

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

**SW 535 SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK**

**Course Outline**

**Summer 2008**

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**Course Requirements/Evaluation Procedures:**

Students are expected to attend every class session. Assigned readings and other course requirements are expected to be completed on time. It is imperative that students contact the instructor regarding any circumstances that interfere with punctual weekly attendance and participation, or the completion of course requirements.

**Course Requirements and Evaluation**

School Law Paper	75 points
Psychosocial-Psychoeducational Assessment	100 points
Position Paper with Sample Intervention	150 points
School Board Meeting/Workshop Assignment	75 points

**Assignment of Final Grades**

A	376-400 points (Superior performance)
B+	349-375.9 points (Better than satisfactory performance)
B	328-347.9 points (Satisfactory performance)
C+	308-327.9 points (Less than satisfactory performance)
C	280-307.9 points (performance well below graduate level standard)

**Required Text:**

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

*-Other readings may be obtained through the on-line library reserve*

**Description of Course Requirements**

**Attendance**

***-Punctual weekly attendance is expected of all graduate students.*** Students are required to be on time to class, and attend the entire class session. Students are required to participate in classroom ethical discussions, group forums and demonstrate critical thinking skills in responses in related classroom discourse. ***Each class absence results in a deduction of 2 points from your final grade.*** Perfect attendance results in 2 points added to your final grade.

**Classroom participation in Ethical Dilemma and Current Issue Discussions**

A portion of each class will be devoted to an ethical dilemma or a current issue relevant to School Social Work Practice. Students are required to keep a copy of the *NASW Code of Ethics* and bring it to class each week. Furthermore students will obtain a copy of the *NASW Standards for School Social Work Services* for reference during the course.

### **School Law Paper (75 points)**

Special Education and Educational Law will be presented in the second class session. Each student will be assigned a topic related to Special Education and Educational Law. The student will submit a written report to the instructor and provide a report to the class on the assigned school law topic. Specific report requirements and content will be provided in the first class session.

### **School Board Meeting/Workshop Assignment (75 points)**

Each student will attend a school board meeting or school board workshop. Before attending the meeting, carefully review the content found on the school systems official website for an overview of the information provided for the community on that site. The student will write a brief paper that focuses on the following issues:

- 1) Identify the location and participants in the meeting: demographics, positions, status, etc.
- 2) Specify issues addressed and discussed
- 3) Report how issues were resolved or unresolved
- 4) Describe the group process. Was it effective or ineffective?
- 5) Select an issue discussed at the meeting and prepare a statement describing and addressing the issue. This is a statement you would make to the school board emphasizing your concerns and how the issue may be resolved.
- 6) Conclude with an assessment of the school system's website.

This report is not to exceed 3 pages (12 point font).

### **Psychosocial-Psychoeducational Assessment (100 points)**

Evaluation and assessment of student needs is an integral part of School Social Work. This requires competency in providing a written document that clearly assesses and evaluates student needs. This assessment requires skills in evaluation of student needs and strengths, as well as gathering a social/developmental/educational history. A format for this process will be provided by the instructor and the student will be responsible for acquiring a case-study and submitting a comprehensive psychoeducational assessment that includes recommendations for addressing and meeting student/client needs.

### **Position Paper (100 points) with Sample Intervention/Method (50 points)**

Each student will select a topic relevant to School Social Work practice for an issue impacting students in grades K-12. The student will examine the topic using critical thinking skills and consider all aspects of the issue. After conducting a comprehensive literature review and considering relevant information, interviews with teachers, students and school social workers the student will defend a position on the topic. The student will create an approach model and design an intervention/method to address the issue.

*-Topics and issues will be discussed during the first class and all students must obtain instructor approval for selected topic.*

Paper must be typed and double-spaced and not to exceed 8 pages (12 point font). This does not include Bibliography or Sample Intervention hand-out.

### **Part I: The Position Paper will include the following:**

- In-depth description of the topic and a summary defining the issue
- Description of current and relevant research related to the topic
- Description of how the issue impacts education (specify effects on individuals or groups)
- Compare and contrast previous or current approaches to the topic/issue
- Clear and informed position on how to address the issue
- Identify/create a School Social Work approach model
- Select an appropriate intervention for the issue/topic

## **Part II: Demonstration of Sample Intervention**

Each student will demonstrate a sample of the intervention (method) as described in your Position Paper. This can be an intervention for individuals, groups, families, parents or teachers. Please consider developmental, cognitive and emotional factors when selecting the activity/directive.

