



SWK-S634 Group & Community-Based Practice with Children & Families (3 cr.)

Course Information

Semester Year: Spring 2017
Section Number: XXXXX
Location: XXXXX
Day: XXXXX
Time: XXXXX

Instructor: XXXXX XXXXXXXXXX
Office: XXXX
Email: XXXX
Phone: XXXXX
Office Hours: XXXXXXXXXX

Course Description

This course will examine the development of and build skills for the implementation of a wide range of prevention and intervention strategies to support child well-being provided at the community level. Special attention will be given to the philosophy of empowerment-oriented and client-driven service models. This course will provide content to build skills in developing and implementing mutual aid and self-help groups to support and educate children and families on issues such as parenting, domestic violence, grief/loss, conflict mediation and child abuse issues. The course will explore the community as a resource and discuss strategies of collaboration and advocacy services for families and children to prevent out-of-home placement or involvement in other formal child protection/juvenile justice services, such as models of community-building, youth development and family group conferencing/restorative justice. The course also provides frameworks for identifying and analyzing best practices in group and community-based services for children and families.

Course Competencies

Council on Social Work Education (CWSE) 2015 EPAS Competencies addressed by this course.

Primary

- 6: Engage with Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities when working with Children, Youth and Families.
- 7: Assess Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities when working with Children, Youth and Families.
- 8: Intervene with Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities when working with Children, Youth and Families.

Course Objectives

Through active participation in the learning experiences and completion of the readings, assignments, and learning projects offered throughout this seminar, learners are expected to demonstrate the ability to:

- 634-01:** Analyze the ethical and values bases of several models of community-based interventions in child welfare practice.
- 634-02:** Evaluate the formal and informal services available and their impact on families and the community. [EP 2.1.6]



- 634-03:** Engage, assess and intervene with communities to advance the social and economic well-being of children and families.
- 634-04:** Engage, assess and intervene with children and families using mutual aid/self-help groups for child welfare practice.
- 634-05:** Analyze the impact of oppression on child welfare practice.
- 634-06:** Advocate strategies for promoting family and community development.
- 634-07:** Integrate the empowerment perspective into community-based child welfare practice.

Required Texts

Available for rent, on Kindle, or in print at Amazon (purchase or rent).

Gitterman, A. & Shulman, L. (Eds.). (2005). Mutual aid groups, vulnerable & resilient populations, and the life cycle. (3rd Ed). New York: Columbia University Press, NY.

Recommended Texts

Gentle-Genitty, C. Napier, P.C., & Campbell, C. (2017). Group-Based Knowledge and Skills: Steps to Competency. Kendall Hunt Publishing. Dubuque, IA.

Turner, F.J. (2017). Social Work Treatment: Interlocking Theoretical Approaches (6th ed.). Oxford University Press. Oxford.

Journal articles and other relevant materials may be made available as deemed necessary by the instructor.

Course Content

This course situates children's well-being at the intersection of the family and the social ecologies within which the family function. Drawing on the social work person-in-environment perspective, the course is designed to encourage students to view the reciprocal relationship between families and the communities that surround them, which in turn impact the well-being of children. Key issues that will be explored include community resources including the level of social supports and connections that are available to families, how such resources are developed and accessed, the degree to which they are consistent with families' definition of needs, and promote families' worth and dignity and by extension, children and youth well-being. The course is theory and practice driven, will be in a seminar format and will involve group-based activities that expose students to community-based organizations where student will have the opportunity to evaluate services in relation to the needs of communities and the families and children who live in the communities.

Course Outline

Module 1: Introduction to the course

Dates:

Overview

- Getting to know you (and me)
- **Course Syllabus (Posted on Canvas)**



Module 2: Empowerment Perspective

Dates:

Readings

- Lee, J. A. B., & Hudson, R. E. (2011). Empowerment approach to social work practice. In F. Turner, *Social Work Theories: Interlocking Theoretical Approaches*. 5th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sarri, R., & Finn, J. (1992). Child welfare policy and practice: Rethinking the history of our certainties. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 14(3-4), 219-236

Module 3: Review of group process and kinds of groups

Dates:

Readings

- Hudson, Chapter 9 (Canvas)
- Cohen, M. B. & Graybeal, C.T. (2007). Using solution-oriented techniques in mutual aid groups. *Social Work with Groups*, 30 (4), 41-58).

