University of Minnesota School of Social Work
Syllabus

SW 8804-Child Welfare Policy

Part I: Course information

SW 8804-Child Welfare Policy
2 credits
Faculty contact:
Name:
Email:
Phone:
Office Location:

1. Course descriptions:

   **Short Description:**
   Develops advanced policy knowledge and skills for social workers practicing in or collaborating with public or private child welfare services.

   **Long Description:**
   The purpose of this course is to prepare students for practice in a public or private child welfare setting. The course is designed to provide the student with knowledge of federal and state child welfare policies, programs, and practices. The emphasis is on enhancing the student’s skills to understand, analyze, develop, and implement child welfare policy within the parameters of social work values and ethics. The content areas covered include: general policy analysis, federal and state child welfare legislation, economic support policies for children and families, as well as policies and programs directed at child maltreatment, family preservation, kinship care, out of home care, adoption, and independent living.

**Pre-requisites:**
1. This is an advanced social work class, and the material presented in this class is at an advanced level. Social Work students enrolled in this course should have completed the foundation classes listed below, or have advanced standing status.
   - SW 5051 - Human Behavior and the Social Environment
   - SW 5801 - Policies and Programs in American Social Welfare
   - SW 8151 - Social Work Practice Methods: Individuals and Systems
   - SW 8152 - Social Work Practice Methods: Families and Groups
   - SW 8153 - Models of Community Intervention
   - SW 8841 - Social Work Research Methods
2. If you are not a Social Work student, you need permission of the instructor
Clinical Licensure Hours:
This course contains some clinical content, as required by the Minnesota Board of Social Work for eligibility for the Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW). The number of hours in each required category is listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Differential Diagnosis</th>
<th>Assessment based treatment planning</th>
<th>Clinical Intervention Methods</th>
<th>Evaluation methodologies</th>
<th>SW values and ethics</th>
<th>Culturally specific clinical assessment</th>
<th>Other areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hours</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part II Course Outcomes:
After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:
- Understand and apply to practice current federal and state policies that impact social work practice in child welfare.
- Understand the role of race and other disparities within the child welfare and family policies.
- Understand delivery systems for child welfare services.
- Understand how current issues move from problem to practice.
- Utilize a policy analysis method to evaluate specific child welfare problems.
- Develop policy responses to child welfare problems within the value context of social work ethics.
- Propose or advocate for policy change within the child welfare policy arena.

Social Work Practice Competencies
Successful completion of this concentration course implies that the student has achieved competency in the following advanced practice behaviors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency: 2.1.2 – Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Behavior</td>
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<td>-------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify and analyze value-based and ethical dilemmas that arise in their area of practice, using professional codes of ethical standards and through appropriate professional consultation.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency: 2.1.3 – Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information. Social workers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice Behaviors</th>
<th>Covered in class through (i.e., activity, reading, content)</th>
<th>Assessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Identify and synthesize multiple sources of knowledge to understand policy and practice issues related to their area of practice.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Policy Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EP 2.1.5 – Advance human rights and social and economic justice**

Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice. Social workers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice Behaviors</th>
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<th>Assessed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Gain a full comprehension about disparities and their development, contribute to knowledge about institutional barriers to equality and apply concentration-appropriate strategies to advance social and economic justice.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Competency: 2.1.8 – Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being**

Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know the history and current structures of social policies and services; the role of policy in service delivery; and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers:

<table>
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<th>Assessed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Understand, compare, analyze, formulate and advocate for policies in an area of practice</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Policy Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Competency: 2.1.9 – Respond to contexts that shape practice**

Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively. Social workers:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Practice Behavior</th>
<th>Covered in class through (i.e., activity, reading, content)</th>
<th>Assessed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Assess the impact of historical and contemporary contexts on practice and policy in their area of practice.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Policy Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are responsive to dynamic changes in society and in their areas of practice.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Policy Brief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Organize and advocate with community members, program</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Policy Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
participants, service providers, community organizations, policy makers and the public to improve practice and service delivery in their area of practice.

Part III Course Requirements:

1. Required Texts
   
   

2. Other Required reading
   There will be additional weekly reading requirements such as state and federal policy documents or current child welfare policy analyses.

