1. Course Description

This advanced level methods course in the Children and Youth in Families and Societies concentration builds upon the foundation level practice methods course and prepares students for employment in the many human service delivery systems which address the needs of children, youth, and their families. This cross-cutting skills course encompasses both direct/micro (i.e., assessment, intervention, prevention) and mezzo and macro (program design, evaluation, administration, community organization, policy analysis) practice methods used to address problems presented by or to children and youth in a variety of contexts. The development of social work skills, values, and ethics applicable to promotion, prevention, intervention, remediation and social rehabilitation activities with diverse child and youth populations at all levels of intervention will be emphasized. Evidence-based change interventions that build on strengths and resources of children and their families at all levels of intervention will be examined in order to develop socially just and culturally-competent policies and practice. This course will address the key diversity dimensions (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) as it relates to children, youth and their families.

2. Course Content

Effective social work practice with children and youth requires a developmentally-sensitive, resiliency focused multisystems approach, an emphasis on prevention and early intervention, and the collaborative involvement of families, other primary caretaking adults, and involved professionals, in the identification, development, delivery, and evaluation of services. In addition to being able to assess and intervene with children and youth, social workers must also develop the skills necessary to assess the resources and the risk factors which may exist in the child’s or youth’s family, neighborhood, community, and in the larger social environment. In
this course the emphasis of intervention is as much on the context as on the individual. Intervention strategies focus on ways to bring about change at levels such as the classroom or school, the peer group, and the community or population, as well as at the individual level. Mezzo and macro practice skills covered in this course are aimed at promoting interpersonal competence, self-esteem, self-efficacy, achievement, and moral development in children and youth by making the contexts within which they develop more responsive to their developmental needs.

Direct practice methods covered in this course provide students with the skills necessary to select and provide effective short-term interventions, evaluate direct practice, develop service delivery systems and work effectively with individuals, families and groups in families, institutions and communities. Skills for engagement, assessment, intervention, prevention, and evaluation relevant to contexts such as families, neighborhood and community, schools, group care facilities, residential care, hospitals, correctional programs and institutions, courts, governmental and nongovernmental agencies will be covered. Intervention strategies may be derived from a variety of approaches and theoretical perspectives, self-help and peer support, group work, family life education, empowerment models, and family preservation. Students will learn to use evidence-based knowledge and skills to engage and communicate effectively with children and youth, families and community members, and other service providers. Assessment skills taught will emphasize the importance of being able to identify special needs, abuse and neglect, family violence, substance abuse, and circumstances of extreme stress, danger, or deprivation, and accurately assess the level of risk these circumstances present for the children or youths concerned. The student will learn how to design individual programs of intervention that are based on clearly articulated goals and priorities, reflect an examination of the evidence base and are consistent with social work ethics and values. Throughout the course, cultural competence and sensitivity to differences among families and the impact of worker/client differences in values, experiences, and power will be analyzed. In addition, the student will learn to understand the significance of “multiple identities” (the interaction of factors such as the diverse dimensions: 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) in shaping the uniqueness of families and individuals and in shaping power and privilege differences.

Mezzo and macro practice methods covered in this course include skills applicable to the areas of community organization and development, administration, policy and planning, and research and evaluation in order to support the strengths of diverse children, families and communities.
and to promote social justice. Presentation of material from these areas recognizes the importance of working with multidisciplinary teams, service delivery agencies, and formal and informal community systems, in order to obtain necessary resources and support services for children and youth. Specific skills addressed include advocacy, needs assessment, working collaboratively with community agency and groups, administrative and supervisory issues impacting service delivery, budgeting and fiscal issues, program design and development, program and practice research and evaluation, and child and youth policy analysis.

3. **Course Objectives**

1. Students will demonstrate advanced-level skills in translating and applying a developmentally sensitive, resiliency focused, collaborative, multisystems intervention perspective in working with diverse populations of children and youth, families and communities.

