

Roosevelt University  
Course Syllabus: Psychology 398-98  
Field Placement with Children and Families (Online Format)  
Spring 2023

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*Course Type:* Asynchronous online format

*Course Dates:* January 17, 2023 – May 8, 2023

*Zoom Office Hours:* Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 9:00 am – 11:00 am. Zoom meetings by appointment during office hours and at other times:  
<https://roosevelt.zoom.us/j/9886352255>

*Required Texts:* All students should buy the following two books:

Dunlap, M. R. (2000). *Reaching out to children and families: Students model effective community service*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. ISBN 0847691160. [Amazon link to buy:](#)  
<http://amzn.to/2CNpMTA>

Kozol, J. (2012). *Ordinary resurrections: Children in the years of hope*. New York: Broadway Books. ISBN 9780770435677. [Amazon link to buy:](#)  
<http://amzn.to/2qCXvdB>

In addition, you will read either one of the following texts. Buy the one most appropriate based on the age of the children at your site:

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. (2000). *Your child: Emotional, behavioral, and cognitive development from birth through preadolescence*. New York: HarperCollins. ISBN 9780062737304. [For sites with children ages 0 – 11 years old] [Amazon link to buy used copies:](#) <http://amzn.to/2qB7ZtP>

- or -

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. (1999). *Your adolescent: Emotional, behavioral, and cognitive development from early adolescence through the teen years*. New York: HarperCollins. ISBN 9780060956769. [For sites with children ages 12 – 18 years old, including all students at the Friendship Circle placement] Amazon link to buy used copies: <http://amzn.to/2CQdZnm>

*Course Prerequisites:*

Advanced enrollment is needed in this class to ensure sufficient time to obtain a field placement. In addition, you must have a signed and approved site contract form that is sent to me by January 13 to remain enrolled in the class. Nine semester hours in psychology and instructor consent are required.

Other prerequisites include enrollment in the Concentration in Child and Family Studies or a waiver to enroll in the class from the instructor.

*Course Description:*

Field Placement with Children and Families is a three-credit course in which you participate in structured community service work for a total of 72 hours during the semester. Service activity must occur in an approved and organized setting, such as in an elementary school classroom, a child care facility, an after-school or YMCA program, or a pediatric hospital unit. In addition, you will complete readings and written assignments during the semester that connect the course material with your experiences at the site through the online component of the class each week.

*Course Goals:*

At the end of this course, you should display a greater ability to:

- Interact with children in empathic, developmentally appropriate, and ethical ways.
- Apply theoretical and research knowledge in your observations of and interactions with children at your site.
- Recognize the ways in which your own experiences and personality influence how you interact with children.
- Identify the ways in which broader factors (such as race, socioeconomic status, access to resources) and social policies shape the lives of children.

- Produce change, at the individual or community level, that can improve the lives of children.

*University and Program Learning Objectives:*

These connect with the university's overall learning goals for students, which are (a) effective communication, (b) knowledge of discipline-focused content, and (c) an awareness of social justice and engagement in civic life. This course also addresses three of the four overarching goals (see below) developed by Roosevelt University's Department of Psychology for undergraduate students enrolled in our courses.

Goal 1: Knowledge Base of Psychology. Students will demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.

Goal 2: Research Methods in Psychology. Students will understand and apply basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretation.

Goal 3: Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology. Students will respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and, when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes.

Goal 4: Application of Psychology. Students will understand and apply psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues with concern for social justice.

In particular, you will learn core concepts within developmental psychology (Goal 1), develop critical thinking skills to closely examine claims about youth (Goal 3), and apply skills and techniques derived from psychology in your interactions with children at your field placement (Goal 4).

Finally, this course is designed to reflect Roosevelt University's historic commitment to social justice and its unique mission: "to educate socially conscious citizens for active and dedicated lives as leaders in their professions and their communities." Roosevelt University prides itself on promoting greater equality in society, consistent with its creation in 1945 by faculty who all resigned from the YMCA College in Chicago to protest its use of quotas and discrimination in student admissions. Consistent with the University's framework of values, you will learn about the challenges of disenfranchised children from personal and social perspectives in this class, and you will be encouraged to help remedy these inequalities through community engagement.

*Course Contact Expectations:*

It is expected that students access the Blackboard site several times during the week. Mondays will feature weekly announcements, and there will be discussion board activities for students to

complete on Wednesdays through Sundays. I recommend checking your Roosevelt University email daily for all online classes.

