NOTE: This course is required for the State of Tennessee School Social Work Licensure Program.

(RE) Prerequisite(s): 510, 512, 513, 519, 522, 537, 538 and 539. Advanced standing satisfies prerequisites.

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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 found in the College of Social Work BSSW and MSSW handbook (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).

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 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://cilvility.utk.edu/.
Disability Services

If you need course adaptation or accommodations because of a documented disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 100 Dunford Hall at (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.

Course Description

This course is a concentration elective. It explores the place of school as a community institution and resource. It examines methods, processes and techniques employed in school social work. The purpose of this course is to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for successful and competent social work in public schools. The course covers the varied roles and functions of school social workers in their practice with diverse groups of students, families, school personnel and communities. It emphasizes best practices in assessing, intervening and evaluating social work practice across all system levels (i.e. students, families, teachers, classrooms, schools, neighborhoods, communities) and the importance of the political environment of the school and its impact on social work practice. It also covers best practices in school-based prevention programs as well as best practices in consultation and collaboration.

Course Rationale

Public schools are emerging as an increasingly important setting for social work practice due to the expanding scope and complexity of the biopsychosocial needs of the increasingly diverse population of children, youth and their families in public schools. The public school setting is one enduring focus for many students and their families. Additionally, while the needs and problems of this population are increasing in
complexity, the social service resources available to them may be fragmented and/or constrained. Social workers in schools must be knowledgeable about these multiple factors and skilled in direct practice with students and their families while also being knowledgeable and skilled in collaboration with multiple non-social work professionals.

**Course Competencies:** By the completion of this course, students (through course activities, assignments and/or exams) are expected to be able to:

1. Identify and describe historical and current trends in the U.S. public schools as well as court cases and educational policies at the local, state and national levels and their implications for school social work practice.

2. Identify and describe the social, emotional, cultural, economic and environmental factors affecting diverse and vulnerable groups of students and their families.

3. Identify and describe the social organization and the political environment of schools and why this knowledge is important in the development and delivery of social work services in schools.

4. Identify, explain and apply the constructs of the Response to Intervention (RTI) framework in designing a school-wide assessment protocol and intervention plan that includes prevention and intervention strategies as well as strategies for evaluating students who are having learning and/or behavioral problems and suspected of having a disability and involving parents/guardians in this process.

5. Understand the importance of and learn the skills involved in serving as a liaison between home and school as well as facilitating the coordination and integration of community services to benefit students and their families. This includes assisting parents in understanding their children’s needs, interpreting student assessments and helping parents develop effective parenting skills.

6. Learn and apply the knowledge and skills required for interdisciplinary collaboration and consultation in addressing students’ needs.

7. Identify several ethical dilemmas confronting social workers in school settings and describe and apply a process for resolving them.

**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 Assignments/Requirements

School Board Analysis Paper- 40 points: (Meets competencies 1, 3, 6)

This assignment asks students to consider how they, as school social workers, (a) can participate in the process of organizational change and (b) can facilitate the involvement of other stakeholders, especially those who are most disadvantaged. Students will attend a school board meeting or school board work session in order to observe both the content and process of the meeting. A brief paper will be written that summarizes the findings, reflecting the function of the school board, the issues addressed and the accessibility of the meeting to other participants. Further consideration and discussion of how school social workers facilitate and support that accessibility is a key to the assignment, as is demonstrating an understanding of ways school social workers can facilitate change on a larger system level. Information about schedules and locations of school board meetings throughout the area will be available on the Blackboard website for this course.

Current Trends in the Educational Setting Paper-80 points: (Meets competencies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6)

News reports related to public education can be found through various news outlets it seems on a daily basis. Of note, Tennessee is often at the forefront of several trends in the U.S and our governor Bill Haslam has recently been referred to as the “Education Governor”. Write a two to three page paper covering the topic, choosing from current news reports. Discuss the topic’s implications for school social work practice. Please include at least three references.

Mid-term exam-80 points: (Meets competencies 1, 2, 4 and 6)

Mid term will cover topics to include historical and current trends in school social work, issues related to the development of children, social, emotional, cultural, economic and environmental factors affecting diverse and vulnerable groups of students and their families, and special education topics.

