



SW 629 Interventions in School Social Work

Fall 2014

Friday, 9:00-12:00 PM

3816 SSWB

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Course Description

This course presents advanced knowledge and skills essential to providing effective school social work interventions. Students will learn to identify, select and apply evidence-based prevention and intervention methods for use with individuals, groups, families, school personnel, and communities to enhance student learning, development, and school success. Student learning will include social justice practice skills, trauma informed practice models, positive behavior supports for school wide programs and individuals, crisis prevention, planning, and intervention, behavior intervention planning; mediation, conflict resolution, and collaborative problem-solving methods. Specific interventions to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Emotional Impairments; and other disabilities covered under Individuals with Disability Education Act will be covered. Ways to promote family engagement and collaboration will be explored as well as a focus on effective measures to promote youth voice. Skills to enhance collaboration and consultation between teachers, families, and other school personnel will be addressed. School social worker intervention methodologies will include ways to help schools develop climates that are inviting, supportive, and inclusive of diversity. Students will acquire the skills needed to effectively practice as a school social worker to enhance student learning and achievement.

Course Content

Content in this course includes practice methodologies that promote student academic success that take into account behavioral and emotional challenges according to school and legislative policies. Inter-disciplinary approaches designed to strengthen individuals, groups, and families within larger social contexts such as the school and community will be presented. Methods that increase student and family access to education and educational resources will be explored. School wide interventions such as the implementation of positive behavioral supports, process oriented forms of discipline, family engagement, inter group dialogue, positive conflict resolution skills, and coordination and collaboration with youth serving agencies in the community will be discussed. Effective classroom wide, small group, and individual interventions will be practiced.

Students will also learn how to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and services offered and make modifications based on student needs. Practice frameworks will include: socially just practice, knowledge and evidence based practice skills for individuals, groups, schools, and communities, and the rich interplay of student, family, school personnel, and community multicultural and diversity dimensions.

As a new course here at the UMSSW, we have the opportunity to mold this course into a course that describes for anyone asking- “this is what school social workers can do in our schools to best help them provide the learning opportunities that they were designed to offer.” There will be opportunities to seek feedback and input from the students of this class, professionals currently in the field of school social work, and colleagues throughout the course in a continuing effort to further shape this course now and in the semesters to come.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and skills for locating, selecting, and applying empirically-supported, evidence-based prevention and intervention methods effective for use with individuals, groups, families, school personnel, and communities to enhance student learning, development, and school success.
2. Demonstrate knowledge and skills in development of behavior intervention plans collaboratively with family members, educational staff, and outside resources, personnel, and agencies.
3. Demonstrate knowledge and skills to provide crisis prevention, planning, and intervention services including the impact of trauma on development, learning and school performance.
4. Demonstrate knowledge and skills to promote positive behavior supports for individuals and school wide programs.
5. Apply principles of social justice to school based practice.
6. Demonstrate the ability to assess and respond to a suspected suicidal threat from a student.
7. Demonstrate the knowledge to design interventions in the event of a death of a student in the school community, or of pervasive bullying reports.
8. Demonstrate knowledge and skills to facilitate and coordinate student and family access to medical, health, mental health, social services, and other community resource and to promote collaboration among school personnel and other community agencies.
9. Demonstrate knowledge of factors that promote positive school climate and culture of belonging among students, families, and school personnel.
10. Demonstrate knowledge and skills in mediation, conflict resolution, and collaborative problem-solving models.
11. Practice skills that enhance youth voice, engagement, and leadership.
12. Demonstrate knowledge and skills to evaluate effectiveness of programs and services and modify these based upon student need.

13. Demonstrate knowledge and skills to carefully consider ethical dilemmas that may arise in the school setting and the ability to make difficult ethical decisions that are guided by the Code of Ethics, relevant laws, and school policies.

COURSE DESIGN AND TEACHING METHODS

This course will use a variety of teaching and learning methods, including lectures, PowerPoint presentations, group activities, case studies, videos, guest presenters, seminar techniques and site visits if logistically possible. 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.

We want this to be a practice class; we want practitioners in the room and we want us in the schools. Both instructors have practiced as school social workers and are excited to share our experiences with the class; we also expect your expertise to be shared with the rest of us in the class.

