

# SWRK 4200

## SWRK 4200: FIELD/FOCUS OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

### CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES 1

#### SYLLABUS

Welcome to SWRK 4200! This online course will have a particular focus on Aboriginal child and family services. Course content will contain particular reference to colonization, the impacts of the residential school system, the interventionist child welfare policies of the 1970's and the key recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry – Child Welfare Initiative (Manitoba). We will also assess and evaluate current practice models in Aboriginal agencies across Canada. You will be provided with learning opportunities to develop knowledge and skill in the application of an assessment, intervention and an evaluation framework appropriate for child and family services with a diverse population that includes differing levels of identification with Aboriginal culture.

The bridges and barriers between Aboriginal agencies and the community will be explored in an organizational and political context. You will have the opportunity to develop a working knowledge of the structure of Aboriginal agencies in terms of staffing, accountability issues and the current links with community-based committees.

You will be encouraged to critically examine current approaches to policy making and practice in Aboriginal and other child and family services agencies. The course will enable you to become more aware of your own biases and values as they relate to Aboriginal child welfare practice and enable a more informed and ethical approach to practice.

This course emphasizes an indigenous perspective in child welfare in Manitoba. This course aims to prepare graduates for entry level Social Work positions in Aboriginal Child and Family Services Agencies in Manitoba and elsewhere.

This course provides a foundation of knowledge that will be built upon in CFS II, SWRK 4300.

#### CONTACTING YOUR INSTRUCTOR

For information on contacting your instructor as well as other important information from your instructor see the Instructor Letter in your course website.

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

A course that teaches the social work practice skills in the context of a field or focus of practice. The course emphasizes practice as a planned change (client systems) and policy and linkage (service system). Students must select one of the two topics for EACH placement.

Pre-requisites: SWRK 1310, SWRK 2080, SWRK 2090, and SWRK 3140; 6 credit hours co-requisite with SWRK 3150 and an additional 6 credit hours co-requisite with SWRK 4120. Students cannot hold credit for both 047.415 and SWRK 4120 (formerly 047.412)

#### COURSE GOALS

Upon completion of this course you will be able to:

- discuss the historical role of child welfare in Aboriginal communities and identify some of the reasons why many Aboriginal people are ambivalent about the role of these agencies in their communities.
- describe the interaction of policy and practices within the field of child and family services, with a particular focus on Aboriginal child and family services. This goal requires general knowledge and experience concerning the connections between policy and practice in various aspects of child welfare work, including child protection, family support and building community capacity building.
- examine the current service model of Aboriginal child and family services agencies -- local control -- provincial standards -- Federal and Provincial funding.
- further develop knowledge and skill in the application of a case management framework appropriate for Aboriginal child and family services.
- discuss some of the unique features of services and practice models which have been developed by Aboriginal agencies and communities.
- Identify some of the special challenges faced by child and family services staff in providing services in Aboriginal communities.
- critically examine current approaches to policy making and practice in Aboriginal child and family services from a social justice perspective and consider alternative methods of service provision which reflect the needs of the community.
- clarify values or beliefs as they relate to Aboriginal child and family services.
- reflect on your own life history and how this influences your perceptions, beliefs and attitudes to Aboriginal child and family services.
- demonstrate an awareness of empowerment-oriented service models in Aboriginal communities.

### Theoretical Goals

- describe the connections between social justice, social policy and social change and how they intersect at the community level in Aboriginal agencies.

### Practical Goals

- describe the ongoing compliance issues for Aboriginal agencies in their efforts to follow the foundational standards as set by the Province.
- identify the organizational context and analyze its effect on practice (caseload/workload, resources, referral policies and practices etc.).
- describe the various stressors that staff face on a daily basis in their efforts to carry out the mandated child and family services activities in their home communities.

## COURSE MATERIALS

### Bookstore

The following required materials are available for purchase from the [University of Manitoba Bookstore](#). Please order your materials immediately, if you have not already done so. See your [Distance and Online Education Student Handbook](#) for instructions on how to order your materials.

### Textbooks

Culleton, Beatrice. (1992). *In Search of April Raintree*. Winnipeg: Peguis Publishers.

Hart, Michael A. (2002). *Seeking Mino-Pimatisiwin: An Aboriginal Approach to Helping*. Halifax: Fernwood Press.

Walmsley, C. (2005). *Protecting Aboriginal Children*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

### Other Readings

There will be a series of required readings within the course. Units will also contain links to outside readings.

### University of Manitoba Libraries

The following materials are available from the University of Manitoba Libraries (See the link to the University of Manitoba Libraries in your course website.):

Absolon, K. (2010). Indigenous wholistic theory: a knowledge set for practice. *First Peoples Child and Family Review*, 5 (2), 74-87.

Kreitzer, Linda & LaFrance, Jean. (2010, November 2). Co-location of a government child welfare unit in a traditional aboriginal agency; a way forward in working in aboriginal communities. *The First Peoples Child and Family Review*, 5 (2), 34-44.

