

SOWK 7850

SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN SCHOOLS

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Classroom: Web Course

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Semester: Fall 2004

Credits: Two

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Prerequisite: Concentration Status of POD. Focuses on the issues and laws related to social work practice in the school. Issues related to rural schools are presented.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an elective course designed for MSW students, but it is required for those who wish to be certified as school social workers in Georgia. It is also open to school social work practitioners who may not have the content.

RELATION TO OTHER COURSES

This course builds on the foundation courses, especially human behavior and practice courses. These courses are: SOWK 6201 (Human Behavior in the Social Environment I), SOWK 6202 (Human Behavior in the Social Environment II), SOWK 6301 (Generalist Practice I – Individuals and Families), SOWK 6302 (Generalist Practice II – Organizations and Communities).

The course content of SOWK 7850 integrates theories, concepts, and application of interventive approaches on multi-levels as studied in SOWK 7300 (Advanced Practice in Rural Areas I – Individuals), SOWK 7310 (Advanced Practice in Rural Areas II-Families), SOWK 7400 (Policy in Rural Areas), SOWK 7611 (Advanced Social Work Practicum I) and SOWK 7612 (Advanced Social Work Practicum II).

RELATION TO ADVANCED GENERALIST CONTINUUM

SOWK 7850 provides students with a theoretical base about school issues related to rural practice. This course focuses on direct practice roles in school settings ranging from 1 to 5 on the right hand side of the advanced generalist continuum.

PRACTICE OBJECTIVES

1. Demonstrate an understanding of an ability to conduct advanced generalist social work practice from an ecological perspective including the ability to articulate the difference between a generalist and an advanced generalist perspective and to reflect

and critically assess one's practice and knowledge in the service of professional growth.

2. Building on the professional foundation content, demonstrate an ability to independently and systematically select and apply from a wider range of theories, practice models and skills, those that fit best specific problems and situations in work with individuals, families, groups, minorities unique to the area, oppressed populations, organizations and/or communities in rural areas.
3. Demonstrate an increased ability to independently identify the needs of diverse Populations in rural areas, as well as select and apply culturally sensitive practice theory methods to persons of diverse cultures living in rural areas. This includes populations-at-risk which exist in, but may be less visible in rural areas, such as those of differing sexual orientation, religion, gender, those who are differently challenged, people of color, and especially those who are vulnerable to poverty, oppression, or social differences in rural communities.

HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT (HBSE)

Students are expected to demonstrate:

1. An understanding of theories of human behavior and social systems as they relate to the changing social contexts particular to rural areas.
2. An understanding of those theories and models that assist in viewing aspects of a client and/or client system along a continuum ranging from pathology to health, focusing on both primary and secondary prevention and intervention as well as how this view relates to social policy and advocacy.
3. An ability to select and analyze from an array of theories those most useful in understanding an intervening as they relate to rural life-styles and rural social work practice at all levels.
4. Increasing independence and depth of analysis as it applies to more complex situations as well as cultural analysis.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

Students are expected to:

1. Apply their knowledge of social welfare policy across social work settings such as health, mental health, child/youth/family, substance abuse, aging schools and management.

2. Apply various social welfare policy analysis frameworks in the context of populations-at-risk, poverty, current social problems, and international policies in rural areas and social communities.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Students are expected to:

1. Demonstrate ability to design agency-based social work research that ethically addresses client characteristics such as age, race, gender, socioeconomic status and disabilities.
2. Demonstrate understanding of issues presented by research design in rural community agencies and the ability to implement strategies to successfully address these issues in research planning and implementation.
3. Demonstrate ability to effectively communicate in written, verbal, and multi-media formats basic information related to research designs and outcomes.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will able to:

