

School Vision: Building upon a foundation of social justice and an ethic of care, we are a community of learners actively engaged in the development of critical, transformative knowledge for social work practice.

Year/Term	2016-2017
Course Title	Child and Family Policy and Practice (3 credits)
Course Schedule	Wednesdays, 2:00-5:00 pm (Term 1)
Course Location	Room 224, Jack Bell Building

Instructor	Office Location	Office Phone	E-mail address
Dr. Edward Kruk	Room 237	604-822-2383	edward.kruk@ubc.ca
Office Hours	Thursdays, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, or by appointment		

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is a graduate course focused on child and family policy and practice, with the aim of helping students to develop a social justice framework consistent with the theory, values and skills of child and family social work. The course will critically examine a range of contemporary social policy and practice issues that affect the lives of children and young people, their caregivers, and their communities. The course emphasizes evidence-based social work and critical thinking to determine what policies and practices are best suited to address the needs of children and families in communities. Thus the main goal of the course is to provide a foundation for child and family policy and practice within a social justice framework, by examining a range of issues pertinent to social work with children and families

Because the course is at the graduate level, and students are likely to be employed in situations where their ability to think critically and communicate clearly about the issues is crucial, there will be an emphasis on the strengthening of students' presentation skills (written and oral) throughout the course. Thus, the course format will be interactive and success for all (including the instructor) will depend on the full participation of each person in critically examining all issues and in presenting their research and views in an effective manner.

LEARNING GOALS:

- Students will learn to locate themselves in a professional and political context, and will utilize a social justice-based framework for social work practice in the child and family field.
- Students will learn about foundational theories and theories of child and family practice from a variety of social justice-based perspectives. Students will be able to distinguish among

the various philosophical and theoretical approaches to the solution of problems related to the well-being of children and families. Students will be exposed to comparative provincial, national and international policy and program options for the solution of such problems.

- Students will become immersed in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and cognizant of its implications for policy and practice. They will be able to review Canadian and provincial policies and practices in consideration of their compliance with the UNCRC.
- Students will reflect upon ways in which cultural assumptions, beliefs, and value systems will enhance or hinder our practice with people of diverse backgrounds. Students will develop and nurture approaches and perspectives to practicing social work with and across differences, and will build a framework for validating human diversity. An anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective will be encouraged throughout the course.
- *Students will develop an understanding about how to influence public policy in ways that will limit or reverse social inequality and discrimination. Students will be equipped to effectively argue their position in respect to a particular problem and its proposed solution.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

This course will be delivered in a combination of lecture, seminar and small group framework. Class members are expected to attend all classes and to come prepared to participate in discussion. Divergent opinions, analyses and experiences related to child and family practice will be discussed with openness and respect.

The goal is not to have students end up with a “correct” position on contentious issues in the child and family field, but to provide a forum toward an open, considered and evidence-based dialogue with respect to matters affecting children and families.

COURSE CONTEXT AND PREREQUISITES:

This course is a required course for students in the advanced year of the M.S.W. program, within the child and family stream.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED READING:

Required

Journal articles, as listed below. These are in e-journal format, available through the UBC Library, or via Google Scholar.

Kruk, E. (2013). *The Equal Parent Presumption: Social Justice in the Legal Determination of Parenting After Divorce*. Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press. (Electronic version available).

Recommended

Swift, K. & Callahan, M. (2009). *At Risk: Social Justice in Child Welfare*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

ASSIGNMENTS:**1. (Short) Essay on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:**

Students will submit a short essay of 6 pages (inclusive of references) with a discussion and analysis of Canada's "track record" in regard to compliance with one of the Articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Specifically, to what degree do you believe the Article has been contravened by Canadian provincial /territorial and federal governments in their child and family laws and policies? Present evidence and examples to back your claims. (Due Week 7) (25%)

2. (Long) Essay on a selected policy/practice issue:

Students will submit a 12 page essay (inclusive of references) on one of their choice of policy/practice issues within the child and practice field, which can be either on a topic they presented in class (see 3 below), or on one of the other topics discussed in class. Students are expected to research and critically examine the theoretical and research literature and current debates relating to their topic, and outline their professional position in relation to the topic, with a clear rationale for their orientation based on empirically-supported theory and research. Students will discuss the practice implications of their stance, and identify and discuss how they will deal with potential ethical dilemmas relating to their topic. (Due Week 13) (50%).

