEXTS AND COURSE READINGS

There is one required text book for this course:


All other course readings will be handed out in class or posted on the coursetools site for this course. These readings can be downloaded, read electronically, and/or printed. The course site is:

http://coursetools.ummu.umich.edu/2004/winter/swps/642/001.nsf

APA FORMAT AND ACADEMIC HONESTY

Please refer to the American Psychological Association Publication Manual (often called the APA Style Manual) in the preparation of your writing assignments. The current edition is the fifth, but using an earlier edition is acceptable. You can find out more at:

http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html

There is a four page PDF guide to APA style on the Main UM Library website at:
http://www.lib.umich.edu/ugl/research/citationguide/APA5thed.pdf

There is also a brief guide on the SSW Library website:
http://www.lib.umich.edu/socwork/apastyle.html

Other web sites provide useful, on-line APA information:
http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html (APA style for electronic references)
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_apa.html (general information about documentation using APA style, 5th Ed.)

It is critical to reference all sources of information or ideas you use in your writing, to do otherwise is academic dishonesty. Direct quotes in particular should be identified as such. Situations of apparent plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be reported and handled according to University policy.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

I invite any class member who has a disability that may affect his or her participation in this course to let me know. We can discuss possible modifications or accommodations in instructional format, assignments, etc.

POLICY ON INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

A grade of “Incomplete” will be given in extenuating circumstances and in accordance with SSW and University policy. Assignments are due in class on the day as noted in the course outline. Late assignments, i.e., those not handed in to me in class on the day due, will be reduced one letter grade for each day they are late. Please plan your work to have things completed on time and keep me informed if any problems arise.
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Several methods will be utilized to assess your learning and progress toward the class objectives. These methods will include participation, a quiz, 3 papers, and a group project. The relative weight of each assignment will be as follows:

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<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
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<td>Paper 2</td>
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<td>Group Presentation</td>
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<td>Paper 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Attendance and Participation</td>
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CLASS PARTICIPATION

Participation counts for 15% of your final grade. Points will be deducted if you do not participate in class discussions and activities, miss class, come late, or are unprepared for class. Please try to let me know in advance if you are going to miss class.

QUIZ

There are two components of the quiz. The first is the quiz itself, which will be 10% of your final grade. The quiz will be used to assess your learning in the areas of the history of school social work, school law, special education processes and procedures, and current policy issues. The quiz will be take home and consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. The quiz will be open book, you may use any resource you choose to gather information to complete the quiz. The quiz will be handed out on February 11th and will be due on February 18th. The second component is you will write one multiple choice and one short answer question related to one of the quiz topics. Your specific topic will be discussed in class. That will be 5% of your final grade.

PAPERS

Two papers will account for 35% of your grade in this course. These papers are described below. Please type or word process your papers, with one inch margins, double spaced, and use 12 font. Use APA style for references, please see the section on APA style above.

**Paper 1: Due March 17th, 3-5 pages, 15% of class grade**

Option A: My School Experience

This paper is a personal exploration of your experience as a student K-12. Divide that experience into three categories: Peers, Teachers, and Other Activities. Then describe the best and worst, of your experience with respect to each category. For Other Activities, think of clubs, sports, specialists (such as: school social workers, art or music teachers, band, sports, principals, school psychologists or counselors, the janitor, etc.). Conclude by discussing how your school experience may inform your school social work practice.

Option B: Brown Vs. The Board
Attend one of the 50th Anniversary of the Brown Vs. The Board of Education meetings/events. Write a paper describing the meeting, what you learned and observed, your reflections afterward, and conclude by applying your insights to school social work practice.

**Paper 2: Due April 14th, 5-7 pages, 20% of class grade**

Option A: Practice Plan
Choose a child you are working with in your field placement, or you can use a classroom or school as the client. Briefly describe the client and the presenting problem, and then present a plan/strategy for providing services to that client(s) with respect to the presenting situation. You may use any resources (people, literature) available to you to construct your plan. Articulate at least 2 goals with objectives you would include in the student’s IEP. Additionally, discuss the individuals, agencies, and referrals you would include, consult or collaborate with in the implementation of the plan. Please reference at minimum one relevant journal article not a part of course readings.

Option B: Observation Assessment Exercise
Arrange to spend a couple hours observing middle school students during unstructured time at a school: lunch, in the hallways between classes, before school starts, after school lets out, on the bus, etc. Observe and take notes about social interactions between students, and between students and staff. Look for patterns in those observations. Write your paper about what you learn about the life of middle school students at that school. During your analysis, think about your understanding of child development, school climate, and systems or group dynamics. You may be creative in your presentation of the material. For example: write it from the first person perspective of a student you create who may be in need of social work services, or write it as a school climate needs assessment and make some preliminary suggestions on a school level intervention or prevention plan.