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 learning experience.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES

- *Multiculturalism and Diversity.* This course will review the recent national, regional, and local demographic shifts that have increased the ethnic and cultural diversity of children and families in educational institutions. A culturally sensitive, developmental perspective will be presented ranging from infancy through secondary education and culminating in the transition from school to the world of work. In addition, the particular policies and services regarding children and youth with illnesses and disabilities, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons will be reviewed.
- *Social Justice and Social Change.* Social workers in educational settings strive to maximize educational opportunities for individuals, groups, neighborhoods, and regions, and promote progressive local, state, and national policy. Relevant legislation and policies that seek to meet these goals will be reviewed, as well as the social justice implications of private and public schools.
- *Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation.* These approaches are incorporated at all levels of practice in educational settings. This includes programs for the student and family, the organization and positive organizational culture in schools, and educational climates overall that promote children's development to their maximum potential. Additionally, characteristics of at-risk children and youth and their particular vulnerabilities will be highlighted. These risks will include school failure, suspension, and expulsion, "dropping out," unplanned pregnancy, insufficient preparation for the work force, family roles, and group and individual violence. Related concerns will include prevention of substance abuse, prevention of the transmission of disease (especially sexually transmitted diseases), and promotion of healthy lifestyles and development. Characteristics that buffer children from these stressors and research on resilience will also be examined.
- *Behavioral and Social Science Research.* The role of the social worker as a consumer of research will be emphasized. Relevant sources will include not only those in social work, but also the theories and empirical studies in interdisciplinary fields, such as human development and education. In addition,

relevant theories and findings regarding accountability for service, empirical validation of interventions, and overall evaluation of practice in educational settings will be covered.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO SOCIAL WORK ETHICS AND VALUES

Social work ethics and values will be addressed within the course as they pertain to issues related to working with clients and their parents, and colleagues. The NASW Code of Ethics will be used as a framework for decisions regarding engagement with students and families, protection of confidential material, designing appropriate interventions, and monitoring unintended consequences related to intervention decisions and taking corrective action. In addition, relevant federal guidelines as put forth in the Individuals with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the American with Disabilities Act, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act will be reviewed in light of their interface with ethical issues related to gathering and using information, and designing and executing interventions.

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, and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate social 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 processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self-knowledge and self-awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

COURSE READINGS AND RESOURCES

All course readings (or links to the readings) will be posted on the CTools site for this course. Required readings on c-tools are marked with an (*) and labeled “required”. Other readings are supplementary and optional.

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/>: This is an amazing website and we will use this time and time again. Familiarize yourself with the site and with all of its resources

APA FORMAT, ACADEMIC HONESTY, WRITING ASSISTANCE

Please refer to the *American Psychological Association Publication Manual* (often called the APA Style Manual) in the preparation of your writing assignments. There is some helpful information related to APA citation guidelines on the Main UM Library website at: <http://www.lib.umich.edu/hatcher-graduate-library/citation-and-style-guidelines>.

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 must be identified as such. Situations of apparent plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be reported and handled according to University policy.

The School of Social Work now has a full time Writing Skills/Study Skills Coordinator to assist students with writing. Contact Betsy Williams (betsywil@umich.edu) Room 1696 SSW (in the Career Services Office) [734-763-6259](tel:734-763-6259)) to ask a quick question or to make an appointment for help with a paper draft or with other writing tasks.

Students with Unique Circumstances or Learning Challenges

Students who have circumstances that could possibly put them at a disadvantage in their participation in the course should bring this to my attention as early in the course as possible, hopefully by the second class meeting. Whether or not you have documentation of a condition that may affect your ability to participate, please initiate a discussion with me about this. My goal is to maximize your learning the material in the course, and this can be done through various accommodations unique to your circumstances. If you feel it would be helpful, we could also draw up, in writing, a set of understandings about what accommodations would be appropriate and helpful for you.

POLICY ON INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

A grade of “Incomplete” will be given in extenuating circumstances and in accordance with SSW and University policy. You may turn in hard copies of assignments or use our c-tools drop box for assignments. Whether using your CTools drop box or bringing a hard copy to class, all assignments are due by class time on the due date assigned. Late assignments, i.e., those not gotten to me on the day due, will be reduced one half letter grade for each class session they are late. Please plan your work accordingly.

CLASS ENGAGEMENT THROUGH ATTENDANCE, READING, AND PARTICIPATION

Being fully present and ready to engage fully is ALL that we ask!

We value you; we value what you have to offer. Preparing you to work with young people is a truly important task, and we will work very hard to be fully prepared to help move you forward in this journey you have chosen for yourself.

Context is essential when hoping for optimal outcomes. Our classroom environment needs to be a desired environment so that all of us can grow to be our best! Being mindful of how you share this space, how mindful you are to the needs of others in the room, how respectful you are of the work that people are doing to make this a great learning experience, all this is on you.

If you must miss class, for example, do your best to communicate (to instructors, group members, etc) about your absence. The nature of the class will be such that missing a class or two will affect your learning significantly and could result in your grade being lowered.

Grading Scale

100 - 95 A	81 - 78 B-
94 - 90 A-	77 - 74 C+
89 - 86 B+	73 - 70 C
85 - 82 B	69 - Failing

Extra credit opportunities will be available for those students who are at risk for receiving a grade below a B.

