

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

**SW 535- SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK**

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**The Honor Statement**

An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity. (*Hilltopics, 2002*).

**Code of Conduct**

It is the student's responsibility to have read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct code that is in the CSW MSSW handbook. [www.csw.utk.edu](http://www.csw.utk.edu)

**Disabilities**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 191 Hoskins Library at (865) 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

**Course Description:**

The purpose of this course is to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for successful and competent social work practice in public schools, with an emphasis on assessment skills and skills in collaboration, crisis intervention, and prevention. Current social problems influencing the practice of social work in schools (e.g. homelessness, HIV/AIDS, violence, substance abuse, racism) will be examined. Both traditional school social work practice as well as emerging practice paradigms will be discussed.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able:

1. To understand the social, emotional, cultural and economic issues affecting diverse groups of students (e.g., students of color, gay & lesbian students) and schools and be able to assist diverse groups of students and families in overcoming barriers to learning.
2. To understand the needs of students at risk due to disability, economic condition, family disruption or other environmental factors and be able to work with teachers, school counselors, school psychologists and family resource center staff in addressing student needs.
3. To serve as liaison between home and school, assist parents in understanding their children's needs, interpret student assessments to parents, and work with the parents in developing parenting skills.
4. To perform case management functions, facilitating the coordination and integration of community services to benefit students and their families.
5. To support students with special needs by preparing social developmental studies, contributing to the development and implementation of individualized education programs (IEPs), functional behavioral assessments (FBAs), and positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBISs).
6. To understand federal, state and local laws and policies affecting students including issues such as services for disadvantaged students, services required by students with disabilities, due process rights of students and families, child abuse and neglect, HIV and AIDS, confidentiality, attendance, suspension and expulsion.
7. To describe and analyze the roles and functions of school social workers (e.g. advocate, teacher, broker, etc...) in their practice with diverse groups of students, families, school personnel, and diverse communities.
8. To understand how the social organization and political environment of the school influences the practice of school social work.
9. To develop skills in a) differential assessment of the problem; b) developing interventions based on empirically supported research (i.e. "what works") with diverse populations; and c) evaluating the outcomes of these interventions.
10. To address a number of ethical dilemmas facing the social work practitioner in the school setting including an exploration of one's personal values and potential conflicts between one's personal and professional values.

**Required Texts:**

Dupper, D.R. (2003). *School social work: Skills and interventions for effective practice*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

Constable, R., McDonald, S. & Flynn, J.P. (2002). *School social work: Practice, policy, and research perspectives (5<sup>th</sup> edition)*. Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books, Inc.

**Course Requirements/Evaluation Procedures:**

Students are expected to attend every class session. *Given the importance of class attendance and participation, missing more than one class will likely place an "A" grade out of reach.* Students are expected to read all required assignments prior to each class session and complete their weekly on-line assignment related to those required readings. Students are also expected to complete all other class assignments on time. It is essential that students notify the instructor in a timely manner if circumstances interfere with class attendance or the completion of course requirements.

Final grades will be based on the following:

1) 3 Quizzes (worth 50 points each)	150 points
2) Attendance and class participation	50 points
3) Weekly on-line discussion board assignments	50 points
4) Roles and Tasks of School Social Workers	50 points
5) In-class group presentation	50 points
6) Case Study Assessment	50 points

**Assignment of Final Grades**

The final course grade will be based on the following point totals:

376-400 points = A (Superior performance, exceeds expectations)

348-375 points = B+ (Better than satisfactory performance)

328-347 points = B (Satisfactory performance, meets expectations)

308-327 points = C+ (Less than satisfactory performance)

280-307 points = C (Performance well below the standard expected of graduate students)

**Course Outline and Required Readings:**

January 14, 2003

Course overview; unmet educational needs of Tennessee's children

([www.state.tn.us/tccy/UM-home.htm](http://www.state.tn.us/tccy/UM-home.htm))

***Unit I - Foundations of School Social Work Practice****January 21, 2003*

The ecological perspective as an organizing framework for school social work practice; roles and tasks of school social workers; NASW Code of Ethics and ethical dilemmas in school social work practice  
 brief history of school social work including major educational legislation and court cases

Required readings:

- ▶ Dupper - chapter 1
- ▶ NASW Standards for School Social Work Services. (revised 5-02).