*Course Assignments:*

1. Volunteer 72 hours in the context of an approved site placement

The Field Placement involves a requirement of at least 72 hours of direct interaction with children. These 72 hours must begin by the first week of PSYC 398, be evenly distributed across the entire semester, and should end by the last week of classes. Placements are not pre-arranged and it is the student's responsibility to find a site; however, the university can provide resources and assistance in guiding the search process. Due to the pandemic, we will be allowing students to complete all of their site work on a remote/virtual basis during the Spring 2022 semester.

Days and times for site work are arranged in consultation with your site supervisor and are finalized in your contract with site personnel. Absences and changes to your schedule must be negotiated with and approved by your site supervisor. Keep in mind that the site's schedule and needs may not overlap with University breaks. Discuss these matters beforehand.

The Field Placement must involve interacting with children (birth – age 18 years) so that you can learn about their psychological, emotional, social, or cognitive development. Placements that allow you to get to know a smaller number of children in greater depth are better than those that those with rotating populations. Consistent with Roosevelt University's commitment to social justice, we encourage you to select sites that allow you to work with children and families who experience some form of challenge or adversity.

The Field Placement can only be completed in organized settings, such as a school, social service agency, or hospital. Informal arrangements (such as babysitting) are not permitted. In addition, your work must be supervised by an appropriate staff member, who needs to have at minimum a bachelor's level college degree. The supervisor must be available to provide training, answer questions, and provide you with appropriate feedback. Supervisors must be sufficiently knowledgeable about your performance so that they can complete the required evaluation forms.

Certain tasks at the site do *not* count towards your contact hours, such as transportation, clerical tasks, administrative work, and any training that the site requires. In addition, you cannot "double-count" hours that you work at the site with any other college-related, credit bearing experience or paid employment.

*Your 72 hours at the site only begin to count after you obtain my signature on the Site Approval and Contract Form that you received prior to the beginning of this semester.*

Your supervisor will complete a mid-semester and a final evaluation of your work at the site; these are due immediately after Week 7 and Week 14, as specified on the course calendar at the end of the syllabus. Your timesheets are due with these evaluation forms. You will be responsible for providing your supervisor with the forms (which are available on the Blackboard site) and verifying that they have been sent to me. In addition, you will complete a form that relates your own perceptions of the site at the end of the semester. Keep extra copies of all completed evaluation forms, especially if you plan to ask me for a letter of recommendation after this semester.

On these forms, your supervisor will be asked to assign you a grade on a 100-point percentage scale for ease. We will then multiply the grade they assign by .13 for weighting purposes. You can receive a maximum of 13 points on your midterm evaluation and 13 points on your final evaluation. Thus, your supervisor's mid-term and final evaluations of your work will collectively account for 26% of your final grade in the course.

*You must fulfill your 72-hour commitment to your site to receive credit for PSYC 398. Students whose evaluations from the site are not satisfactory or who have excessive absences from their site (even those that occur on a remote basis) will not be able to receive a passing grade for this course.*

## 2. Complete the assigned text readings each week

Readings from your textbooks are the primary source of information in this course. We recommend purchasing them through Amazon, as one is now out of print and the bookstore was unable to acquire copies. All students will read Michelle Dunlap's *Reaching Out to Children and Families*. This book provides helpful guidance for interacting with children at your service-learning placement. The advice she provides is based on insights gained from her supervision of hundreds of students' community-based work.

Everyone will also read Jonathan Kozol's book, *Ordinary Resurrections*. It describes his interactions with children in schools located in the South Bronx in New York City. We will use this text to understand the lives of children who encounter environmental adversity.

Based on the age of the children at your site, you will purchase and read either *Your Child: Emotional, Behavioral, and Cognitive Development from Birth through Preadolescence* (for those working with children 0 – 11 years old) or *Your Adolescent: Emotional, Behavioral, and Cognitive Development from Early Adolescence through the Teen Years* (for those working with children 12 -18 years old, which will be the one for all students who are placed at Friendship Circle to buy based on the age of their population). Both are published by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and cover the same topics. The only difference is that the information presented addresses different age ranges.

Complete all assigned readings for each week by Wednesdays so that you can use this information for your postings in the online discussions, as described below.

3. Read the Commentary that we post each week

We will write and post a Commentary on the topic that you are reading about each week. We will highlight a particular issue in greater detail or will integrate important course themes. Sometimes we will provide case illustrations or will connect the topic to a controversial debate in the field.