3. Class presentation on a selected topic in child and family policy and practice:

Students will research and critically examine the literature and current debates relating to pre-assigned social justice topics within the fields of child and family policy and practice. Students will then make a class presentation in the form of presenting each side of the debate related to the topic, and engage in a discussion with the class. In the presentations, students will focus on the degree to which theories and perspectives are empirically supported by research. (Weeks 3-12) (25%).

COURSE POLICIES [attendance, participation, academic dishonesty]:*Excerpt from the UBC calendar:*

Regular attendance is expected of students in all their classes (including lectures, laboratories, tutorials, seminars, etc.). Students who neglect their academic work and assignments may be excluded from the final examinations. Students who are unavoidably absent because of illness or disability should report to their instructors on return to classes.

The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Access and Diversity Resource Centre. The University accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations. Please let your instructor know in advance, preferably in the first week of class, if you will require any accommodation on these grounds. Students who plan to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other similar commitments, cannot assume they will be accommodated, and should discuss their commitments with the instructor well before assignment due dates.

It is recommended that students retain a copy of all submitted assignments (in case of loss) and should also retain all their marked assignments in case they wish to apply for a Review of Assigned Standing. Students have the right to view their marked examinations with their

instructor, providing they apply to do so within a month of receiving their final grades. This review is for pedagogic purposes. The examination remains the property of the university.

Academic Dishonesty:

Please review the UBC Calendar “Academic Regulations” for the university policy on cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. Also visit www.arts.ubc.ca and go to the students’ section for useful information on avoiding plagiarism and on correct documentation.

Students wishing to use any electronic devices including computers and recorders must have the permission of the instructor and must have the wireless capacity of the device turned off during class.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week 1 Introduction; A Responsibility-to-Needs Approach to Child and Family Policy and Practice

- Conceptualizing justice and injustice
- Human rights and the “ethic of care”
- Social justice as responsibility-to-needs: the essential needs of children and parental and social institutional responsibilities to those needs; the “best interests of the child from the perspective of the child”

Required Reading (Optional in brackets):

Healy, C.M. (2008). “Exploring the history of social work as a human rights profession.” Anne Westhues (Ed.) (2003) *Canadian Social Policy: Issues & Perspectives*. 3rd Edition. Wilfred Laurier Press. “Introduction” and “An overview of social policy” PP 3-24 plus Ch 17 “Evaluating social welfare policies and programs” pp 319-334 (course reader)

B. Wharf & B. McKenzie (1998). Connecting Policy to Practice in the Human Services. Toronto: Oxford University Press. Chapter 2, “Policy-making models and their connection to practice” pp. 18-33; Chapter 3, “Making social policy in Canada: Institutional and political factors” pp 34-51 (Course reader)

(Baker, Maureen (2006) Restructuring Family Policies: convergences and divergences. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
Ch. 1. “Restructuring family policies”
Ch 2. “Socio-demographic changes and family policy restructuring”)

(Kruk, E. (2013). “Social Justice, Spirituality and Responsibility to Needs: The ‘Best Interests of the Child’ in the Divorce Transition,” *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health*, 15 (2), 1-13.)

(Nielsen, L. (2014). “Woozles: Their role in custody law reform, parenting plans, and family court,” *Psychology, Public Policy and Law*.)

Week 2 Philosophical & Theoretical Foundations of Family Policy; International Social Justice and Human Rights Legislation; Social Justice and Children’s Rights: The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Related Legislation

- Social justice and children’s rights

- Parental and social institutional responsibilities to children's needs
- Parental authority and corporal punishment debate
- State authority and treatment of young offenders

Required Reading:

Colin M. MacLeod (2007) "Raising children: Who is responsible for what?" in Samantha Brennan & Robert Noggle (eds.) *Taking Responsibility for Children*. Waterloo Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press pp1-18

(Jan Narveson (2007) "Parental Responsibility" in Samantha Brennan & Robert Noggle (eds.) *Taking Responsibility for Children*. Waterloo Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press pp 19-46)

(Caroline Beauvais & Jane Jenson (2001) Two policy paradigms: Family responsibility and investing in children. CPRN Discussion Paper No. F/12. February 2001. available at <http://www.cprn.org> (79 pgs))

(Orr, F. (2014). "To what extent is it fair to say that children are 'vulnerable victims' that require special protection under international human rights law?," *Journal of Social Welfare and Human Rights*, 2 (1), 87-105.)

(Sparrow, J.D. (2011). "Child Justice, Caregiver Empowerment, and Community Self-Determination," in Fennimore, B.S & Goodwin, A.L (Eds.) (2011). *Promoting Social Justice for Young Children*. New York: Springer.)

Week 3 Issues in Child and Family Practice: Topic 1: Abortion–Reproductive Autonomy/Abortion Rights versus the "Right to Life"

- Defining "child" and "human life"
- Pro-life versus pro-choice debate
- Sex selection abortion; disability and abortion

Required Reading:

Condic, M.L. (2009). *When Does Human Life Begin?: A Scientific Perspective*, Thornwood, NY: The Westchester Institute.

Johnstone, R. (2010). Framing Reproductive Rights: The Politics of Abortion Access and Citizenship in a Post-Morgentaler Era. *Canadian Political Science Association (May 2010) pp, 1-12.*

Week 4 Issues in Child and Family Practice: Topic 2: New Reproductive Technologies and the Rights of Children to Know their Biological Origins; Same Sex Parenting–Diversity of Family Structures and Family Roles

- Defining "parent" and "family"
- Rights of children to know their biological origins
- New reproductive technologies
- "Presumption in favour of the natural"
- Traditional and emergent family forms
- Same sex parenting

Required Reading:

Pon, G. et al (2011). "Immediate response: Addressing anti-native and anti-black racism in child welfare," *International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies*, 3, 385-409.

Blackstock, C. (2011). "The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal on First Nations Child Welfare: Why if Canada Wins, Equality and Justice Lose," *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33, 187-194.

Week 8 Issues in Child and Family Practice: Topic 6–Child Protection: Family Violence and Child Welfare

- Family violence; violence against women; violence against men
- Child exposure to family violence; child protection and family violence

Required Reading:

Dutton, D.G. & Corvo, K. (2006). "Transforming a flawed policy: A call to revive psychology and science in domestic violence research and practice," *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 11.

Gondolf, E.W. (2007). "Theoretical and research support for the Duluth model: A reply to Dutton and Corvo," *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 12.

Week 9 Issues in Child and Family Practice: Topic 7–Child Custody, Access and Parenting After Divorce I

- Discretionary "best interests of the child" standard: Should judges have discretion in child custody disputes? Should the discretionary "best interests of the child" standard be retained or should a rebuttable presumption of shared parental responsibility be legislated?
- Primary caregiver presumption

Required Reading:

Canadian Bar Association (2010). *In the Interests of Children*. Ottawa: National Family Law Section, Canadian Bar Association.

Kruk, E. (2013). *The Equal Parent Presumption*, pages xix-97

Week 10 Issues in Child and Family Practice: Topic 7–Child Custody, Access and Parenting After Divorce II

- Egalitarian parenting after divorce; rebuttable presumption of shared parental responsibility

Required Reading:

Kruk, E. (2013). *The Equal Parent Presumption*, pages 98-147.

Harman, J. (2016). Parents Behaving Badly: Gender Biases in the Perception of Parental Alienating Behaviors, *Journal of Family Psychology*.

Week 11 Issues in Child and Family Practice: Topic 8–Child Care Policy and Practice

- Egalitarian parenting in two-parent families
- Arguments for and against universal government-subsidized child care
- Should family allowance direct payments “flow with the child”?

Required Reading:

McLaren, L., & McIntyre, L. (2013). Conceptualizing child care as a population health intervention: Can a strong case be made for a universal approach in Canada, a liberal welfare regime? *Critical Public Health*, 1-11.

Baker, M., Gruber, M., & Milligan, K. (2008). “Universal child care, maternal labor supply, and family well-being,” *Journal of Political Economy*, 116 (4).