Research Paper-80 points: (Meets competencies 1, 2, 4)

Choose from a wide range of topics related to school social work and write a paper, presenting the topic in great detail. Special emphasis should be given to its implications for school social work practice. Suggested topics include RTI, Common Core, truancy, Title I, alternative settings, suicide prevention, bullying, crisis response, children in foster care, juvenile court, topics from special education, counseling specific culturally diverse groups, and any specific childhood or adolescent DSM V disorder. This list serves as a guideline only, and other topics of personal interest will most certainly be considered and should be presented for approval. This paper should be minimally eight pages and should cite 12 to 15 references. It is permissible to tie this paper into whatever topic was chosen for the Current Trends paper.
Final Exam-80 points: (Meets competencies 3, 5 and 7)

Topics include the social and political environments of school and impacts and delivery of school social work services, the critical importance of the relationship between school social work and families and communities, collaboration between school social workers and educators to effectively meet student needs and identifying and resolving ethical dilemmas in school settings.

Attendance and participation-40 points

Attendance is especially important since the skills taught in this class are essential to your professional development and have direct application in future courses, field placements and practice experiences. Students are expected to be in attendance at each class and attendance will be taken. Students will be allowed to be absent one time without penalty. Each additional absence will result in five points being deducted from the 40 possible points for attendance and participation. Five classes are roughly equivalent to ⅓ of the course so any absences over five will result in a failing grade and receiving no credit for the course. In addition, excessive tardies will be considered as an absence. Trouble finding a parking place is not considered an acceptable reason for being tardy, as parking has always been difficult at UT and students should allow adequate time to park and arrive in class. Arriving in class more than 10 minutes late or leaving early counts as one half of an absence. If you miss a class you are still responsible for what you missed. Students are asked to notify me by cell phone/voicemail or email if circumstances prevent attending a class. To earn maximum participation points students are expected to read all assigned material prior to class and participate frequently in class discussions and activities. Additionally, social work students are expected to treat their peers, faculty and staff with dignity and respect (section 2.01A of NASW Code of Ethics), and avoid unwarranted negative criticism and demeaning comments of these constituencies (section 2.01B of NASW Code of Ethics).

Final course grade will be based on the following rubric:

A = 376-400 points (Superior performance, exceeds expectations)
B+=348-375 points (Better than satisfactory performance)
B = 328-347 points (Satisfactory performance, meets expectations)
C+=308-327 points (Less than satisfactory performance)
C = 280-307 points (Performance well below the standard expected of graduate students)


Additional readings will be required for most classes and will be posted on the course Blackboard site throughout the semester. Also, guest speakers may be invited to classes to share their expertise on occasion. It is expected that students will give guest speakers their full attention and utmost respect.
Course Outline

1/19/16  Introduction, course overview

1/26/16  Historical through current trends, policies in School Social Work
          Jarolmen, Ch. 1 pp 1-5, Ch 2
          Additional readings posted on Blackboard

2/2/16   The Developing Child – neurobiological issues, child development theories & introduction to counseling children
          Jarolmen, Ch 1 pp 5 – 21
          Additional readings posted on Blackboard

2/9/16   Current Trends paper due
          Cultural, economic and environmental factors of vulnerable groups:
          Diversity and inequalities in our schools
          Jarolmen, Ch 7 & 8
          Harry, B. (1992), Cultural diversity, families, and the special education system: Communication and empowerment (Ch 3). New York, NY, Teachers College Press.

2/16/16  Social/emotional factors affecting school behavior and performance
          Jarolmen, Ch 9
          Additional readings posted on Blackboard

2/23/16  The World of Special Education
          Jarolmen, Ch 3 & 4
          Additional readings posted on Blackboard

3/1/16   Social organization and political environment of schools

3/8/16   Mid-term exam

6
3/15/16  **Bridging the Gap: home, community and school**

Jarolmen, Ch 5 pp 126-132


Additional readings posted on Blackboard

3/29/16  **School board analysis paper due**

*Integrating what we do with what they do: collaborative efforts to avoid “Us vs. Them”*

Jarolmen, Ch 5 pp 116-126

Additional readings posted on Blackboard

4/5/16  **Ethics and school social work**

Jarolmen, Ch 6


4/12/16  **Research paper due**

*Practice Methods for Effective Intervention*

Jarolmen, Ch 10

Additional readings posted on Blackboard

4/19/16  **Cases from an authentic practice perspective**

Jarolmen, Ch 11

Additional readings posted on Blackboard

**Evaluating ourselves: Practice outcomes and the future of school social work**

4/26/16  **Final Exam**