4. Take “virtual field trips”

We will post external links related to the topic of study for each unit. These “field trip” links will connect to websites that address pertinent themes. These resources are an important complement to the material that you will read about in your textbooks.

5. Participate in online discussion groups with other members of class each week

Your participation is essential if we are to learn from each other. It isn't simply a matter of choosing to participate; this is a collective effort that requires conversation and reflection. All students are expected to contribute actively to the online discussions within groups and strive to maintain effective working relationships with others.

We will post discussion questions each Wednesday morning that build on your field experiences and the material covered in the required readings. You will develop your own response to these questions to post on the asynchronous discussion board before Friday at 9:00 pm. You will then respond to others' posts in detailed and thoughtful ways via additional posts by Sunday at 9:00 pm. This creates a dialog in our class rather than merely submitting your own written work to us.

Do not wait until the last several hours before posting your contributions. This would result in holding up the entire discussion process for your group! Extra time will not be given for any reason, including computer problems. Be sure to have a back-up plan if your own computer does not work.

Your 14 discussion postings will be evaluated each week of the semester. Thirteen of these will be graded on a 3-point scale, using the criteria listed below. If you do not write a discussion posting within the week's time frames, you will not receive credit. Submissions posted after the due dates are also not eligible for credit. These exercises will be each scored on a 3 point scale, graded as *excellent* (3 points), *very good* (2.75 points), *good* (2.5 points), *adequate* (2 points), or *not submitted* (0 points).

- (a) Postings must be substantive. You should write no less than 500 words each week for a passing grade. Students who receive higher grades on these assignments will post more often during each window. Their postings will be longer and much more detailed than the 500 word minimum length, too;

- (b) Postings must reflect your knowledge of the reading material (from both the current week as well as previous weeks' readings, as appropriate). Your postings can be informed by information that you have gathered from the virtual field trips as well;
- (c) Your follow-up postings must build on those written by other class members. That is, these threaded discussions reflect a dialog between you and your classmates rather than a series of independent and disconnected essays on the same topic. You need to read your peers' postings during the week (the Blackboard system monitors how many discussion postings you actually access).
- (d) Postings should also display your critical thinking and careful analysis of the issue at hand. They should not stray far from the topics that we pose.
- (e) We will grade postings that have been completed earlier more favorably than those that are posted immediately before the end of the allocated times (i.e., within the Wednesday-Friday window and then the Friday-Sunday window). This incentive should encourage you to complete this assignment earlier so that a dialog can develop.

We will have a different discussion assignment during Week 9 of the class that will be graded on a 5-point scale instead because of its larger scope. Instead of a typical discussion, students will be completing a social justice project and will be sharing their work with classmates. More specifically, you will engage in advocacy on behalf of children or families that involves researching relevant state legislation using Internet resources, developing an informed position on the matter, and then disseminating your position in writing and by telephone to your elected officials. We will review this assignment in greater depth in a few weeks so that you will have sufficient time to complete your social justice project. This assignment counts for almost twice as much as a typical weekly discussion posting.

These 14 discussion postings (including the social justice project) collectively account for 44% of your final course grade.

#### 6. Maintain a journal about your field work

After each visit to your site, you should type a journal entry. The **minimum** length for each week's journal entry is 750 words (three pages). If your hours (and consequently your journal entries) are shorter due to an exceptional circumstance one week, both must be proportionally longer the following week.

Lengthier journal entries, however, receive higher grades. Journals must be composed using Microsoft Word (double-spaced, with 1-inch margins on all sides) and will contain the following parts. Be sure to organize your journals into well-written paragraphs and proofread before you hand them in to us.

**Write and use these as headings in each journal entry:**

- (a) The date(s) and the start and stop time(s) of your volunteer work for the week;
- (b) A summary of your activities and interactions at the site.  
Focus on describing the social, emotional, and cognitive functioning of children;
- (c) Concrete connections between your volunteer work and the readings.  
Note that these connections must be detailed and specific. They may relate to any part of the readings rather than only to the weekly topic. Select specific topics from the course and explain how they helped you understand children at your site. Conversely, choose some experiences at your site and explain how these interactions clarified reading material; *and*
- (d) A commentary on what you learned, found interesting, and your emotional reactions.

Even though you are writing your journal entries on a weekly basis, you will send us your journals in three sets. The first set of journals will be due on February 19. In addition to the weekly entries that address the points above, this first submission will also include a two-page preface that provides an overview of your site and a description of your responsibilities. The second set of journals will be due on April 2. The last set of journals will be due by May 5 during Finals Week.