   - Effectively communicate with and establish developmentally sensitive, culturally appropriate collaborative relationships with children, youth, their families, and other significant members of their social environments in every level of social work intervention.
   - Develop and implement a practice vision of social justice
   - Apply socially just interventions that maintain strengths-based and resiliency perspectives.
   - Become familiar with belief systems and cultural practices of children, youth, and their families with whom they work by asking relevant questions in order to understand their needs within the context of these practices.
   - Apply collaboration building and consultation skills within and across child and youth serving organizations to strengthen families and organize communities in response to the program practice and policy needs of diverse populations of children and youth in different child-serving settings.
   - Specify how risks, protective and promotive factors that contribute to child and youth safety, health, security and well-being.
   - Effectively seek out needed information and become familiar with formal and informal resources available to meet the diverse needs of children, youth and their families.

2. Students will demonstrate advanced skill in using evidence-based prevention, intervention and rehabilitation practice guidelines to develop micro, mezzo and macro interventions that address child, youth, family and community goals and priorities.

   - Develop evidence-based change interventions that build on child, youth, family and community strengths and resources at the micro, mezzo and macro system levels.
   - Incorporate social work values and ethical principles in planning and implementing interventions for children and youth and their families.
   - Use relevant child, youth and family policy initiatives, laws and judicial decisions to
Yatesha Robinson, LMSW, MA

advocate for improvements in the delivery of interventions that support the strengths of diverse child, youth, family, and community systems and promote social justice.

- Develop and apply change interventions that a) differentiate within and between social categories; b) maintain strengths-based and resiliency perspectives; c) promote dialogue across social and cultural differences.
- Critique the applicability of current knowledge, research and evidence based practice methods in work with diverse populations of children, youth and their families who live in communities where they experience discrimination and oppression due to the diversity dimensions.
- Create a logic model or concept map describing connections between child, youth, family and community focused practice model with goals, objectives, activities, outcomes and evaluation approach.

4. Course Design and Attendance Expectations

This course will use a combination of lecture, class discussion, case material, experiential exercises, group discussion and video material as appropriate. Students’ experiences in the field will be utilized as much as possible in assignments and case presentations and discussions.

5. Relationship of the Course to the Four Curricular Themes

- Multicultural and Diversity issues will be emphasized throughout this course, not only in relationship to direct intervention with children and youth and their families and communities, but also in regard to the need to develop and maintain effective collaborative relationships with other community resources and service providers. Students will learn to recognize the existence of group differences in a number of areas (such as nonverbal communication, individual and family values, family and community structures, preferred and accepted responses to crisis, response to exclusion or oppression) and how these may impact intervention relationships with children, youth, and their families.

- Social Justice and Social Change will be addressed in relationship to children and youth as populations who experience vulnerability due to developmental and status factors (i.e., age and dependence), in addition to other impacts they may experience due to membership in other groups which encounter exclusion and discrimination. In recognition of this, abuses of power within the family (i.e., domestic violence, physical and sexual abuse and exploitation) will be addressed as issues related to social justice and human rights, and not just as indicators of individual and family psychopathology. Advocacy for children and youth, especially those whose families and communities are particularly impacted by social inequality and social injustice,
will be emphasized at individual, family, organizational, community, and policy levels.

- **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation** are particularly important for child and youth populations, due to the increased likelihood of negative outcomes as services or interventions are delayed, and the “time-limited” nature of childhood and youth. These areas are addressed in the micro practice areas through family life education, family preservation activities, screening early identification of children at risk, and family and community based early intervention with children and youth in a variety of context. At the mezzo and macro practice levels, program development and evaluation, staff and professional training, fiscal and economic issues and policy analysis addresses the relationship between policy decisions and risks to children and youth.

- **Behavioral and Social Science Research** is presented as the necessary basis for conducting empirically grounded assessment, intervention and evaluation practice at all levels of intervention. Course materials draw upon research knowledge from a variety of social sciences, as well as other professions and disciplines (i.e., social work, medicine, psychology, sociology, economics, law, etc.), and emphasize the need for multidisciplinary collaboration and communication around issues related to children and youth and their ecosystems. Social science research concepts and methods are described in relationship to both social work practice and program and policy evaluation processes.

