1. Course Description:

This course will critically analyze the various social services and policies that provide developmental, preventive, treatment, and rehabilitative services aimed at children and youth and their families. The role of social services in the broad context of both formal and informal systems that influence the life course of children and youth will be addressed. This 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 and organization and delivery of child-oriented social services based on behavioral and social science research and through the lens of multi-culturalism and social justice values. In addition, illustrative cross-national comparisons of services and policies for families with children and youth will be examined. The course will address the key diversity dimensions “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.”

2. Course Content:

Substantive service and policy focal areas in this course are listed below. These areas will be critically analyzed in terms of the four curricular themes: multiculturalism and diversity; social justice and social change; promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation; and behavioral and social science research and with an analysis of the policy and services implications of power, privilege, oppression, diversity, and social justice.

- Indicators of the well-being of children and families in the United States, including historical domestic and cross-national comparisons
• Approaches to policy analysis and the legal and service delivery frameworks that shape child and youth policies, programs and services
• Family violence – child protective services and domestic violence
• Family support services, including income support, child care, Head Start, home visiting programs, and family support centers and early childhood education
• Policies and service programs designed to encourage positive youth development, including school-based programs
• Child Protective Services (including family preservation, foster care, group residential care, kinship care, adoption and guardianship)
• Juvenile justice
• Child health and mental health services and policies
• Alternative solutions and future outlooks

3. Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course

1. Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the policies that govern services to Children & Youth and their Families in Society in the following areas:
   
   a. Specify and critique the philosophies and ideologies that guide the development of policy instruments and service arrangements for children, youth and their families
   b. Specify and critique how the current policy frameworks (at the federal, state, and local levels) reflect society’s social construction of the child, youth and family (e.g. do not take into account variant family/caretaking forms and structures)
   c. Specify and critique the laws, regulations and judicial interpretations that govern the delivery of social services to children, youth, and families
   d. Specify and critique the outcomes and implications of current policies for children, youth, and families
   e. Specify and critique the funding mechanisms that are available to provide services to children, youth, and families
   f. Demonstrate understanding of how the structure and historical development of policies maintain systems of power, privilege and oppression
   g. Develop the ability to identify how inequitable power is manifested on various dimensions of children, youth, and their families and how these dimensions interact with each other.
   h. Show an understanding and the ability to critique how current policy frameworks work to promote social justice or oppression.
   i. Demonstrate critical analysis using cross national comparisons

2. Students should demonstrate knowledge of how the current service delivery system disrupts or supports the oppression, discrimination, and injustice of
children, youth, and their families. and articulate alternative design possibilities in the field of Children & Youth and their Families in Society to address such problems as:
   a. Level and type of attention to the basic needs of families (promotion)
   b. Lack of prevention as a focus of the service system
   c. Lack of social services attached to concrete provision
   d. Unequal distribution of services based on the current policy framework
   e. Racial and ethnic disparities among those who enter the system and the differential ways in which they are served
   f. Structural discontinuities in the public vs. private provision of services

3. Students should demonstrate in depth knowledge and the ability to apply evidence-based programming and professional knowledge in the design and implementation of comprehensive, culturally responsive services for children, youth, and families. Students should be able to critique evidence-based programming in terms of its cultural framing and how power and inequities are being initiated and reinforced.

4. Students should demonstrate in depth policy analysis research in one or more of the specific areas of services and policies to children, youth, and their families, be it family support services, child protection, foster care, juvenile justice, or the like.

4. Course Design:

This course will be taught using lectures, class and small group discussion and exercises, media, and group class projects and papers.

5. Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:

   • *Multiculturalism and Diversity* will be addressed through, for example, discussion of the diverse client populations of the service systems covered in the course. In addition, the design of programs and how they are or are not responsive to the varying cultural and ethnic circumstances of their clients is addressed. Special child and family policy needs related to issues of poverty, race, ethnicity, discrimination, family structure, and other differences are also considered.

   • *Social Justice and Social Change* will be addressed by considering the differential impact of child, youth, and family policy and services on the poor, race and ethnic groups, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth; by identifying the mechanisms in these policies and services that support privilege and oppression; and by developing an awareness of ways to promote social justice goals within these systems.
• **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation** will be addressed by examining the continuum of care present or ideally needed in the programs and services provided to children, youth, and their 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 the effectiveness of services and policies for children, youth, and their families.

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

   This course will cover 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, this 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 will be covered, 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 the treatment of minors.

7. **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.

**Class Requirements**

**Class Participation**

Student attendance is expected at every class session. Students are responsible for securing lecture notes and handouts when circumstances require them to be absent. More than two unexcused absences will result in a grade penalty.