Week 12 Issues in Child and Family Practice: Topic 9—Income Security for Children and Families

- Child and family poverty
- Alternative approaches to income security, including living wage and guaranteed annual income

Required Reading:

Anne Westhues (Ed.) (2003) *Canadian Social Policy: Issues & Perspectives*. 3rd Edition. Wilfred Laurier Press. “Introduction to Part II” and “The problem of child poverty in Canada” pp 25-49

BC Poverty Reduction Coalition (2014) bcpovertyreduction.ca - This website will introduce you to some suggested proposals for poverty reduction at the provincial level. Note the distinction between federal and provincial areas of jurisdiction

(Canadian Council on Social Development (2008) "The Economic Well-being of Children," from the *Growing Up in North America* series. <http://www.ccsd.ca/>)

(Juliana Parker, Tara Black & Nico Trocme (2007) “Adolescent childbearing and child neglect: What’s the connection?” *Canada’s Children*. Summer 2007. p13 (published in Ottawa by the Child Welfare League of Canada)

(Howie, P. (2011). Guaranteed Annual Income: Derailing Economic Growth. *Policy Options* 57.)

(Forget, E. L. (2011). The town with no poverty: the health effects of a Canadian Guaranteed Annual Income Field Experiment. *Canadian Public Policy*, 37 (3), 283-305.)

Week 13 Other Issues in Child and Family Social Work; Review of Course

- Consumer culture and corporatization of childhood; sexualization of children; routinization of children’s lives and the “right to play”
- Children of war
- Practice and policy implications

Required Reading:

Pagani, L.S, Fitzpatrick, C, Barnett, T.A. & Dubow, E. (2010). Prospective Associations Between Early Childhood Television Exposure and Academic, Psychosocial, and Physical Well-being by Middle Childhood. *Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine*, 164, (5).

Werner, W. (2012). Children and war: Risk, resilience, and recovery. *Development and Psychopathology*, 24, 553-558.

(Kruk, E. (2015). "Child and Family Social Work in Canada: Issues and Challenges Within a Neo-liberal Political Context." In Palattiyil, G., Sidhva, D. & Chakrabarti, M. (Eds.) *Social Work in a Global Context: Issues and Challenges*, London: Routledge (to be provided by instructor upon request).

ASSIGNMENTS GRADING, & EVALUATION:

Submitting Assignments-

Students can submit assignments in class or drop off to the reception counter in the main office. Items will be date-stamped and distributed to my mailbox.

Return of marked student assignments -

Instructors coordinate the return of marked assignments. The options are as follows: a) the instructor returns the paper to students in class; b) if the paper has been submitted electronically, the instructor will mark it on-line and return to the student on-line; c) the instructor returns the paper to the student by post (the student provides a self-stamped, addressed envelope to the instructor). Marked papers not returned by any of the options above will be held by the instructor. Marked papers will not be put in a box outside the instructor's office or at the main office counter.

Late assignments-

Deadlines for the assignment of grades for grading purposes are established on the basis of the university schedule to assure submission of marks to the registrar's office. In accordance with university policy, a deadline may be extended only in the event of serious illness or domestic affliction documented by the student's physician and approved by Student Health Services, or for reasons of religious observance.

Students who submit assignments late will have one mark deducted per day late from the final grade for the course.

GRADING CRITERIA			
Letter Grade	Percent Range	Mid-Point	
A+	90-100	95	Represents work of exceptional quality. Content, organization and style are all at a high level. Student demonstrates excellent research and reference to literature where appropriate. Also, student uses sound critical thinking, has innovative ideas on the subject and shows personal engagement with the topic.
A	85-89	87	
A-	80-84	82	
B+	76-79	77.5	Represents work of good quality with no major weaknesses. Writing is clear and explicit and topic coverage and comprehension is more than adequate. Shows some degree of critical thinking and personal involvement in the work. Good use of existing knowledge on the subject.
B	72-75	83.5	
B-	68-71	69.5	
C+	64-67	65.5	Adequate and average work. Shows fair comprehension of the subject, but has some weaknesses in content, style and/or organization of the paper. Minimal critical awareness
C	60-63	62.5	
C-	55-59	57	

			or personal involvement in the work. Adequate use of literature.
D	50-54	52	Minimally adequate work, barely at a passing level. Serious flaws in content, organization and/or style. Poor comprehension of the subject, and minimal involvement in the paper. Poor use of research and existing literature.
F	0-49		Failing work. Inadequate for successful completion of the course or submitted beyond final date of acceptance for paper.