I. **Purpose and Description:** SW 780 has been designed to be taken during the final semester of the MSW program for students who have a special emphasis in working in public child welfare. Students enrolled in this course must be participants in the MSW Title IV-E Child Welfare Stipend Program. The course is an advance research-oriented seminar that engages students in an effort to address current needs of children and families who come to the attention of public child welfare agencies. Emphasis is placed on the theoretical perspectives and research approaches used to examine outcomes of children, youth, and their families in the public child welfare system. Given federal and state laws which require child welfare agencies to monitor and report the outcomes of their services, it is important that social workers working in child welfare agencies are able to understand how scientific methods may be used to improve practice and policy in this field.

II. **Learning Outcomes:** After completion of SW 780, students will demonstrate competencies in the following areas: (EPAS: Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards, Council of Social Work Education)

1. **EPAS 2 - Engage diversity and difference in practice (Advanced)**
   - Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies. [research paper]

California Social Work Education Center (CALSWEC) Foundation Competencies (CA 4.1)

   - In providing effective child welfare practice, consistently demonstrate and articulate both accurate awareness of self and knowledge of societal
variables contributing to power imbalances and interpersonal and intercultural conflict among individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. [research paper]

2. EPAS 4- Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
   • use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
   • use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery. [research paper]

California Social Work Education Center (CALSWEC)
Foundation Competencies (CF 6.b)
   • Demonstrate knowledge of how to consult and utilize research evidence to inform ongoing practice and policy at all levels. [research paper]

III. Readings: There is no required textbook or course reader. Required readings are either provided directly by the instructor or available on Blackboard. Required or recommended readings include:


Collins-Camargo, C., Sullivan, D. & Murphy, A. (2011). Use of data to assess performance and promote outcome achievement by public child


IV. Course Assignment:

Assignment 1: Well-being Review: Using data to make decisions (40% of grade)
This quantitative analysis paper uses the second cohort of the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-being (NSCAW II) dataset in which students select a research question based on the available data and then generate descriptive statistics, chi-square and/or t-tests to answer the research question. The assignment includes a 4 to 6 page paper that presents an analysis of the quantitative data, including the use of tables or graphs to present the data and an interpretation of the results. An additional 1-page summary of the paper is also included as part of the assignment. Through analysis and interpretation of the data, students are asked to use practice experience to inform their research, and through sharing of the 1-page summary, students apply research skills in an effort to improve practice.
Assignment 2: Permanency Review: Comparing foster care rates (30% of grade)
For this paper students will use the CWS/CMS Dynamic Report System website (http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/Ccfsr.aspx) to compare foster care entry and exit rates in San Diego County to those in Los Angeles County and other neighboring counties. Students will also use rates to calculate racial disproportionality indexes. The assignment includes a 4 to 6 page paper that includes the use of tables or graphs to present the data and an interpretation of the results. An additional 1-page summary of the paper is also included as part of the assignment. Through analysis and interpretation of the data, students are asked to use practice experience to inform their research, and through sharing of the 1-page summary, students apply research skills in an effort to improve practice.

Assignment 3: Identifying Interventions and Evaluating Evidence: Group Assignment (30% of grade)
This is a group assignment which requires students to select an intervention with some evidence of promoting safety, permanency, or well-being for children or youth involved in the child welfare system (we will discuss in class how to locate possible interventions/programs that would best fit this assignment). Students will be asked to describe the program, who it serves (target population), and the underlying assumptions that promote its effectiveness. In addition, students should evaluate the research evidence for the effectiveness of this intervention for a child welfare population; and develop a Logic Model that communicates what the program involves and which child welfare outcomes would be impacted. In place of a paper, each group will create a PowerPoint presentation with their findings. Each group will be required to present their findings during the last day of class.

All grades are assigned in accordance with the policies set forth in the MSW Handbook.

MSW students.

The following grading scale will be utilized:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-95%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>94-90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>83-80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79-77%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76-74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>73-70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69-67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>66-64%</td>
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</table>
1. Grades of A or A- are reserved for student work that not only demonstrates excellent mastery of content, but also shows that the student has (a) undertaken complex tasks, (b) applied critical thinking skills to the assignment, and/or (c) demonstrated creativity in her or his approach to the assignment. The degree to which the student demonstrates these skills determines whether he/she receives an A or an A-.

2. A grade of B+ is given to work that is judged to be very good. This grade denotes that a student has demonstrated a more-than-satisfactory understanding of the material being tested, and has exceeded expectations in the assignment.

3. A grade of B is given to student work that meets the basic requirements of the assignment. It denotes that the student has done satisfactory work on the assignment and meets the expectations of the course.

4. A grade of B- denotes that a student's performance was less than satisfactory on an assignment, reflecting only moderate grasp of content and is below expectations.

