Western Kentucky University

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Services to Children and Families
(3 credit hours)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Services to Families and Children is designed to acquaint the student with a broad overview of social services to children. Such services are more commonly known as Child Welfare Services. The focus will be on understanding problems and issues faced by children and families within an ecological framework. The complexities of social work practice within the child welfare system will also be examined.

COURSE OBJECTIVES IN RELATION TO PROGRAM INDICATORS:

Upon completion of this course, students will:

Program Performance Indicator 1.1.1f
Utilize critical thinking within the context of social work practice, including an understanding of organizations and the need for planned change within service delivery systems. (EPAS 3.0.1 and EPAS 3.0.12)

1. Critically analyze family dynamics and intervention strategies commonly used with families in need within the child welfare system (classroom group activities, integrative paper, and quizzes). (EPAS 3.0.1)

Program Performance Indicator 1.1.2f
Apply a generalist social work perspective across all system levels, integrating a broad range of knowledge and theories. (EPAS 3.0.M6)

2. Demonstrate an understanding of the impact that the history of child welfare and services to families have had on present practice. (classroom group activities, integrative paper and quizzes). (EPAS 3.0 M6)

Program Performance Indicator 1.1.3f
Synthesize and apply theoretical frameworks of practice interventions that incorporate knowledge of developmental and behavioral interactions between individuals and multiple systems. (EPAS 3.0.7 and EPAS 3.0.12)
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the awareness of the changing face of the American family structure and dynamics (quizzes, classroom group activities, and, integrative paper). (EPAS 3.0.M6)

**Program Performance Indicator 1.1.4f**
Utilize various communication skills differentially to articulate and advocate for diverse populations and communities. (EPAS 3.0.3 and EPAS 3.0.10)

4. Understand how service delivery may vary simply due to client's age, race, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and circumstances. (classroom group activities and integrative paper)

**Program Performance Indicator 1.2.2c**
Integrate specialized knowledge and skills necessary for effective practice within the Child Welfare system.

5. Demonstrate knowledge of Child Welfare services and programs and how they are delivered. (quizzes, class discussions, integrative paper).

6. Demonstrate an understanding of problems and issues confronting children and families today such as physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect, as well as mental illness, domestic violence, substance abuse, juvenile delinquency, and educational problems, etc. (quizzes, integrative paper and classroom group activities).

**Program Performance Indicator 2.1.6f**
Understand and apply social work values and ethics in social work practice with an appreciation for empowerment, diversity, and client strengths. (EPAS 3.0.2)

7. Demonstrate an awareness of the personal values and assumptions that are held about the welfare of children and the normality of families. (integrative paper and classroom group work). (EPAS 3.0.2)

**Program Performance Indicator 2.3.7f**
Identify the impact of value conflicts and ethical dilemmas in social work practice related to ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation. (EPAS 3.0.2 and 3.0.3)

8. Understand how service delivery may vary simply due to client's age, race, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and circumstances. (integrative paper).
TEXTS:
Required:


PERFORMANCE TASKS/ASSIGNMENTS (Faculty Individualize)
1. **Class Attendance and Participation (10% of grade):**
The professor assumes that all students will attend all classes except where illness or emergency makes this impossible. Absences affect not only the individual student’s learning, but also the entire group process. Students will inform the professor in advance if unable to attend class.

Classroom participation includes, but is not limited to, active engagement with the course material during class, in-class discussions with peers and the instructor, being respectful of others values and beliefs, respectfully expressing own values and beliefs, asking and responding to questions/comments, and taking a leadership position to engage in behavior to keep the classroom climate positive and constructive for learning. Taking part in and completing assignments and activities is also key. Participation also includes a student’s attitude, attendance, absences, tardiness to class, timeliness, attentiveness, cooperation in group activities, and displaying professional behavior in a manner consistent with social work values and beliefs.

2. **Chapter Quizes each week: based on assigned chapters in Child Welfare Social Work: an Introduction (30% of grade):** Multiple choice, true/false and essay; will cover required readings. To be taken weekly.

4. **Child Welfare Agency Interview and Paper (25%): Due June 26, 2008.**
Students will contact a social worker at a child welfare agency and conduct an on-site interview focusing on the role and function of the social worker working with children. Students will then write a short paper AND/OR create a powerpoint presentation and orally present their experience. Summarization of the interview, including a reflection of what was learned about the experiential nature of “a day in the life of a social worker” working within the child welfare system, will be given. A grading rubric, list of contacts, and a guide to questions and presentation will be provided.

