



## SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

### SWK 362 – Child Welfare

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OFFICE: Henderson 306  
OFFICE HOURS: Mondays 1- 5 p.m.;  
4-7 p.m. Tuesdays in *Virtual Office*; Anytime by appointment  
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#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This elective course is designed to introduce the student to the many facets of a career in child welfare and agencies related to working with child welfare. The course will include information on the laws involved in working with children and families and the enforcement procedures and how they impact the clients. Problems that families face will be reviewed to help the student develop an understanding of family functioning and how policies, referrals and services influence the multiple outcomes a client/family may be faced with during an interaction with a child welfare agency, judicial system or law enforcement agency.

#### **GOALS AND COMPETENCIES:**

**1. Prepare BSW graduates for entry-level professional social work practice that reflects generalist social work knowledge and skills. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:**

- 1.1 Apply critical thinking and effective communication (2.1.3)
- 1.5 Apply change strategies with all levels of systems (2.1.10)

**2. Enable BSW graduates to practice ethically and apply social work values to promote equality and justice. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:**

- 2.1 Apply social work ethics & principles (2.1.2)
- 2.2 Engage diversity in practice (2.1.4)
- 2.3 Promote human rights and social and economic justice (2.1.5)

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The demand for knowledgeable human service practitioners is growing as the diverse needs of children expand. This course draws from the historical functions of child based service providers and explores the needs of agencies working as a team within communities.

Upon completion of the course, students will have attained the following objectives:

1. Utilize personal knowledge of local social mores, customs, traditions and community cultures to influence local needs in child/families.
2. Evaluate professional performance and impact of non-professional performance.
3. Be able to understand, interact and communicate with administration in both local governments and agency hierarchy.
4. An understanding of community-oriented/based practice.
5. Adhere to the values and ethics of the Human Service professions
6. The class will focus on the following concepts of the Child Welfare System in the State of Texas and its National scope

- Placement of the child
- Development of the case plan
- Case management and supervision (of the child)
- Referral to services (example: accessing community-based resources)
- Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations (examples: coordination with courts, preparation of reports for permanency hearings)
- Case reviews
- Recruitment and licensing of foster homes and institutions
- Other topics directly related to improving outcomes for children in out-of-home care

### **TEXT:**

Crosson-Tower, Cynthia, (2005) *Understanding child abuse and neglect*. 8th ed. Pearson: Boston.

### **GRADING:**

Grading and evaluation - Grades will be determined according to the following percentage points earned against possible points.

Evaluation for the course grade will be computed according to the following formula:

<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>
200 to 180	A
179 to 160	B
159 to 140	C
139 to 120	D

### **CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:**

**ONLINE:** Students are expected to attend class by logging in to the course in a timely manner, reflecting responsibility which is inherent in the development as a social work professional. The instructor has the ability to see when you log in, what sections you visit and how much time you spend in the course material. Assignments submitted on time are also counted as attendance; therefore, an assignment not submitted is counted as an absence for that week. Students are

expected to participate in class, even when there is not a specific grade attached (see Topic Check-in). Course topics, PowerPoint lectures, discussions, groups, videos, and other experiential exercises are essential for a student's professional learning and continued development of self-awareness. In this online course, a student is considered absent if he/she fails to log in sufficient time for the material for that week or fails to complete an assignment that is due that week.

The following penalties for absences (unexcused, or excused, according to university policy) will be administered:

Weekly	Up to 2 absences No penalty	3 absences 1 letter grade drop	4 absences Class grade of "F"	
Bi-weekly	Up to 3 absences No penalty	4 absences 1 letter grade drop	5 absences 1 letter grade drop	6 absences Class grade of "F"
Summer 10-week	Up to 1 absence No penalty	2 absences 1 letter grade drop	3 absences Class grade of "F"	

Final evaluation and grades depend on both presence and participation. Students' grades will be significantly impacted by inadequate participation or lack of required time commitment each week. Students are expected to spend a comparable amount of time in the online learning environment as they would in class (3 hours a week in the classroom). In addition, just as in traditional F2F classrooms, students are expected to spend time reading and studying class materials.

