University of Wisconsin – Madison  
School of Social Work  
SW643: Topics in Contemporary Social Welfare: Social Work and Delinquency

Spring 2015

Instructor: Nick Yackovich, Ph.D., LCSW  
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Lecture Day: Thursday  
Lecture Time: 1:20pm-3:15pm  
Lecture Location: Room 159 - Van Hise

Course Overview:
This course is designed to enhance the participant’s knowledge base as it relates to providing social work services to troubled and delinquent youth. This will be accomplished by examining etiological factors that contribute to mental health issues experienced by this population. Once a basic conceptual understanding of child and adolescent psychopathology has been established, the course will move toward understanding the social work process of assessment, treatment, and prevention for this population.

Course Objectives:
By the end of this semester, students should be able to:

1) Developed an introductory understanding of difficulties faced in Child and Adolescent development;
2) Established a base of knowledge related to child and adolescent sexual development and sexual misbehavior;
3) Developed a basic understanding of the cultural issues as they relate to behavior and treatment interventions;
4) Established an introductory ability for assessing factors related to problem behaviors and delinquency;
5) Established an introductory ability for multisystem treatment planning for youth and their families who are seeking assistance from a human service agency;
6) Prepared an original treatment intervention; and
7) Acquired a base of knowledge related to prevention strategies for problem behaviors related to delinquency.

Course Competencies and Practice Behaviors

Successful completion of this course implies that students will have progressed towards achieving some of the core social work competencies by demonstrating the following practice behaviors:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies Addressed in Course</th>
<th>Practice Behaviors Addressed in Course</th>
<th>Assignment(S) Measuring Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly</td>
<td>▪ Applying knowledge of social services, policies, and programs relevant to work with youth involved in the mental health and criminal justice systems. In so doing will utilize the generalist social work perspective.</td>
<td>Assignment One, Two, and Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice</td>
<td>▪ Evaluate ethical dilemmas related to problems and issues encountered while working with youth involved in the mental health and criminal justice systems.</td>
<td>Assignments One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments</td>
<td>▪ Identify and synthesize multiple sources of knowledge on a variety of theoretical models for work with youth involved in the mental health and criminal justice systems. Examine practice issues related to the assessment and treatment of participants. ▪ Identify and evaluate models of intervention that are appropriate for work with youth involved in the mental health and criminal justice systems.</td>
<td>Assignments One, Two, and Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice</td>
<td>▪ Demonstrate an understanding of how culture and values affect diverse conceptualizations and construction applicable to work with youth involved in the mental health and criminal justice systems.</td>
<td>Assignment Two and Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research</td>
<td>▪ Critically evaluate and utilize empirical research relevant to developing, conducting, and evaluating work with youth involved in the mental health and criminal justice systems.</td>
<td>Assignments Two and Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment</td>
<td>▪ Evaluate and apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment to choose populations and circumstances appropriate for work with youth involved in the mental health and criminal justice systems.</td>
<td>Assignments Two and Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.10a Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities</td>
<td>▪ Employ diverse strategies to engage with individuals, families, organizations, and communities as this applies to work with youth involved in the mental health and criminal justice systems.</td>
<td>Assignment Two and Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.10b Assess individuals and families</td>
<td>▪ Assess individuals and families to determine a range of potentially effective and appropriate interventions with youth</td>
<td>Assignment Two and Three</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1.10c Intervene with individuals and families

- Demonstrate ability to intervene at different levels utilizing conceptualization and implementation skills for work with youth involved in the mental health and criminal justice systems.

Assignment Two and Three

Course Format:
This course will be comprised of lecture, discussion, and application. Assigned readings will support the topic of discussion. When possible, guest speakers, site visits, and multimedia material will be used to enhance the subject matter. Students will be expected to take notes and read the assigned articles, but equally important, students will be expected to participate in discussion of material.

