



University of Central Florida
School of Social Work

SOW 4654.0001 – Children’s Services

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Term: Fall 2009
Class Day: Wednesday
Meeting Time: 6:30-9:20
Class Location: HPA 272
Credit Hours: 3

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Study of societal responses to children’s needs. Development of knowledge and skills for preventing family breakdown, placing children in alternative care and reuniting children with their families.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the term, students should be able to:

1. Enhance the student’s development of a professional identity through an overview of past and current child welfare philosophies and policies; and of current practices, standards, and issues.
2. To demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge, skills, ethics, and values needed by child welfare practitioners.
3. Provide the student with a framework for understanding and critically analyzing the social and organizational systems that are responsible for the delivery of child welfare services.
4. Heighten the student’s sensitivity to racial, cultural and religious factors that affect the provision of child welfare services to various populations and the implication this has for practice.
5. To understand the history of local, state and federal programs and their responsibility in providing services to children and their families who are in need.
6. To familiarize the student with Chapter 39, Florida Statutes, including the Adoption & Safe Families Act language, and the range of services provided by the Department of Children and Families and other agencies to protect children and to prevent family violence.
7. To identify factors in assessing child safety, risk and resilience.
8. To demonstrate an understanding of child protective services, adoption, foster care, permanency planning and family preservation services.
9. To identify the current structures, types and characteristics of child welfare delivery systems, as well as impediments to reform and model service shifts being tested.
10. To develop an awareness of funding streams, alternative funding strategies and their political and economic context.
11. To develop knowledge and skills of best practices designed to work with children and families in foster care and adoption.
12. Expand upon the student’s knowledge of varying family structures, lifestyles and needs with emphasis on identifying strengths and resiliency.

LEARNING METHODS

This course will incorporate a variety of teaching methods. These methods may consist of lecture, discussion, audiovisual materials, small group exercises, guest speakers, and student presentations. A variety of case examples will be used to exemplify issues discussed. Students are expected to be active in the learning process. This implies substantive class participation: **quality of participation will be judged over quantity.** Not all readings will be reviewed directly in class. Students are expected to demonstrate their mastery of course content, including reading material, through class discussion, written assignments, and quizzes.

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Crosson-Tower, C. (2004). Exploring child welfare: A practice perspective. (4th ed.) Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
2. Crosson-Tower, C. (2003). From the eye of the storm: The experiences of a child welfare worker. Boston MA: Allyn and Bacon.
3. Pelzer, D. (1993) A child called "it". Omaha, NEB: Omaha Press.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

The UCF Libraries has a full array of paper and electronic resources available for students and their research needs.

Students will be expected to utilize UCF library resources to search library databases for required readings.

The following web sites which can help students find information, navigate through databases and learn how to use the library:

1. Library Instruction sessions - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Instruction>
2. Library Research Tutorials - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Instruction/LIToursTutorials.asp>
3. Streaming videos - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Videos/Default.asp>
4. Research Guides - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Guides/>
5. Ask a Librarian service - <http://library.ucf.edu/Ask/>
6. Consult with the librarian familiar with Social Work—Mr. Hal Mendolsohn

In addition to paper copies of books and journals, UCF students have the ability to access a vast selection of journals and books in electronic format while on or off campus. The web address to the library's catalog is <http://library.ucf.edu/>. The Ask A Librarian service provides students the ability to contact a library professional either by phone, on-line chat or email, and ask for assistance on "how to" locate, research, and obtain library materials. The web address for Ask A Librarian is <http://library.ucf.edu/Ask/>. A series of streaming videos, showing students how to search for a book or journal article, has been developed and are available at <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Videos/Default.asp>. Research Guides for different majors, that list books, journals, databases, and web sites have been developed and are available in electronic format at <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Guides/>. Another service to help students conduct library research is called Research Consultation. After a student has conducted his/her research and is in need of additional information, s/he can work with a librarian to locate material with the help of his/her expert searching capabilities. To set-up a Research Consultation, students can either come into the library and sign-up at the Reference Desk or call the library Reference Office at 407-823-5880. Finally, students are always encouraged to visit the library and ask a Reference Librarian how best to conduct one's research. If a student has a simple question on how to locate either a book or journal title, the UCF Reference Libraries are happy to provide this type of service too.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Assignment guidelines and other course handouts are available through www.webct.ucf.edu

ASSIGNMENTS AND POINTS

Evaluation of Learning and Grading: All assignments will be discussed in class. The final course grade will be based on the following assignments:

1. **Mid-Term Exam – 30%**

In class examination to include evaluation of student understanding of assigned readings and class lectures.