3. Assignments

   Policy Issue in the News - 5 points
   Bring in an article in the news (hand in a copy) that discusses a child welfare or family policy issue and present to the class. In your presentation, talk about a summary of the policy discussion, the problem underlying the policy, how it fits with social work values, how it relates to child welfare families, what is success, and your own opinion on what advocacy should look like on this issue. You may choose a topic that relates to your individual writing assignments or another topic. Presentations should be a maximum of 10 minutes. You will be given a list of child welfare policy newsreader subscriptions and you are to choose an article from one of these forums. You will also post a one paragraph summary of your policy issue on Moodle. Each student will be expected to post a comment on at least three policy issues on Moodle.

   Policy Brief – 30 points
   Choose a child welfare policy and create a three to five page single-spaced policy brief following the outline given in class. Think of this as a document that you are providing to a legislator on a particular policy. You should examine;
   - the scope and context of the problem behind the policy
who the policy affects “the winners and losers of the policy”
• review other policy attempts to solve the problem
• evaluate the current policy implementation and make recommendations for change

Remember to be succinct, provide only enough and as much information as needed to understand the underlying problem, the policy alternatives and policy solution. Use scholarly research to support your description of the problem and evaluation of the policy.

You will also be expected to give a 10 minute overview of your policy brief in class when scheduled, and post your policy brief on the policy blog for the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare.

Midterm Quiz – 25 points
There will be a short in class midterm quiz that will cover policy analysis and major state and federal child welfare policy legislation.

Policy/Program Intervention (Group) Project – 25 points + 5 Extra Credit points for One group
Consider you are applying for a $1 million grant, which will be awarded by your classmates acting in the role of legislators. Take one of the policy briefs examined by your group members’ individual policy briefs, and create a new policy or program that more effectively addresses the problem than the policy described in the brief. Prepare a 15 minute presentation regarding your proposed policy/program intervention, and be prepared to answer questions about your proposal from your classmates. Only one group will be awarded the grant (5 extra credit points) and will be selected by majority vote of the class (You may not vote for your own project). If schedules permit, a few MN Legislators may be invited to hear your presentations and give feedback and suggestions about enhancing their political feasibility.

Class Participation – 15 points
This includes regular attendance, active participation in class discussions both in class and on Moodle.

4. Grading
Grades will be awarded based on
• Knowledge of the subject matter,
• Organization and clarity of ideas
• Use of well-reasoned arguments
• Use of supporting scholarly evidence in these arguments
Final grades will be based on a cumulative point score and translated into a letter grade. Individual assignments will receive number grades based on total points possible. These number grades will be weighted according to the point system below.

The translation of the number grades to letter grades will be calculated based on total points earned as follows.

A  93-100  C+  78-79  D-  60-62  
A-  90-92  C  73-77  F  59 and below  
B+  87-89  C-  70-72  
B  83-86  D+  67-69  
B-  80-82  D  63-66

Course Policies

There are many University and School of Social Work policies that govern this course. Please go to http://www.cehd.umn.edu/ssw/Documents/SSWCoursePolicies.pdf to see a complete description of all the policies.

