**Course title:** School Social Work Assessment  
**Course #/term:** SW 626, Spring/Summer 2021  
**Time and place:** Tuesday 1-5pm Online  
**Credit hours:** 3  
**Instructor:** Beth Sherman  
**Pronouns:** She/Her/Hers  
**Contact info:**  
Email: shermanb@umich.edu  
Phone: 734 330-8703  
You may expect a response within 24 hours, maybe longer over weekend  
**Office:** Virtual  
**Office hours:** By appointment, please email and we will find a time.

### 1. Course Statement

**Course description**
This course will present knowledge and critical skills to prepare for social work practice in school settings. The five topical areas will include:  
1) a brief overview of educational programs and legislation in the United States for individuals of all ages and their families;  
2) school social worker assessment tools and services for educational institutions at the pre-K elementary, and secondary levels.  
3) assessing and responding to issues of economic and social discrimination in ways that center justice and educational access  
4) laws, policies, and practices related to determination of qualification under special education rules within multi-disciplinary teams and response to intervention, multi-tiered models  
5) advocating for the right to education of oppressed and special populations (including children and youth with mental, physical, and emotional disabilities, TLBGQ youth, economic and geographic disadvantages, and diverse racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds). Students will learn comprehensive, multi-tiered and culturally relevant assessment protocols and techniques relevant to school based social work practice.
Course objectives and competencies

1. Students will learn how to conduct ongoing individual, family, and system/organization assessments/evaluations with the goal of improving student social-emotional, behavioral, functional, and academic outcomes.
2. Students will learn how to conduct comprehensive assessment and evaluation for students, families, and schools to identify student strengths and resiliency factors in order to diminish educational and developmental risks.
3. Students will obtain knowledge related to using standardized assessment protocols to conduct comprehensive assessment and evaluation for students, families, and schools.
4. Students will learn to conduct assessments of the impacts of trauma.
5. Students will obtain knowledge of normative developmental expectations for infant, child, adolescent, and young adult functional skills, emotional, behavioral, social, cultural, communicative, cognitive, learning, and physical development.
6. Students will understand the similarities and differences between clinically based definitions of psychiatric disorders and eligibility for educational support and services as indicated under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE).

Course design
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.

Intensive focus on 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.

2. Class Requirements
Attendance, Participation and Reading:

All are required. We will be meeting virtually for 2.5 hours each week. During these virtual sessions we have lectures, breakout sessions, small and large group discussions. Required readings and pre-learning assignments are to be completed prior to class session. Please come prepared to have your cameras on for most of the session. In the unlikely event that you must miss a virtual session, email me to inform me about your absence and discuss make up plan. Because attendance is required, missing more than two classes will make it difficult to pass the class.

Grading

For each assignment, I provide specific instructions and how the assignment will be graded. Assignments should be completed and turned in by their due date. Points will be deducted for late materials. Please feel free to reach out to me if there are difficulties or special circumstances.

Policy on Incompletes and Late Assignments

A grade of “Incomplete” will be given in extenuating circumstances and in accordance with SSW and University policy. All assignments are due by class time on the due date assigned. Please keep me informed if any problems arise.

APA Format and Academic Honesty
Using APA for citation is expected. *APA formatting*. Review the [Library APA Citation Guide](#) as needed. The Purdue Owl website is another helpful resource for assistance with APA formatting.

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. More information on academic integrity policies can be found in the MSW Student Guide.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

I invite any class member who has a disability that may affect his or her participation in this course to let me know. We can discuss possible modifications or accommodations in instructional format, assignments, etc. If you are in need of any accommodations, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such. Additional information about accommodations for students with disabilities, as well as a list of appropriate accommodation forms, is available here. Please present the appropriate paperwork at least two weeks prior to the need for the accommodation (test, project, etc.).

**For more information, contact:**

**Services for Students with Disabilities**

G-664 Haven Hall  
505 South State St.  
**Phone:** (734) 763-3000  
**Email:** ssdoffice@umich.edu

**Religious/Spiritual Observances**

There are also a number of religious observances that occur during the term that will be relevant for some of you. We should discuss how we can allow you to practice your faith and meet course obligations. The University of Michigan, as an institution, does not observe religious holidays, however it has long been the University's policy that every reasonable effort should
be made to help students avoid negative academic consequences when their religious obligations conflict with academic requirements. Please click here to find out more about student expectations around conflicts between the academic and religious calendars, as well as a non-exhaustive list of religious holidays.

Safety and emergency preparedness:

All University of Michigan students, faculty and staff are required to familiarize themselves with emergency procedures and protocols for both inside and outside of the classroom. In the event of possible building closure (i.e. severe weather conditions, public health notices, etc.) you may contact (734)764-7793 for up-to-date school closure information.