2. **Research Paper – 40%**

Referencing the current version of the Florida Statutes relating to children in Chapter 39, students will research and critically examine an issue related to course content. This paper is intended to focus on a macro-level issue that is related to child welfare. (Examples include: teen pregnancy, teen violence, family preservation, efficacy of residential settings) The issue is to be addressed in terms of prevalence, effects on children, role of the professional social worker in addressing the issue, current intervention techniques, and implications for social work practice. Guidelines for the paper will be distributed to students in class.

3. **Group Project -15%**

Students will divide into small groups to present information about topics related to child welfare practice, programs and policies. Dates: Per arrangement of each group.

4. **Class Participation – 15%**

Students will participate in class discussions, small group exercises and role playing for the purpose of practicing intervention strategies with fictitious children and families. In order to provide the freedom to learn, these activities will not be graded but active participation will play an integral role in the general participation aspect of the course grade.

GRADING SCALE

A	95 - 100	B-	80 - 83	D+	67 - 69
A-	90 - 94	C+	77 - 79	D	64 - 66
B+	87 - 89	C	74 - 76	D-	60 - 63
B	84 - 86	C-	70 - 73	F	59 or less

POLICIES

In addition to the information below, the student should become familiar with School of Work Student Handbook and The Golden Rule Handbook for UCF Students. All policies included in these handbooks apply to this class.

Modification of Syllabus

This syllabus may be modified at the discretion of the instructor. Changes will be discussed with students in class and/or via email. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the student's email address is current in eCommunity.

Cell phones, pagers and recorders

- Students are asked to turn off cell phones and beepers during class sessions.
- Permission to audiotape a class meeting(s), must be obtained from the instructor in advance.
- While the use of laptops is convenient for students to take class notes, it is expected that students WILL NOT engage in other laptop activities during class time that may include: internet activities, reading and responding to email, balancing a checkbook, etc. If this should occur, the instructor reserves the right to request that the student not use a laptop during class.

Classroom Decorum

- Side conversations are discouraged because they distract the class.
- The instructor expects students to respect the culture, values, beliefs and rights of their classmates. During class sessions, alternate points of view are encouraged and should be received by others with respect. Students should feel free to express their opinions and to refer to relevant personal situations without fear of disapproval or disrespect; however, the classroom is not the place where students should indulge in personal venting or support seeking.

Attendance and Participation

Student attendance and participation are integral parts of this course. Students are expected to attend each class, arrive on time, and remain for the duration of the class. Students are also expected to assume responsibility for their own learning and to actively involve themselves in class discussions and exercises. Students must be prepared for class (i.e., complete readings and other assignments *prior* to class). Furthermore, make-up exams will be given **ONLY** in extreme circumstances. These circumstances include exceptional health EMERGENCIES (that require that the student bring in medical documentation), and the make up exam will be an essay exam. Out-of-town vacations, trips, mild colds, and other similar circumstances do not qualify as extreme. Students who miss three (3) or more absences regardless of the reason will have their final grade lowered by one letter grade. The only exception to this is if the student has a **documented** extraordinary circumstance (student hospitalization; severe illness; death in the family; car accident) preventing the student from coming to class. In that case, the student must present written documentation to the instructor.

Attendance during Finals Week: It is university policy that all classes **MUST** meet for either a final exam or a class session.

Written Assignments

Effective written communication skills are essential to professional social work practice. Thus, students are expected to present their ideas clearly and properly and to adhere to accepted standards of writing. *Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are to be correct in all written materials submitted and will be considered in grading written assignments.* All written assignments must be typed in a 12-font print, and all margins must be one inch. The cover page of a paper is not considered to be a page of text. Work not conforming to these standards or demonstrating serious deficiencies in common English usage will be returned ungraded. When required, references should be included in the APA documentation style. Students are encouraged to use the University Writing Center (UWC) for assistance in preparing written assignments. The UWC is located in MOD 608 (near the Communications Building). UWC staff may be reached at (407) 823-2197 or <http://www.uwc.ucf.edu/>.

The assignments will emphasize the integration of interviewing, verbal, conceptualization and writing skills in practice. All assignments will be evaluated and graded on the following criteria.

1. Appropriate use of APA writing style.
2. Adequate number of references cited.
3. Organization and clarity of ideas presented.
4. Ability to integrate theory and practice appropriately.
5. Ability to use analytical skills throughout the assignment.
6. Creative ways of responding to the instructions beyond the requirements.