Verniest, Laura. (2006). Allying with the medicine wheel: social work practice with aboriginal peoples. *Critical Social Work* 7(1), (n.p.).

### Required Hardware and Software

To participate in the Adobe Connect sessions you should have a headset with a microphone. We strongly recommend that you install and test all required software immediately. If you encounter difficulties installing your software contact [de\\_support@umanitoba.ca](mailto:de_support@umanitoba.ca).

### Optional

Each unit has a lengthy list of recommended readings and websites that are a useful supplement to the required learning materials. Please take advantage of these useful resources.

## COURSE OVERVIEW

SWRK 4200 is a six credit course consisting of six units, each approximately 4-5 weeks in duration.

### TOPICS

#### Unit 1: Historical and Legislative Context of Aboriginal Child Welfare

This unit focuses on the impact of colonialism on Aboriginal families and communities. We will explore provincial legislation for mandated and non-mandated child and family services and the development of Manitoba's child welfare system, with an emphasis on Aboriginal families and agencies. Finally, we will examine some of the key changes in legislation during the decades of reform in the 1980s and significant changes in the field of adoption.

#### Unit 2: Inside an Aboriginal Child and Family Service Agency

In this unit, you will learn more about Aboriginal child and family service organizations and Aboriginal values and practices in child welfare practice. By the end of this unit, you should have a good understanding of the funding of CFS agencies and the current Foundational Standards which guide the provision of the mandated services.

#### Unit 3: Service Delivery Models in Aboriginal Child and Family Service Agencies

This unit examines the development and subsequent impact of child protection measures, which have historically stressed the apprehension and placement of Aboriginal children. You will learn about alternatives to placement, such as family preservation and family support, and strategies to facilitate family reunification and kinship care. We will assess the current focus by Aboriginal agencies on family support, family continuity and connections with the biological and extended family and discuss the role and influence of women in/on Aboriginal child welfare. This unit also addresses the question of what services are required to respond more effectively to the psychosocial needs of Aboriginal children who have been victimized by neglect or abuse. Using case situations, we will explore some of the challenges of implementing an integrated services model at the community level. Finally, we will assess the capacity of the Aboriginal agency and the community to

develop resources at the local level.

#### **Unit 4: Beyond Theory and Policy: Practice in Aboriginal Child and Family Service Agencies**

This unit allows you to further develop your knowledge and skills in the application of appropriate approaches to intake, assessment, intervention and evaluation in Aboriginal child and family services. You will learn to integrate Aboriginal ways of practice with other knowledge when completing an assessment, developing a case plan for intervention, and completing an evaluation. Foster care is clearly not the intervention of choice of Aboriginal child and family services agencies. We will explore the continuum of care and the features of those options that involve the placement of Aboriginal children in alternate care. We will also look at how Aboriginal agencies implement Differential Response and Family Enhancement in the Province of Manitoba. Finally, we will examine relevant material on the procedures involved in the family court process and discuss the three stages of the court process: docket, pretrial and trial.

#### **Unit 5: Practice in Rural and Remote Aboriginal Communities**

This unit looks at the various bridges and barriers an Aboriginal agency experiences with regard to its community. We will further explore types of family support, in particular kinship care, and examine the high correlation between poverty and child welfare involvement in Aboriginal communities. We will develop an inventory of the challenges Aboriginal agencies face in coping with human resource issues; for example, recruitment, retention, staff development, training and education.

#### **Unit 6: Service Delivery in a Culturally Relevant Context**

This unit will integrate and build upon the learner's understanding of the Aboriginal world view, including the importance of spirituality, the concept of holism and the value of the collective. We will further explore current Aboriginal approaches to child welfare and learn about the implementation of customary care, mediation and family group conferencing practices in Aboriginal agencies. You will learn to assess the quality/quantity of services available to First Nations families living off reserve and learn how cultural relevancy can be incorporated into the service delivery system.

### **LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

Please complete all of the unit readings, study questions and web searches, watch the videos, and participate in the discussion forums. Doing so will help you complete the graded assignments.

### **EVALUATION AND GRADING**

There are a total of 8 graded assignments for this course. There is no final exam. Instead, you will participate in 3 Adobe Connect live sessions and submit five written assignments. For more details on the assignments, see the assignment file.

### **DISTRIBUTION OF MARKS**

<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Assignment 1: Adobe Connect Session	5%
Assignment 2: Written Assignment	10%
Assignment 3: Adobe Connect Session	5%
Assignment 4: Written Assignment	10%
Assignment 5: Written Assignment	10%
Assignment 6: Written Assignment	15%
Assignment 7: PPT and Adobe Connect Session	15%
Assignment 8: Written Assignment	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

#### **Adobe Connect Sessions**

The three Adobe Connect sessions will allow you to participate with your classmates and instructor in a real time online discussion about current child welfare issues in Manitoba.

