

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK  
SW 535 SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK**

**Summer Semester  
Mondays, 5:30 - 8:30**

**2002-2003 Academic Year**

**Instructor: Annice Overall, LCSW**

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**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 College of Social Work MSSW Handbook ([www.csw.utk.edu](http://www.csw.utk.edu))

**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*, 2000).

**Disability**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services at 191 Hoskins 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) are examined. Both traditional school social work practices as well as emerging practice paradigms such as full service schools are 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 and 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 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 histories, contributing to the development and implementation of individualized education programs (IEPs) and helping ensure the participation of parents.
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.

#### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS/GRADING**

**Grading for this course will fall into five categories:**

- I. Classroom Participation in 10 Ethical Dilemma Discussions ----- 10 points**
- II. Quiz on Special Education and Educational Law Issues----- 20 points**
- III. Social History/Psychoeducational Assessment-----20 points**
- IV. Sample Activity for a Hypothetical Group Session-----20 points**
- V. Project/Presentation-----30 points**

**Total Maximum = 100 points**

**Assignment of Final Grades** - The final course grade will be based on the following point totals:

- 92 – 100 points = A (Superior Performance)**
- 87 – 91 points = B+ (Better than Satisfactory Performance)**
- 82 – 86 points = B (Satisfactory Performance)**
- 77 – 81 points = C+ (Less than Satisfactory Performance)**
- 70 – 76 points = C (Performance well below standard expected of grad. students)**

**I. Classroom Participation in Weekly Ethical Dilemma Discussions (10 points):**

The final 30 minutes of 10 class periods will consist of group discussions of ethical dilemmas that school social workers may encounter. At the beginning of the semester the class will be randomly divided into small discussion groups. Each group will decide upon a way to rotate selection of “group leaders.” Each week the groups will be given a vignette to discuss for about 15 minutes. That week’s group leaders are responsible for initiating and facilitating the discussion and giving a brief verbal summary of the group’s position to the rest of the class during the final 15 minutes. “Grades” of 0 or 1 point will be given each week based upon the extent that the student is present and makes meaningful contributions.

**II. Quiz (20 points):**

This will be a brief multiple choice and/or short answer quiz assessing knowledge of Special Education Issues and Educational Law

**III. Social History/Psychoeducational Assessment (20 points):**

This will be a written assignment based upon observing a classroom demonstration of a social history interview with a parent and the administration of a psychoeducational assessment instrument. (Additional information will be provided in class.)

**IV. Sample Activity for a Hypothetical Group Session (20 points):**

Each student will “create” a hypothetical school-based group, summarizing pertinent information (number of students, ages, gender, type of problem or issue, etc.) in a typed description (1/2 to 1 page in length). On the back of the same page, the student will describe/detail a sample activity for the group, explaining exactly how to conduct the activity and the goal/reason for doing such an activity. Additionally, on the designated due date, each student will bring to class 20 copies of the assignment to provide to the other students and will bring the materials needed to conduct the activity with the class. (Additional information will be provided in class.)

**V. Project (30 points):**

The project will be done individually, (though requests for 2-person-team projects will be considered) and will include researching a currently relevant issue/problem in the field of school social work and making a classroom presentation (approximately 30-40 minutes), which includes basic

information/definition of the issue, pros and cons of potential/existing interventions, and a proposal for addressing the problem. The presentation should also address any potential ethical dilemmas unique to the chosen topic. Students will do a brief, but comprehensive literature review and fully explore the chosen area. Students will turn in a typed outline and bibliography two weeks prior to the assigned presentation date, and will bring copies of the outline and bibliography to distribute to classmates on the day of the presentation.

**The project grade will be separated into two components:**

Outline/Bibliography	-	25%
Classroom Presentation	-	75%

Topics must be approved and each person must have a different topic.

**Suggested project topics include (but are not limited to):**

- 1) Desegregation/Integration/Affirmative Action: Has It Worked? Where Do We Go From Here?
- 2) Public Education: Is It Still Viable? Alternatives? Charter Schools, Vouchers, Changes needed to length of school day or the school-year calendar? etc.
- 3) No Child Left Behind Legislation
- 4) Teacher's Unions: Pros and Cons
- 5) Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), including issues addressed in past reauthorizations and those anticipated in pending reauthorization
- 6) Diagnostic Labels...Pros and Cons: Is There A Better Way? (Criteria, Differences between states, etc.)
- 7) Bilingual Education/ESL programs...Pros and Cons: Is There A Better Way?
- 8) What Can School Social Workers Do To Improve Student Attendance?
- 9) What Can School Social Workers Do To Improve Student Achievement?
- 10) What Can School Social Workers Do To Reduce Teen Pregnancy?
- 11) What Can School Social Workers Do To Reduce the Drop Out Rate?
- 12) How Can School Social Workers Impact Upon School Violence?
- 13) How Can a School Social Worker Achieve and Demonstrate Cultural Competence with Diverse Student Populations?
- 14) Inclusion/Mainstreaming of Special Education Students...Pros and Cons
- 15) What Can School Social Workers Do to Address the Growing Numbers of Students with

Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome?