Late Assignments

All assignments must be turned in to the instructor at the beginning of the class period or delivered to the instructor's mailbox *before class starts on the due date.* *It is the student's responsibility to see to it that her or his assignment is stamped with the date by the social work staff member who then places the assignment in the*

instructor's mailbox. No assignments will be accepted by fax or email unless the instructor has given explicit prior approval. *Late assignments will lose a full letter grade for each week that they are late unless the student gained prior approval from the instructor.* No assignment will be accepted after the last day of class. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the instructor regarding late assignments.

Incomplete Grades

In exceptional circumstances, an incomplete grade may be given per School and University policies. Individual arrangements must be made with the instructor for the completion of the course requirements, but in no case will the date set extend beyond the end of the following semester. Students who experience chronic medical or personal problems that prevent them from attending class regularly are encouraged to review policies relating to securing a leave of absence from their university studies.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

Social workers must demonstrate high standards of integrity. Every student is expected to do his or her own work and all of the work produced will be expected to be completed in its entirety by the student who turns it in. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any acts of plagiarism, *including not acknowledging sources of information appropriately and in accordance with APA guidelines*, may result in a failing grade in the course. School and University policies on academic integrity will be strictly enforced. Students found to have cheated or plagiarized will receive no credit for the exam or assignment, receive a failing grade for the course and may be subject to appropriate referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. (See the UCF Golden Rule for further information.). Students who observe others violate this policy are expected to report this to the instructor.

Plagiarism and Cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result in an "F" for that assignment, the student may also receive an "F" for the entire course and may be subject to appropriate referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. (See the UCF Golden Rule for further information.) It is assumed for this course that students will adhere to the academic creed of the University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, don't cheat by giving answers to others or taking them from anyone else. The instructor also adheres to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not ask for your grade to be changed without just cause or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

Turnitin.com

The instructor reserves the option to use turnitin.com; an online system which can determine if work has been copied from another source. The instructor will provide information on submitting assignments through this system at the beginning of the semester. For a more detailed look at this process, please visit <http://www.turnitin.com>

Disability Access Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

THE UCF CREED

Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions.

- Integrity:** I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.
- Scholarship:** I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.
- Community:** I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.
- Creativity:** I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.
- Excellence:** I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.

Important Dates:

Session 4	Group Project Proposal Due
Session 5	Paper Proposal Due
Session 7	Mid-Term Exam- In Class
Session 8-13	Group Projects Due
Session 14	Research Paper Due

COURSE OUTLINE & SCHEDULE

All assigned readings are from the course text unless otherwise noted.

Session 1 Introduction to the field of Child Welfare

Unit Learning Objectives:

1. Discuss syllabus
2. Discuss course expectations
3. Discuss assignments

Session 2 The Historical Context of Child Welfare

Unit Learning Objectives:

1. The evolution of Child Welfare in the US
2. The current status of children and Child Welfare in the US

Readings:

1. Crosson-Tower: Chapter I, Children: Our Most important Resource.
2. The Eye of the Storm: Chapters 1 and 2.
3. Library readings as assigned in class.

Sessions 3 & 4 Knowledge of Family Diversity

Unit Learning Objectives:

1. Understanding the family
2. Understanding the child
3. Early childbearing and family support
4. Understanding the role of the social worker
5. Cultural diversity and the family

Readings:

1. Crosson-Tower: Chapter 2,
2. The Changing Family The Eye of the Storm, Chapter 3 and 4
3. Library readings as assigned in class.

Session 5 Introduction to the Public Child Welfare System

Unit Learning Objectives:

1. Characteristics of poor children
2. Consequences of growing up in poverty
3. Recent efforts to fight poverty
4. Economics of poverty

Readings:

1. Crosson-Tower Chapter 3, Children and Poverty
2. The Eye of the Storm: Chapters 5 and 6
3. Pelzer: Chapters 1-4
4. Library readings as assigned in class.

Session 6 Societal Problems that Impact Children

Unit Learning Objectives:

1. Children and violence
2. Children and substance abuse
3. Homeless families
4. Homeless and runaway youth

Readings:

1. Crosson-Tower, Chapter 4, Violence, Addiction, and Homelessness.
2. The Eye of the Storm: 7-8
3. Pelzer: Chapters 5-7
4. Library readings as assigned in class.