5. A grade of C reflects a minimal grasp of the assignments, poor organization of ideas and/or several significant areas requiring improvement.

6. Grades between C- and F denote a failure to meet minimum standards, reflecting serious deficiencies in a student's performance on the assignment.

V. Course Policies

SDSU Faculty Senate Disability Policy: If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Accommodation for Religious Observances: Students will be allowed to complete examinations or other requirements in advance of a religious observance. However, it is
the student’s responsibility to contact me in advance so that I can make the necessary arrangements.

**Academic Misconduct:** Academic misconduct is an act in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation, uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise, forges or falsifies academic documents or records, intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others, engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance, or assists other students in any of these acts.

Academic misconduct, including plagiarism, is a serious offense in academia and will be treated according to the university policy, as written in the SDSU catalog/Graduate Bulletin. Any Academic misconduct, including plagiarism infractions, will be reported to the SDSU Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities as is mandated by the CSU Chancellor.

If you are unsure as to what is plagiarism: Students can take the 30-minute pre- and post-online quiz: **SDSU Plagiarism: The crime of intellectual property** by SDSU librarian Pamela Jackson, found at: [http://infotutor.sdsu.edu/plagiarism/index.cfm](http://infotutor.sdsu.edu/plagiarism/index.cfm).

For more information visit the Office of Student Rights and Responsibility: [http://studentaffairs.sdsu.edu/srr/academics1.html](http://studentaffairs.sdsu.edu/srr/academics1.html)

**ADDITIONALLY:**

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers will be submitted to Turnitin for textual similarity review for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Another option is that you may request, in writing, that your paper not be submitted to Turnitin. However, if you choose this option you will be required to provide documentation to substantiate that the paper is your original work and does not include any plagiarized material. This is a completely paperless system. You will upload your paper to Turnitin and I will grade and make comments on this electronic copy. Furthermore, you will be able to view these comments on a PDF copy of your paper that you can save or print out for your records. Turnitin is fully integrated with Blackboard and should be easy to use. Please review instructions on how to use Turnitin well before your paper is due (see Turnitin resources on Blackboard under assignments for this course).

**NASW Code of Ethics:** The NASW Code of Ethics is an academic standard at the SDSU School of Social Work. Students are expected to maintain a high standard of professionalism and to follow all the principles of the NASW Code of Ethics (Revised, 1996). The Code of Ethics specifies that social workers should be “continually aware of
the profession's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them” (NASW, Revised 1996, Ethical Principles). Adherence to the Code of Ethics includes placing clients’ interests in highest priority, maintaining client confidentiality, demonstrating appropriate professional boundaries, treating one’s colleagues with respect, and maintaining standards of honesty and integrity.

**Attendance Policy:** Students are expected to attend every class and to remain in the class for the duration of the class. Failure to attend class, arriving late or lack of active participation may impact your ability to achieve course objectives, which could affect your course grade. Students are expected to notify the instructor by email of any anticipated absence or reason for tardiness.

**Late Assignments:** Papers are due on the day and time specified. Extensions will be granted only for extenuating circumstances. Students who do not inform instructor in advance, and skip the class on the date the assignment is due, will not have the opportunity to make the case of unanticipated circumstances. If the paper is late without permission, the grade will be affected. **Please note: Six points will be deducted for late assignments (except for approved extensions and accommodations) after grade is assigned based on merit, and one point for every additional day.**

**Class Etiquette:** Students are asked to refrain from knitting, needlework, personal grooming, laptop use (other than note-taking), text messaging, participating in any social networking activities, or other distracting personal behaviors during class. Cell phones should remain off or on vibrate only. Students are asked to arrive at class on time, as latecomers are a distraction.

**Written Assignments:** All assignments must be in APA format (6th edition). Assignments should be typed, double-spaced with 12 point font and 1” margins. Times New Roman font is suggested. Avoid colloquial expressions, proof-read all documents and employ correct grammar and standard English. **Assignments should be electronically submitted to the instructor via Blackboard as an attached Microsoft Word or PowerPoint document, and are due any time before midnight on the day specified.**

**Incomplete Grade:** On rare occasions (e.g., documented illness or family emergencies), an “incomplete” may be granted as long as the student does not have to make up more than 30% of the required class work. If the student wishes to request an “incomplete,” he
or she must discuss this with the instructor. The condition for removal of the “incomplete” shall be determined by a written plan approved and signed by the student and instructor. It is expected the student will complete work within a one month time period. If the student still fails to complete the course within the extended time frame negotiated with the instructor the student will fail the class assignment.