Students are responsible for assisting in the creation of a learning environment that promotes professional socialization, and 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 reduce inequalities and promote social justice.

Your participation grade will be based upon class attendance, the quality of your participation in and facilitation of classroom discussion, and your group presentations.

**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 textbook and in the resources sections of the CTools site for this course. The reading assignments are outlined in this syllabus. The textbook for this course is available at the following local bookstores: Ulrich’s; Barnes & Noble at the Michigan Union and North Campus; Crazy Wisdom; Common Language.


This edition is highly recommended with a new chapter and all revised other chapters.

An additional set of required readings is available in the Resources section of CTools. These are organized by the weekly session of the course on which they are due. In addition, some of these readings can be directly downloaded from the following sites:

- All articles that appear in any issue of *The Future of Children* can be downloaded from the web at [www.futureofchildren.org](http://www.futureofchildren.org)
- Publications from the Center for Law and Social Policy can be found at [www.clasp.org/publications](http://www.clasp.org/publications)
- Publications from the Census Bureau can be found at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)
- Publications from the USDHHS, Administration for Children and Families, can be found at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/)
- Publications from the USDHHS, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation can be found at [http://aspe.hhs.gov/index.cfm](http://aspe.hhs.gov/index.cfm)

**Written Assignments (detailed guide in handout and on CTools Resources Session 1)**

This Group Portfolio assignment is based on a case-study and seeks to make explicit the linkages between social policy and social services for children, youth, and/or their families. It requires students to critically analyze the entire complex set of relationships from policy to program and to develop ideas about how these influence practice realities.
and practice possibilities. This assignment builds on skills developed last semester during SWPS 530 *Introduction to Social Welfare Policy and Services*.

Your group of 4-6 students will be picking a case example in an area of interest in the course, based on similar field placements, policy area interests, etc. However, the point of this exercise is to learn skills that are generalizable to other social work policy and service settings and to learn from your colleagues in the class about how these work in other case examples in policies and services directed to children, youth, and/or their families and environments.

This project is designed to offer you the opportunity to:

- Develop an in-depth understanding of a piece of federal and/or state legislation;
- Develop a sophisticated understanding of the relationship between federal policy, state policy, social service delivery systems, and specific social service programs (particularly financial incentives, program design, etc.);
- Develop a deeper understanding about the service needs and system barriers involved in serving particular populations of clients with unique needs;
- Critically analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the existing empirical literature with respect to target populations, and service intervention including service effectiveness and best practices for service delivery;
- Creatively and critically analyze the design and delivery of programs and services;
- Critically analyze program funding streams and to creatively and strategically think about them given the current political and economic realities;
- Disseminate group findings to classmates and engage them in critical conversation.

**Class Presentations**

Each student is required to give two presentations.

1. Each person will join a group of 2-3 people to do an in-class presentation of one article from the assigned readings from one week.

You have one article presentation. You and one or two other students will work as a team to share your understanding of a topic with the class, based on the assigned readings by topic and class selected. Your job includes:

   (a) stimulate interest in the topic;
   (b) present a clear summary of the articles (note: most of your classmates have not read them carefully);
   (c) most importantly, share your insights and learning points from the articles in relation to (i) what you see as core messages in the articles as a whole, (ii) is the information conveyed in the articles consistent with your prior knowledge—what is and what is not, (iii) what you see as the most interesting or intriguing information and how do you make sense of it, (iv)
how social workers can use the information, i.e., what implications for social work; and
(d) provide one question for class discussion.

Previous students have used a variety of audio-visual aids (e.g., power point slides, short videos, cartoons) and activities (e.g., role play, opinion survey) to assist their presentations. If you use power point slides, please get it ready to open before the class begins (e.g., save it in the desktop of the classroom computer). You have at least 30 minutes for the presentation, including expected time for Q & A or other interactive exercises with the class. **Effective interactive involvement of the class will enhance your grade.** Presentations may exceed 30 minutes depending on the nature of the presentation.

Grading criteria for article presentation: (a) clarity, accuracy and conciseness of the summary; (b) extent of effort to engage the audience; (c) demonstrated understanding of the assigned readings, ability to extract core messages, and critical thinking; (d) demonstrated ability to integrate the readings to personal experience and social work practice.

2. Each group will give an hour presentation on their Portfolio case study during the last three weeks of the course.

**Grading**

**Grading Criteria for Written Assignments**

The portfolio paper will be graded using the following criteria:

a. The quality of the analysis and depth of understanding of the concepts, ideas, and information presented. It must be clearly grounded in and thoughtfully reflective of the professional literature cited.

b. The clarity of expression and organization of the paper - is there a logical order to the presentation of each section of the portfolio.