Session 7 Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting (In-class mid-term examination)

Unit Learning Objectives:

1. Historical perspective
2. Demographics
3. Teens at risk
4. Prevention

Readings:

1. Crosson-Tower, Chapter 10, Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting.
2. The Eye of the Storm: 9-10
3. Library readings as assigned in class.

Session 8 Introduction to Child Protection

Unit Learning Objectives:

1. The Child Maltreatments
2. Policy, program and practice when children are neglected, physically and sexually abused.
3. What happens when maltreatment is reported?

Readings:

1. Crosson-Tower. Chapter 7, Protecting Children When Families Cannot; Child Abuse and Neglect;
- 2 The Eye of the Storm: 11-12
3. Library readings as assigned in class.

Session 9 Counseling for Children and Families

Unit Learning Objectives:

1. The counseling process
2. Types of Counseling
3. Children and Grief
4. Ethical considerations

Readings:

1. Crosson-Tower, Chapter 6, Counseling for Children and Families.
2. The Eye of the Storm: Chapter 13-14
3. Library readings as assigned in class.

Session 10 Services in School and Residential Settings

Unit Learning Objectives:

1. Serving infants and preschool children
2. School based programs
3. Types of residential settings
4. Working with children in residential care

Readings:

1. Crosson-Tower, Chapter 5, Serving the Developing Child
2. Crosson-Tower, Chapter 13, Residential Services for Children
3. The eye of the Storm 15-16
4. Library readings as assigned in class.

Session 11 The Family and the Government

Unit Learning Objectives:

1. The current atmosphere in Congress. Federal and State trends
2. Court Intervention; Chapter 39 of the Florida Statutes; Role of the Social Worker
3. Juvenile Offenders

Readings:

1. Crosson-Tower, Chapter 9, Court Services on Behalf of Children
2. The Eye of the Storm: 17-18
3. Library readings as assigned in class.

Session 12 Keeping Families Together

Unit Learning Objectives:

1. Understanding the current Child Welfare efforts on permanency planning and family preservation
2. Family-Based Services to Prevent Out-Of-Home Placement Policy, program and practice for families in need of service Family- Based Practice and Home Visiting Approaches Empowering Families
3. Family Building
4. A network of services for the family

Readings:

1. Crosson-Tower, Chapter 8, Family- Centered Services for Children.
2. The Eye of the Storm: Chapter 18-19
3. Library readings as assigned in class.

Session 13 Substitute Family Care

Unit Learning Objectives:

1. When families break down
2. Foster family care: the foster parents, the biological parents, and the foster child as child and adult
3. A continuum of temporary and permanent child placement

Readings:

1. Crosson-Tower, Chapter 11, Children in Family Foster Care.
2. The Eye of the Storm: Chapter 20-21
3. Library readings as assigned in class.

Session 14 Adoption Services

Unit Learning Objectives:

1. The adoptive parent, the biological parents, and the adopted child
3. Adoptions policy and program issues
2. Special Adoption Issues

Readings:

1. Crosson-Tower, Chapter 12, The Adoption of Children.
2. The Eye of the Storm: Chapter 22
3. Library readings as assigned in class.

Session 15 Course Review

SUGGESTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bibb, W. (1991). *Rose's story*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.
- Brown, V. A. (2002). *Child welfare case studies*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Cohen N.A. et al. (2000). *Child welfare – A multicultural focus*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Glicklen, M.D. & Sechrest, D.K. (2003). *The Role of the helping professions in treating the victims and perpetrators of violence*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Kilpatrick, A. C., & Holland, T. P. (2003). *Working with families: an integrative model by level of need*. (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- MacKinnon L.K. (1998). *Trust and betrayal in treatment of child abuse*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Mather, J.H. & Lager, P.B. (2000). *Child welfare: A unifying model of practice*. Pacific Grove, Ca: Brooks/Cole Publishing.
- Mignon, S.I.; Larson, C.J.; & Holmes, W.H. (2002). *Family abuse consequences, theories, and responses*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Popple, P., Vecchiolla, F. (2007). *Child welfare social work: an introduction*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Sallee, A.L, Lawson, H.A., & Briar-Lawson, K. (Eds.). (2002). *Innovative practices with vulnerable children and families*. Eddie Bowers Publishing, Inc.
- Wallace, H. (2002). *Family violence: Legal, medical, and social perspectives*. (3rd Ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Winton M.A. & Mara B.A. (2001). *Child abuse and neglect: Multidisciplinary approaches*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.