1. Understand school social work and the organization of schools from an ecological and systems perspective.
2. Understand the history, and roles (or functions) of the school social worker with an emphasis on rural settings.
3. Understand the needs, problems, and issues of students (pupils) of diverse backgrounds, particularly those at risk of school failure, students with special needs, and students with disabilities.
4. Understand school policy, social work practice, and legal issues related to student rights, behavior, discipline, discrimination, and equal opportunity.
5. Understand the law and the legal system including locating and using legal sources, and the role played by social workers in a hearing process.
6. Understand planning, implementing and evaluating social work services in schools with an emphasis on rural settings.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PAPERS

1. All papers must be submitted typed, double-spaced. Use 12-point font.

2. Use professional literature **ONLY**. Internet sources will not be accepted for class papers.
3. Spelling and grammar errors will affect your grades. Either use spell and grammar check or have someone else edit your paper.
4. Use standard format (A.P.A. 4th edition) for your citations and bibliography.
5. Assignments should always be on time. At such time this is impossible, negotiations for extended time should be made **BEFORE** the due date, and the instructor has the right to determine whether an extension is possible. If an extension is granted and the student fails to comply with the agreed upon extension date, the assignment is considered late. A point penalty will be given for late assignments.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

The Division of Social Work has as its goal the preparation of students for the professional practice of social work. The Division believes that students will respond to classes as they respond to work, therefore, the expectations and requirements reflect this assumption. They are:

1. Students are expected to attend all classes. It is the responsibility of the student to Negotiate excused absences prior to class when possible and to make arrangements to make up work that is missed. When unforeseen events occur that result in absences, the instructor should be notified as soon as possible to make arrangements to make up work.
2. Students are expected to be on time for class and to return from breaks at the agreed upon time. In case of absenteeism or tardiness that cannot be resolved between the student and the instructor, the student should be referred to the Director immediately. Appropriate action will be taken through a special advising process.
3. It is expected that **ALL** members will participate equally in small group sessions.
4. It is expected that students will communicate directly with the professor regarding workload issues for the class.
5. This syllabus is the contract between the instructor and students that should be followed. The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus during the course and students will be notified of any necessary changes. Students should always read and follow instructions for assignments.
6. Standards are not negotiable.

7. Learning is a complex phenomenon for which the instructor and students are responsible. Everyone in the class can be successful; learning is not intended to be competitive.
8. The evaluation criterion is clearly stated in the syllabus. If this is not clear, it is the student's responsibility to ask questions so that further explanation may be given.
9. At such time the student is unable to continue or complete the class work as indicated in the syllabus, the student should contact the instructor. An "T" is given only when inability to complete the work is due to circumstances beyond the control of the student, such as illness, death in the family and so forth. Please see student handbook for additional information.

Any student with specific learning needs is invited to talk with the instructor about addressing those concerns. Special Services 249-2498 welcomes your requests.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Allen-Mears, Paula, Washington, R. O., & Welsh, B. L. (2004). Social Work Services In Schools (4 ed.). Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon.

Fischer, L., & Sorenson, G. P. (Eds.). (1996). School law for counselors, psychologists, and social workers. New York: Longman Publishing Group.

GRADING

Each project is worth 240 points; class participation including on-line participation 0- 40 points

A = 900 – 1000

B = 800 - 899

C = 700 - 799

D = 600 - 699

F Below 600

TEACHING METHODS

Lectures, group discussions, guest speakers, student presentations and independent study. The format of this class is designed to emphasize student autonomy and integration of reading material, practicum or work experiences in school settings and previous academic content. The content is organized into four modules, which allows students to meet all course objectives.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Class Participation: (0-40 pts.) Students are expected to apply seminar material to their own practicum and work experience. The instructor is responsible for the class syllabus, for a facilitative environment, and for introducing learning materials. Students are responsible for their active participation in the learning process to attain individual benefits and for the success of others in the class. This participation includes reading all assigned content before class, and making expeditious choices in assignments in order to enhance individual learning.