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. **NOTE:** Because you are working together, you should provide yourselves ample time to **proofread** the writing and make sure to turn in a second or third draft on which all group members have contributed.

**STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT DRAFTS TO DR. CABIN AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE FOR UNGRADED FEEDBACK.**
Grading Criteria for the Course

Each written assignment will be given a letter grade. The criteria I use are as follows:

**A+, 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 are 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** 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.

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

a) Portfolio project 70%

b) Class Participation, Article Presentation, and Project Presentation 30%

Writing Assistance

Sweetland Writing Center

One of the benefits of being a student at the University of Michigan is the range and depth of resources to which you have access. The Sweetland Writing Center is one such resource. Graduate students are eligible for seven sessions per semester. For help with your paper, please free to consult them for writing support. They can help you develop your argument, improve your paper organization, correct grammar mistakes, and craft effective prose. SWC is located at 1310 North Quad (corner of W. Washington and State St.) You can register with them on line and schedule an appointment: Website: [http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/)

School of Social Work Career Services

Tutoring and writing assistance for social work courses is also available at the School of Social Work Career Services Office located in 1696 SSWB. To schedule an appointment, email the office staff at [ssw-cso@umich.edu](mailto:ssw-cso@umich.edu)

Another resource is the English Language Institute: [http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli)
Plagiarism

Representing someone else’s words, statements, ideas or works as one’s own without proper acknowledgement or citation – is a serious violation of academic integrity and will be grounds for failure on an assignment and other disciplinary action as described under the School’s policies on academic and professional conduct:

http://ssw.umich.edu/studentGuide/2012/page.html?section=12&volume=1

Another helpful resource can be found at:

http://www.lib.umich.edu/academic-integrity/resources-students

Note that using Web resources increases the risk of “accidental plagiarism.” Do not let that happen.

Students with Disabilities

The School of Social Work has policies and services to provide equitable educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities in all programs and activities. Students with disabilities who require academic adjustments are encouraged to contact their instructors at the beginning of the semester to discuss their specific needs.

To find out more about services, or to volunteer as a reader, note taker, or tutor, contact Services for Students with Disabilities, G664 Haven Hall, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1045, (734) 763-3000 http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/. Students with disabilities may also contact the SSW Office of Student Services for assistance in accessing needed services at (734-936-0961) or email sswaccessibility@umich.edu.
Course Outline (subject to change based on class discussion)

Session 1  Introductions, Course Overview

Course Syllabus and Handouts; setting dates and course schedule adjustments (if necessary); Forming Groups for Article Presentation and Portfolio Projects

Session 2  Child Well-being Indicators, Child Poverty Policies and Programs

Jenson & Fraser, Chapters 1-2, pp. 1-56


America’s Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2012


The Clearinghouse on International Developments in Child, Youth and Family Policies at Columbia University
http://www.childpolicyintl.org/
Session 3  Selected Policies for Families: An Analytic Overview, Legal and Service Delivery Frameworks for Child Welfare

Jenson & Fraser, Chapter 3, pp. 57-112


Session 4  Family Supports and Early Child Care


Group Project Bi-weekly work plan DUE
Session 5       Education Policies and Programs

Jenson & Fraser, Chapter 4, pp. 113-145


Session 6       Positive Youth Development


**HAVE A GOOD SPRING BREAK**

**Session 7**

**Topics in Child Welfare: Child Protective Services**

*Child Maltreatment* 2010 (Indicators from Session 2)


**Session 8**

**More topics in Child Welfare: Foster Care, Adoption, IL**


Session 9  
Child Health and Disabilities

Jenson & Fraser, Chapters 6-7, pp. 195-269


Miller, D.P. (2010 accepted). Associations between the home and school environments and child body mass index. Social Science and Medicine, 1-34.

C. S. Mott Children’s Hospital National Poll on Children’s Health  
http://www.med.umich.edu/mott/npch/reports/index.htm

Session 10  
Child Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Jenson & Fraser, Chapters 5 & 8, pp. 146-194; 270-305


**Session 11**  
**Juvenile Justice**

**Group project presentations**

Jenson & Fraser, Chapter 9, pp. 306-352


**Session 12**  
**Topics for the Future: Supporting or preventing “fragile families”**

**Group project presentations**


Session 13  More topics for the Future of Policy and Services

Group project presentations

Jenson & Fraser, Chapter 10, pp. 353-370


LAST IN-PERSON CLASS: April 14
FINAL PROJECTS DUE BY EMAIL APRIL 21