Be prepared. Familiarize yourself with the emergency card posted next to the phone in every classroom/meeting room. Review the information on the emergency evacuation sign (located nearest the door) and locate at least two emergency exits nearest the classroom.

Each SSW classroom is equipped with door locks. Pressing the Lock button (the only button located on inside of the door handle) to lock the door from within the room.

If you are concerned about your ability to exit the building in the case of an emergency, contact the Office of Student Services (Room 1748) at (734) 936-0961 or via email at ssw-adacompliance@umich.edu.

Click here to read more about the School of Social Work's emergency policies and procedures.

Additional resources:
- Report a hate crime or bias-related incident
- Sexual Misconduct, Harassment, Discrimination
- Register for UM Emergency Alerts
- View the annual Campus Safety Statement
- Co-vid 19 and University of Michigan
• **Mental health and well-being:**
  The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of all students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact:

- **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** at (734) 764-8312
  SSW embedded CAPS Counselor: **Alejandro Rojas, LMSW**. He is dedicated to supporting the wellbeing of social work students and the SSW community and offers short-term, solution-focused individual therapy. All services are free and confidential. Contact him at (734) 764-8312 or via email at aroja@umich.edu.

- **University Health Service (UHS)** at (734) 764-8320

- **Additional campus health and wellness resources**
  The Office of Student Services' Health and Wellness Program provides supportive services to MSW students which promote wellness, self-care and maintenance of a healthy academic and mental health balance, as well as to increase disability awareness.
  - **SSW Health and Wellness Guide**
  - Contact the Health and Wellness Program at ssw.wellness@umich.edu

**Teaching evaluations:**
Students are strongly encouraged to complete teaching evaluations at the end of each term. Teaching evaluations are administered via Canvas and will be emailed to students during the last week of classes. Student identity is completely anonymous, and instructors cannot view evaluation reports until after grades are submitted.
Proper use of names and pronouns:

All students will be referred to by the names and pronouns they use (e.g. she, they, he etc.) If you have a name that differs from the one that appears on the roster, please inform the instructor before the second-class period so that they use your correct name and pronouns. Students can designate their personal pronouns on the class roster via Wolverine Access: Student Business > Campus Personal Information > Gender Identity. There are two inclusive restrooms in the SSW building: room 1784 (1st floor, near Registrar's Office) and B833T (Lower Level). Click here for the Spectrum Center's map of gender inclusive restrooms on campus.

Military deployment:
Please click here for more information and resources for students called to Active Duty status while enrolled at the University of Michigan.

Writing skills and expectations:
Strong writing and communication skills are essential to students' academic success and professional career. The Writing Coordinator for the School of Social Work is open to meeting with students during any phase of the writing process. The Writing Coordinator's office is housed within the Career Services Office. The Career Services Office also offers workshops, resources and individual assistance to help improve skills and confidence in written communication.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact:

SSW Writing Assistance
Career Services (Room 1696)
1080 S University Ave.
Phone: (734) 763-6259
Email: ssw-cso@umich.edu

2. CLASS SCHEDULE (Tentative, may be revised based on circumstances)

Class #1: May 11 Introduction to Class, Introduction to School Social Worker Assessment, Schools in the time of Co-vid
Class #2: May 18 History of School Social Work, School Social Worker Standards, Racial Equity in Schools

Class #3: May 25 School Social Worker Roles in Assessment: A Multi-Tier Approach; School Social Worker Assessment Roles under 504 and the Individuals with Disability Education Act

Class #4: June 1 Assessment and Social Emotional Learning (Assignment #1 Due)

Class #5: June 8 Assessment and Trauma Informed Practices

Class #6: June 15 Assessing equity of access (Student Presentations Due)
   a) Rights to education of Black students
   b) Rights to education of undocumented students
   c) Rights to education for students experiencing homelessness

Class #7: June 22 Assessing equity of access (Student Presentation Due)
   a) Rights to Education of LGBTQI+ students
   b) Rights of Pregnant and Parenting Teens
   c) Rights to Education of Indigenous students
   d) Rights of students who experience bullying at school

Class #8: June 29 Assessment and Restorative Practices

Class: #9: July 6 Assessment and Autism Spectrum Disorder (Assessment Tools Due)

Class #10: July 13 Assessment and Emotional Impairment (Final Exam Distributed)

Class #11: July 20 Writing PLAAF and IEP goals (Final Exam Due)

3. Assignments

Several methods will be utilized to assess your learning and progress toward the class objectives. These methods will include 1 paper, a group presentation, an assessment toolbox assignment, and a final three essay take home exam. The relative weight of each assignment will be as follows:

- My School Experience Paper 15% (Due June 1)
- Group Presentation 20% (Due June 15 or June 22)
- Toolbox Assignment 30% (Due July 6)
My School Experience Paper: Due June 1, 3-5 pages, 15% of course grade