5. **Agency Volunteer time and Pamphlet Presentation (15% of grade for Grad Students; 25% of grade for Undergrad Students): Due July 1, 2008.** Additional instruction will be provided in class.
6. Integrative/Final Paper (20% of grade for Grad Students; 10% of grade for Undergrad Students): Due July 3, 2008. Using From the Eye of the Storm (Graduate Students) you will write a paper which will allow you to integrate all that you have learned in this course. A grading rubric will be provided. NOTE TO ALL STUDENTS: I MAY DROP THIS ASSIGNMENT AND INTEGRATE INTO ANOTHER ASSIGNMENT. HOWEVER, IF I DO SO, READING THIS BOOK WILL STILL BE VITAL TO YOUR LEARNING EXPERIENCE.

EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE

Students are required to be on time for class. Attendance is required and will be taken at the beginning of every class session. A student missing two or more sessions will receive a full grade lower than what he or she earns in the course (for example, a student who has earned a grade of an A grade in the class will receive a grade of B for not adhering to the attendance policy). "Excused" absences must be cleared with the instructor 24 hours prior to the anticipated absence.

Students are expected to complete all required readings, and to participate in class discussions. Class participation includes active engagement with the course material during class in class discussions with peers and the instructor, asking and responding to questions/comments, and taking a leadership position to keep the classroom climate positive and constructive for learning.

Assignments are due on the dates designated and will be marked down 1 point for each day late (including weekends) unless alternative arrangements (48 hours before due date of written assignments; 24 hours before tests) have been made with the instructor.

It is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor if for any reason you are unable to fulfill the requirements of the course. If the student does not complete all requirements of the class within two weeks of class ending the instructor will enter a grade based on assignments turned in to date.

Grading Scale

Grading scale: A=94-100; A- =90-93; B+ = 89-87; B = 86-84; B- = 80-83; C+ = 79-77; C = 76-74; C- = 70-73; D+ = 69-67, D =66- 64, D- =63-60, Below 60= F.

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

The course content will be delivered via a variety of means. These may include lectures, seminar style discussions, exercises, student led class discussions, work groups, videos, written exercises, and other means as they apply to learning needs.
COURSE EXPECTATIONS/ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT
Please note the following general guidelines concerning shared responsibilities of the professor and students in this course:

1. Students are expected to participate in developing a positive learning environment with the desire to learn. Attendance is important to the overall spontaneous learning.

2. It is expected that students will refrain from plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct and may result in permanent dismissal. Students are expected to be familiar with University and Department policies (WKU & Department Student Handbooks).

3. Students are expected to adhere to WKU and departmental codes of conduct.

4. Students are expected to use APA style (5th ed.) for writing, citing and listing references. (1 inch margins, all sides, double-spaced, 12 pt font)

5. Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services, Room 101, Garrett Conference Center. The OFSDS telephone number is 270-745-5004 V/TDD. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE COURSE
WKU SITE Evaluation process will be utilized prior to course ending date. Students are encouraged to provide oral/written feedback to instructor about their assessment of the course during the course of this session. Instructor may periodically solicit oral/written feedback about the course as well.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1, beginning June 3, 2008

Topics:

Introduction and Syllabus Review
Chapter 1 - Child Welfare as a Field of Social Work and Public Policy
Chapter 2 - Child Welfare in the United States: A Brief History
Chapter 3 - Families and Children Served by Child Welfare Agencies

Required Readings:
Popple & Vecchiolla, Chapters 1-3

Week 2, beginning June 10, 2008

Topics:

Chapter 4- Risk Factors and Risk Assessment in Child Welfare
Chapter 5- Assessing and Intervening with Families
Chapter 6- Universal Services for Children and Families

Required Readings:

Popple & Vecchiolla, Chapters 4-6

Week 3, beginning June 17, 2008

Topics:

Chapter 7- Services to Families and Children at Home
Chapter 8- Services to Families and Children with the Children in Substitute Care
Chapter 9- Services for Children Who Cannot Go Home

Required Readings:

Popple & Vecchiolla, Chapters 7-9

Week 4, beginning June 24, 2008

Topics:

Chapter 10- Doing Child Welfare
Presentations (by Grad Students) and Class Discussions of Agency Interviews
Chapter 11- Other Key Players in the Child Welfare System
Chapter 12- Concluding Thoughts on the Practice of Child Welfare

Required Readings:

Popple & Vecchiolla, Chapters 10-12
Week 5, beginning July 1, 2008

**Topics:**

Presentations
Summary and Closure

**COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY**


**OTHER:**

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as needed with reasonable notice and accommodations for the students.

M. M. R.
May 23, 2008