I. COURSE RATIONALE

A. How the course relates to the School’s mission.
Social work practices are, in part, shaped by their context. All practitioners must be willing and able to adapt basic knowledge, values, and skills for application in specific contexts. In keeping with the mission of the University Of Kansas School Of Social Welfare to educate students, conduct scholarly inquiry and perform community service, the school social work curriculum promotes an approach to social work practice that advances the empowerment curriculum and well being of children within a school setting.

Consistent with the mission of our school, students who successfully complete this course will be able to demonstrate a thorough and comprehensive level of knowledge for social work practice with children in schools. This knowledge base prepares students for advanced level practice by integrating foundation level knowledge of policy, research, HBSE and practice with substantive knowledge from their chosen field of practice. The expected result is for students to know how to actively and appropriately perform professional social work roles in school settings. Students enter a field of practice course that is complementary to their advanced field practicum.

B. How this course links with other courses in the curriculum.
Social Work Practice in Schools builds on generalist practice, human behavior in the social environment, policy and research courses mastered in the foundation year of the program. At the advanced level, the course provides students with the opportunity to integrate and apply knowledge gained from other complimentary course work. Students will continue their examination of client problems within the context of the person and environment with specific attention to the school. Emphasis on micro, mezzo and macro systems introduced in generalist practice will enhance integration of assessment, goal setting and intervention tasks in the school and community. Students will strengthen direct and indirect skills for engagement, assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation as they apply to work with children, families and other school and agency personnel in the multi-level context of the school setting. Support from individual and community human behavior courses will provide a knowledge base for examining normal developmental stages of children with emphasis on strengths, diversity and challenges experienced within the family, school and community. Policy content will be infused throughout the course as we examine specific laws and programs that affect school funding, child welfare services and mental health programming for children. Finally, knowledge of research will be strengthened as students critique and apply empirically based intervention strategies to their work.
C. How this course prepares participants to be advanced level practitioners.
This course prepares participants to be advanced level practitioners by developing the knowledge, information and skills necessary for successful and competent practice within the school with children and their families, teachers, agencies and communities. Students will examine and assess institutional policies, and corresponding multi-level practice methods, and related research in accordance with the values and ethics of social work. This course is practice oriented because knowledge is applied to specific areas of practice in school settings.

D. In general terms, what this course covers.
The curriculum will utilize an ecological systems framework and strengths perspective for the development of basic competencies in school social work practice. These competencies include a critical analysis of the roles of social workers in schools; knowledge of the effect of federal, state and local legislation on special education, child welfare and mental health services for children; and a thorough understanding of assessment within the domains of classroom, school, family and community that will address the barriers to optimal cognitive and social/emotional functioning of children in schools. Special attention will be given to practice with diverse groups of children, including those affected by poverty and disability, and those who are members of sexual/racial or ethnic or religious minority groups.

II. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES
By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. Apply critical thinking skills and a critical perspective to social work practice in schools. (Reflects Clinical Concentration Objectives 4, 5, 6)

2. Demonstrate the capacity to integrate research, policy, human development, and direct practice information in considering issues central to practice in schools. (Reflects Clinical Concentration Objectives 1, 4)

3. Identify, discuss, and analyze how research and social work values and ethics inform and define the best practices in school social work practice. (Reflects Clinical Concentration Objectives 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)

4. Analyze public policies, laws, and programs related to education, child welfare and mental health and the human values and social norms that shape them to determine their influence on engagement, empowerment and collaborative goal setting with clients at the direct service level. (Reflects Clinical Concentration Objectives 2, 3, 4, 5)

5. Explain how diversity issues manifest themselves in school settings and how policy impacts people of diverse backgrounds. (Reflects Clinical Concentration Objectives 2, 3, 4, 5)

6. Identify and discuss how the major themes of diversity, economic and social justice, the strengths perspective, and a critical perspective apply to social work practice in schools. (Reflects Clinical Concentration Objectives 4, 6)
7. Compare and contrast the most common approaches for assessment and diagnosis, including DSM-IV, within the school setting with special attention to how “labeling” of children can impact social-emotional development and school functioning. (Reflects Clinical Concentration Objectives 1, 4, 5)

III. CURRICULUM THEMES
The overarching themes of the school are encompassed in a practice centered curriculum that promotes a critical perspective, focuses on people’s strengths, celebrates human diversity and promotes social justice.