Part IV: Course Content
The following schedule may be altered due to availability of class speakers and current policy issues. If changes will be made you will be notified in class and on Moodle as soon as the need for change becomes apparent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Activities/Assignments Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
<td>Pecora, Ch. 1</td>
<td>Logan Marr video (?)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Overview of syllabus</td>
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<td>Overview of Child Welfare</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Services</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Overview of Policy Analysis</td>
<td>Bardach book</td>
<td>Performance Outcomes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>developing Outcomes</td>
<td>Chambers ch. 1 &amp; 3</td>
<td>Worksheet group activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Overview of Child Maltreatment</td>
<td>Pecora, Ch. 5</td>
<td>Policy Issue in News</td>
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<td>Child Maltreatment 2009</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm09/cm09.pdf">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm09/cm09.pdf</a></td>
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<td>NIS-4</td>
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<td>congress_full_pdf_jan2010.pdf</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Key State Legislation <strong>MN Stat 626.556</strong> <strong>MN Tribal/State ICWA Agreement</strong> <strong>MN Screening Guidelines</strong></td>
<td>MN 626.556 <a href="https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Legacy/DHS-5022-ENG">https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Legacy/DHS-5022-ENG</a> <a href="https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-5144-ENG">https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-5144-ENG</a></td>
<td>Policy Issue in News</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Family Poverty and Economic Support Legislation <strong>Title IV A-E Medicaid</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Policy Issue in News</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Midterm Individual Policy Brief Reports</td>
<td></td>
<td>Policy Briefs Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>MN CFSR Outcomes and Performance <strong>DHS website</strong> <strong><a href="http://library.childwelfare.gov/cwig/ws/cwmd/docs/cb_web/Blob/707.pdf?w=NATIVE%28%27%27DT+ph+is+%27%27CFSR+Final+Report%27%27+and+STATE+%3D+%27%27Minnesota%27%27+and+RP+ERIOD+%3D+%27%272nd++Round+CFSR%27%27+and+DOC_AVAILABILITY+%5E%3D+%27%27Not+publicly+available+on+the+Children%27%27CFSR+website%27%27%279%25m=1">http://library.childwelfare.gov/cwig/ws/cwmd/docs/cb_web/Blob/707.pdf?w=NATIVE%28%27%27DT+ph+is+%27%27CFSR+Final+Report%27%27+and+STATE+%3D+%27%27Minnesota%27%27+and+RP+ERIOD+%3D+%27%272nd++Round+CFSR%27%27+and+DOC_AVAILABILITY+%5E%3D+%27%27Not+publicly+available+on+the+Children%27%27CFSR+website%27%27%279%m=1</a></strong></td>
<td>Policy Issue in News Kris Harder from DHS?</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Legislative Advocacy <strong>MN Post-Partum Information Act</strong></td>
<td>Linda Jones speaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>In Home Services <strong>Pecora Ch. 3,6,7</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://nrcinhome.socialwork.uiowa.edu">http://nrcinhome.socialwork.uiowa.edu</a></td>
<td>Policy Issue in News Policy</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Independent Living Aging Out of Foster Care</td>
<td>Pecora Ch. 10 <a href="http://www.positivelyminnesota.com/Programs_Services/Youth_Services/Shared_Youth_Vision/Inter-Agency_Projects/Rural_Minnesota_CEP.pdf">http://www.positivelyminnesota.com/Programs_Services/Youth_Services/Shared_Youth_Vision/Inter-Agency_Projects/Rural_Minnesota_CEP.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IT1EjQnCTu">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IT1EjQnCTu</a></td>
<td>Policy Issue in News Policy intervention Presentations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bibliography and Suggested Readings

    Washington DC, CQ Press.


Children’s Defense Fund and their policy priorities http://www.childrensdefense.org/policy-priorities/


Family Assessment Response – review executive summary of pilot evaluation

http://www.firstfocus.net/sites/default/files/ChildrensBudget2010.pdf

Foster, E.M. & Gifford, E.J. (2004) Challenges in the Transition to Adulthood for Youth in Foster Care, Juvenile Justice, and Special Education 

Foster Care until 21 MN Legal Language

Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 
http://www.fosteringconnections.org/about_the_law?id=0001

http://www.financeproject.org/Publications/ThinkingBroadly.pdf

Helping Youth Transition from Care to Adulthood


Impacts of Early Childhood Programs, Brookings Institute, 


Child


https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfs/Server/Legacy/DHS-5881-ENG
ICWA http://www.nicwa.org/Indian_Child_Welfare_Act/


MN Mandated Reporting Act https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=626.556

MN Maltreatment Screening Guidelines http://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfs/Server/Legacy/DHS-5144-ENG

MN Practice Guide for Post Adoption Services
http://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfs/Server/Legacy/DHS-4701-ENG


Part C Screening http://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfs/Server/Legacy/DHS-4483-ENG

Paths to Permanency http://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfs/Server/Legacy/DHS-4907-ENG


Practice Guide for Concurrent Permanency Planning http://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfs/Server/Legacy/DHS-4778-ENG


Title IV-E Compliance http://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfs/legacy/DS-4061-ENG


Psychology and Psychiatry, 11(1), 167-175.

