

**SW 625: Interpersonal Practice with Children and Youth  
Spring Summer 2012**

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**Mondays 1-5 PM; B798**

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**Office hours - Mondays 10:00-12:00; others by appointment**

**Course Description:**

This course will examine practice theories and techniques for working directly with children, adolescents, and their caretakers. This course will emphasize evidence-based interventions that address diverse groups of children or adolescents within their social contexts (e.g. peer group, school, family, and neighborhood). Special attention will be given to issues of diversity as it relates to building therapeutic relationships and intervening with children, adolescents and their families. The interaction between environmental risk factors, protective factors, promotive and developmental factors as they contribute to coping, resiliency, and disorder, as well as how these might vary by child or adolescent diversity factors, such as race, ethnicity, disadvantage, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity and culture will also be covered.

**Course Content:**

This course will present prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation models appropriate to interpersonal practice with children, youth and their families in a variety of contexts. Content will focus on the early phases of intervention, including barriers to engagement that may result from client-worker differences, involuntary participation on the part of the child, youth, or family, and factors external to the client-worker relationship, such as policy or institutional decisions that may influence or shape the therapeutic relationship. Since the intervention strategies taught in this course rely significantly on the social worker as a critical component of the change process, attention will be paid to the understanding of self as an instrument in the change process. Although a variety of evidence-based interventions for engaging children, youth, and their families (or other caretaking adults such as foster parents) will be presented, my primary approach is adventure/experiential-based hence will be regularly presented and demonstrated. Assessment content will emphasize client and caretaker strengths and resources as well as risks to child or youth well-being that may result from internal or external vulnerabilities caused by trauma, deprivation,

discrimination, separation and loss, developmental disability, and physical and mental illness. Particular attention will be paid to cultural, social, and economic factors that influence client functioning or the worker's ability to accurately assess the child, youth, or family. These assessments include attention to life-threatening problems such as addictions, suicidal ideation, and interpersonal violence. Content on intervention planning will assist students in selecting interventions which are matched with client problems across diverse populations, cultural backgrounds, socio-political contexts, and available resources. These interventions will be based on a thorough assessment, appropriate to the child's or adolescent's situation, and sensitive to and compatible with the child/adolescent's and family's expressed needs, goals, circumstances, values, and beliefs. Summary descriptions of developmental stages (i.e. infancy, toddlerhood, preschool age, school age, and adolescence) will be presented in terms of developmental characteristics and milestones, salient developmental challenges, and themes such as self-esteem and the development of peer relationships. Helping parents or other caretaking adults to understand the child's or youth's issues or behavior in developmental terms will also be discussed.

Since work with children and youth almost always requires multiple intervention modalities, attention will be given to creating effective intervention plans through the integration of different modalities. Those intervention methods that have been empirically demonstrated to be effective will be given particular emphasis. Methods for monitoring and evaluating interventions will also be discussed and demonstrated in this course. A range of evidence-based intervention approaches will be presented such as cognitive behavioral therapy, behavioral therapy, and parent management training. Promising practices for children and adolescents across child serving settings will also be reviewed. The use of play therapy in working with young children and children who have been traumatized will be explored.

My primary practice approach is experiential/adventure-based so expect us to engage in the use of adventure and experiential tools and techniques throughout the duration of the course.

### **Course Objective:**

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

1. Understand and address the impact of diversity (including ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation) of children, adolescents and their families and the social worker on practice process and outcomes.
2. Describe and apply a number of assessment procedures (e.g. direct observation of or interviews with the client, parent or caretaker, and collateral contacts with teachers,

caseworkers, or other professionals) that identify internal and external risk protective and promotive factors that may affect children and adolescents.

3. Describe the primary developmental tasks and characteristics of childhood and adolescence as they relate to the selection and implementation of developmentally and culturally appropriate techniques for engaging and treating children and adolescents.
4. Identify the ways in which continuity or disruption in primary care relationships may impact children, adolescents, and the therapeutic relationship.
5. Engage in an assessment process that includes gathering information on the risk, protective and promotive factors at the intrapersonal, family, peer group, school and neighborhood levels in order to formulate and understanding of the child/adolescent's presenting problems and circumstances.
6. Implement evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies (e.g. cognitive behavioral interventions, parent management training) that are compatible with child/adolescent and family or caretaker goals, needs, circumstances, culture, and values.
7. Develop advanced intervention skills in working with children, adolescents and their families.
8. Monitor and evaluate interventions with regard to: effectiveness, sensitivity to diversity factors; impact of child/adolescent' and families' social identities on their experience of power and privilege; and appropriateness of the intervention to specific child/adolescent needs resulting from conditions such as maltreatment, deprivation, disability, and substance abuse.