6. **Relationship of this course to Social Work Ethics and Values:**

Practice with children and youth requires considerable attention to issues of ethics and values, due to the special challenges these populations offer the social work practitioner. For example, confidentiality cannot be maintained when suspected child abuse or neglect must be reported, and issues of self-determination and autonomy often arise when an adolescent discloses important information that has not been shared with a parent or other responsible adult. Social work values and social science knowledge may also conflict with the child-rearing beliefs and practices of some cultural or religious groups. Resource limitations or lack of training or sensitivity may result in inappropriate treatment for some children or youth and their families, and others may be excluded entirely. Finally, social policy decisions significantly affect the lives of children and youth, the stability of their families and communities, and their access to resources and services. This course emphasizes, in relationship to each of the substantive areas outlined above, the importance of examining the complexities of ethical and value issues as they apply to the problems of children and youth. Social work values and ethics, as outlined in the
professional Code of Ethics, are presented as the necessary and appropriate guidelines for practice when ethical dilemmas arise in social work practice.

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 stigma, 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.

8. **Accommodation for Disability Statement**
   Any Student who has a disability or condition that may interfere with your participation in this course, please feel free to contact me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your specific needs. This information will be kept strictly confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, (734) 763-3000.

9. **Writing Assistance**
   For further assistance with writing, you may go to the Writing Workshop 1139 Angell Hall 764-0429.

10. **Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity**
    All academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and misrepresentation will be treated seriously. You will find a discussion of plagiarism and other violations academic integrity. Please consult your *Student’s Guide to the Master’s in Social Work Degree Program* (online).

**Required Texts**


COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance, Class Participation and Weekly Discussion Posts (20 points)

Students are expected to attend all class sessions. The instructor must be notified in the event of an emergency.

- Attendance at each class session is expected. The learning in this class is experiential. The learning environment will foster reciprocity, where everyone in the space will share knowledge and learn from each other. Your presence and active participation is required in order for this to be a success. Absences and tardiness will result in a reduction in your final grade by a minimum of a half step.

Only students who attend ALL classes and actively participate by REGULARLY contributing to discussions and activities will receive full points.

If for personal reasons you find class participation to be difficult, please see me.

- Please refrain from texting, social media and other Internet usage that is unrelated to in-class activities. It is VERY obvious when students are using their computers inappropriately in class. Doing so will lower your grade significantly. I may or MAY NOT speak with you about it, but I do notice and note my observations on the attendance sheet and will grade accordingly.

- Assignments are expected to be on time. Assignments that are turned in late will result in an automatic reduction in the grade for the assignment. Submit written assignments electronically using a word document (not pdf) in the assignments section on Canvas.

Assignments

1. Weekly Positive Psychology Exercise Reflections (Weekly Discussion Posts)
   – DUE MONDAYS BEFORE CLASS (Maximum 1 page) – (Points included above)

Each week, students will be assigned a positive psychology exercise to practice and/or reflect upon. Students will contemplate the potential that the exercise has to foster a sense of wellbeing in children and youth and write a one-page reflection on their experience that will be shared with their classmates. The goal is for students to gather first-hand experience with exercises that can inform the development of interventions designed to empower children, youth and their families. Students are to engage in meaningful self-reflection to gain insight into the principles of wellbeing and flourishing that have been rigorously studied in positive psychology and how
these practices may be used to complement social work interventions and services to children, youth and families. Reflections should be posted on the Discussion Board on Canvas each week.