- 16) How Can School Social Workers Help Students, Schools, and Parents in Dealing with Disruptive Behavior Disorders?
- 17) How Can School Social Workers Help Students, Schools, and Parents in Dealing with Mood Disorders?
- 18) How Can School Social Workers Help Students, Schools, and Parents in Dealing with Mental Retardation?
- 19) How Can School Social Workers Help Students, Schools, and Parents in Dealing with Learning Disabilities?
- 20) How Can School Social Workers Help Students, Schools, and Parents in Dealing with Chronic Medical Problems?
- 21) How Can School Social Workers Help Students, Schools, and Parents in Dealing with Severely Emotionally Disturbed Students?
- 22) What Can School Social Workers Do to Facilitate Greater Parent Involvement in the Schools?
- 23) What Can School Social Workers Do to Ameliorate the Impact of Poverty on Students and Schools?
- 24) What Can School Social Workers Do to Ameliorate the Impact of Divorce upon Students?
- 25) What Can School Social Workers Do to Ameliorate the Impact of Substance Abuse upon Students and Schools?
- 26) What Can School Social Workers Do to Promote Alternatives to Corporal Punishment?
- 27) How Can School Social Workers Demonstrate the Effectiveness of Their Services?

**SW 535 - SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK  
COURSE OUTLINE, SCHEDULE, TOPICS and ASSIGNED READING**

**Required Text:**

Dupper, David; School Social Work: Skills and Interventions for Effective Practice; Wiley Pub.; 2002; ISBN: 0-471-39571-4

**Supplemental Readings may be assigned from: (copies of these texts should be on reserve in the library)**

Alexander and Alexander; The Law of Schools, Students, and Teachers in a Nutshell, West Publishing Co., ISBN: 0-314-05882-6

Edith M. Freeman, et al; Multisystem Skills and Interventions in School Social Work Practice, NASW Press, Inc., 1998. ISBN: 0-87101-295-2

Robert Constable, et al; School Social Work Practice & Research Perspectives, Lyceum Books, Inc., ISBN: 0-925065-11-0

## **Outline of Weekly Class Topics and Assigned Reading:**

- June 2** Introductions (In class introduction activities) and Discussion of Expectations  
(Class #1) School Social Work in Tennessee and the Certification Process  
Historical Overview, Models, Current Directions  
Assignments to Ethics Groups and Ethical Dilemma #1  
Assigned Reading (for next class): Dupper Text - Chap. 1, 2 & 9 and NASW Code of Ethics  
(download from <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>)
- June 9** Multi-Disciplinary Roles and Responsibilities: The Social Organization and (Class #2)  
Political Environment of the School Setting  
Ecological Perspective as Organizing Framework for School Social Work Practice  
Barriers to Learning and the “Enabling Component Model” by H. Adelman and L. Taylor  
(In class activity on school social work in various environments.)  
Ethical Dilemma #2  
Assigned Reading: Dupper Text - Chap. 6.
- June 16** Special Education and Educational Law Issues: Major Legislation and Precedent (Class  
#3) Setting Court Cases  
Disability Categories, Definitions, and Eligibility Criteria (Tennessee Department of Education)  
Video segment: “Including Students with Special Needs in the Regular Classroom”  
Ethical Dilemma #3  
(Decide on Articles, Project Topics and Presentation Dates)  
Assigned Reading: Dupper Text - Chap. 5 (suggest review Chap 6 for Quiz)
- June 23** **Quiz**  
(Class #4) Assessment of Individuals and Families  
(In class demonstrations relating to learning disabilities and Video: “Understanding Learning Disabilities: How Difficult Can This Be?”)  
(In class exploration of various assessment instruments.)  
Demonstrations of Social History Interviews and Administrations of Various Instruments Used to Assess Adaptive Behavior (VABS, ABS, ABES, ABI, SIB-R); to Assess Autism (CARS); to Assess for Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (Conner’s Scales); and to Assess for Emotional Disturbance (Achenbach, BASC, Depression Scales, Anxiety Scales)

(Information from one of these interviews may be used to complete Social History/Psychoeducational Assessment Assignment)

Ethical Dilemma #4

Assigned Reading: Dupper Text – Chap. 4, 8 and 11.

- June 30**  
(Class #5)      **Social History/Psychoeducational Assessment Due**  
Resiliency, Prevention, Parental Involvement and Education  
(In class activities on parenting education and crisis prevention using de-escalation techniques.)  
Video segments from “Parent to Parent,” “SOS! Help for Parents, “ and “Can We Talk”  
Interventions Related to Externalizing Behaviors, (Truancy, Substance Abuse, Aggression, Sexual Activity)  
Video segment from “Dealing with Anger: Giving It, Taking It, Working It Out”  
Emphasis on Vulnerable Groups of Students in Schools (i.e. Gay and Lesbian Students, Ethnic and Cultural Minorities)  
(In Class Experiential Activity/Simulation Exploring Discrimination)  
Ethical Dilemma #5  
Assigned Reading: Dupper Text - Chap. 3, 7 & 10.
- July 7**  
(Class #6)      Interventions, continued  
Interventions Related to Internalizing Behaviors, with Emphasis on Other Vulnerable Students (Those Abused and/or Neglected; Children of Divorced and/or Substance Abusing Caretakers; Homeless Students and Those in Foster Care)  
(In class activities related to play therapy.)  
Measuring Outcomes to Evaluate Both Micro- and Macro- Level Interventions, Programs, and Policies  
Ethical Dilemma #6  
Assigned Reading: Dupper Text - Chap. 12 and Appendix  
(Outline/Bibliography Due from those presenting on 7/21)
- July 14**  
(Class #7)      **Sample Activity for a Hypothetical Group Session Assignment Due**  
(In-class discussions about Activities)  
(Outline/Bibliography Due from those presenting on 7/28)  
Ethical Dilemma #7
- July 21**  
(Class #8)      Current Issues: Presentation/Activity/Discussion  
(Outline/Bibliography Due from those presenting on 8/4)  
Ethical Dilemma #8
- July 28**      Current Issues: Presentation/Activity/Discussion

(Class #9) Ethical Dilemma #9

**August 4** Current Issues: Presentation/Activity/Discussion  
(Class #10) Ethical Dilemma #10