### **Course Design:**

Class format will include lecture, discussion, case analysis, skills development sessions and viewing of videotapes. Written assignments will integrate theory, evidence-based research, and case analysis, and when possible, the student's practicum work.

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

- *Multiculturalism and Diversity* will be addressed through discussion of child/adolescent/family-worker differences and power/privilege differentials based on ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation. Case examples of intervention and readings will reflect this theme.
- *Social Justice and Social Change* will be addressed through discussion of differences between problems responsive to interpersonal practice interventions and those which result from poverty, discrimination, and disenfranchisement, requiring systemic as well as individual interventions. Case advocacy for disadvantaged, deprived, victimized and underserved or inappropriately served children and adolescents and their families will also be emphasized.

- *Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation* will be addressed through discussion of risk, protective and promotive factors across the child/adolescent's multiple contexts. Discussions will also emphasize intervention theories and techniques that support the child's or adolescents' developmental potentials.
- *Behavioral and Social Science Research* will be addressed in relationship to the selection, monitoring, and evaluation of assessment and intervention methods with specific emphasis on evidence-based interventions in the areas of developmental psychopathology, attachment, risk, resiliency and coping, trauma, and maltreatment. Students will develop advanced skills necessary to implement evidence-based interventions and critically evaluate intervention theories and approaches used with child and adolescent populations.

### **Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:**

Social work ethics and values in regard to confidentiality, self-determination, and respect for cultural and religious differences are particularly important when working with children and youth. Social workers working with children and adolescents often need to make critical intervention decisions which may have to balance risks to the child's or adolescent's safety or emotional well-being with their need for ongoing connection to their families and communities. This course will cover the complexities of ethical dilemmas as they relate to work with child and adolescent populations and the ways that the professional Code of Ethics may be used to guide and resolve value and ethical issues.

### **Intensive Focus on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS):**

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self knowledge and self awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

### **Accommodations:**

If you need or desire an accommodation for a disability, please let me know soon. The earlier that you make me aware of your needs the more effectively we will be able to use the resources available to us, such as the services for Students with Disabilities, the Adaptive Technology Computing Site and the like. If you do decide to disclose your disability, I will treat that information as private and confidential. Also, please notify me if religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments so we can make appropriate arrangements.

## Behavioral Expectations:

- Be fully present; be respectful of all who partake; be open to feedback;
- Communicate effectively; be aware;
- Attend and participate in all sessions; complete all assignments

**Special Note:** *Texting, writing papers, net surfing, messaging or emailing during class are a distraction to you, to me and to your classmates and is unacceptable.* I may or may not say something to you if I notice you are so engaged – but *it will affect your participation grade.* You are going into a field that needs you to be well equipped and you have a short amount of time in this program to obtain IP skills and knowledge.

## Course Assignments

You are professional students. In a year or two, you will be in the field engaged in practice. What is offered in this class should help you function better in the field. How much you put in, or take out is totally up to you. My hope is that you will reflect on your needs and work to meet them through the offerings of this class.

As a way to “walk the talk”, here is perhaps an unusual way to present the challenges required from you-

1. **Papers:** You will each complete four written assignments, one each around engagement and setting the tone, assessment, matching with- and implementation of- an intervention, and an evaluation of the process. More details forthcoming! **78** possible points
2. **Participation:** Throughout the course, we will engage in class activities. It is important that you participate fully in them. From time to time, I will offer opportunities for extra credit reflection papers. There will also be spot checking on reading through game shows, quizzes, reflection papers and activities-created-solely-to-see-what-you-know! **11** possible points
3. **Attendance:** Due to the primarily experiential nature of this class section, I place much weight on your presence in class. Letting me know if you expect to miss class is respectful and appreciated; however it doesn't give you the points earned by others who are present. **11** possible points

## Grading

Letter grades from "A" through "E" are given for class performance. "A" grades are given for exceptional individual performance and mastery of the material. The use of "A+", "A", and "A-" distinguish the degree of superiority. "B" grades are given to students who demonstrate mastery of the material. "B+" is used for students who perform just above the mastery level but not in an exceptional manner. "B-" is used for students just below the mastery level. "C" grades are given when mastery of the material is minimal. A "C-" is the lowest grade which carries credit. "D" grades indicate deficiency and carry no credit. "E" grades indicate failure and carry no credit.