Class Requirements

- Attendance and Participation (30%)
 - Show up!
 - Engage with the readings
 - Engage with the classroom activities
 - Be present
- Written Assignments (70%)
 1. 2 journal entries- choose 2 sessions from (1-6; 7-13); Write a 3-4 page journal on take aways from having perused ALL resources offered for that session (readings, discussion, activities used to enhance learning, experience you bring about the topic, etc). The first one is due by **Session 7** and the second one by **Session 12**. 5 points each
 2. Assignment 2 offers two options. Whichever you choose, you will work with a partner, prepare a 3-4 page paper of your findings and post on CTools by **Session 3**. From that paper, create a 1-page handout that you will use as a frame for a 10 minute presentation to the class on your findings. 20 points
 - a. Option A. Choose a state from the shared list and research all you can about school social work services in that state. Use any and all means to find out all you can. (Imagine that you are working with a family and they have informed you that they are moving to this new state and would like your help in finding out school-based resources for their child/family).
 - b. Option B. Differing Schools
Choose two schools/school districts with at least one blaring significant difference from a cultural determinant (rich/poor; majority/minority. Rural/urban; public/charter; gen ed. building/sp ed. building; girls/boys; public/residential; public/prison. Your task is to investigate such that you can share with us how that difference affected the School Social Worker's intervention design
 3. Assignment 3: Engage in the helping process with a client/client system. Assess, Plan or design an intervention; Implement the intervention; evaluate your work. Upload your 8-10 page paper onto CTools by Session 11. 30 points
 - a. Choose a client/client system

- b. Consider an area for change/growth
 - c. Complete an assessment
 - d. Develop an intervention plan
 - e. Implement said plan
 - f. Evaluate your actions/efforts
4. What drives the diagnostic/assessment process for special education classification? As recently as the mid-1980's, students were seen by social workers for all sorts of reasons- anger outbursts, delayed reading, truancy, the death of a pet, and feelings of sadness. Social workers also visited classrooms regularly and offered preventive tips to whole classrooms around stealing or unhealthy practices or lying, etc. Things changed and our services became specialized. By 1990, the state was pushing for redefining learning disability, emotional impairment and hyperactivity. Fewer students were receiving help. Bullying, violence, neglect and abuse, poverty, homelessness, hunger, sadness and fear were not qualifiers for school social worker services. An assessment process was put in place to ascertain that only the appropriate students had access to specialized services including social work. Here is what we want from you. Find out all you can about this historical process and provide us with a 3-4 page position paper about what you think has driven this process that we summarized above. Use references, cite whatever you can find; include conversations with perhaps those who were around during that time period. Consider the lobbies and other organizations that might have been invested in this result! Due Session 8. 10 points

Session Outline

- 9/5 Session 1 CTE/Expectations/Class Assets
Who is in the room? And what came with each of us?
Expectations for/of the class, and for each other
Quick overview of the helping process through an experiential lens
- 9/12 Session 2 SSWer History/Role
What is our history?
How does our history inform our current practice?
What factors have driven what role is given to the worker?
What roles are available to us?
- 9/19 Session 3 Developing models for practice
Building v Child Focus; Pull out v Keep in; Understanding the process behind creating an intervention; Direct versus Consultative services; Dysfunctional versus disordered
- 9/26 Session 4 Visit Dearborn Academy **Emailed 9/1**
More in class
- 10/3 Session 5 Interventions around Race, Ethnicity, Legal Status (Immigrants, Homeless)
First a conversation about these factors and how they might affect school climate, school functioning, and school safety. Race and ethnicity, Majority culture and schools, Whiteness, GBLT in the Schools, cultural hostility, religion, male homophobia, etc.; Bullying, Suicide and the LGBTQIA community; Gay Straight Alliance (GSA); being the service provider that you are and what comes with you
Guest: Andre Criswell, MSW, Dean, Henry Ford Academy, Detroit, MI
- 10/10 Session 6 FBA's and BIP's
Guests: Michael Kelmenson, MSW & Emily Patterson, MSW
- 10/17 Session 7 (Tony away) Clinical Interventions (Students with behavioral and Psychological concerns).
Applying techniques from CBT, Motivational Interviewing, Social Skills Training and Solution-Focused Therapy to address symptoms of ODD, ADHD, Depression, and Anxiety in school; Clinical uses of music, poetry, and art; Unique application of therapeutic techniques within the school setting; Connection between DSM-V diagnoses and special education classification of ED or OHI; Clinical connections to the classroom; Collaborative Problem Solving

- 10/24 Session 8 (Tony away) - Ethical Considerations
Personal values, biases; Code of Ethics, school policy; Ethical dilemmas in schools; Ethical decision-making process and practice
- 10/31 Session 9 Adventure and Experiential Interventions; Building Interventions; Classroom Interventions
- 11/7 Session 10 (Hoping for class to attend the MASSW Conference in Traverse City):
However if we end up having class, we will focus on something More on this in class
- 11/ 14 Session 11 Bullying, Suicide, LGTBQA
- 11/21 Session 12 (Tony away) Working with students on the Autism spectrum
<https://www.gvsu.edu/autismcenter/ebp-national-resources-34.htm>
Guests: Patti Kovacs & Theresa Boehne
- 11/28 No class Thanksgiving Break
- 12/5 Session 13 Endings; Closure