### Written Assignments

The five written assignments give you the opportunity to reflect more deeply on a specific child welfare issue. For each written assignment you are expected to use American Psychological Association (APA) formatting. Most of the written assignments are 5-7 pages, double spaced, 12pt. Times New Roman font; the final assignment is 10-12 pages, double spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font.

### ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

Consult your course schedule for the assignment due dates.

### GRADING

Grading will be based on completed assignments and attendance (as specified). Grading systems are as per calendar statements and the Student Handbook, with regard to the conversion of numerical values into a letter grade, and as to the interpretation of letter grades. Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage range	Description
A+	> 93	Exceptional
A	86 - <93	Excellent
B+	79 - <86	Very good
B	72 - <79	Good
C+	65 - <72	Satisfactory
C	58 - <65	Adequate
D	50 - <58	Unacceptable
F	less than 50	Failure

Appeals of final grades are to be directed to the Appeals Committee, Faculty of Social Work. Requests to re-read an assignment or to re-consider a grade may be directed to the instructor with a supporting rationale in writing within two weeks of receiving the graded assignment. Please refer to the Student Handbook for further details on academic regulations and procedures.

**Note:** All final grades are subject to departmental review.

### PLAGIARISM, CHEATING, AND EXAMINATION IMPERSONATION

Plagiarism is defined in the University of Manitoba General Calendar, and it carries serious academic penalties. If you are unsure of the appropriate practices to avoid plagiarism please consult with the instructor. You should acquaint yourself with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation as detailed in the General Academic Regulations and Policy section of the University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar. Note: These policies are also located in your Distance and Online Education Student Handbook or you may refer to Student Affairs at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/student>.

### STUDENT AND ACADEMIC STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

The University of Manitoba has expectations regarding student behaviour. Policies concerning inappropriate or disruptive behaviour are online: [http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing\\_documents/students/279.htm](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/students/279.htm) And policies regarding student discipline are online:

[http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing\\_documents/students/discipline/531.htm](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/students/discipline/531.htm)

In addition, policies regarding academic staff's responsibilities regarding students is available online:

[http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing\\_documents/students/278.htm](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/students/278.htm)

### PROFESSIONAL UNSUITABILITY

The Faculty of Social Work may require any student to withdraw from the Faculty pursuant to the procedures set out in this By-Law when the student has been found unsuited, on considerations of competence or professional fitness, for the practice of Social Work.

For further information please refer to the undergraduate handbook:

[http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/social\\_work/media/BSW\\_Handbook\\_2012-2013\\_Final\\_updates\\_April\\_26\\_12.docx](http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/social_work/media/BSW_Handbook_2012-2013_Final_updates_April_26_12.docx)

Or, the graduate handbook:

[http://umanitoba.ca/social\\_work/media/Pre-MSW\\_MSW\\_Handbook\\_2011-2012.pdf](http://umanitoba.ca/social_work/media/Pre-MSW_MSW_Handbook_2011-2012.pdf)

## ATTENDANCE

Though this is an online course, you are expected to complete all assignments and participate in the Adobe Connect sessions on the dates required. The instructor has the right to set deadlines and to impose the grade of an 'F' for un-negotiated and/or unreasonable delays from students. In the normal course of events students are expected to meet deadlines and complete all course requirements within the regular academic session.

## GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

As students and adult learners with experience and knowledge, it is expected that you contribute to the online learning and teaching context through attendance and participation. Written assignments are expected to meet the usual requirements of scholarship at the graduate level. In addition to the presence of content relevant to the course objectives, these will be among the criteria used in assigning the grade and include: appropriate use of the literature, coherence in the organization between and within sections, presentation of available evidence for your arguments and a logic to the steps taken towards conclusions. Assignments should use the APA reference style as outlined in the texts below:

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Szuchman, L. & Thomlison, B. (2003). *Writing with style: APA style for social work* (2nd ed.) Toronto: Nelson Thomson Learning.

Examples of this reference style can also be found online (copy and enter the URL once you have accessed the internet): <http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/>

## DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION (DE) STUDENT RESOURCES

In your course website there are links for the following:

- Contact Distance and Online Education Staff
- Distance and Online Student Handbook
- Distance and Online Education Website

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### CONTENT SPECIALISTS:

Richard de La Ronde, Sandy Bay CFS  
Bruce Unfried, Consultant

Richard De La Ronde is the Executive Director of the Sandy Bay Child and Family Services. He previously worked as a research assistant with the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada Inc. A member of the Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation, he received his Master of Social Work in 2009 from the University of Manitoba. Richard has been extensively involved in the development of First Nations child welfare for the past decade.

Bruce Unfried is retired as a child and family services specialist and is currently engaged in teaching and consulting work. He had previously worked for 25 years in front line and senior positions in child and family services in Northern Manitoba and Winnipeg. His areas of interest include Aboriginal child and family services, governance issues of Aboriginal agencies, quality assurance initiatives and training of supervisors in rural/remote practice.

### INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER:

Dr. Robert Lawson  
Distance and Online Education  
University of Manitoba

**WEB DEVELOPER:**

Kelsey Loewen  
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