**GROUP PRESENTATION**
A group presentation will account for 25% of your grade in this course. We will discuss this project in class and I will provide you with a handout listing possible topics. On January 14th we will organize the groups, deciding on membership and topics. The groups may include 3-5 students. You will be given class time to work on this project during the semester, but will also be expected to meet outside of class. On January 21st, we will schedule the group presentations. Below is a list of the group project expectations, which will also serve as the grading criteria:

1. Class presentation – The presentation should be five minutes in length per group member, followed by 10-15 minutes of class questions/discussion. The presentation may take on varied formats, PowerPoint, Role Play, Talk Show, Debate, School Meeting, etc. The presentation should define and describe the central concepts and issues related to the topic (25%), and then present either a more in-depth analysis of the issue or intervention/prevention strategies or practice principals for school social workers (25%). Provide the class with handouts related to your presentation(10%). Please provide me with materials from the preparation of your presentation such as: slides, speaker notes, handouts, etc.
2. Individual Process Paper – This paper should be 2 – 3 pages in length. Discuss the group project process, what you learned, and how that may inform your role as a member of a team working in a school setting (20%).

3. One journal article per group member – The content of the presentation should draw from a minimum of one journal article per group member (20%). Please provide me with a reference list.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Class 1) January 7 – Introduction to Course**

Topics A) The plan – syllabus and assignments
Topics B) Overviews of course and school social work

Reading 1) NASW (2002). *Standards for social work services in the schools.* Washington, DC: NASW.
http://www.socialworkers.org/sections/credentials/school_social.asp

**Class 2) January 14 – History and Current Issues**

Topics A) Origins and evolution of school social work
Topics B) School social worker roles and responsibilities
Topics C) School reform, school-based services

Reading 1) Chapters 1 & 2 - Allen-Meares

**Class 3) January 21 – Current Issues Continued**

Topics A) School funding, vouchers, magnets,
Topics B) Testing, accountability, No Child Left Behind

Reading 1) No Child Left Behind Act:


**Class 4) January 28 – Theoretical Frameworks for SSW Practice**

Topics A) Ecological & Family Systems  
Topics B) Strengths-Based, Risk & Protection, and Resilience

- Reading 1) Chapters 3 & 4 - Allen-Meares  

**Class 5) February 4 – School Law and Special Education**

Topics A) FREAP, EAHCA, BEA, ESEA, 504, EHA, IDEA  
Topics B) Inclusion, Confidentiality

- Reading 1) Chapters 8 & 10 – Allen-Meares  

**Class 6) February 11 – Special Education Continued**

Quiz Handed Out

Topics A) IEP, CST, FBA, BIP


**Class 7) February 18 – Assessment in Schools**

Quiz Returned

Topics A) Observation, Interviews, Structured Interviews, Self-Report Instruments  
Topics B) Special Focus – The School Success Profile
February 25 – Spring Break

Class 8) March 3 – Group Work in Schools

Topics A) Planning and facilitating groups in schools


Class 9) March 10 – School Climate

Topics A) School climate or environment – theory, research, and applications
Topics B) School Violence, Teasing and Bullying

Reading 1) Chapter 7 – Allen-Meares

Class 10) March 17 – Vulnerable Populations of Students

Paper 1 Due

Topics A) Overview of the vulnerable populations of students frequently the target of school social workers

Reading 1) Chapters 5 & 9 – Allen-Meares

Class 11) March 24 – Vulnerable Populations Continued

School Meetings, Collaboration and Consultation

Topics A) Strengths-based and solution-focused consultation
Topics B) Group Presentations

Reading 1) Chapter 11 – Allen-Meares

Class 12) March 31 – Empirical Practice with Vulnerable Student Populations

Topics A) GLBT Issues in Schools – Film and Discussion
Topics B) Group Presentations

Reading 1) Appendices I & II– Allen-Meares

Class 13) April 7 – Empirical Practice with Vulnerable Student Populations

Topics A) Group Presentations

Reading 1) Chapter 12 – Allen-Meares
Reading 2) (R13-OpenHearts) *Open Hands, Open hearts: Working with Native Youth in the Schools.* Garret, M. T., Bellon-Harn, E., Torres-Rivera, E., Garret, J. T., & Roberts, L. C.

Class 14) April 14 – Evaluation

**What is School Social Work Really Like?**

Paper 2 Due

Topics A) Evaluating school social work practice and school-based programs
Topics B) Panel discussion of practicing school social workers

Reading 1) Chapter 13 – Allen-Meares

Class 15) April 21 – Bringing it all together

Reading 1) *The Etiology and Treatment of Childhood*