



Course title:	School Social Work Assessment	
Course #/term:	SW 626, Fall 2021	
Time and place:	Mondays 6-9pm Zoom/Online	
Credit hours:	3	
Instructor:	Beth Sherman	
Pronouns:	She/Her/Hers	
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	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, including the history and theoretical foundations of school social work. 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 learn to conduct functional assessment of behavior.
6. 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.
7. 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.

a. 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

a. Text and class materials

All required readings will be posted on canvas in the session's module. They are due to be completed before the class session. To fully engage in the course topic and become a competent and skilled social work practitioner, it is expected that students will complete all required readings.

b. Class schedule (Tentative, may be revised based on circumstances)

Class #1: August 30 Introduction to Class, Introduction to School Social Worker Assessment, Schools in the time of Co-vid

No class September 6- Labor Day

Class #2: September 13 Theoretical Foundations and History of School Social Work, Social Work Ethics, School Social Worker Standards, Racial Equity in Schools

Class #3: September 20 School Social Worker Roles in Assessment: A Multi-Tier Approach

Class #4: September 27 Assessment and Social Emotional Learning (Assignment #1 Due)

Class #5: October 4 Assessment and Trauma Informed Practices

Class #6: October 11 Assessment and Restorative Practices

No Class October 18- Study Break

Class #7 October 25 Assessing equity of access (Group Presentation Due)

- a) Rights to education of Black students
- b) Rights to education of undocumented students
- c) Rights to education for students experiencing homelessness

Class #8: November 1 Assessing equity of access (Group 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: #9: November 8 School Social Worker Assessment Roles under 504 and the Individuals with Disability Education Act

Class #10: November 15 Assessment and Autism Spectrum Disorder (#3 Assessment Tool Assignment Due)

Class #11: November 22 Assessment and Emotional Impairment

Class #12: November 29 Assessment and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Class #13: December 6 Transitions and Closure (MET/PLAAFP/IEP Assignment Due)

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:

#1 My School Experience Paper	20% (Due September 27)
#2 Group Presentation	25% (Due October 25 or November 1)
#3 Tool Box Assignment	30% (Due November 15)
#4 MET/PLAAFP/IEP	25% (Due December 6)
Total	100%

Assignment Details

My School Experience Paper : Due September 27, 5-6 pages, 20% of course grade

Part I: This paper is a personal exploration of your experience as a K-12 student. 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.

Part II: 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, 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 (PODS) and comments on one (1) specific NASW Code of Ethics and

one (1) NASW School Social Worker Standards relevant to this reflection. Finally answer the question of how these learnings can be tied to theoretical foundations of the school social work profession and service delivery.

Please remember to include introductory and concluding paragraphs. Your introduction should include a summary of what your paper is going to cover and in what order. Your conclusion should summarize what you have covered and mention future directions for consideration. Since this is a personal exploration, you may write in the first person and do not need to include citations.

Your paper will be graded on how well you address each aspect of the assignment, depth of reflection, timeliness, clarity of writing, and paper organization. Please see rubric for how each aspect of this assignment is weighted.

This assignment correlates to [MDE Standard](#) for the Preparation and Practice of School Social Workers. The particular elements addressed in this assignment are:

- **1. Ethics and Values:** Adhere to the ethics and values of the social work profession while understanding the unique aspects of school social work practice and the needs of the students, families, teachers, and the larger school community they serve)
 - 1.1 Understand the theoretical foundations of the school social work profession and service delivery
 - 1.2: Follow NASW Code of Ethics and NASW School Social Worker Standards

Educational Inequities and Advocacy Group Presentation: Due October 25 or November 1, 25% of course grade (Sign up on Collaborations Tab of Canvas Site).

Topic Options: Students that have been denied the right to education, safe, and inclusive schools. Select from the following:

1. Rights to Education of Black students
2. Rights to Education of undocumented students
3. Rights to Education for students experiencing homelessness
4. Rights to Education of LGBTQI+ students
5. Rights of Pregnant and Parenting Teens
6. Rights to Education of Indigenous students
7. Rights of students who experience bullying at school

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 intersectional and overlapping identities. Please find a way to reflect this in your work. For example, many GLBTQ students face homelessness, White and BIPOC teen parents may experience disproportional inequities when trying to access their education., etc. The groups will include 3-4 students. You may use time during the hours that we have scheduled asynchronous learning but your group may also 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. On the days of the presentation, class will meet for the full 3 hours (eg 6-9pm).

- 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.) to share the knowledge gained from your work together.
- The presentation should include:
 - Central Concepts - define and describe the central concepts and issues related to the specific population of students (20%)
 - History/Legislation - discuss history, key legislation, and advocacy issues (20%)
 - Assessment Strategies- focus the class on how this information can be used to guide assessment strategies in the school. (20%)
 - PODS - Please be sure that, in addition to discussing risks, your presentation focuses on strengths and affirms the students, families, and communities being discussed. (20%)
 - References - draw content from a minimum of 2 peer-reviewed references per group member (20%)
 - Organization & Timing- be well organized, cohesive, succinct, and stay to the allotted time provided (20%)
- Group materials are due on canvas by 2pm on the day of the presentation.
- Please be sure to include each group member's name on the submitted materials.

Recommendations that will enhance your project:

1. Work as a group, but also individually, to find and save materials and images related to the issue for inclusion in your group's presentation.
2. Once you have gathered content, take time as a group to sift through the material and talk about what you have discovered together.
3. Use these findings to construct a final presentation that is interesting and visually appealing.

4. Practice your presentation to make sure it is dynamic, cohesive, succinct, and conforms to the time allotted. Try not to simply "read from the slides" as this does not engage audiences.
5. If possible, allocate some of your research time to collect anecdotal data, in the form of interviews with individuals affected by the issue.