VI. Course Topics and Outlines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading due (before class):</th>
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</table>
| 1/21 | 1    | • Introduction and Course Overview  
• Assessment of research knowledge  
• What makes a competent child welfare worker  
• Child and Family Services Review Process | Required: Collins-Camargo, Sullivan, & Murphy, 2011; Garfat, 2008; Milner, Mitchell, & Hornsby, 2001  
Recommended: Carnochan, Samples, Lawson, & Austin, 2013; CFSR Aggregate Report, 2011; Zander-Willis & Jenkings (pp. 24-37), 2011 |
| 1/28 | 2    | • Using administrative and survey data to study CW outcomes & limits | Required: Drake & Johnson-Reid, 1999; English, Brandford, & Coghlan, 2000; Fallon, Trocme, Fluke, MacLauein, Tonmyr, & Yuan, 2010; Hill, 2012; Vandivere & DeVooght, 2014  
Recommended: Garner & Poertner, 2000; Grogan-Kaylor, 2000 |
| 2/4  | 3    | • Theoretical perspectives in child welfare/theory and research  
  o Safety and well-being  
  o Review of research concepts  
  o Problem statement  
  o Measurement, reliability, and validity  
• Overview of well-being paper | Required: Ayon & Aisenberg, 2010; IOM (pp. 210-213), 2014; Pecora, et al. (pp. 63-87), 2009; Smith & Brun, 2006; Wells & Correia, 2012  
Recommended: Bwisa, 2008; FFTA Measures (pp. 10-15); Mennen & O’Keefe, 2005 |
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Reading Required</th>
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</table>
| 2/11  | 4   | 8-10 | **Computer Lab:** Class will meet in HH-212 lab  
  - Review of research concepts  
    - Communicating data results  
    - Interpreting findings  
    - Developing a good research question (P.I.C.O.)  
|       |     |      |          | **Required:** Aslam & Emmanuel, 2010; Biemer, Wheeless, & Smith, 2014 (pp. 3-6); NSCAW Research Group, 2002 |
| 2/18  | 5   | 8-10 | **Computer Lab:** Class will meet in HH-212 lab  
  - Introduction to NSCAW data  
|       |     |      |          | No required reading |
| 2/25  | 6   | 8-10 | **Computer Lab:** Class will meet in HH-212 lab  
  - No required reading |
| 3/3   | 7   | 8-10 | **No Class:** In lieu of class, students will attend the Student Research Symposium on March 4 or 5.  
  - WELL-BEING PAPER DUE!  
|       |     |      |          | No required reading |
| 3/10  | 8   | 8-10 | **Computer Lab:** Class will meet in HH-212 lab  
  - Discuss student symposium research  
  - Defining and measuring permanency  
  - Disparities & Disproportionality  
  - Introduction to CSW/CMS website  
  - Overview of permanency paper  
|       |     |      |          | **Required:** Drake, Jolley, Lanier, Fluke, Barth, & Johnson-Reid, 2011; Hill, 2006 (pp.1-25); IOM, 2014 (pp. 46-48; 213-216); Ogbonnaya, 2015; Wood & Summers, 2014  
  - **Recommended:** Font, Berger, & Slack 2012; Garland, Landsverk, & Lau, 2003; IOM (pp. 213-216), 2014; Johnson, Bogie, Scharenbroch, & Cotter 2010; Miller, Cahn, & Orellana, 2012; Needell, Brookhart, & Lee, 2003 |
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Required/Recommended</th>
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<tr>
<td>3/17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>No Class:</strong> In lieu of class, students will use class time to complete assigned readings and work on their Permanency assignment.</td>
<td><strong>Required:</strong> Needell, 2013; Putnam-Hornstein &amp; Needell, 2011</td>
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| 3/24  | 10   | • The California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (CEBC)  
• Evidence-based practice - what is it?  
• Locating information about evidence supported interventions  
• Assessing empirical evidence | **PERMENANCY PAPER DUE!**  
**Required:** CEBC handouts; Gibbs & Gambrill, 2002; Littell, 2008; Price et al., 2008  
**Recommended:** Mullen, Bledsoe, & Bellamy, 2008 |
| 3/31  | 11   | Spring Break- No Class | Enjoy your break! |
| 4/7   | 11   | • Using research/data to inform child welfare practice | **Required:** Aarons & Palinkas, 2007; Horwitz, et al. 2014 |
| 4/14  | 12   | • Logic models & Outcome measurement, program evaluation  
• Overview of Intervention Assignment | **Required:** Kellogg Foundation, 1998 (pp. 35-43); Kellogg Foundation, 2004 |
| 4/21  | 13   | **No Class:** In lieu of class, students will use class time work on their group assignment. | No required reading |
| 4/28  | 14   | • Special topic- Research proposals and reports  
• Special topic- Using Excel to analyze data  
• Review of course & integration with your practice | **Required:** Bwisa, 2008 |
| 5/5   | 15   | **GROUP PRESENTATIONS** | **INTERVENTION PPT PRESENTATION DUE!** |