**Resources/Texts:** I expect to use these texts to support our conversations and discussions throughout the semester. Some of the chapters are on CTools; the books should be on reserve at the library.

Bertolino, Bob (2010) *Strengths-Based Engagement and Practice: Creating Effective Helping Relationships*. Allyn & Bacon Publishers

Davies, Douglas (2004). *Child Development: A Practitioner's Guide: 2nd Edition* New York: Guilford Press.

Friedberg, RA, McClure, JM, & Garcia, JH (2009). *Cognitive Therapy: Techniques for Children and Adolescents*. New York: Guilford Press.

Gil, E. (2006). *Helping abused and traumatized children: integrating directive and nondirective approaches*. New York: Guilford Press

Lung, D. Maurie, Stauffer, Gary A., Alvarez, Tony G. (2008) *The Power of One: Using adventure and experiential activities in one-on-one counseling sessions*. WoodNBarnes Publishing

Taffel, Ron (2005) *Breaking Through to Teens*. New York: Guilford Press (There is a 2010 paperback edition available)

## SW 625

### Semester Schedule

May 7: Introduction to the class! Who is here? Foundations for IP

- Practitioner's Perspective
- The Facilitated Process
- Adult Helping Qualities...

May 14: Creating the Ideal Environment; Point B's!

- Check all the articles in the folder

May 21: Engagement: Defining Resistance/addressing it

- Check all the articles in folder

June 4: Assessing Children/Adolescents: The Four Corners Tool

- Check all in folder

June 11: Assessing families/groups

- Will add to this folder soon

June 18: Matching with an Intervention; Contracting; Developing the journey

June 25: Intervening with Children/Adolescents

July 2: Group/Family Interventions

July 9: Suicide Prevention/Intervention; Bullying

July 16: Evaluating our Process; evaluating ourselves

July 23:

## Class Assignments

Note on Assessment of Papers/Grading: My practice is to provide detailed feedback on your papers. In some cases, I will suggest additions and revisions to the papers. By revising the paper, you will have a chance to raise the grade.

Note on content of paper: My assumption is that for each paper, you will reference lessons from class, texts, and articles that you have found that will help to support the work you will be writing about

### The YOU paper (9 points)

1. Write a 2-3 page paper (upload onto CTools by **May 14**) covering the following:
  - a. Who are you? What is important for me to know about you (learning style, need for structure/flexibility, professional pet peeves, defensiveness-es, topics that make you shut down, topics of interest, etc)? What do you bring, from prior experiences (classroom, field, life), to this class? What are some areas of strength (specific is best)? What are some areas for improvement (specific is best)? Share some of your hopes and expectations for this class.
2. Prepare a PPT slide that I will show in class that best summarizes all of the above. When your slide shows up, you will be asked to respond to any questions that class members have (up to a minute's worth). Submit this through CTools by Sunday noon, **May 13**

### The Engagement Assignment (16 points)

We have talked in class about the value of having an engaged client. We also discussed how resistance shows up in a session. On **June 4**, come prepared to present to your small group the following:

1. (10 minutes) Present a tool you would use to address an area of the helping process that when addressed would enhance engagement or diminish resistance.
2. Prepare a 1-2 page document that your colleagues can take away that will help them understand your tool. (upload to CTools by **June 3**)
3. Make sure you include references and support for it
4. After all have presented, as a group, choose one that the owner will demonstrate in an experience with you all.
5. Reflect on your experience (1-2 pages) that you upload onto CTools by **June 11**.



## **The Helping Process (60 points)**

This project will entail the following components-

1. Completing a 4-corners assessment of an individual or a family (10)
2. Identifying areas for intervention (5)
3. Contracting (4)
4. Designing an intervention plan (8)
5. Implementing an aspect of it (10)
6. Reflecting on the experience (15)
7. Evaluating your actions (8)

### **More in class**

**Total Possible Points Available to be earned      107 points**

**Written Assignments      85 points**

Paper 1=	10
Paper 2=	15
Paper 3=	20
Paper 4=	25
Paper 5=	10

**Attendance and Participation      22 points**

### **Grading**

A+	108+
A:	102-107 points
A-	96-101
B+:	90- 95
B:	84- 89
B-	78- 83
C+:	72- 77