*January 28, 2003*

The organizational structure and processes of the school; culture and climate of the school; political environment of the school; 20-60-20 theory of school change

Required readings:

- ▶ Dupper- chapter 2
- ▶ Constable, McDonald & Flynn - Chapter 24

***Unit II - Student-Focused Interventions****February 4, 2003*

Assessment strategies; nature and extent of classroom behavior problems, bullying, and peer sexual harassment in schools; guidelines for assessing potentially violent students

Required readings:

- ▶ Dupper - Overview of section 2 (pp. 37-39), Chapter 3 (pp. 41-47)
- ▶ Constable, McDonald & Flynn - Chapters 16 & 32

*February 11, 2003*

Proven interventions that focus on externalizing behavior problems; alternatives to out-of-school suspension and expulsion; group work in schools; school survival group; in-class demonstration of school survival group session(s)

Required readings:

- ▶ Dupper - Chapter 3 (pp. 47-65) and Appendix (pp. 241-265)
- ▶ Constable, McDonald & Flynn - chapters 29, 30, 31 & 34

*February 18, 2003*

**QUIZ #1;** Assessing and intervening with students who are anxious and fearful, lonely/shy, grieving, and/or depressed/suicidal; crisis intervention in schools

Required readings:

- ▶ Dupper - Chapter 4
- ▶ Constable, McDonald & Flynn - Chapter 33

*February 25, 2003*

Interventions with truant students, dropouts/pushouts, homeless students, foster children, abused and neglected students, students from divorced homes or separated from parents, substance abusers, sexually active/pregnant/parenting teens

Required readings:

- ▶ Dupper - Chapter 5

*March 4, 2003*

Overview of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and IDEA Amendments of 1997; the Individualized Educational Program (IEP); Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS); Social Developmental Study (SDS)

Required readings:

- ▶ Dupper - Chapter 6 (pp. 109-118)
- ▶ Constable, McDonald & Flynn - Chapters 13 & 20

*March 11, 2003*

### **ROLES AND TASKS OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS ASSIGNMENT IS DUE**

Interventions with students diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder with Hyperactivity (ADHD), Learning Disabilities (LD), Autism

Required readings:

- ▶ Dupper - Chapter 6 (pp. 118-129)

*March 18, 2003*

**NO CLASS--SPRING BREAK**

### ***Unit III - System-Focused Interventions***

*March 25, 2003*

**QUIZ # 2;** Principles of exemplary school-based prevention programs; school-based programs for preventing violence, bullying, substance abuse; conducting a comprehensive needs assessment in school settings

Required Readings

- ▶ Dupper - Overview of Section 3 (pp. 131-132) and Chapter 7 (pp. 133-144)
- ▶ Constable, McDonald & Flynn - Chapter 14

*April 1, 2003*

School-based programs for preventing truancy, sexual abuse, teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases; innovative programs designed to transform schools

Required Readings

- ▶ Dupper - Chapter 7 (pp. 144-152)

*April 8, 2003*

**CASE STUDY ASSESSMENT IS DUE;** Interventions on behalf of vulnerable groups of students - victimization based on known or presumed gay or lesbian sexual orientation, working with children of color, working with students being reintegrated into school from residential and juvenile justice settings

Required Readings

- ▶ Dupper - Chapter 8
- ▶ Constable, McDonald & Flynn - Chapter 12

*April 15, 2003*

The school social worker as consultant and team member (MSAP video)

Required Readings

- ▶ Dupper - Chapter 9
- ▶ Constable, McDonald & Flynn - Chapter 28

*April 22, 2003*

New perspectives on the role of the school social worker; challenges in building school-community collaborations; increasing parental connectedness with schools; proven and promising school-community collaborations and initiatives

Required Readings

- ▶ Dupper - Chapter 10
- ▶ Constable, McDonald & Flynn - Chapter 27

***Unit IV - Evaluating school social work practice***

*April 29, 2003*

Evaluating student-focused and system-focused interventions; process versus outcome evaluations; categories of measures and research designs; guidelines for successfully planning, implementing, and evaluating new programs and Comprehensive Quality Programming (CQP) steps

Required Readings

- ▶ Dupper - Chapters 11 & 12
- ▶ Constable, McDonald & Flynn - Chapter 22

**QUIZ 3** will be scheduled during finals week

### **Roles and Tasks of School Social Workers**

The roles and tasks that school social workers vary greatly from state to state as well as across countries. The purpose of this assignment is to provide an opportunity for students to learn about the breadth of school social work practice across the U.S. and in other countries.