- Consistent with a critical perspective, students in the Social Work in Schools course will be expected to raise questions, reflect upon and systematically evaluate and apply the divergent theories and knowledge upon which school social work practice is based.
- The strengths perspective is a humanistic, empowerment approach to social work practice in schools that operates on the assumption that all persons have untapped mental, physical, and emotional resources. Students are encouraged to extend their understanding of assessment, goal setting, design and selection of interventions, and evaluation practices in school settings and to view themselves as collaborators in working with children, families, school and agency personnel to achieve their chosen goals.
- The commitment to principles of appreciating diversity while securing social justice entails helping students develop an appreciation for difference and an awareness of how oppression limits human and community development. The focus will include fostering economic and social justice that enables diverse groups of children and their families to access resources to pursue their chosen goals.

IV. THE LIBERAL ARTS PERSPECTIVE
This course builds on the liberal arts perspective by engaging students in critical thinking as they examine the literature related to best practices that enhance the development of children, within the school setting. Students must perform assessments that utilize knowledge from the social and biological sciences as they develop understanding of the resources and barriers to healthy development of children. Students will be challenged as they advocate for children in scenarios with “professionals” who may hold differing viewpoints about how to serve the best interests of the child. Finally, students will learn to integrate knowledge from various disciplines to formulate intervention plans that will enhance the development of children within the school environment.

V. PROFESSIONAL PURPOSE AND VALUES
This course challenges students to think critically about the use of social work values and ethics within the school setting. The course is focused on serving children, not in a vacuum but in their family, community and school. National and local mandates that will affect children and family’s ability to access resources will be emphasized. This course emphasizes the person-in-environment perspective and concerns itself with empowerment of clients, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Social work values
and ethics are addressed in terms of accountability, client involvement, self-
determination, advocacy, confidentiality and informing parents and children of their
rights in regard to the purpose of services/programs within the district. This focus within
the course seeks to help school social workers identify where personal and professional
values conflict with the purpose of programs and ways to handle those situations.

VI. PREPARATION FOR PRACTICE WITH DIVERSE POPULATIONS
This course considers variations in developmental, racial, cultural, socioeconomic,
gender, age, sexual orientation and disability. The course focuses on both positive and
negative influences of these factors as the child is considered within his/her
environmental context. The school setting is identified as an environment that may either
support or discriminate against diverse groups of children or families. Policy that
supports patterns of discrimination and oppression will be identified as well as methods
to address the barriers that prevent children from developing to their fullest potential.
Particular emphasis will be on teaching students how to consult with teachers in a culture
sensitive way that may enhance communication with diverse groups of students and
parents.

VI. TOPICS

Must be covered:

1. The role of the social worker in the school.
2. Social work values and ethics within the school setting, social and economic justice,
   and cultural diversity.
3. Use of the ecological framework to analyze resources in school and community.
4. Implications for schools and children of national, state and local policy including
   special education, child welfare and mental health.
5. Joining and communication process with multiple stakeholders in the
   school/community.
6. Tools for assessment and diagnosis, including strength-based perspective, social
   developmental study, classroom observation, ecomaps, genogram, and DSM-IV.
7. Collaborative goal setting and evaluation with student, teachers, parents and outside
   agencies
8. Facilitation of student’s academic, social and emotional development through the
   development of programs that increase bonding to school and teach children ways of
   relating that foster optimal growth.
10. Endings with children and staff in school settings
Individual instructors’ syllabi should provide a topical outline for the course and provide adequate information to determine where and when the required topics are being covered.

VIII. RECOMMENDED READINGS

Texts:

Individual instructors must either select one of the texts listed or obtain approval from the faculty mentor for an alternative text

Recommended Articles:


For individual syllabus, remove the word “RECOMMENDED.” In addition individual syllabi need to specify which readings are required and which are recommended. The entire list of “additional resources” does not need to be included in individual syllabi.

IX. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENTS

The specific details of these assignments can be found in the individual course syllabus OR on file with the chair of the committee.

Ecological/strengths perspective of school and surrounding community: Students will develop knowledge of school and surrounding community through use of an exercise that explores demographics, student/teacher ratio, specialized programs, staff attitudes toward students and families; style of administration; political atmosphere, neighborhood resources, and available agencies. (Outcome Objectives 2,3, 6)

Think, Pair and Share: Students will develop critical thinking skills through analyzing the readings and summarizing important points in with a student partner. (objective 1)

Case Assessment and Intervention Plan: Students will develop an assessment and intervention plan for a student in their school. (Outcome Objectives 3, 5, 6, 7)
Public Policy and its Impact on Service Delivery: Students will analyze a case and determine how federal, state and local laws impact service delivery to a child who has special needs. (Outcome Objectives 1, 2, 4)