You need to submit these journals through Blackboard. Follow these steps: (a) click on the “Submit Work” button located on the main menu to locate the correct assignment link; (b) click on the underlined title of the assignment (e.g., Journal 1); (c) click the “Browse My Computer” button to navigate your desktop or flash drive to retrieve your file; and (d) click “Submit” to send the file. You can also see these instructions in more detail in the Blackboard tutorials at <https://www.roosevelt.edu/current-students/support-services/technology/blackboard-tutorials>. Double check that your attachment was submitted in this area afterwards and verify that you attached the correct document. This verification step is important to do.

Journals will be graded on a 10-point scale; late submissions will be penalized 0.25 points per day late. The penalty period includes weekends and holidays. Journals that are not received within two weeks of the due date (or a shorter period for the last set when we need to submit grades) will earn a score of 0. The journals collectively account for 30% of your grade in this course.

***Assignment Feedback Dates:***

Weekly discussion postings will be graded by Tuesdays each week (i.e., 48 hours after the discussion board closes). Journals will be graded within 7 days after the submission due date.



### *Grading:*

Your assignment grades will be posted under “My Grades” at Blackboard, which will allow you track your course progress and performance. Discussion board postings will be graded within three days after the end of each week. We will write a weekly reply to your group’s postings and grades will be posted within Blackboard. Please feel free to contact us for additional feedback about your individual postings. Journals will be graded generally within one week of the due date. Feedback will be provided in more detail using a rubric for the submission.

Scores from each component of the class (midterm supervisor evaluation, final supervisor evaluation, journals, weekly online postings) will be added together for a maximum of 100 points, before extra credit is added. “A point is a point” regardless of the assignment in this grading system. For instance, receiving an additional point on a journal would completely offset the effect of not receiving a point on a weekly discussion posting. You can monitor how your overall grade changes throughout the semester by looking at the total on the Blackboard site.

Numerical grades will be converted to final letter grades according to the following scale. Please note that there will be absolutely no “rounding” of final scores. For example, a final score of 89.99 will translate into a B+ for the course.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Total Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Total Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Total Points</u>
A	93.00 – 100	A-	90.00 – 92.99	B+	87.00 – 89.99
B	83.00 – 86.99	B-	80.00 – 82.99	C+	77.00 – 79.99
C	73.00 – 76.99	C-	70.00 – 72.99	D+	67.00 – 69.99
D	63.00 – 66.99	D-	60.00 – 62.99	F	59.99 and below

### *I (Incomplete) Policy:*

A grade of incomplete may be given only with the consent of the instructor and appropriate notification to the Office of the Registrar and the instructor’s dean or department chair. A student should only receive an Incomplete grade if:

- The student initiates the request for an incomplete grade before the end of the academic term; *and*
- The student is in good standing the course and has completed a majority of the coursework (usually at least 75% of the coursework, if not more); *and*
- A medical condition or other serious, non-academic extenuating circumstance (as documented with the Office of the Dean of Students) prevents them from completing a small portion of the coursework required to complete the course prior to the end of the term; *and*
- The required work may be reasonably completed in an agreed-upon timeframe with the faculty member (no later than the end of the next semester, excluding summer); *and*
- The required work does not require the student to retake any portion of the course.

### *Withdrawals:*

You may withdraw from PSYC 398 if you feel that you will be unable to complete the requirements for the course within the expected timeframe. You will need to consult with me and your site supervisor to ensure that the premature departure proceeds as best as possible.

The final date for an official withdrawal from this class (meaning a “W” would appear on your transcript) is March 24, 2023. You should consult your academic advisor if you are considering withdrawing from a course. If you receive financial aid, also check with your financial aid counselor to assure that aid isn’t affected by withdrawing from a class.

### *General Note:*

We are committed to the education of each student in this course. If there is a problem that is negatively affecting your course performance, *contact us immediately* so that we can develop an appropriate plan to help you succeed in this class. We urge you not to wait until the end of the semester or until after an assignment is due to speak with us. We encourage you to attend office hours or contact us by telephone, voice mail, or e-mail.

Finally, people characterized by a variety of backgrounds, ages, experiences, abilities, and other differences contribute to the community of learners in our class. Students enrolled in the university are expected to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the university’s function as an educational institution. Please familiarize yourself with the Student Code of Conduct, the Student Handbook and related procedures which is available through this link: [Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities Webpage](#)

If you have any questions about specific course policies or course content, please outreach us at any time. We are always happy to help.