Requirements for this portion of the assignment include:

- 1) A typed description of the method and rationale for application (format for intervention description will be provided).
- 2) Handout of intervention for each student in the class.
- 3) Materials and skills needed to demonstrate intervention in class.

## **Outline of Weekly Class Topics, Assignments, and Reading**

### **Unit I: Foundations of School Social Work Practice**

- Assigned Reading for Unit I: Dupper Text – Chapters 1,2, 6
- Assignment: Read and familiarize yourself with the following documents;

**NASW Code of Ethics**

<http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>

**NASW Standards for School Social Work Services**

[www.naswdc.org/practice](http://www.naswdc.org/practice) select School Social Work Practice

#### **Session 1**

Introductions and Discussion of Expectations  
Outline of Additional Readings from Course Reserves  
Historical Overview, Models, Current Issues  
Ecological Perspective as Organizing Framework for School

Social Work Practice

- Assignment: Select School Law Paper topic. Research topic and outline key components of selection.

#### **Session 2**

Special Education and Educational Law  
Major Legislation and Precedent Setting Court Cases  
Impact of Educational Law on School Social Work Practice  
Review: Disability Categories, Definitions, and Eligibility Criteria

- Assignment: Complete School Law Paper and prepare to present topic to class.

#### **Session 3**

Multi-Disciplinary Roles and Responsibilities in SSW  
The Social Organizational Structure and the Political Environment of the School Setting  
Assessments and Psychoeducational Evaluations

- Assignment: Research and review samples of School Social Work Assessments. Establish format appropriate for Psychosocial-Psychoeducational assessment. Identify a student/case study for assessment.

### **Unit II: Student-Focused Interventions in School Social Work Practice**

- Assigned Reading for Unit II: Dupper Text – Chapters 3, 4, 5, (review 6)

- Session 4** Interventions Related to Externalizing Behaviors  
Guidelines for assessing potentially violent students  
-In class activities on parent education, crisis prevention, and de-escalation techniques
- Assignment: Begin research and literature review for Position Paper and Sample Intervention

- Session 5** Interventions Related to Internalizing Behaviors  
Guidelines for assessing at-risk students  
-In class activities for effective individual sessions with students and group work in schools
- Assignment: Submit literature review and method plan for Position Paper and Sample Intervention

- Session 6** Overview of Social Problems in the Schools  
Understanding the Unique Problems of Children and Youth  
Best Practice Perspectives in School Social Work  
Integrating Assessment and Intervention
- Position Paper Reports and Sample Interventions  
Current Issues: Presentation/Activity/Discussion

### **Unit III: System-Focused Interventions in School Social Work Practice**

- Assigned Reading for Unit III: Dupper Text – Chapters 7,8,9,10

- Session 7** Exemplary School Based Prevention Programs  
Interventions on Behalf of Vulnerable Students  
Innovative Programs to Transform Schools
- Position Paper Reports and Sample Interventions  
Current Issues: Presentation/Activity/Discussion

- Session 8** School Social Worker as Consultant and Team Member  
Defining Characteristics of Consultation in Schools  
School Teams and Effective Collaboration  
Strategies for Classroom Behavior Problems
- Position Paper Reports and Sample Interventions  
Current Issues: Presentation/Activity/Discussion

- Session 9** Involving Parents and Community in Restructuring Schools  
Challenges in Building School-Community Collaborations  
Increasing Parental Connectedness with Schools  
Home Visiting
- Position Paper Reports and Sample Interventions  
Current Issues: Presentation/Activity/Discussion

### **Unit IV: Evaluating School Social Work Practice**

- Assigned Reading for Unit IV: Dupper Text – Chapters 11 & 12

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**Session 10**

Evaluating Student Focused Interventions  
Evaluating System-Focused Interventions  
Measuring Outcomes to Evaluate SSW Practice  
Interventions, Programs, and Policies

Position Paper Reports and Sample Interventions  
Current Issues: Presentation/Activity/Discussion