2. Logic Model for Youth Serving Organization – DUE 5/21 (2 – 3 pages + model – 20 pts)

Students will create a logic model for a youth servicing organization any place in the world. This can be the student’s field site, place of employment or an organization of interest; however it MUST reflect the student’s own work – students are not to plagiarize existing logic models. Information should be gathered for the logic model via the Internet, face-to-face interviews or phone calls/other contact with the organization or key informants. The logic model should be accompanied by a 2 – 3 page description of the organization with information about their theory of change, mission and values. Students should reflect on the organization’s strengths and areas for growth in terms of their ability to serve youth with diverse needs, with key interests on how they address/support youth who have experienced trauma. **Students will present a 5-minute overview of their logic model to the class.**


Students will conduct a needs assessment of either a youth serving organization or an individual child or youth. Students should provide sufficient background information that details the scope of the problem and the need for social work intervention. Students will assess the needs of the child or organization and describe their readiness for change, strengths, areas for growth, and how their circumstances create challenges for their advancement or wellbeing. Students will discuss how they would engage the client in developing appropriate interventions and describe comprehensive action steps or interventions to help actualize the client’s goals.


Students will write a 3 – 5 page meta-reflection on their experiences with the positive psychology exercises. This will be submitted privately to the professor under the assignments tab in Canvas. In addition to their personal experiences, students will discuss how they might incorporate the exercises with possible clients or organizations in their career. Students will support their assertions with a minimum of 4 in-text citations specific to positive psychology, with a list of scholarly (peer-reviewed) references.

5. Data Visualization Group Project – DUE 7/23 (15 – 20 Minutes – 25 pts)

Students will get into groups of 2-3 and locate a publicly accessible online data set (e.g. from data.gov) about children or youth. Student will be responsible for presenting the data to the class using a pictorial or graphical format and discuss how the analytics presented may be used to
advance services to children and youth (i.e. educate community members/donors, secure funding, inform organizational programming, inform individual interventions, grant reporting … etc). This assignment can be focus on macro or interpersonal practice or both. Students will present their findings in a 15 – 20 minute presentation. Students are encouraged to the engage the audience with interactive activity (i.e. wordle, kahoot, activities etc…).

**Final Grades**

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<td>C-</td>
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Please complete assigned readings BEFORE CLASS to ensure that you are prepared to receive full participation points during group discussions and activities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
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<th>Readings</th>
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| 1  | 5/7  | Introduction and Overview of the Course  
In-class Activity: Your Vision? Why?  
Rapport Building with Clients  
In-class group activity: Icebreaker Challenge  
Integrating Positive Psychology into Social Work | Perry: Ch. 1 - Tina’s World;  
Ch. 9: Mom is Lying…Hurting…  
Schiraldi – Ch. 30 278 - 281 |
| 2  | 5/14 | Intro to Attachment Theory  
Trauma  
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)  
Community Nonprofits/Logic Models  
In-class activity: Juvenile Justice in the US.  
In-class activity: Choosing a curriculum or workbook |  
| 3  | 5/21 | Tell the Story Through Data Viz (Group Formation)  
Logic Models for Youth Serving Orgs Due Presentations in Class | Data Visualization resources will be posted on Canvas |
|     | 5/28 | NO CLASS MEMORIAL DAY |  
| 4  | 6/4  | Social Work in Mental Health Settings  
Assessment and Treatment Planning | TESI – C Traumatic Events Screening Inventory – Children  
Schiraldi – Ch. 5, pp 63 – 77; Ch. |
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6/11 Grief &amp; Loss</td>
<td>Schiraldi: Ch. 29, 267 – 278</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>6/18 Social Work Practice in Schools</td>
<td>Perry – Chapter 10 – The Kindness of Children</td>
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<td>Needs Assessment &amp; Intervention Plan Due</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>6/25 Department of Health &amp; Human Services: Child Protective Services and Foster Care</td>
<td>Schiraldi: Ch. 19, 197 - 206</td>
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| 9 | 7/9 | Healing the Wounds  
Post-Traumatic Growth |
|   |   | Schiraldi - Chap. 41  
Perry – Chapter 8 - The Raven  
Perry – Chapter 11 - Healing Communities |
| 10 | 7/16 | Guest Lecturer: Attachment?  
Meta-Reflection on Positive Psychology Interventions Due |
|   |   | Perry: Ch. 5 – The Coldest Heart  
| 11 | 7/23 | Data Visualization Group Projects Due |