I. My School Experience - This paper is a personal exploration of your experience as a student K-12. Divide that experience into three categories: Peers, Teachers, and Other Activities. Then describe the best and worst of your experience with respect to each category. For Other Activities, think of social supports, clubs, sports, specialists (such as: family, school social workers, art or music teachers, band, sports, principals, school resource officers, school psychologists, counselors, etc.). You may also include information related to work, faith based, or volunteer experiences. Finally, reflect on how your school experience may inform your school social work assessment practices. How were your needs, related to the school experiences you described in this paper, school assessed and responded to or not? **This section should include thoughts about how you might integrate these reflections into your future assessment behaviors, critical and specific reflections related to Privilege, Oppression, Diversity, and Social Justice and comments on two specific NASW social work ethics relevant to this reflection.** Please remember to include introductory and concluding paragraphs. Since this is a personal exploration, you may write in the first person and do not need to include citations.

II. Group Presentation: (Sign up, Due June 15 or June 22) – **Topic: Students that have been denied the right to education, safe, and inclusive schools.**

Prepare and present to the class on a population of school students that are vulnerable to poor school outcomes due to inequities and oppression. Use the provided group research sheets to research the history, legislation, strengths, protective factors, and advocacy efforts to obtain equal access to affirmative education. The purpose of your presentation is to educate yourselves and your colleagues about historical and current barriers and efforts to increase equity in schools. This knowledge helps school social workers assess what is needed at their schools to ensure educational access to all students and families. Although your presentation will focus on distinct positionalities, it is understood that students, families, and communities have insectional and overlapping identities. Please find a way to reflect this in your work. For example, many GLBTQ students face homelessness and White and BIPOC teen parents may experience disproportional inequities when trying to access their education.

The groups will include 3-4 students. You may use time during the hours that we have scheduled asynchronous learning but also may need to work outside of class time to prepare. Below is a list of the group project expectations, which will also serve as the grading criteria:
The presentation should be approximately 20 minutes in length, followed by 10 minutes of class questions/discussion. The presentation may take on varied formats, PowerPoint, Prezi, video presentation, etc. sharing the knowledge gained from your work together. **Please be sure that, in addition to discussing risks, your presentation focuses on strengths and affirms the students, families, and communities being discussed.**

The presentation should define and describe the central concepts and issues related to the specific population of students (20%), discuss history, key legislation, and advocacy issues (20%) and focus the class on how this information can be used to guide assessment strategies in the school. (20%). The content of the presentation should draw from a minimum of 2 peer reviewed references per group member (20%). The presentation should be well organized, cohesive, succinct and stay to the allotted time provided. Please practice the presentation ahead of time. Presenters should not simply read from slides. (20%). Group materials are due on canvas by 2pm on the day of the presentation. Please be sure to include each group members’ name on the submitted materials.

**III. Assessment Tool Box Assignment (Due July 6)**

The purpose of this project is to research and describe 2 practice tools based on the topics and concepts you are learning in this course. This project is 25% of your grade. My intent is that you use this assignment to gain and demonstrate a skill set for current and future practice.

Details of the assignment:

1. Select 2 evidence informed assessment tools that you can use in your current and future practice serving children, youth, and families in a school setting. These can include assessment strategies that look at any tier of assessment (e.g. school climate, disciplinary referrals, restorative practices implementation, anti-racism efforts, family engagement, behavior observations, mental health screenings, developmental screenings, suicide risk assessment, special education evaluation tools such as the BASC 3 or Autism Diagnostic Observation Scales etc. etc.)
2. For each tool, research the purpose, evidence basis, implications, goals, relevant populations, and possible strengths and weaknesses of the intended tool. (20% of assignment grade)
3. For each tool, research and describe how the assessment could be implemented in a school setting. Discuss benefits and challenges to implementation and utilization of this assessment tool. (20%)
4. For each tool, please research and consider how the assessment strategy takes into account culture and how the assessment tool contributes to
affirming or harming BIPOC students and their families. (20% of assignment grade)

5. For each tool, create a PowerPoint, Prezi, video etc. that summarizes your learnings related to items 2-4. This product should briefly and succinctly demonstrate the purpose, use, implementation of the tool, including culturally responsive and anti-racist considerations. (25% of assignment grade)

6. Post your projects in the discussion boards of our class. Please title your presentation with the name and purpose of the tool. (EG “Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Developmental Screening for Young Children”)

7. Once tools have been posted, review and comment on three of your classmate’s posts. The format of comments should be substantive and collegial. Share what you learned, or thought about, based on the information they shared. If a couple of comments have already been left on a colleague’s project, review a project that does not yet have comments. Comments close after one week (15%)

IV. Final Exam- Take home essays – To be distributed in class on July 13. Due on canvas July 20th at 9pm.