Module 4: Community Assessment and Intervention Strategies

Dates:

Readings

- Hudson, Chapter 12
- Community Capacity Building Tool (on Canvas)
- Community Tool Box [Community Tool Box from Center for Community Health and Development](#)

Module 5: Visit with Rev. Jim Strietelmeier at Neighborhood Fellowship Church

Dates:

Neighborhood Fellowship Church

3102 E.10th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46201 (Student Outreach Clinic church)

Please note this is subject to change. Students will be notified accordingly.

[Indiana University Student Outreach Clinic](#)

Module 6: Prevention Services (Primary, Secondary, Tertiary Prevention)

Dates:

Readings

- [Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect Resource Guide](#)
- [Issue Brief: Child Maltreatment Prevention](#)

Module 7: Organization of Community Services: System of Care

Dates:

Guest Speaker: Dr. Betty Walton



Readings

- Pumariega, A., Winters, N. & Huffine, C. (2003). The evolution of systems of care for children's mental health: Forty years of community child and adolescent psychiatry. *Community Mental Health Journal*, v39 (5) pp. 309-425. Birmingham, AL: National Council of Community Mental Health Centers and Springer Verlag

Module 8: Urban vs. Rural Community Practice

Dates:

Readings

- Humble, Lewis, Scott, Herzog (2013) Challenges in rural social work practice: When support groups contain your neighbors, church members, and PTA. *Social Work with Groups*, 36 (2/3), 249-258.
- Reibschleger, J. (2007). Social workers' suggestions for effective rural practice. *Families in Society*, 88,2.
- Reibschleger, Norris, Pierce, Pond, & Cummings (2015). Preparing social work students for rural child welfare practice: Emerging curriculum competencies. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 51: sup 2, S209-S224.

Module 9: Mutual Aid Groups for Children and Adolescents

Dates:

Guest Speaker: Dr. Betty Walton

Readings

- Gitterman and Shulman, 4*, 5, 6*,7*, 8 (*denotes optional reading - chapters 5 and 8 are required)
- Carter, C., Meckes, L, Pritchard, L. Swensen, S., Wittman, P.P., Velde, B. (2004). The friendship club: An after-school program for children with Asperger Syndrome. *Family and Community Health*, 27 (2), 143-150.
- Jagendorf, J., & Malekoff, A. Groups-on-the-go: Spontaneously formed mutual aid groups for adolescents in distress. *Social Work with Groups*, 28 (3/4), 229-246.
- Pinto, R. M. & Queely, T. (2004). Parents and children come together to prevent drug abuse: A mutual aid approach. *Social Work with Groups*, 26 (3), 77-92.
- Steinberg, D. M., (2010). Mutual aid: A contribution to best-practice social work. *Social Work with Groups*, 331 (1), 53-68.

Module 10: Mutual Aid for Adults

Dates:

Readings

- Chapters 14,15 & 16
- Gitterman, A. & Shulman, L. (Eds.). (2005). *Mutual aid groups, vulnerable & resilient populations, and the life cycle.* (3rd Ed). New York: Columbia University Press, NY.
- Comer, E., & Fraser, M. (1998). Evaluation of six family-support programs: are they effective?. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services*, v79, i2, pp. 1-14.



Module 11: Family Group Conferencing Models

Dates:

Readings

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Module 12: Family Team Conference Presentation and Role Play

Dates:

Guest Speaker: William Snowden, MSW

Readings

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Modules 13 & 14: Presentations

Dates:

Module 15: Final Examination

Dates:

Supplemental readings are on Canvas unless otherwise noted. Professor reserves the right to change this schedule based on course need. I may add readings.

Assignments and Grading

*Assignments: For the purposes of this course you will be divided into groups and you will work together for the entire semester. You will have time each week to work together as a group to plan and implement your project.

Note: There is no make- up work nor extra credit work offered in lieu of the course assignments, quizzes and class activities.

Detailed description of the assignments, identified below, along with each assignment’s purpose in meeting the course objectives, are provided below. Each assignment has a specific purpose as related to the course objectives, team activities/assignments and student/group products.

The professor reserves the right to administer quizzes and to assign additional class activities, both announced and unannounced, when, in the professor’s professional judgment, the quiz will add to the learning environment for the class and/or for individual students.

