The University of Tennessee
College of Social Work
BSSW Program

SW 461 – Child Welfare I: History, Programs, and Policies

FALL 2017
(3 credit hours)

Instructor: Tracy Watkins  
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Section: 001
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Office hours: By Appointment

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 BSSW Handbook (http://www.csw.utk.edu/docs/BSSWHandbook.pdf). Students are also expected to sign and adhere to the Social Work Field Placement Code of Conduct.

CSW Standards of Professional Conduct
There are certain cognitive, emotional and character requirements that students must possess that provide the College of Social Work (CSW) with reasonable assurance that students can complete the entire course of study and participate fully in all aspects of social work education and the professional practice of social work. Students in the CSW are expected to possess the following abilities and attributes at a level appropriate to their year in the program. They are expected to meet these standards in the classroom as well as in their practicum.

- **Professional Behavior.** The social work student behaves professionally by knowing and practicing within the scope of social work, adhering to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and the Tennessee Board of Social Worker Standards of Conduct (1365-01-.10) as found in the Tennessee Board of Social Work Certification and Licensure General Rules and Regulations, http://www.state.tn.us/sos/rules/1365/1365-01.20100729.pdf

- **Interpersonal Skills.** The social work student communicates and interacts with other students, faculty, staff, clients and professionals in a professional manner, and demonstrates respect for and consideration of other students, faculty, staff, clients and professionals in spoken, written and electronic form. The social work student expresses her/his ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrates a willingness and ability to listen to others.

- **Self-awareness.** The social work student is willing to examine and change his/her behavior when it interferes with her/his working with clients and other professionals, and is able to work effectively with others in subordinate positions as well as with those in authority.

- **Professional Commitment.** The social work student has a strong commitment to the essential values of social work (the dignity and worth of every individual and her/his right to a just share of the society’s resources). The social work student is knowledgeable about and adheres to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and the Rules of the Tennessee Board of Social Worker Certification.

- **Self-care.** The social work student recognizes the signs of stress, develops appropriate means of self-care, and seeks supportive resources if necessary.

- **Valuing Diversity.** The social work student appreciates the value of human diversity. Social work students do not impose their own personal, religious, sexual, and/or cultural values on other students, faculty, staff, clients or professionals. Social work students are willing to serve in an appropriate manner all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person’s age, class, race, religious affiliation (or lack of), gender, disability, sexual orientation and/or value system.
Academic Standards of Conduct

All social work majors are expected to abide by the University Honor Statement. In social work classes, violations of the honor statement include cheating, plagiarism, collaborating on a graded assignment without the instructor’s approval, providing or receiving unauthorized information during an examination or possession and/or use of unauthorized materials during an examination, submitting the same assignment for credit in more than one course, forging the signature of another or allowing forgery by another on a class attendance sheet, or other infractions listed in “Hilltopics”. These violations are serious offenses, subject to disciplinary action that may include failure in a course and/or dismissal from the University. The instructor has full authority to suspend a student from his/her class, to assign an “F” for an assignment or examination or to assign an “F” in the course. See “Hilltopics” for more detailed information.

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).

University Civility Statement
Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other’s well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus: http://civility.utk.edu/

Disability Services
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 100 Dunford Hall (865) 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Dimensions of Diversity
The College of Social Work and the University of Tennessee welcome and honor all people. In accordance with the U.S. National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the U.S. Council on Social Work Education (CSWE 2015 Educational Policy Statement), “the dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including” age, class, color, culture, mental or physical disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, gender identity, immigration status, marital status, national origin, political ideology, race, regionality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. The College values intellectual curiosity, pursuit of knowledge, and academic freedom and integrity. “A person’s diverse life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim” (CSWE 2015 Educational Policy Statement). The College of Social Work promotes social justice and social change, and strives to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice.
Inclement Weather
Class will be cancelled only if the University is closed due to inclement weather. Campus and local radio and TV stations will be notified, so that appropriate announcement may be made. If class is cancelled, any assignments due that day will be due the next time class meets.

Course Description
SW 461 is a study of the child welfare system that examines history, policies and programs, both state and federal, pertinent to child maltreatment and juvenile justice.

Course Objectives:
The objectives of this course are to provide students the opportunity to understand and analyze:
- the current and historical context of child welfare policies and programs in Tennessee and the United States;
- the relationship of racism and poverty to child welfare;
- the impact of child abuse, neglect, and co-occurring issues on children and families;
- attachment theory and its implications in child psychosocial development and in child welfare practice;
- systems theory as it applies to families and child welfare practice
- the guiding principles of the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services practice model with particular attention to:
  1. The “one child-one worker” seamless service delivery system
  2. Permanency planning and the use of “concurrent planning” for permanency
  3. Family-centered practice and engaging families
  4. The strengths perspective as basis for assessment
  5. The use of “child and family team meetings”
  6. Culturally competent child welfare practice;
  7. State and federal policies and programs that outline the scope of practice in child protective services (CPS), foster care services, adoptions, and juvenile justice.