**NOTE: PROBLEMS WITH YOUR INTERNET CONNECTION AND/OR COMPUTER ARE NOT CONSIDERED AS REASONS FOR LACK OF PARTICIPATION.**

You have access to the university's computer labs (in the social work department AND other campus facilities, including the library) as well as local libraries and other access to computers and ISPs.

If you believe that you are unable to fulfill the requirements for the course you should talk with your instructor about the possibility of dropping or withdrawing.

Class participation has three components: (1) Appropriate interactions with classmates, (2) Attentiveness, and (3) Active involvement in class activities. Evaluation of class participation is based on instructor observation. Students will be given feedback if problems are evident.

**POLICY ON DUE DATES:** Assignments are due at 11:59 p.m. on the Sunday of the week in which the assignment is located. Class weeks for this course begin on Mondays at 12:00 a.m. and close on Sundays at 11:59 p.m. Late assignments for papers and/or projects (with the exception of final exams) will be accepted with a penalty of one grade deduction for every day the assignment is late. *Late assignments will not be accepted for discussion board postings and quizzes.*

**POLICY ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:**

Every student is expected to do his/her own work. Law, ethical standards, university policy, and departmental policy demand that students refrain from plagiarism and any form of cheating. Plagiarism is the "Act of appropriating the literacy composition of another, or parts of passages from of his [or her] writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the products of one's own mind." (Black's Law Dictionary, Abridged Fifth Edition, 1983). When

using others' words, phrases, or ideas in writing, the original author should be given proper credit.

Cheating may take different forms. These include, but are not limited to, copying others' answers during an exam, using notes or other forms of help during an examination or quiz, except when explicitly permitted by the instructor, giving or receiving help on exams or assignments, or submitting work for one class which has already been submitted for another class for credit. Use of citations from the Internet without paraphrasing content AND proper referencing is regarded as plagiarism. Professors have the right to use electronic review programs (such as Turn It In™) to identify plagiarism.

The department does not tolerate plagiarism or cheating. A student found to be engaging in such illegal and unethical conduct may receive a failing grade in the course and may be subjected to further disciplinary proceedings. Any assignment or exam that lacks honesty will be given a grade of "0".

### **ACCEPTABLE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:**

“Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to obey all federal, state, and local laws, in addition to the regulations of the University. The standards of Student Conduct including disciplinary rules and procedures are designed to provide and conform to the basic tenets of due process, as developed by institutions of higher education. As such, the University distinguishes these procedures and regulations as an educational and growth process which is not intended to conform to adversary proceedings as in a court of law. (Student’s Guide Book, 2011, p. 35).

### **OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS**

1. Quizzes (3 throughout the course) = 60 points total
2. Discussion board (2 throughout the course) = 40 points total
3. Written assignments (2 throughout the course) = 70 points total
4. Topic Check-in (3 throughout the course) = 30 points

Assignments will open two weeks in advance for students who wish to work ahead. They close when they are due. But items such as discussions will remain available as “Read Only” after the closing date. Pay attention; however, to things such as not posting *response* comments prior to the 11:59 p.m. Wednesday date. This is important because I want you to read what everyone has to say before you choose who to comment to and what you want to say. (See Discussion Board for more details.)

<b>Week</b>	<b>Reading(s)</b>	<b>Assignment/Activities</b>
1- Aug. 25	Syllabus	Listen to Syllabus PowerPoint
2- Sep. 1	Chapter 1 – Historical Perspective	
3- Sep. 8	Chapter 2 – Roles, Responsibilities, Rights	Topic Check-in #1
4- Sep. 15	Chapter 3 - Maltreatment	Discussion Board #1