Assignments

1. Group Research Paper-Assessment of Community Capacity for Child Welfare Support Services
 - a. DUE:date
 - b. Point value:40
2. Mutual Aid Group Observation Reflection Paper (ind)
 - a. DUE:date



- b. Point value:20
- 3. Quizzes and Final Exam (ind)
 - a. DUE:date
 - b. Point value20
- 4. Assigned Class Activities
 - community education intervention presentation (group) and field trips as assigned
 - a. DUE:date
 - b. Point value:20

Assignment 1: Group Research Paper

Assessment of Community Capacity for Child Welfare Support Services

Part 1

The student should consider the following tasks in the development of the assessment tool:

1. Review resource material {**COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING- the Community Capacity Building Tool- A tool for planning, building and reflecting on community capacity in community based health projects**}
2. Identify the student’s focus and area of interest relative to services for children and their families within a specific community. and
3. Determine what questions will provide a focused analysis of the community’s capacity to care for children and their families.

The assessment tool provides student an opportunity to develop a methodical approach to the other sections of this assignment. The tool equips the student to focus more carefully when visiting a community center, interviewing a community leader and completing the analysis of community capacity.

The student should develop the assessment tool around one of the nine areas illustrated in the Community Capacity Building Tool article:

1. Participation
2. Leadership
3. Community structures
4. External supports: funding bodies
5. Asking why
6. Obtaining resources
7. Skills, knowledge, and learning
8. Linkages with others
9. Sense of community

This will narrow the focus and provide a legitimate direction to pursue.

The inquiry approach will need to narrow the assessment focus on a specific area of community based child welfare practice. Community based child welfare program service areas can be approached by



first focusing on the well-being of children and their families. From this perspective, one can inquire as to child safety, child economic security, child education, child health and mental health etc.

Part 2 Reflection Paper

Reflection Paper on Community Center Visit (individual reflection) Group visits together but must write reflection individually. Designed to meet the following course objectives:

- 634-03. Engage, assess and intervene with communities to advance the social and economic well-being of children and families
- 634-05. Analyze the impact of oppression on child welfare practice.

The student will write a reflection paper using the DEAL method on h/her visit to a community center, which serves children and their families. The community center needs to be a community center that serves and/or is located in the community chosen for Section #1 of this assignment.

The assessment tool, in part, will provide the student with a particular focus while visiting the center. The visit should be a combination of observing and interacting. The student will want to focus the visit on areas that will provide insight into the purpose of the center, who the center serves, how the center is funded and who in the community oversees the center's operation. Beyond the purpose of the center, the student will need to further narrow in on what community based child welfare services are available and what services are needed but not available within the community. The student may want to choose a particular service delivery system to provide further structure to the inquiry and analysis. Example: For children and their families in the defined community, how are mental health services made available in this community? For clinical services, does the child/family have to leave the community to receive services? For support services and mutual aid services, do the child/ family receive services within the community? At the community center? In other words, what is the capacity of the center, and the community to support and serve children and their families with mental health related support service needs and or addiction support service needs. Is this a community center (from observation) that you as a professional social worker would refer someone to in hopes of gaining support for a child or family? If yes why? If no, then why not?

Part 3 Community Leader Interview

Designed to meet the following course objectives:

- 634-03. Engage, assess and intervene with communities to advance the social and economic well-being of children and families.

Assignment Format:

- APA format
- Interview Summary:
- Tool Used for Interview (Interview Questions) (one page)
- Specific Information on Interviewee (1/2 page)
- Summary of Information gained from interview (one –two pages)
- DEAL Model for Reflection Paper (two-three pages) (Group reflection)

The group will need to develop a list of interview questions to be used to interview the chosen community leader.



The group needs to identify who was interviewed, why the interviewee is considered a community leader* as well as, where and when the interview occurred.

Beyond the interview tool and the identification of the interviewee, the student needs to summarize what was discussed in the interview that assists the student in gaining insight into the level of community capacity that exists and that may be needed in order for the community to provide effective, community based child welfare support services for the community's children and their families.

Lastly, the group needs to reflect upon the interview apart from gathering opinions and facts related to the general focus of community capacity building, and reflect upon what was learned as a transformational community support worker by this experience.

*Please note that the person chosen to be interviewed must meet a criteria beyond being an employee of a social service organization, a colleague and/or a friend of the students

Part 4 Analysis of Community Capacity for Child Welfare Support Services

Assignment Format:

- Define Community
- Method and Tools Used to Analyze Community Capacity
- Define Focus (Child Welfare-Support Services)
- Community Capacity Findings
- Best Practice/Promising Practice Program Service for Community Capacity Enhancement

The group will write an analysis that defines a specific community and analyzes the community's capacity to serve children and their families through community support programs.

