



SW 629 School Social Worker Interventions  
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### SW 629 School Social Worker Interventions

#### 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 learnings 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 program and services offered and make modification 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.

#### Course Objectives:

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 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.
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. Demonstrate knowledge and skills in development of behavior intervention plans collaboratively with family members, educational staff, and outside resources, personnel, and agencies.
6. Demonstrate knowledge and skills in mediation, conflict resolution, and collaborative problem-solving models.
7. Apply principles of social justice to school based practice.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of factors that promote positive school climate and culture of belonging among students, families, and school personnel.
9. Practice skills that enhance youth voice, engagement, and leadership.
10. Demonstrate knowledge and skills to evaluate effectiveness of programs and services and modify these based upon student need.
11. Demonstrate ability to communicate effectively with students, parents, school staff and agencies in both verbal and written communications.

### **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**

Professional social work ethics will be reviewed focusing on their application to educational settings. Particular issues may include confidentiality of and access to records and services provided, especially to minors, access to independent services by children and youth without parental consent, appropriateness of service delivery with regard to the age and developmental stage of the target group, parental permission and knowledge regarding sex education, mandated reporting of child abuse, neglect, and truancy, and policies regarding expulsion and suspension from school.

### **COURSE DESIGN AND TEACHING METHODS**

This course will use a variety of teaching and learning methods, including lectures, PowerPoint presentations, group exercises, case material, role plays videos, guest presenters, and seminar techniques. 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.

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 brave and respectful learning experience.

### **COURSE READINGS**

Required readings for each session (or links to the readings) will be posted on the canvas site for this course.

#### **Additional Resources:**

- UCLA's School Mental Health Project- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>
- School Social Work Association of America- <http://www.sswaa.org>
- American Council for School Social Work- <http://www.acssw.org/>
- Social Work Helper- <http://www.socialworkhelper.com/>
- Self Help Warehouse- <http://www.selfhelpwarehouse.com/>
- US Department of Education- <http://www.ed.gov/>
- UC Berkley's Greater Good Science Center- <http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/education>
- Training Wheels- <http://www.trainingwheelsgear.com/>
- PBIS World- <http://www.pbisworld.com/>
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning- <http://www.casel.org/>
- Intervention Central- <http://www.interventioncentral.org/>
- Evidence-Based Intervention Network- [http://ebi.missouri.edu/?page\\_id=227](http://ebi.missouri.edu/?page_id=227)
- Education Resources Information Center (ERIC)- <http://eric.ed.gov/>
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultations <https://www.ecmhc.org/>

#### **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://guides.lib.umich.edu/citationhelp>.

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](mailto: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.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

I invite any class member who has a disability that may affect their participation in this course to let me know. We can discuss possible modifications or accommodations in instructional format, assignments, etc. Any student who feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability may let me know so we can work out ways to address. Please contact the Services for Students with Disability office at 734-763-3000 in room G-664 Haven Hall to coordinate accommodations for students with disabilities.

### **POLICY ON INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

A grade of “Incomplete” will be given in extenuating circumstances and in accordance with SSW and University policy. Please use canvas to submit assignments. Assignments are due by class time on the due date assigned. Late assignments will be lowered ½ letter grade.

### **CLASS ATTENDANCE, READING, AND PARTICIPATION**

All are required. Required readings are to be completed prior to class session. In the unlikely event that you must miss class, please call or email to inform me about your absence. Missing more than one class will result in your grade being lowered one half letter grade. Missing additional classes may result in not being able to pass the course.

During class time, laptop use is permitted for note taking, accessing powerpoints and other course materials only. During the past few years, our classes have struggled with the use of laptops for non-class related activities such as browsing the web, social media, etc. While teaching, I have find these activities very distracting and also disrespectful to peers. On this basis, if a student is using media for non-class related activities during class time, their final course grade will be lowered one half letter grade.

I expect that each student be present during class time. As social workers, teachers, and learners, we need to find ways to remain engaged even during times that may seem challenging, boring, or difficult. If you are not experiencing class as engaging, please take steps to take responsibility for your learning, by finding ways to engage and give feedback. I greatly value class dialogue, so feel free to step forward in a respectful manner if your learning needs are not being met.

### **Assignment 1: Research Paper: School Based Intervention (Due October 12)**

Select a student population and choose an intervention that can be applied in a school based setting.

