SOCW 505: CHILD WELFARE SEMINAR

THIS IS A SAMPLE OUTLINE. ACTUAL COURSE OUTLINE MAY VARY IN STRUCTURE, REQUIRED READINGS, TEXTS AND ASSIGNMENTS.

Calendar Description: Throughout this course we will examine and critique ideas and discourses relating to child welfare knowledge, policy and practice. We will look at child welfare ideas (as they pertain to both practice and policy) historically and currently, and critically engage with them from a variety of perspectives, predominantly Indigenous and including feminist, critical and post-structural views. Emphasis is placed on these perspectives because they challenge prevailing assumptions about child welfare policy and practice.

Course Objectives:
To provide an opportunity for you to critically reflect on your location/positionality. Factors such as class, race, nation, gender, ability, sexual orientation) and life/work history (with special attention to your previous encounters with child welfare) influence your perceptions, assumptions, beliefs and attitudes about child welfare theory, knowledge, policy and praxis. These will be explored as part of this course.
- To further your understanding of the assumptions and implications of child welfare history, traditions, theories and discourses: what assumptions about reality, knowledge, praxis and worldview does each entail?
- To explore child welfare from a politically engaged perspective that emphasizes how colonization and colonialism and their attendant relations of power shape the child welfare encounter. Underpinning this intention is a key question: what ethical and moral frameworks, worldviews and protocols should we draw on to frame our practice and our professional (personal) identity?
- To provide opportunities for collaborative teaching/learning, exploration of student areas of interest, and the further development of research, writing and presentation skills.

Weekly Topics with readings:
EAST: FOUNDATIONAL AND HISTORICAL PIECES – IDEOLOGY
Week 1 MAY 15: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE
Visit from Elder – Introductions - Development of class climate commitments
Week 2, 3 & 4 MAY 16/22/23: READINGS AND DISCUSSION
• Sinclair, R. (2007). Identity lost and found: Lessons from the sixties scoop. First Peoples
• Child & Family Review 3 (1), 65-82

Supplementary Readings (AVAILABLE ON COURSE RESERVE)

SOUTH: REFLECTIONS ON SELF, EXPERIENCE, IDENTITY AND RESPONSIBILITY
Week 5 & 6 MAY 29/30: READINGS AND DISCUSSION
Unbecoming mothers: women living apart from their children. Binghamton, N.Y.: Haworth Press, 185-208

- de Montigny, G. (1995). The power of being professional. In M. Campbell and A. Manicom (Eds.), Knowledge, experience and ruling relations. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 209-220

Supplementary Readings (AVAILABLE ON COURSE RESERVE)

WEST: PRAXIS: BRINGING HISTORY, FOUNDATION AND SELF TOGETHER
Week 7 & 8 JUNE 5 and 6: READINGS AND DISCUSSION

Supplementary Readings (AVAILABLE ON COURSE RESERVE)

NORTH: VISION AND REVISION, INTEGRATION
Week 9 & 10 June 12 and 13: READINGS AND DISCUSSION
• *Canadian Review of Social Policy* 47, 59-76

**Supplementary Readings**
• *WEN:DE: We are coming to the light of day*. www.fncfcs.com

**Assignments/Learning Activities & Due Dates:**
There are three (3) assignments for this course, described in detail below. While each assignment has specific grading criteria, in general we are looking for evidence that you are familiar with and able to integrate course and outside material, that you are able to understand and critically analyse the material and your learning experiences, that you have critically self-located in your assignments, and that you are able to address the individual components of the assignments with intellectual honesty. It is our expectation that students working at a graduate level will seek out and make use of articles and books beyond the required and supplementary course materials in preparing their assignments.

Only one paper is required in this course and our expectation is that it will have been thoroughly proof read and corrected before it is turned in. Please make and keep a personal copy of your paper before turning it in. It must be typed in no less than 12-point font and double-spaced. APA style and referencing system must be used for all in-text and bibliographical references. Grammar, style and referencing will be considered in grading. If you are not familiar with APA referencing and style, please consult a manual, such as:


**ASSIGNMENTS**

1. **Attendance and participation** (*weighting 25%: assessment throughout the course*)
   The purpose is to ensure that students are continually engaged in critically analyzing and examining the ideas presented in the readings and in class and critically reflecting on and engaging with these ideas, as well as actively participating in facilitating their own learning, the learning of other students, and a respectful learning environment. In other words, your active participation in class discussions and activities is expected. Your self-assessment will be a factor in assigning a mark for this section, though the instructors will be responsible for assigning the final mark.
   
   **Evaluation criteria**
   Evaluation and assessment will focus on the points outlined in the “Self-assessment Form” included in the course outline.

2. **Class facilitation** (*Weighting: 30%*)
   Two students share the responsibility for teaching half a class, assisted by the instructor. The components of this assignment include:
   - Present reviews of at least three of the assigned readings for the session, including the authors’ theoretical perspectives and main argument.
     - Clear and concise summary/description of ideas, arguments and theoretical perspectives
   - Relate readings to professional and scholarly practice, with a special emphasis on contentious issues in social work practice, policy or discourse.
     - Clear and concise description of your responses to the readings, including highlighting some points for engagement with the readings
- Ability to relate reading and discussion material to your location/positionality and/or your research, work or practicum interests.
- Facilitate class engagement and interaction (students are encouraged to be creative and use different teaching formats, such as workshops, activities, panel discussion, role play, use of audio-visual materials, etc.)

**Evaluation criteria**
- Evidence that student-instructors are well prepared.
- Clearly demonstrated understanding of articles and ability to convey that understanding to class.
- Ability to engage the class in discussion or other learning activity.
- Organization and effective use of in-class time.

The evaluation of this assignment will include peer review and feedback, though the instructor will be responsible for assigning the final mark.

3. **Paper and presentation (weighting 45% [paper 30%, presentation 15%])**:
   *presentation dates by lottery; final paper due xx*

Each student is asked to prepare a 16 – 20 page paper on a child welfare topic which significantly relates to their own thesis, project, practicum, personal, community or work interests. The main ideas in the paper are to be presented to the class (time limit: 20 minutes) for feedback and discussion prior to preparation and submission of the final paper.

There are several purposes to this assignment: to contribute to student learning pertaining to their particular research, practicum or work interest; to provide the opportunity to “workshop” ideas in a supportive and collaborative learning environment; to apply the ideas and theoretical perspectives covered during the course; and to enhance presentation skills.

**Evaluation criteria - presentation**
- ability to introduce your work in a clear and comprehensive fashion
- organization of ideas
- originality and creativity
- ability to engage the class in discussion related to your work
- time limit observed

**Evaluation criteria - paper**
- clarity of focus
- breadth and depth of analysis
- ability to introduce ideas that show a complex and in-depth understanding of both your topic and the course material
- organization of ideas
- use of resources outside required readings
- quality of written expression – presentation, grammar and style