The paper will need to do the following: (Combine this with the capacity piece above if you want to)

1. Define the community (this may be done geographically, ethnically, racially, culturally, economically, socially, religiously etc.) that is being analyzed.
2. Identify the method and tools used to complete the analysis
3. Identify the focus of this particular paper and the reason for the focus
4. Identify a level of community capacity that you learned exists
5. Identify a level of community capacity that needs to be reached
6. Identify a best practice/promising practice service program that could enhance the community's capacity
7. Project who would be better off if community capacity were to be enhanced by the development of a best practice/promising practice program service.

Assignment 2: Mutual Aid Group Observation Reflection Paper (ind)

Assignment Format:

- APA Format
- DEAL Model Outline Format



The student will need to observe a mutual aid group. The mutual aid group needs to meet in the community that has been chosen for study or wherever a person who is living in that community would or could go in order to participate in a mutual aid group.

The group observed must meet the criteria and definition of a mutual aid group and the reflection must be relevant to the actual “mutual aid” activity that occurs within the group.

Example:

Observing an Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting can meet the assignment requirement but does not automatically. The student will need to focus on what part of the meeting is actually serving as mutual aid/mutual support to the participating members and what part of the meeting is not.

This is also true for groups that provide support but have a major focus in providing psychological treatment or therapy. If a licensed social worker or psychologist is leading the group and/or the group is meeting in a secure facility and meeting attendance is required formally or informally, the opportunity to identify mutual aid dynamics may be minimal.

Please consult with the professor to determine if the group you choose is considered appropriate for the assignment.

Assignment 3: Community Intervention based on above assessment

Assignment format: Group Presentation

The group will devise an intervention based on assessment of community need. This can be parenting education at a community center or clinic, or other intervention that your group deems necessary. You might work with a food pantry or clothes closet to collect and distribute food or clothing. Any of these will suffice

Grading Standards

Papers are graded on the quality of the final product not on the effort you extended completing them. The grade of A is reserved for truly outstanding work that goes beyond basic requirements.

In the Indiana University School of Social Work MSW program, grades of B are the expected norm. Reflecting competency and proficiency, grades of B reflect good or high quality work typical of graduate students in professional schools. Indeed, professors typically evaluate students’ work in such a way that B is the average grade. Grades in both the A and the C range are relatively uncommon and reflect work that is significantly superior to or significantly inferior, respectively, to the average, high quality, professional work conducted by most IU MSW students. Because of this approach to grading, students who routinely earned A grades in their undergraduate studies may conclude that a B grade reflects a decrease in their academic performance. Such is not the case. Grades of B in the IU MSW program reflect the average, highly competent, proficient quality of our students. In a sense, a B grade in graduate school is analogous to an A grade in undergraduate studies. MSW students must work extremely hard to achieve a B grade. If you are fortunate enough receive a B, prize it as evidence of the professional quality of your work.

Grades of A reflect Excellence. Excellent scholarly products and academic or professional performances are substantially superior to the “good,” “the high quality,” “the competent,” or the “satisfactory.” They are unusual, exceptional, and extraordinary. Criteria for assignments are not only met, they are exceeded



by a significant margin. Excellence is a rare phenomenon. As a result, relatively few MSW students earn A grades.

Grades of B signify good or high quality scholarly products and academic or professional performance. Grades in the B range reflect work expected of a conscientious graduate student in a professional program. Criteria for assignments are met in a competent, thoughtful, and professional manner. However, the criteria are not exceeded and the quality is not substantially superior to other good quality products or performances. There is a clear distinction between the good and the excellent. We expect that most MSW students will earn grades in the B range—reflecting the good or high quality work expected of competent future helping professionals.

Grades of C and C+ signify work that is marginal in nature. The scholarly products or professional performances meet many but not all of the expected criteria. The work approaches but does not quite meet the standards of quality expected of a graduate student in a professional school. Satisfactory in many respects, its quality is not consistently so and cannot be considered of good or high quality. We anticipate that a minority of MSW students will earn C and C+ grades.

Grades of C- and lower reflect work that is unsatisfactory. The products or performances do not meet several, many, or most of the criteria. The work fails to approach the standards of quality expected of a graduate student and a future MSW-level professional. We anticipate that a small percentage of MSW students will earn unsatisfactory grades of C-, D, and F.

Grading scale

Grade minimums are as follows [Note: grades below C are Unsatisfactory in the MSW Program]:

A	93%	Excellent, Exceptional Quality
A-	90%	Superior Quality
B+	87%	Very Good, Slightly Higher Quality
B	83%	Good, High Quality (expected of most MSW students)
B-	80%	Satisfactory Quality
C+	77%	Marginal, Modestly Acceptable Quality
C	73%	Marginal, Minimally Acceptable Quality
C-	70%	Unsatisfactory Quality