Read at least 6 current peer reviewed references regarding needs of the population and the selected intervention. The 6 required sources must be peer reviewed research articles or book chapters and current (e.g. published in the last 15 years).

1. Write an introduction to your topic and paper.
2. Describe the needs of the population you have chosen and the selected intervention. In this section you should include a brief overview of the particular needs of the

- population you have chosen and describe the intervention strategy including the purpose and goals of the intervention.
3. Describe the details of the intervention including information about what the intervention would look like, what specific techniques are utilized, and how the intervention is implemented etc. In this section, please include a brief description of the intervention curriculum and activities.
  4. Reflect on strengths and weaknesses of the intervention chosen and what modifications might be needed to adapt the intervention. Are there barrier to implementation that need to be addressed?
  5. What are some considerations needed in order to make this intervention culturally responsive related to students' various areas of identities such as gender, gender identity and/or gender expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, race, ethnicity, immigration status, disability status, faith, family engagement and other intersecting identities? (You do not need to consider each of these areas of identities. I am interested here is your ability to think critically about this topic.)
  6. Write a concluding section that summarizes your work and reflects upon your learnings.

**Bibliography:** Include an APA style bibliography of the references you have cited.

**Length:** 8-10 pages (including bibliography)

**Grades:** This paper is 50% of your grade. Grading will be based on organization, following the terms of the assignment, clarity of the writing, and accurate application of the concepts.

\*\*\* All papers must be typed, 12 pt. font, double spaced, and proof-read. Please proof read carefully.

All papers are to be submitted on canvas by class start time of the date the paper is due. Please try to have things completed on time and keep me informed if any problems arise.

**Assignment 2: Tool Box – Students sign up to present either November 16, November 30, Dec 7 Final materials due on canvas by Wednesday December 12.**

The purpose of this final project is to develop 4 practice tools based on the topics and concepts you learned about in this course. This project is 50% of your grade. My intent is that you use this assignment to gain and demonstrate a skill set for current and future practice. During our last three classes, students will present one tool from their tool box to enhance shared learning and portability.

Details of the assignment:

1. Select 4 tools that you can use in your current and future practice serving children, youth, and families in a school based setting.
2. For each tool, provide a two page summary including the purpose, evidence basis, implications, goals, relevant populations, and possible strengths and weaknesses of the intended tool. (25% of assignment grade)
3. For each tool, develop a sample lesson plan, including sample activities, were you describe the intervention's implementation. (25% of assignment grade)

4. For each tool, create a powerpoint, prezzi, video etc. that you can use to briefly and succinctly demonstrate the purpose, use, and implementation of the tool. (25% of assignment grade)
5. Choose one of the tools and do a 15-20 minute presentation to our class, using the powerpoint, prezzi, video etc. that you prepared. During this presentation, please walk us through how to use the tool. (25% of assignment grade)

## **Tentative Course Outline**

### **Session #1 September 7**

Topic: Social Work Interventions in school settings; Introduction to course objectives and course content

### **Session #2 September 14**

Topic: Principles, values, and roles of school social workers; response to intervention models and techniques

Required Readings on Canvas

### **Session #3 September 21**

Topic: Applying principles of social justice to school based practice; Building positive school climate and culture of belonging among students, families, and school personnel

Required Readings on Canvas

### **Session #4 September 28**

Topic: Performing Functional Behavioral Assessment and Developing Behavior Intervention Plans

Required Readings on Canvas

### **Session #5 October 5**

Topic: Trauma Informed Practice

Required Readings on Canvas

### **Session #6 October 12 (Assignment #1 Due)**

Topic: Restorative Justice Practices

Required Readings on Canvas

**Session #7 October 19**

Topic: Interventions for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Required Readings on Canvas

**Session #8 October 26**

Fauri Child Welfare Conference- Details to be announced

**Session #9 November 2**

Topic: Interventions for Students with Emotional Impairments

Required Readings on Canvas

**Session #10 November 9**

Topic: Crisis, conflict, mediation, and collaborative problem solving models

Required Readings on Canvas

**Session #11 November 16**

Students Present Toolkit

**Session #12 November 30**

Topic: Students Present Toolkit

**Session #13 December 7 (Final Tool Kit Assignment Materials Due)**

Topic: Students Present Toolkits