Course Content:

**Session 1**: Thursday, January 22
Focus: Introductions, Review of the Syllabus and Course Content, Discussion of Theory Development

Required Readings:

Optional Reading:

**Session 2**: Thursday, January 29

Focus: Continued discussion of delinquency theory and historical perspective on juvenile policy

UNIT TWO: Developmental Focus and Diagnosis

**Session 3**: Thursday, February 5

Focus: Childhood Challenges and disorders: Object Relations, Attachment Theory and Attachment Styles, Learning Theory
Required Readings:


**Session 4:** Thursday, February 12  
Focus: Adolescent Challenges and disorders

Required Readings:


**Session 5:** Thursday, February 19  
Focus: Psychosexual Development

Required Readings:  


**Session 6:** Thursday, February 26  
Focus: Family Dynamics: Contemporary Changes in the Family, Family Dysfunction, Single-parent and Remarried families, Family Impact on Behavior


**UNIT THREE: Problem Behaviors and Delinquency**

**Session 7: Thursday, March 5**
Focus: General Delinquency and the Youthful Offender

Required Readings:


Optional Readings:


**Session 8: Thursday, March 12**
Focus: Adolescence and Substance Abuse


**UNIT FOUR: Assessment and Interventions**

**Session 9: Thursday, March 19**
Focus: Interventions with Troubled and Delinquent Youth, Case Conceptualization and Professional Writing – Parts One and Part Two

Required Readings:


**Session 10: Thursday, March 26**
Site Visit: Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center (MJTC)
Focus: Behavioral Interventions and a Treatment Milieu for Interventions with Troubled and Delinquent Youth – In-Patient Perspective

**Spring Break: March 30 - April 5**
Session 11: Thursday, April 9  
Focus: Assessment and Treatment with Youthful Offenders

Required Readings:


Session 12: Thursday, April 16  
Focus: Assessment and Treatment of the Youthful Sexual Offender

Required Readings:

Session 13: Thursday, April 23  
Site Visit or Guest Presentation - Operation Freshstart, Inc. (OFS)

Community agency that works with transitioning youth (ages 16-25) by utilizing trade-skill development and attachment (Bond Theory). OFS’s motto is “building lives by building houses” and working on conservation projects.

Session: 14: Thursday, April 30  
Focus: Individual and Group Work with Youth

UNIT FIVE: Prevention

Session 15: Thursday, May 7
Focus: Prevention Strategies
Topic: Youth Aging Out of the Forster System – Guest Presenter: Kristi Wood

Required Readings:


Optional Readings:


Texts and Reading Material for the course:

Texts:


Required and Optional Readings:

Additional Chapters and journal articles will be posted on Learn@UW. Some of these will be required reading for the course and others will be listed as optional for your further exploration.

Evaluation of Student Outcomes: Assignments, Grading, and Methods:

Professionalism Policy – This policy is based on the expectation that a student studying this material at this stage of their life and academic development will conduct themselves as a professional. This includes attendance, promptness, willingness to participate in class discussion appropriately, respectful engagement of others, and, perhaps the most important, a willingness to be open to learning new ideas/concepts and honor the right of others to do the same (even if we don’t agree with their perspective). **Total 10 points**

The remaining grading process will involve three equally weighted assignments. These assignments are designed to allow you to formulate and display material that you have acquired and developed in class. They also are designed to examine the variety of approaches congruent with Generalist Social Work Practice.