ON-LINE CASE DISCUSSIONS

Each student is expected to complete case discussions on-line. There will be a total of 3 case discussions. Explicit instructions as to how to participate in these discussions will be found in Web-CT. Class participation points are based on attendance and on-line participation.

(Measures Practice object. 1-3; HBSE object. 1-4; Policy & Research object. 1-3)

CLASS PROJECTS

All papers should reflect the APA format, correct spelling, and standard grammatical construction. Please see course outline for assignment due dates.

PROJECT I – Theoretical Framework (Due September 9) 240 Points

(Measures Practice object. 1-3; HBSE object. 1-4; Policy & Research object. 1-3)

Prepare a paper involving the assignment described below. Be prepared to discuss your paper in class and turn the paper into the instructor at the end of the class period. Paper should be written in APA style.

- Identify the major issues in American schools
- Explain how general systems theory and person-in-environment conceptual framework converge and how these ideas can guide social work services in schools

Required:

Study the following chapters in Allen –Mears et. al (2004) *Social Work Services In Schools*.

Chapter 1, Major Issues in American Schools

Chapter 2, School Social Work: Historical Development, Influences, and Practices

Chapter 3, Social Organization and Schools: A General Systems Theory Perspective

Chapter 4, An Ecological Perspective of Social Work Services in Schools

Construct a brief survey designed to elicit information about individual perspectives of major issues in local schools. Administer the brief survey to the following: A teacher

- A parent
- A principal
- A school board member
- A school social worker
- Others if appropriate

Please attach your interview questions. Provide a summary of the responses to the survey in your project. What do these findings mean? Discuss. (A minimum of 5 people MUST be interviewed)

You may use information taken from educational reports, professional reports, etc. (please no internet sources).

Identify ideas, questions, concepts for which you need clarification and wish to discuss in class. (This part does not need to be included in the paper).

PROJECT II – Best Practices Methods (Due October 7) 240 Points

(Measures Practice object. 1-3; HBSE object. 1-4; Policy & Research object. 1-3)

Select a topic for independent study from the list of available topics (each student MUST select a different topic).

- Attendance
- Pupil Rights & Control of Behavior
- Violence
- Disabilities
- Equal Opportunity (Includes such issues as race, language, gender, poverty, etc.)
- Child Abuse & Neglect
- Substance Abuse

Write a paper on the topics identified using APA style. The paper should not exceed 12 pages in length. The paper should include the following information:

- APA formatting (double-spaced, headings, pagination)
- Definition of the topic
- Incidence data
- Identification of practice methods generally used
- Identify best practice methods if recommended (that is, if the research does not indicate best practice)
- Methods, identify what you believe is/are the best practice methods
- Identify the theoretical framework from which this method(s) is derived; research support for the method(s)
- Discuss how this method might be replicated in the school system in which you work

- A minimum of 8 professional resource references should be used

Required Readings:

Relevant chapters in both texts
 Professional journals
 Educational Reports
 Other sources as needed

PROJECT III – School Policies and School Law Ethics and Values (Due November 4) 240 Points

(Measures Practice object. 1-3; HBSE object. 1-4; Policy & Research object. 1-3)

Write a paper of 10-12 pages in length using APA format.

Select a case from **practicum or work** that illustrates an application of school law.

This case should include sufficient demographic information about the student/family involved including the following (please respect confidentiality when writing):

- Define the specific area of law related to the case
- Legal concepts (i.e., in loco parentis, due process) which are relevant to the specific situation
- Landmark cases or decisions in which legal precedent has been established
- How the law is generally enacted in one's specific state and school setting
- The outcome of the specific case

Required Readings:

Fischer & Sorenson (eds.) (1996) *School Law for Counselors, Psychologists, and Social Workers*.

PROJECT IV – Designing Social Work Services (Due December 2) 240 Points

(Measures Practice object. 1-3; HBSE object. 1-4; Policy & Research object. 1-3)

You are employed in a rural school system in which there is no Social Services Program.