Research Worksheet for Group Project:

Please use this sheet to guide your initial research about this issue/population.

1. What are the demographics related to the issue/population? Who is affected? In what numbers? Where?
2. What key history, policies, and pieces of legislation affect this issue/population?
3. What are some important strengths, protective factors, and advocacy issues related to this issue/population?
4. How does the research you are doing/images you are displaying affirm BIPOC individuals and communities?
5. What are the important local or national resources available to deal with the issue/population?
6. What organizations are currently advocating on behalf of this issue/population?
7. What is the position of the Nation Association of Social Workers (NASW) and/or Association of School Social Workers of America on this issue?

You will be assigned a group grade for this assignment. Grades are assigned based on how well the project meets the terms of the assignment (see instructions and grading rubric)

This assignment correlates to [MDE Standard](#) for the Preparation and Practice of School Social Workers. The particular elements addressed in this assignment are:

- **5. Human Rights and Social and Economic Justice:** Continue to develop relevant knowledge and understanding to service the diverse client groups
 - 5.1: Recognize a broad range of experiences, personal characteristics, and background variables that influence student learning and development
 - 5.2: Communicate educational language in understandable terms to students and families
 - 5.4: Advocate that services are provided with multicultural awareness and competence within the school setting
- **7. Legal and Advocacy:** Advocate for policy and best practices at individual, school, district, community, and state levels to provide appropriate services to students and families and to assure equal access to educational opportunities
 - 7.1: Fulfill legal responsibilities and critical roles within the educational mission of the school or district

Assignment 3: Assessment Tools (Due November 15) 25% of course grade

The purpose of this project is to research and describe two (2) practice tools based on the topics and concepts you are learning in this course. 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 (eg 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, prezzi, 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%)

This assignment correlate to [MDE Standard](#) for the Preparation and Practice of School Social Workers. The particular elements addressed in this assignment are:

- **2. Assessment:** Conduct ongoing individual, family, and system/organization assessments/evaluations with the goal of improving student social-emotional, behavioral, functional, and academic outcomes
 - 2.1: Understand how to use standardized assessment protocols
 - 2.2: 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
 - 2.5: Understand normative developmental expectations for infant, child, adolescent, and young adult functional skills, emotional, behavioral, social, cultural, communicative, cognitive, learning, and physical development

Assignment # 4 MET/PLAAF/IEP – Due December 6 (TBD, Details in Canvas)

This assignment correlates to [MDE Standard](#) for the Preparation and Practice of School Social Workers. The particular elements addressed in this assignment are:

- **2. Assessment:** Conduct ongoing individual, family, and system/organization assessments/evaluations with the goal of improving student social-emotional, behavioral, functional, and academic outcomes
 - 2.6: Understand 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)
- **4. Data-Driven Decision Making and Practice Evaluation:** Use data-driven information to evaluate practice outcomes for students and programs
 - 4.4: Practice effective communication of the assessment and evaluation results for students with disabilities that include recommendation and goals
- **6. Interdisciplinary Leadership and Collaboration:** Engage internally with school personnel, family members, and externally with community professionals as appropriate to increase accessibility and effectiveness of services
 - 6.1: Understand the roles of other professionals to promote successful interdisciplinary collaboration within local contexts
 - 6.2: Participate in multidisciplinary teams, reviews of existing evaluation data, and IEP/IFSP team meetings
 - 6.4: Communicate educational jargon in understandable terms to parents, other school staff, and agencies, both written and oral
- **7. Legal and Advocacy:** Advocate for policy and best practices at individual, school, district, community, and state levels to provide appropriate services to students and families and to assure equal access to educational opportunities)
 - 7.3: Understand relevant local, state, and federal legislation, statutes, and policies that may impact students, families, school social workers, and other school personnel including requirements in the Individuals with

Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE).

Attendance and class participation (All classes will be held online)

All are expected. Please come to class on time and ready to learn. I asked that students have their cameras on as much as possible during virtual sessions. Please feel free to use virtual backgrounds if you prefer and mute when you are not speaking.

Required readings are to be completed prior to class session. Required readings for each session are available in the session module on canvas. Because school and special education policy is constantly evolving and I try to tailor readings to individual class interests as they evolve, occasionally I will swap out readings. I will do my best to do this at least one week in advance.

In the unlikely event that you must miss class, please call or email to inform me about your absence. **Missing more than two classes may result in your grade being lowered one half letter grade.** Missing additional classes may result in not being able to pass the course. (Please see policies listed and linked below related to absences due to health and religious observances).

c. 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. However, please feel free to reach out to me if there are difficulties or special circumstances.

d. Class Recording and Course Materials

Recording and Privacy Concerns FAQ:

Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording being done. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. If the instructor chooses to record a class, they will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on the course management website. On days when classes are recorded, students will be notified a recording is occurring. Class recordings and course materials may not be reproduced, sold, published or distributed to others, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the instructor. If students are recording or taking screen shots of content, please be sure not to include images of classmates.

e. COVID-19 Statement

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. By returning to campus, you have acknowledged your responsibility for protecting the collective health of our community. Other applicable safety measures may be described in the [Wolverine Culture of Care](#) and the [University's Face Covering Policy for COVID-19](#). I also encourage you to review the [Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) and the [COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

f. Health-Related Class Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online. Please note that documentation (a doctor's note) for medical excuses is *not* required.

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: <https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources>. They include:

- *Safety and emergency preparedness*
- *Mental health and well-being*
- *Teaching evaluations*
- *Proper use of names and pronouns*
- *Accommodations for students with disabilities*
- *Religious/spiritual observances*
- *Military deployment*
- *Writing skills and expectations*
- *Academic integrity and plagiarism*