5- Sep. 22		Quiz 1
6- Sep. 29	Chapter 4 - Neglect	
7- Oct. 6	Chapter 5 –Physical Abuse	Paper #1
8- Oct. 13	Chapter 6 – Sex Abuse	Topic Check-in #2
9- Oct. 20	Chapter 7, 8 – Incest; Extrafamilial Abuse	
10- Oct. 27	Chapter 9 – Psychological Maltreatment	Quiz 2
11- Nov. 3	Chapter 10 – Intervention	Topic Check-in #3
12- Nov. 10	Chapter 11 – Case Management	
13- Nov. 17	Chapter 12 – Legal Response	Discussion Board #2
14- Nov. 24	Chapter 13 – Treatment Physical Abuse and Neglect	Paper #2
15- Dec. 1	Chapter 14 – Treatment Sexual Abuse	Quiz 3
Finals		No finals for this class

## ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

**1. Quizzes** – There are three quizzes throughout the course; each one is worth 20 points (20 questions worth 1 point each). Quizzes will only open on Monday at 12 a.m. in the week they are listed and will close at 11:59 p.m. on Sunday. (They are not opened two weeks in advance.) There are no allowances for opening a quiz after it has closed (in order to be completed late). Each quiz is on specific chapters and there are no overlaps. All quizzes are open book; however, all quizzes are also timed, which means you are advised to have notes or to have read the material to reduce flipping through pages to find the answers.

If you score a C or lower on a quiz, you have the option to take a “re-take” quiz. Note: The grade on the re-take quiz is **final** *even if it is a lower score than the original quiz*, so only open and begin a retake quiz if you believe you can do better. It will be on the same material but will not be the same quiz.

**2. Discussion board** – There are 2 discussion assignments throughout this course. They are worth 20 points each. To get full points on every discussion assignment **you must do all of the following:**

- a. Post your initial response to the discussion by 12 noon on Thursday of the week in which the discussion is listed.

**b.** Your initial post must be a true discussion of your understanding of the topic assignment and must be a minimum of 15 sentences.

**c.** You must post at least one comment to three other student posts after 12:01 p.m. on Thursday but prior to the Sunday due date. These comments must be a minimum of five sentences and must add to the discussion. Though you are free to say things like “Interesting thought” or “Nice discussion,” these comments and those similar are not counted as part of the five sentences.

**d.** Proper grammar is expected. I highly recommend typing your thoughts and comments in a file on a word processing program and check for spelling and grammatical errors. Professionalism and professional presentation is an expectation and not an option. Points will be taken off for sloppy spelling and writing.

**3. Papers** – You will have two written assignments throughout the course on an assigned topic. Each paper is worth 35 points. All assignments are 3-4 pages double-spaced. They are submitted via the dropbox in your eCollege course for the week they are due. *Do not submit them as an email. They must be a document with your last name as part of the file name and they must be a Word document (.doc or .docx extensions).* You are required to use the template “Writing paper template.dotx” for every paper, changing the elements (but not the format) to fit your paper. The template is located in Doc Sharing. A grading rubric is supplied for each paper so you know exactly what you are being graded on. You are permitted to rewrite your paper if the initial grade you received is not satisfactory. All rewrites are due one week from the due date of the original paper. (Graded papers are returned to you on Wednesdays).

**4. Topic Check-in** – There are 3 Topic Check-ins throughout this course and they are worth 10 points each. They require that you log in for that week and watch the assigned video. For credit (10 points), you must click into your Journal after viewing the video and post a one paragraph summary of what the video was about, and a one paragraph summary of your thoughts on what you saw. Be sure that you date your journal entry. The combined assignments are worth 30 points. These cannot be made up. They must be completed in the week they are assigned. Late posts will not count and will result in a zero for that Topic Check-in.

## **POLICY ON EXTRA CREDIT**

I do not allow extra credit but I do allow rewrites for papers and retakes for quizzes. There is no make up or rewrite for discussions. I do not make ups for any missed assignment unless you have a doctor’s excuse. It is only to make up a low grade. Deadlines still apply. Note that re-writing does not guarantee an improved grade. You do have the possibility to earn a lower grade than the original.

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**  
**Texas A&M University-Commerce**  
**Gee Library- Room 132**  
**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**  
**Fax (903) 468-8148**  
**StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu**

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