Course Syllabus

SW 796 Section 001 Winter 2015
Conversations with Parents about Discipline Mini-Course
Monday, 6 – 9 pm
Rm B684 SSWB

Professors: Julie Ribaudo & Shawna J. Lee
Office Hours: by appointment
Email: jribaudo@umich.edu and shawnal@umich.edu

Class meetings are January 12, January 26, February 2, February 9, February 16
Please note that this mini-course will not meet on MLK Day

1. Course Description:

Several recent high profile cases raised important questions about how parents use physical punishment, especially toward young children. In this mini-course we will examine the role of discipline and punishment in childrearing, addressing research on the effectiveness of wide range of parental disciplinary approaches. Content will be embedded within a child development framework that considers the child’s age and development stage, in conjunction with family- and community-level factors. We will examine evidence-based parenting interventions, and their recommendations and approaches to child discipline. We will discuss how cultural norms and beliefs may influence parents’ discipline choices and how social workers can best dialogue with parents help them achieve their parenting aims. This mini-course will address micro- and macro-social work issues.

2. Course Design:

This course will consist of lectures, assignments, readings, class exercises, and writing assignments. Various classroom strategies will be used by the instructors including lecture, multimedia presentations, video, small and large group discussion, and presentations by students and guest lecturers.

3. Assignments and Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>Full credit/ no credit; attendance is required at every class session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90%</td>
<td>Final paper (see below)</td>
<td>Submitted to Ctools Monday, February 16</td>
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Class attendance and participation

**Student attendance is required at every class session**, and attendance will be taken. Each student is expected to sign-in at every class session. Because this is a mini-course with only 5 sessions, we will enforce the mandatory attendance policy.

Grades
The criteria for each grade are as follows:

**A+, A, A-**  
Superlative 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 excellence in 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 or C-**  
Demonstrates a minimal understanding of subject content. Significant areas needing improvement to meet course requirements.

**D**  
Student has failed to demonstrate minimal understanding of subject content.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>99-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-96</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91–93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>&lt;69 (no credit)</td>
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**Notes on Grading**

- Class attendance and class participation are considered essential for this course. Therefore you are expected to attend, to be prepared, and to make reasonable contributions to enhance the class discussion.
- Course Incompletes are only given in extreme circumstances whereupon a serious, extenuating circumstance has prevented the student from completing the final paper. The instructors must be notified of the circumstances that prohibit the student from completing the course assignment in writing (e.g., via email). The instructors reserve the right to determine if the circumstances are sufficient to justify an incomplete in the course.

**Final Paper**

Students will have the option of selecting one of the final options for their final paper assignment.

**Option A: Intervention with Families (4 – 6 pages, double spaced)**

Six-year old is behaviorally aggressive and is referred to you. You find out the parent is using physical discipline frequently (at least 1-2 times per week). Describe how you would begin to think about the child’s behavior with this information, and how it would inform your assessment. In first person language, address your thought process as to how you would approach the parent, what kinds of questions you might ask and how you might begin to proceed. Finally, in the last section, address what personal thoughts or feelings or concerns might be evoked in you as you work with the family. You must show evidence of incorporating some of the readings.

**Option B: Policy or Macro Intervention**

The second writing assignment option is to write a policy memo or set of recommendations for how professional organizations can or should address the issue of discipline/ spanking/ corporal punishment. The policy memo/ recommendation will: Identify a specific policy (or policy proposal) relevant to the issue of discipline of children; Identify the implications of this policy for a relevant stakeholder group (e.g., children, child welfare practitioners, social work practitioners), based on
existing research and evidence; Recommend what position that is appropriate for the organization relative to that policy (or proposal); Write a formal policy memo and formulate recommendations for that clearly conveys the position.

For example, you could assume the role of policy analyst and write a set of recommendations for the NASW (or any similar professional organization). In your memo, you will review the existing NASW policy on child discipline or a related issue. Write a policy memo with recommendations highlighting strengths of the existing policy and formulating recommendations. If no policy exists, then recommend a policy or set of recommendations. In the end, your memo will both inform the NASW members—which consists of social work practitioners and educators—of the official social work position on the policy (or proposal) and formulate recommendations or modifications that are evidence-based.

4. **Schedule of Class Sessions & Assignments:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January 12, Class #1: Introduction, scope of this course, and definitions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>•</strong> Introductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>•</strong> Why are you in this course?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>•</strong> Beliefs about discipline and corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>•</strong> Commons definitions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>•</strong> UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)</td>
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Required Reading:
1. United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (on Ctools)

Other Resources:
--Countries that have prohibited corporal punishment: http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/pages/progress/prohib_states.html
--UN Perspective: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/CorporalPunishment.aspx

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<tr>
<th>January 26, Class #2: Culture, race, ethnicity, religion, gender</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>•</strong> The evidence regarding discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>•</strong> The evidence regarding corporal punishment</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>•</strong> Cultural beliefs and discipline, including corporal punishment</td>
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Required Reading:

Optional Reading:
February 2, Class #3: Child development and discipline

- Child development and discipline
- Child development and use of corporal punishment
- Attachment and discipline – what does the research say?
- CP vs. abuse: Parenting representations, projective identification and intergenerational repetition of abuse

Required Reading:

Optional Reading


February 9, Class #4: Evidence-based parenting strategies and programs

- Age appropriate discipline – what works at what ages?
- Effective strategies for intervention
  - Primary prevention/public health models
  - Secondary intervention – general parenting courses
  - Intensive intervention – working with high-risk parents
- Medical practitioners, anticipatory guidance

Required Reading:
908.


Optional Reading:

**February 16, Class #5: Conversations with parents**


Optional Reading: