Course Rationale:

Children and youth face a variety of developmental challenges and a variety of external barriers that inhibit the successful resolution of developmental tasks. Understanding the normative processes of human development in their context provides a conceptual base to help children and youth meet these challenges. Developmental processes related to school success are particularly important in our current climate of educational accountability. Applying a theoretical framework to child/youth intervention programs and understanding best practices suggested by the literature facilitate counselors’ capacity to positively impact the lives of children and youth.

Course Objectives:
1. Develop an understanding of developmental psychology, particularly as it applies to intervention programs for children and youth.
2. Conceptualize sociopolitical, familial, and individual factors that influence functioning.
3. Understand the characteristics of children who are at-risk of developing difficulties in everyday functioning.
4. Understand traditional and social-justice oriented approaches to youth development.
5. Understand the application of psychoeducational interventions within a conceptual, prevention and treatment model for adolescents at risk for a variety of psychosocial problems.
6. Become fluent in the literature germane to challenges children and youth face (e.g. school engagement, postsecondary transitions, critical consciousness development).
7. Develop a theory-based intervention that addresses the developmental needs of and measures developmental change in children and/or youth.

Required Text:


* Note: All author proceeds from the sale of this text book are donated to family service agencies.

Supplementary Resource:

Michigan Comprehensive Guidance Program handbook. The handbook is available online via the Michigan Department of Career Development at:
Basic Expectations of Students at Michigan State University:

All rules governing scholarship and social behavior at Michigan State University are required of students enrolled in this course. Specifically, students are expected to follow guidelines of academic integrity as outlined in the Graduate Student Handbook (published by the university). Suspected cheating (including plagiarism) will be reported to the appropriate university officials for further investigation. Incidents of substantiated cheating may result in one or more of the following: a failing grade in this course, dismissal from the graduate program you are enrolled in, dismissal from the university.

Expectations Regarding Student Conduct:

Listed below are a few guidelines that will promote a positive learning environment for you, your colleagues and your instructor. This list is not comprehensive. It comprises basic social expectations that instructors in the MA Counseling Program have of students enrolled in courses:

1. Students will use respectful language and respect the rights and opinions of others when communicating with one another and the instructor.
2. Students will accept feedback (including but not limited to) regarding conduct and academic performance in a mature manner consistent with professional standards.
3. Students will strive to integrate feedback and will consult with the instructor regarding ways in which feedback may be incorporated. Failure to incorporate feedback may result in consequences including, but not limited to, inhibiting the development of counseling skills and competencies, interpersonal conflicts with instructors and/or peers, and/or cumulative grade reductions.

A student’s consistent violation of the behavioral expectations noted above and inattention to feedback may result in a lower grade in this course, may influence the content of the student’s annual evaluation letters, and may affect faculty’s letters of recommendation for post graduation activities (i.e., job search, application for doctoral programs). The instructor will provide students with a first warning by e-mail; a second warning will occur in a formal meeting with the instructor; and any subsequent warning, at the discretion of the instructor, will result in the student’s required presence at a formal program faculty meeting to discuss the status of the student in the program.

General Course Policies

1. The self-directed nature of learning in online courses is more difficult for some students. Other students may struggle to complete required readings without the structure of a regularly scheduled class meeting. I understand these difficulties, but it is your responsibility to remain active on the discussion boards and regularly read required chapters/articles. To provide structure, I have created a course schedule at the end of this syllabus, which provides deadlines for when readings should be completed and when students should anticipate new threads in the discussion forums related to these required readings.
2. The first unit for each week will span from Monday morning until Wednesday night (11:55pm); the second unit for each week will span from Thursday morning until Sunday night (11:55pm). Students will not be able to post to the Discussion Forum for the first unit of each week after Wednesday night and for the second unit of each week after Sunday night. The dates listed in the Course Schedule (at the end of this syllabus) are suggested days for when students should read course materials and participate in the Discussion Forum for that unit.

3. **Required assignments are due at midnight EST on the date listed in the Course Schedule.**

4. Do the reading before each scheduled “class.” Questions on the discussion board will be direct questions regarding the material for the “day” indicated in the course schedule.

5. Students are required to obtain and maintain an MSU email account. I will conduct class business and make announcements through the ANGEL system. If you choose to use another email account (such as AOL) as your primary email, you must have your MSU email account forwarded to your primary email account.

6. Students are required to use and familiarize themselves with the ANGEL system (to be discussed further in class). Your course notes and other information will be posted via ANGEL for you to download.

7. Respect confidentiality in the course. People may reveal information about themselves that they would not want others outside of the class to know.

8. All students must submit assignments by uploading them into “dropboxes” I will create in ANGEL. For example, there is a folder named “Dropbox for ‘Presentation to the Board’ assignment” for this assignment. Students will use the following rule for all files submitted: LastnameFirstnameAssignment.doc – so my file for this assignment would be named DiemerMattPresboard.doc

9. If you require a special adaptation or accommodation to participate fully in this course, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss your request. If the student with a disability does not choose to disclose that s/he has a disability, then the student is agreeing to take full responsibility for any related consequences that may occur. Last minute special requests will be subject to the same late assignment policy as other students. You will also need to provide a letter from the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities that verifies your status.

**Late Assignment Policy**

1. All assignments are due by midnight EST on the dates listed in the syllabus unless prior approval is received from the instructor. Only rare exceptions will be made for extensions. **Computer crashes and/or system malfunctions are not an acceptable excuse for missing deadlines.** Always complete your work well in advance of the deadline to avoid this problem.

2. I strongly advise you to do all work outside of the ANGEL system (ANGEL can time out and/or occasionally crash) and then cut/paste/upload your assignments so you do not lose assignments.
   i. For example, drafting responses on the discussion board in a word processing application, and then copying and pasting your text into the ANGEL discussion boards, is recommended.

3. I strongly encourage you to keep back-up copies of all work, if only by cc'ing yourself on an e-mail. Thumb/flash drives are very useful for saving everything you do for this course.
Course Requirements:

1. **Discussant**
   Collaborative teams of students (1-2 students/unit) will plan for and organize a discussion of the readings, on the discussion boards. Students will form and/or be assigned to discussant teams the first week of class, based on their interests in the topic for each unit. A wiki nested within the Week One Content folder provides a list of topics and potential discussants – students will sign up for one unit, using this wiki, in Week One. **Discussants** will be responsible for:

   1. Encouraging and supporting an active exchange of ideas among your peers. This will be done by developing and submitting to me a list of five questions/reactions designed to facilitate discussion in the course discussion boards. This list of five questions must be submitted to me **one week** before the date your group will serve as discussants. I will then select three-five questions that your group will post to the discussion boards; your group will also serve as lead discussants in the discussion boards related to those readings. I will (initially) take a secondary role to the assigned discussants for each unit, deferring to the expertise of the discussants for each unit.

      (a) (Discussants for the third unit on May 26 will not be held to this “one week prior” requirement. I do request that you submit questions to me prior to May 23 and guarantee a quick review of your proposed questions).

      (b) Your group will be expected to submit a documentation of each team member’s contribution to the final product, approved by all team members.

   2. Discussants have the option of posting a brief summary of the readings, which would include the most interesting and provocative issues and why these issues are important for child/youth interventions. Students are expected to have done the reading, sparing discussants from having to summarize the readings. A dropbox has been enabled for each week of the course – discussant can upload their summaries there. Let me reiterate that summaries are entirely optional and creating/not creating a summary has no effect on my evaluation of your role as Discussant.

Dr. Diemer will serve as the Discussant for the second unit of week one (May 21) to model the roles & responsibilities of the Discussant. Students’ role as discussant will count for 30 points.

2. **“Presentation to the Board”**

   Working collaboratively in groups (3-4 students/group), students will deliver a (mock) presentation to persuade a school board (or, funding agency) to approve or fund your intervention program. Each group will use technology to create an audio recording of their presentation (10-15 minutes/group) that will be posted for other class members to review, using the ANGEL system. Groups are required to create a brief visual presentation (such as power point slides) with an accompanying audio presentation that will be uploaded to ANGEL for all students to review. Groups are also required to submit a five page paper (detailed below). Groups are not required to include additional materials with their audio presentation (copy of measures, short outline, etc.) but may do so.

   For example, students could use the Audacity freeware program to record an audio presentation – each student in a group could be responsible for creating a smaller audio file for each
component of the group’s overall presentation. Or, groups could designate one student as the “presenter” who creates and narrates the entire audio presentation. [Please see: http://audacity.sourceforge.net/help/ or http://podcast.msu.edu/audacity/audacity.html for technical assistance with the Audacity program. A flash movie displaying how to embed audio files into powerpoint, zipping these files together & uploading them into ANGEL has been posted to ANGEL. Finally, .mp3 audio files are preferable to .wav files because of their smaller file size.]

Each student in the course will then listen to each group’s presentation. The translation of course readings and our discussions into prospective interventions will serve as the required readings for the final week of class. (Groups should post their final papers into a clearly marked dropbox on ANGEL - other students will be able to access this presentation. The dropbox will also be used for students to upload the five page paper accompanying their project).

Presenters in each group will then respond to inquiries/criticisms/comments regarding their Presentation to the Board on the course discussion boards. I encourage each group to develop 2-3 questions they post to initiate a thread on the discussion boards, and I remind students in the course that they are expected to participate in discussions regarding these assignments in the final week of class.

Your presentation must address:

a. “Context of the problem” - An explanation of why issue X is a problem that needs to be addressed by your intervention. You can illustrate the context of the problem via statistics, vignettes/narratives, etc.
b. “What is the theoretical basis of the program?” – Explain the theoretical framework that guides your intervention to a more general audience. You must explain the theoretical framework to a non-academic audience, without using jargon and technical language. Being able to understand complex ideas and explain them simply reflects a clear understanding of course materials and the application of developmental science to meet the needs of children and youth. Try to apply ideas and concepts from the readings in your presentation.
c. “How this problem will be addressed” – An explanation of your intervention curriculum/program in specific terms. What will the components of your intervention be? What sort of things will you do to impact this problem? (You may use small pieces of existing interventions, but cannot simply copy the curriculum & design of an existing intervention program.)
d. “How will this program be evaluated” - Explain the measure that you will use to assess change in participants, as a result of your intervention program. How will students be different as a result of this intervention? Also discuss the strategy and plan you will use to measure change in participants (e.g. pre-/post-testing, use of control groups, etc.) Again, discuss the measure used to assess change and the evaluation plan in language suitable to a non-academic audience. Assessing the impact of our work is where many counselors and school personnel fall short, and should not be overlooked in your assignments.

Each group will submit a paper that provides a more in-depth discussion of their presentation. This paper should not exceed five pages, double-spaced. Appendices, title pages, etc. (if desired) will not count toward this page limit. Your group will also be expected to submit documentation
of each team member’s contribution to the final product, approved by all team members (not counted toward five page limit). For example, groups could assign one member as the “presenter,” one who is more responsible for responding on the discussion forum regarding their presentation, etc.

The topic for this paper can be a topic not assigned in the required readings, but all students interested in doing so must receive prior approval from the instructor or receive a 0 on this assignment. This project will be worth 50 points.

3. Quizzes

We will take three online quizzes, at the 1/3, 2/3 and final points of this class. The first two quizzes will cover the provided slides, class discussions, and required readings up to that point. The final quiz will be more comprehensive, covering the provided slides, class discussions, and required readings of the entire semester (although the emphasis in the final quiz will be course content from the last third of the class).

Each quiz will be worth 10 points.

5. Class participation:

Class participation will be assessed by your participation in discussion boards (encompassing mini-quizzes and other participatory activities) and total 50 points. Participation is critical in online courses and provides an opportunity for the exchange of ideas and interaction central to learning. Please keep in mind that participation is not a competitive endeavor, and that participating in a manner that invites your peers into discussions, or builds upon the earlier comments of a classmate, will be evaluated more highly. At the same time, students are encouraged to respectfully disagree and hold opposing viewpoints, where appropriate.