Course Competencies:
By the completion of this course, the students are expected to be able to demonstrate (through course activities, assignments, and/or exams):
1. discuss the current child welfare philosophy and structure of the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services;
2. identify and describe each of the roles of the child welfare team of professionals in Tennessee including:
   - Child Protective Services (CPS)
   - Foster care
   - Adoption
   - Juvenile justice
3. discuss situations that warrant involvement of the various professionals listed above and the impact of each role on interventions with families;
4. explain the legal definitions of child abuse and neglect, laws related to reporting child abuse, and reporting requirements in Tennessee;
5. discuss social work values with regard to child welfare practice;
6. demonstrate the ability to engage in critical thinking and problem solving regarding child welfare through successful completion of class activities and assignments;
7. discuss the value of implementing evidence-based child welfare practice.
Course Rationale
This course is designed to prepare students for entry-level child welfare practice. A focus on best practices will increase students’ knowledge and skills for evidence-based, culturally competent, strengths-based, and family-centered child welfare practice.

Course Format & Requirements
The course format will be a combination of lecture, speakers, video, class discussion and activities. Students are expected to read, critically analyze, and discuss readings. Participation in class is a requirement and students should come to each class prepared to discuss the reading assigned for that class session.

Required Text

Other Required Readings
In addition to assigned readings from our texts, there are several articles designated in our syllabus which are also required readings. These readings can be accessed through the course site on Canvas/Online @ UT.

Grading
Students will be evaluated by total points earned in this course as outlined below. No extra credit is permitted in this course. The grading scale by total points is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<td>282 - 300</td>
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<td>270 - 281</td>
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Instructor’s Policy
Any alternative arrangements such as make-up exams or deadline extensions will be permitted at the discretion of the instructor in the case of a verified emergency. If there are extenuating circumstances, the instructor must be informed prior to the date/time of the exam or the due date of the assignment. Any assignments or exams that are not completed as scheduled will be recorded as a “0”.

Research Paper (60 points) This assignment evaluates competency # 3, #5, #6, and #7.
Write a research paper about one of the major child welfare issues covered in the course. (You must discuss your topic choice with the instructor before writing the paper.) Your paper should incorporate APA style using a 12-point font. You should use at least 5 current peer-reviewed research articles for references. Please note: Your textbook is not an acceptable reference for your paper. This assignment is due in class on October 2nd.
Your paper should address:
- A thorough description of the issue you will research. In other words, what is the issue? How is it related to child welfare? Define/describe the issue thoroughly. (15 points)
  Be sure to include:
  o Overall scope of the problem
  o Etiology of the issue
- A thorough examination of the issue (20 points)
  Be sure to include:
  o Discussion on how the NASW Code of Ethics relates to the issue
  o Discussion on how family-centered child welfare practice relates to the issue
  o Any other relevant information from your research
Evidence-based practice intervention strategies according to current literature (15 points)
Your paper will also be evaluated on the clarity and strength of your writing. This includes grammar, spelling, use of APA style, the strength of your analysis and the appropriate use of source materials. (10 points)

Policy Analysis Report (80 points) & Presentation (20 points) This assignment evaluates competency # 1, #2, #3, #5, #6, and #7.
For this assignment, students will work in pairs/groups to complete an analysis of a federal child welfare policy using the Karger & Stoesz (2006) framework below. Each pair/group will also present the policy analysis findings to the class. You will each rate the individual members of your group on their participation this is due at the same day as the paper. The written policy analysis report is due on November 27. Policy analysis presentations will be held in class on November 20th and November 27th.


I. Name & Goals of the Policy (5 points)
- What is the official name & legal citation of the policy?
- What are the stated goals of the policy?
- What are the unstated goals of the policy?

II. Description of the Problem (15 points)
- What problems, needs, or conditions led to the creation of the policy?
- What are the causes of the problem?
- Who is affected by the problem and how are they affected?
- How widespread is the problem currently?

III. History of the Policy (10 points)
- When did the policy originate?
- How has it been changed over time? What is the policy’s legislative history?

IV. Description of the Policy

Values & Ideology (10 points)
- What are the underlying values, beliefs, and assumptions of this policy?
- What is the NASW position on the issue addressed in the policy?
- Identify the major stakeholders regarding this policy?
- Identify any special interest groups, advocacy groups, or others who support the policy? Why?
- Identify any special interest groups, advocacy groups, or others who would like to eliminate or change the policy? Why?

Benefits & Eligibility (10 points)
- What benefits, services, or goods are provided through this policy?
- What are the criteria for eligibility?

Administration (10 points)
- How is the policy expected to work? In other words, how will the policy be carried out?
- Which of the three major program areas at TN DCS is this policy related to (child protective services, foster care/permanence, or juvenile justice)? How so?
- Are there specific social programs that are associated with this policy? If so, which ones?
V. Policy Analysis (15 points)

- What is the knowledge or scientific grounding on which the policy is based?
- Describe how the policy is and/or is not meeting the goals it was intended to meet.
- Are the values, beliefs, and assumptions that underlie the policy congruent with NASW Code of Ethics? Why or why not?
- How do the goals of the policy contribute to a better quality of life for the target population?
- Will the goals adversely affect the quality of life for the target population in any way?
- What are your recommendations for changes in the policy? Why?

The Policy Analysis Report will also be evaluated on the clarity and strength of your writing. This includes grammar, spelling, APA style, strength of your analysis, and the appropriate use of source materials. (5 points)

Tests (2 @ 60 points each = 120 points) This test evaluates course competencies 1-7.
There will be 2 tests in this class. The tests will cover required readings, class discussions, lectures, videos and guest speakers. Each test will be worth 60 points.

Please note: Dates for quizzes are scheduled. However, the instructor reserves the right to present unannounced “pop quizzes” in class if necessary to encourage students to keep up with course readings.

Test 1 is scheduled for October 16th. Test 1 will cover material from class sessions 1 thru 7:
The historical & current influences on child welfare philosophy & practice; Government/welfare programs related to child welfare; Evidence-based child welfare strategies; Family-centered practice; TN Department of Children’s Services Practice Model & Practice Wheel. Cultural competence and cultural considerations in child welfare; The influence of the social context on child welfare & child welfare practice including poverty, racism, sexual orientation, gender identity, homophobia, violence, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, homelessness, and family systems & structure; Family support services and prevention programs; Conditions that warrant child welfare intervention; The court system and child welfare; The legal structure and issues related to child welfare; Issues in child protection; Definition/dimensions of child abuse and neglect; Mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect.

Test 2 will be administered via Canvas during the exam period for this semester. This exam evaluates course competency #1—7.
Students will take the exam at their convenience during this period of availability. Test 2 will cover material from class sessions 8-14: Types of child abuse and neglect; Impact of child abuse and neglect including attachment, loss and grief; Child protection services; TN DCS Multiple Response System; Family preservation services;

Foster care roles and responsibilities; Concurrent planning; Termination of parental rights; Emancipation; Permanency services; Adoption; Juvenile Justice roles and responsibilities; Risk and prevention in juvenile justice; Classification of juvenile offenses; Overrepresentation of minorities in the juvenile justice system; Restorative justice; Federal and state laws governing child welfare practice (information to come from text, class discussions and student groups in-class policy presentations).

Blackboard/Online discussion board assignments (2 @ 5 points each and 1@10 points = 20 points)
Participation in all online assignments/discussions is required for all students. There will be 3 Canvas discussion board assignments. The due date for each assignment is listed below in the assignment description and posted on Blackboard. These assignments will be opportunities for students to engage in critical analysis and thoughtful dialogue of course concepts that emerge in classroom discussions and course readings. Each student will post her/his own response to the question(s) posed for the assignment and also respond to at least 2 other students’
postings. This will mean that each student will have a total of at least 3 postings to each discussion board assignment.

Discussion Board #1: This assignment evaluates competency #1, #5, #6, and #7. Discuss family centered practice and the TN DCS Practice Model. Are these congruent with the NASW Code of Ethics? Why or why not? Identify at least 2 benefits and 2 challenges of the family centered approach for children and families and child welfare workers. Due date: Each student should post her/his responses on the discussion board by 6:00 pm on September 11th.

Discussion Board #2: This assignment evaluates competency #2, #3, and #6. Students will view the video Foster care: A system in crisis (2006) via a link provided on the course Canvas site. This video explores some of the current challenges of the U.S. foster care system including foster care drift and quality foster family recruitment. After viewing the video, students will engage in sharing perspectives and application of course concepts via discussion questions posed on the discussion board. Students will post a response to the question(s) posed and respond to at least two (2) other students’ postings. Detailed instructions on accessing the video and the related questions can be found on the course Canvas site under “Assignments” and “Discussion Board.” This assignment is due no later than 6:00 pm on October 23rd.

Discussion Board #3: This assignment evaluates competency #1, #2, and #3. Based on what you have learned so far about the 3 major program areas at TN DCS (Child Protective Services, Foster Care/Permanence, and Juvenile Justice) which of these three do you think you would be best suited for as a social worker? Explain why. Also, discuss your understanding of your role and interactions with children and families in this program area. What challenges do you foresee for yourself? Due date: Each student should post her/his responses on the discussion board by 6:00 pm on November 13th.