**Assignment One: Position Paper**  
(Due February 26 by end of class)

This assignment requires you to chose a topic or theory relevant to the Concept of troubled and Delinquent Youth. I will give you a fair amount of latitude with your topic selection. Some suggested topics are:

- Young people aging out of the foster care system
- Juvenile Crime Policy
- Pregnant Teens
- Mental Health Services for Adolescents and Young Adults
- Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment for Adolescents and Young Adults

Once you have selected a topic you should write a 2-3 page position paper using the following framework:
### Part 1: Your introduction paragraph

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points:</th>
<th>10 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) clear statement of thesis</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) explanation of the thesis</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Part 2: Your evidence paragraphs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points:</th>
<th>65 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) topic statements</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) explanation of the evidence using specific references to data, facts, quotes, dates, etc.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) why the evidence supports your thesis</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Part 3: Your conclusion:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points:</th>
<th>10 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) a summary of your points</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) reiteration of your thesis</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### General

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points:</th>
<th>15 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of full sentences</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct grammar, citations, and punctuation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Total points for this assignment: 100

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**Assignment Two and Three: Group Treatment Session Development**

This project involves you developing a two-hour treatment group assignment. You will select a topic related to a treatment intervention or skill building task. These assignments will produce a final product that involves the development of six parts:

1. **Rationale** for intervention *(70 points)*
2. **Practical considerations** *(30 Points)*
3. Material for a 40 minute **Psychoeducational Presentation**; *(50 points)*
4. **Assignment** that can be completed in the group by the participants, related to the skills/intervention discussed in the presentation; *(20 points)*
5. **Group exercise** that allows the participants to practice the skill/intervention *(20 points)*; and
6. **Closing** that involves a debriefing and review *(10 points)*

**Assignment Two** is the initial draft of the final product. **This is due by the end of class on Thursday, April 9** and should include three parts: Rationale, Practical Considerations, and References. The Rationale should be a 2-3 page paper (12-font, double-spaced) that answers two basic questions: 1) why is an intervention needed and 2) why should your particular intervention be considered. Practical Considerations would be a 1-2 page paper that discusses the population most likely to benefit from the intervention, how they will be identified/referred, and the logistical needs of the intervention (i.e., location, space needed, staff needed, materials needed, etc.). The
Assignment Three is due by the end of the last class on Thursday, May 7.
Assignment Three will include the information from assignment two (with any revisions that you make based on feedback from me), plus the completed intervention, which would have five parts: Agenda, Psychoeducational presentation material, assignment, group exercise, and a closing (that involves a debriefing and review).
This intervention should start with a basic outline/agenda for the intervention content, with time slot allocations. The presentation material can be an annotated outline of what you will discuss or be written in a paper format. Remember it should be able to fill an approximately 40-minute slot. The assignment should be an in-group task that the participants can complete individually. Your assignment should include instructions and an explanation of what the objective of the assignment is. The group exercise should be a task that is interactive with multiple group members working together. It should be practicing or enhancing skills that are the focus of this intervention. The closing is a small piece at the end that 1) makes sure everyone is leaving the group in a stable emotional state, and 2) that any key points are reviewed as the participants move forward.

1. Material for a 40 minute Psychoeducational presentation (total 33 points);
2. Assignment for group participants, related to the skills/intervention discussed in the presentation (total 33 points); and
3. Group exercise that allows the participants to practice the skill/intervention (total 33 points). Plus one point because I like you 😊
**Grading Structure:** A total of 310 points is possible and final grades will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professionalism</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment One: Position Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment Two: Treatment Intervention-Phase 1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment Three: Treatment Intervention-Phase 2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are a total of 310 points for the class. At the end of the semester, I will divide your total score by 310 to determine the percentage of points that you have earned for the semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Outstanding, surpasses requirements in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88-93</td>
<td>A/B</td>
<td>Surpasses requirements in many areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82-87</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Meets requirements in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-81</td>
<td>B/C</td>
<td>Meets requirements in some areas, below in others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-75</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Below requirements in most areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64-69</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Below requirements in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤ 63</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Fails to meet minimal requirements in all areas, not acceptable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Policies:**

Reading Assignments:
Class discussion and projects will assume that participants have read the assigned readings.

Class Attendance/Participation:
An **excused absence** is one for which the student has obtained permission to miss a class prior to the class beginning. Permission may be granted by the instructor or an administrative staff of the School of Social Work.