For this assignment, each student will select a state or a country and become familiar with school social work practice in that state/country. Students should use a variety of resources in gathering this information including: 1) local school social work associations; 2) discussions with school social workers and educators via e-mail, letter, phone calls, and/or face-to-face contacts; 3) journal articles, books, websites, etc... For this assignment, it is important that each geographical area of the U.S. is represented (Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Southwest, Northwest) in addition to other countries. Each student will gather information about the following:

- 1) What state requirements (e.g., social work degree, field experience, course work, state exams, etc..) are required by your state/country to practice school social work? Is the job title referred to as “school social worker” in your state/country?
- 2) How many school social workers are currently employed in your state/country? Is there growth in this field of social work in your state/country?
- 3) What local or state associations or groups are supportive of school social workers in your state/country? What types of support do these groups or associations provide?
- 4) What are the many “hats” that school social workers wear in your state/country? In other words, what roles and tasks do school social workers assume in your state/country?
- 5) Describe a “typical” day in the life of a school social worker in your state/country. How is their time spent? What percentage of time is spent on various activities (e.g., one-on-one interventions, group work, child advocacy work, interventions with parents, interventions with teachers, IEP development, teaming, etc...)? Please comment on mandated tasks as well as what tasks are actually carried out.
- 6) What issues currently face school social work in your state/country?

After gathering this information, each student will write a 4-6 page paper (APA format). All papers will be posted on our Blackboard site.

***All papers are due on or before March 11, 2003***

### **In-Class Group Presentations**

Each student will be responsible for preparing and delivering an in-depth presentation on a topic related to school social work. As part of their presentation, students will also be expected to develop and pose a number of thoughtful, probing questions related to their topic. Each presentation may include up to 3 students and should be no longer than 20 minutes, including questions. *In addition to their oral presentation, each group must complete and turn in an annotated bibliography containing at least five recent references (e.g., journal articles, book chapters, reports, monographs).* It is highly recommended that group members schedule a time to meet with the instructor in preparing for their presentation.

#### **2-4-03**

- ▶ conducting classroom observations

#### **2-18-03**

- ▶ interventions with grieving students
- ▶ interventions with depressed/suicidal students

#### **2-25-03**

- ▶ interventions with truant students
- ▶ interventions with homeless students
- ▶ interventions with foster children

#### **3-4-03**

- ▶ interventions with abused and neglected students
- ▶ interventions with students from divorced homes or who are separated from parents
- ▶ interventions with sexually active/pregnant/parenting teens

#### **3-11-03**

- ▶ students diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder with Hyperactivity (ADHD)
- ▶ students diagnosed with Learning Disabilities (LD)
- ▶ students diagnosed with Autism

#### **3-25-03**

- ▶ conducting a comprehensive needs assessment in a school setting

### **Case Study Assessment/Social Developmental Study**

School social workers must be able to write succinct and salient case study assessments/social developmental studies. In this assignment, students will contact and conduct an in-depth interview with parent(s) of a school-aged child. Additional information about this assignment can be found on pages 183-188 of the Constable text. Based on the information obtained in this interview, each student will write up a case study assessment. ***Each paper MUST follow the format listed below with the following subheadings clearly labeled.***

*I. Identifying Information & reason for referral*

*II. Developmental History (incl. health)*

*III. School History*

*IV. Cultural Background, Family History, and Current Issues*

*V. Current functioning*

*VI. Summary & Recommendations*

***On a separate page, each student must also answer the following questions:***

- 1) What did you learn from this experience?
- 2) What would you do differently next time?
- 3) How would you evaluate your strengths & weaknesses in conducting interviews and writing up the results of your interview?

Grading Criteria:

- 1) to what extent did the writer concisely summarize the content from the protocol in each section of the social developmental study?
- 2) to what extent were findings in the social developmental study supported by direct quotes and/or observations rather than personal bias (e.g., personal hunches, gut feelings, practice wisdom)?
- 3) is the summary a presentation of the major points from each section of the report? (the summary should not contain any new information)
- 4) did the writer use discretion and good judgement in making their recommendations?

The written report must be typed and double-spaced and should not exceed 5-7 pages (12 point font size) (excluding the separate sheet). **This assignment is due on or before April 8, 2003.**