Prevention Intervention: Students will develop an intervention that will impact an aspect of the school environment that influences a group of children who are vulnerable to failure in school (i.e. truancy, transitions to new school, bullying, competition, teen pregnancy). (Outcome Objectives 2, 3, 5 and 6)

Diversity and its Effect on Development: Through the use of a novel, students will determine how an aspect of diversity (ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, SES) impacted the cognitive, social and emotional development of a child or adolescent. (Outcome Objectives 1, 3, 5)

Staff consultation: Students will demonstrate the ability to engage collaboratively with teachers, administration and outside agencies to develop and evaluate an intervention plan with a student. (Outcome Objectives 2, 3)

X. GRADING
A. What Grades Mean (plus and minuses are assigned at instructors’ discretion)

A = Exceptional work: outstanding: this grade will be assigned to work that shows extensive use of the literature as well as wide use of concrete examples from practice.

B = Fully meets graduate standards: this grade will be assigned to work in which all aspects of assignments are completed satisfactorily, showing a combination of accurate use of theory and principles, and precise descriptions of practice.

C = Overall performance is unsatisfactory, below graduate standards, although all aspects of assignments were completed.

F = Failure: overall quality of work is unsatisfactory, or some aspect of assignments not done.

Incomplete grades. A temporary grade of Incomplete may be assigned to a student who, for a reason beyond the student’s control, has been unable to complete the required work in a course on time. It is the student’s responsibility to request an Incomplete from the instructor. A request signed by the student and the faculty member must be on file when grades are submitted. A student may not enroll in a course sequential to one in which he or she has an I or F letter grade. An incomplete not removed by the end of the next semester will be changed to an F.

B. ATTENDANCE POLICY
In order to pass the course, students cannot miss more than three classes during the semester. Any additional policies regarding class attendance will be determined by individual instructors

Individual instructors’ syllabi should be exactly the same as in the master syllabus.
Individual instructors’ syllabi should specify the following:

C. The weighting of each assignment in the course and the dates by which they are done.

D. For every assignment, explain the standards used for grading.

E. If class participation is part of the grade indicate what this means. For example, if 10 points are awarded for class participation, one point will be deducted for every class missed.

F. Indicate the policy on late assignments, e.g., they are not accepted and treated as an “F” grade or the grade is reduced by ___ for each day, week, etc.

G. Indicate how final grades will be determined

XI. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Students who have special educational needs of any kind, including those related to learning disabilities, other disabilities, English as a second language should discuss necessary accommodations with the instructor within the first two sessions of the course. The university and School of Social Welfare are committed to provide supportive programs and accommodations to assist students who have special learning needs to successfully meet course expectations. In particular, students who feel that they have a disability that may require accommodation should advise the instructor of such disability and desired accommodation as soon as one obtains written documentation of the disability. The instructor will work with the student and the office of Services for Students with Disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations.

Please notify the instructor if your religious observances conflict with class or due dates for class assignments so we can make appropriate arrangements.

XII. RECORDING AND SHARING RECORDINGS OF LECTURES

Course materials prepared by the instructor, together with the content of all lectures and review sessions presented by the instructor are the property of the instructor. Video and audio recording of lectures and review sessions without the consent of the instructor is prohibited. On request, the instructor will usually grant permission for students to audio tape lectures, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructor, recordings of lectures and review sessions may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

XIII. HIPAA REGULATIONS

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requires that any personal information that may identify a person must be removed to protect confidentiality. Confidentiality applies to both classroom discussions and to written work. Please follow these simple, yet essential guidelines:
• Always disguise the name and other personal identifying information when you speak and write about a person, following the guidelines established by HIPAA.

• If writing in great detail about a client, ask permission from the client.

• Share nothing about specific clients, agencies or other students outside of the classroom.

Any information shared with the class/instructor will be confidential, within the limits defined by the Code of Ethics and state guidelines.

**Individual instructors’ syllabi should be exactly the same as in the master syllabus.**

**XIV. INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY**

Provide students with information on how to see and/or reach you.

**XV. INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

In the event of inclement weather students should call

Lawrence: the University (785) 864-SNOW, or if hearing impaired and have TTY/TDD equipment, (800) 766-3777

Edwards Campus: (913) 897-8499

KCKCC Campus: (913) 334-1100

to determine if classes have been cancelled. Class will be held if classes have not been cancelled, and students should contact the instructor if weather or driving conditions make it impossible for them to get to class.