Attendance & Participation
Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive punctually. Attendance will be taken in each class session. Students are allowed to be absent 1 time during the semester without penalty. Each additional absence will result in two (2) points being deducted from the student’s final course grade unless other arrangements have been made in advance with the instructor. Students are expected to arrive on time for class, students arriving late for class will have 1 point deducted after 5 minutes of the start time of class, unless prior arrangements have been made with and approved by instructor. Students are expected to stay for the entire class; students leaving class early will have 1 point deducted, unless prior arrangements have been made with instructor. Laptops will not be allowed unless the class is working on a specific assignment which requires the use of the device. Cell phones are only to be used in emergency situations, please let instructor know if you are experiencing an emergency situation. The instructor may dismiss a student from class for disruption if they are using an electronic device which will result in the student losing a point for leaving early.
Tentative Course Outline

August 28  
Course Introduction  
Child welfare overview  
What is child welfare?  
The relevance of policy to child welfare  
Global/international child welfare  
Historical overview of child welfare in the United States  
The Tennessee Department of Children’s Services (DCS)  
The Brian A. Lawsuit and Settlement Agreement  
DCS Practice Model & Guiding Principles  
The DCS Practice Wheel  
Evidence-based practice in child welfare  
Family-centered practice  

Reading:  
Downs, Moore & McFadden (2009) chapter 1 (pp. 1-33)  
Tennessee Department of Children’s Services standards of professional practice for serving children and families: A model of practice  
Note: This document is for your review—you aren’t expected to read all of it!

September 4  
Labor Day—Class does not meet

September 11  
Family support services  
Prevention programs  
Government programs to support families and children  
Poverty  
Welfare programs  
Day Care  

Reading:  
Downs, Moore & McFadden (2009) chapter 2 (pp. 37-66)  

Discussion Board #1 is due by 6:00 pm

September 18  
The social context of child welfare  
Poverty and classism  
Overrepresentation and racism  
Homophobia, heterosexism, sexual orientation, and gender identity  
Violence  
Substance abuse and addiction  
Homelessness  
Teen pregnancy  
Family systems and family structure
Cultural competence & cultural responsiveness


September 27  Child welfare principles and practices
Fundamental principles of child welfare practice
Casework
Basic tasks in child welfare practice

Reading: Downs, Moore & McFadden (2009) chapter 4 (pp. 117-147)

October 2  The court system and child welfare
Juvenile court and juvenile justice
Family court
Criminal court
Child Protective Services (CPS)
Issues in child protection
Definitions
Mandatory reporting

Reading: Downs, Moore & McFadden (2009) chapter 5 (pp. 150-185)
Downs, Moore & McFadden (2009) chapter 6 (pp. 188-202 & 222-232)

Research paper is due at the beginning of class

October 9  Child abuse & neglect
Physical abuse
Emotional abuse
Sexual abuse
Neglect
Impact of abuse & neglect
Attachment theory & implications
Loss & grief

Reading: Downs, Moore & McFadden (2009) chapter 6 (pp. 202-222)


October 16  Child Protective Services and TN DCS
Multiple Response System (MRS)
Assessment
Intervention
Linkage/referral

**Reading:** *Multiple Response Approach to Child Maltreatment Concerns*

**Online at:** [http://www.tennessee.gov/youth/services/multrespapproach.htm](http://www.tennessee.gov/youth/services/multrespapproach.htm)

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**TEST 1**

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**October 23**

**Family preservation services**
Family preservation philosophy
Intensive home-based services
Kinship care

**Reading:** Downs, Moore & McFadden (2009) chapter 7 (pp. 240-268)

**Discussion Board # 2 is due by 6:00 pm**

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**October 30**

**Foster Care and Permanency**
Permanency
Foster care
Kinship care
Federal laws

**Reading:** Downs, Moore & McFadden (2009) chapter 8 (pp. 273-317)

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**November 6**

**Foster Care and Permanency continued**
Engaging families & concurrent planning
Termination of parental rights
Emancipation
Therapeutic interventions
Intensive services

**Readings:** Downs, Moore & McFadden (2009) chapter 9 (pp. 326-373)

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**November 13**

**Permanency continued**
Adoption
**Juvenile Justice**
Risk and prevention factors
TN Youth Development Centers (YDC)
Residential programs
Restorative justice

**Reading:** Downs, Moore & McFadden (2009) chapter 10 (pp. 387-434)

Discussion Board #3 is due by 6:00 pm

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<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 20</td>
<td>Policy Analysis Presentations in class</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 27</td>
<td>Policy Analysis Presentations in class</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Policy Analysis Written Reports are due</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 7-14th</td>
<td>TEST 2   Available Online</td>
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