Both the quality and quantity of your posts to discussion boards will be considered in evaluating your class participation. “Me too” or “I disagree” responses without explanation and/or clarification are not acceptable at the graduate level and will be evaluated very negatively. Posts are an online representation of your professionalism and are expected to be proofread, spellchecked, clear, and grammatically correct.

Quality refers to: the integration of required readings into your response, the thoughtfulness of a post, synthesis and critical evaluation of readings and previous posts in your response, acknowledgement of the viewpoint and perspectives of others, and the degree to which your post spurs further discussion.

Quantity refers to: my expectation that each student posts at least once to each discussion board per week (so, a minimum of two posts/week).

Determination of Grade

There will be 160 points possible in this class.
Grades will be assigned in accordance with the grading policies of the College of Education. The cut off lines may be moved lower depending upon the distribution of grades at the end of the semester, but I will not move them higher. The following standard will be used to assign grades:

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<tr>
<td>95-100</td>
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<tr>
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<td>71-76</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>65-70</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

All readings are **required** unless otherwise indicated.

*Note: The first half of the course focuses upon models of development and intervention.*

**Week One**

May 19  
*Introduction and Overview*

Readings:  
Course Syllabus  
Syllabus quiz and wiki within Week One Folder  
Student post audio introduction file to ANGEL

May 21  
*Understanding Development: Risk & Resiliency*  
Discussant: Dr. Diemer

Readings:  
Chapter 1: An Introduction to At-Risk Issues: The Tree  
Chapter 6: Characteristics of High-Risk and Low Risk Children & Youth

**Week Two**

May 26  
*Understanding Risk & Protective Factors:*

Discussants:

Readings:  
2. Understanding Risk & Protective Factors, from U.S. Surgeon General:  
3. Applying Risk & Protective Factors to Interventions:  

May 28  
*Developmental Advocacy & Fostering Competence*


**Week Three**

June 2  
*The Social Context of Child & Youth Development*

Discussants:

Readings:  
Chapter 2: Environmental/Societal Factors That Contribute to Risk
June 4  
**Youth Development: Traditional & Sociopolitical Perspectives**  
Discussants:  

**Week Four**  
June 9  
**Conceptualizing Prevention & Interventions**  
Discussants:  
Readings:  
1. Chapter 12: A Prevention/Early Intervention/Treatment Framework and Other Environmental Consideration  
2. Chapter 13: Core Components of Programs for Prevention and Early Intervention  
3. Chapter 14: Peer Interventions  

June 11  
**Estimating Reliability & Assessing the Impact of Interventions**  
Discussants:  
Readings:  

Note: The second half of class focuses upon topics for interventions.  

**Week Five**  
June 16  
**Fostering Coping & Interpersonal/Social Competence**  
Discussants:
Readings:  

Recommended:  

*Quiz 2 covers content to here*  

June 18  

*School Engagement*  
Discussants:  

Readings:  

**Week Six**  

June 23  

*Postsecondary Transition to College*  
Discussants:  

Readings:  
2. Each student will review the website, navigating *each* section and subsection of this website: [http://www.educ.msu.edu/collegeinsider/](http://www.educ.msu.edu/collegeinsider/)  

Discussion questions for this unit will be derived from your exploration of the College Insider website.  

Recommended:  

June 25  

*Critical Consciousness/Sociopolitical Development*  
Discussants:  

Readings:  
Minority Psychology, 12(3), 444-460.


Week Seven

June 30 ‘Presentations to the Board’

July 2 ‘Presentations to the Board’

Final Quiz

Please note that this syllabus is subject to change with notice.

References

In place of a coursepack, the following required readings are available as full-text through the MSU library system. Search for the journal title using the MAGIC system, and then click the ‘electronic resource’ option, then click ‘connect to online resource’ to find the specific article in full-text form.


Required reading that will be posted on ANGEL:


*Note, a .pdf copy with the sections to be read has been placed on ANGEL. The sections to be read have been highlighted in the .pdf copy of this document*