Design social work services in a rural school system to include direct, indirect, prevention services, and evaluation of the services. Write a paper 10-12 pages in length using APA format. Carefully describe your plan. You must have a minimum of 8 resource references.

Required Readings:

Allen-Mears, et. al., *Social Work Services In Schools*.

Chapter 11, The Design of Social Work Services
 Chapter 12, The Delivery of School Social Work Services
 Chapter 13, Evaluating Practice and Programs
 Appendix I, An Example of Rural Practice

Timely submission of assignments is a crucial practice skill. **Assignments are due on the assigned date.** In fairness to those who submit their work on time, **all late papers will lose one letter grade.**

COURSE OUTLINE

CLASS 1 INTRODUCTION TO CLASS & CLASS OVERVIEW

Wed. June 9

- School Social Work in Rural Context of Practice
- History of School Social Work
- Major Issues in School Social Work

READINGS: Allen-Meares, et al, Chapter 1: Major Issues in American Schools
 Allen-Meares, et al, Chapter 2: School Social Work: Historical Development, Influences, & Practices pgs.

CLASS 2 FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

Tuesday June 15

- The Ecological Perspective: Application to School Settings
- Social Work Ethics & Values
- Best Practice Methods

GUEST SPEAKER: Sheila Bouchard. LCSW/School Social Worker Suwannee Co.
 Roger Bouchard, MSW/President, Florida Sheriff Boy's Ranch

ASSIGNMENT DUE: PROJECT #1

READINGS: Allen-Meares, et al, Chapter 3: The Social Organization of Schools
 Allen-Meares, et al, Chapter 4: An Ecological Perspective of Social Work Services in Schools

CLASS 3 EDUCATIONAL POLICY & SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Tuesday July 29

- Pupil Rights/Confidentiality & Student Records
- Search & Seizure
- Corporal Punishment
- Due Process & Reasonable Cause
- Disabled Children & Children With Special Needs
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

ASSIGNMENT DUE: PROJECT #2**GUEST SPEAKER:** DR. FRANCES PATERSON/Professor (School Law)

READINGS: Fischer & Sorenson, Chapter 2: Confidentiality and the Duty to Warn
 Fischer & Sorenson, Chapter 4: Education Records and The Students' Right to Privacy
 Fischer & Sorenson, Chapter 7: Behavior Control and Student Discipline
 Allen-Meares, et al, Chapter 6: Student Rights and Control of Behavior

CLASS 4 PROVIDING SOCIAL SERVICES TO A DIVERSE STUDENT BODY***Tuesday, July 13***

- School Social Work With Diverse Families
- Empowering Children & Families
- Children With Special Needs & Educationally Disadvantaged Children
- Rural and Cultural Issues

GUEST SPEAKER: Carol Smith, LMSW**ASSIGNMENT DUE: ASSIGNMENT #3**

READINGS: Allen-Meares, et al, Chapter 8: Children With Disabilities
 Allen-Meares, et al, Chapter 9: Some Target Groups of Children
 Allen-Meares, et al, Chapter 10: Securing Equal Educational Opportunity: Language, Race, Gender
 Fischer & Sorenson, Chapter 6: Students with Special Educational Needs

CLASS 5 DESIGNING SOCIAL WORK SERVICES***Tuesday July 27***

- Designing Social Work Services In Schools
- Assessing School & Community Dynamics
- Students, Families & Small Groups
- Evaluation of School Social Services

GUEST SPEAKER: Marion Stephens, LMSW Dougherty Co. Schools**ASSIGNMENT DUE: PROJECT #4**

READINGS: Allen-Meares, et al, Chapter 11: The Design of Social Work Services
 Allen-Meares, et al, Chapter 12, The Delivery of School Social Work Services

Allen-Meares, et al, Chapter 13, Evaluating Practice and Programs
Allen-Meares, et al, Appendix I, An Example of Rural Practice