Finally, we may change any aspect of the course, including assignments and due dates, to meet student needs and interests or in the event of unforeseen circumstances. All syllabus changes will be announced, communicated to students via RU email and Blackboard. Students are responsible for checking RU email and Blackboard for updates.

Please consult the separate Policies and Resources document for additional details about these important points.

## READING LIST AND CALENDAR

### ***Unit 1: The Life of Children and Adolescents***

#### ***Week 1: January 17 – January 22***

Topic: CHILD DEVELOPMENT I

Readings: *Reaching Out to Children and Families*, Chapter 2.

*Your Child*, Chapters 1 and 2; or  
*Your Adolescent*, Chapter 1.

#### ***Week 2: January 23 – January 29***

Topic: CHILD DEVELOPMENT II

Readings: *Reaching Out to Children and Families*, Chapter 3.

*Your Child*, Chapters 3 and 4; or  
*Your Adolescent*, Chapters 2 and 3.

### ***Unit 2: Day-to-Day Challenges of Children***

#### ***Week 3: January 30 – February 5***

Topic: CHALLENGES AT HOME

Readings: *Reaching Out to Children and Families*, Chapter 4.

*Your Child*, Chapters 5 and 6; or  
*Your Adolescent*, Chapters 4 and 5.

#### ***Week 4: February 6 – February 12***

Topic: CHALLENGES AT SCHOOL AND IN THE COMMUNITY

Readings: *Reaching Out to Children and Families*, Chapter 5.

*Your Child*, Chapters 7 and 8; or  
*Your Adolescent*, Chapters 6 and 7.

***Unit 3: Risk in Childhood, Resilience, and Social Justice***

***Week 5: February 13 – February 19***

Topic: RISK AND RESILIENCE

Readings: *Reaching Out to Children and Families*, Chapter 6.

*Ordinary Resurrections*, Introduction and Chapters 1 to 5.

Note: *Submit the first set of journals by Sunday, February 19 at 9 pm. Remember to include the two-page introductory preface.*

***Week 6: February 20 – February 26***

Topic: SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND NEIGHBORHOOD OPPORTUNITY

Readings: *Ordinary Resurrections*, Chapters 6 to 11.

***Week 7: February 27 – March 5***

Topic: RACE AND ETHNICITY

Readings: *Reaching Out to Children and Families*, Chapter 8.

*Ordinary Resurrections*, Chapters 12 to 15.

Note: *Your mid-term evaluation from your site supervisor is due by March 5*

***Spring Break: March 6 – March 12***

***Week 8: March 13 – March 19***

Topic: GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, AND IDENTITY

Readings: *Reaching Out to Children and Families*, Chapter 7.

*Ordinary Resurrections*, Chapters 16 to 20.

**Week 9: March 20 – March 26**

Topic: SOCIAL JUSTICE AND CHILDREN'S WELL BEING

Readings: *Ordinary Resurrections*, Chapters 21 to 23, and Epilogue.

Note: *Social justice project due instead of our regular weekly discussion posting.*

**Unit 4: Abnormal Development and Psychotherapy with Children**

**Week 10: March 27 – April 2**

Topic: OVERVIEW OF ABNORMAL CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND THERAPY

Readings: *Children's Mental Health*. Read online at:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/data.html>

*Evidence-based Therapies*. Click on several of the links that appear underneath the introductory paragraphs online at:  
<https://effectivechildtherapy.org/therapies/>

Note: *Submit the second set of journals by Sunday, April 2 at 9 pm.*

**Week 11: April 3 – April 9**

Topic: PHYSICAL, DEVELOPMENTAL, AND EATING DISORDERS

Readings: *Reaching Out to Children and Families*, Chapter 9.

*Your Child*, Chapters 9 and 12; or  
*Your Adolescent*, Chapters 8, 11, and 12.

**Week 12: April 10 – April 16**

Topic: EMOTIONAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

Readings: *Reaching Out to Children and Families*, Chapter 10.

*Your Child*, Chapters 10 and 11; or  
*Your Adolescent*, Chapters 9, 10, and 14.

**Week 13: April 17 – April 23**

Topic: ETHICS IN CLINICAL WORK WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Readings: *American Psychological Association, Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct.*  
Read online at <https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index>

**Week 14: April 24 – April 30**

Topic: PSYCHOLOGICAL TREATMENT

Readings: *Reaching Out to Children and Families*, Chapter 11.

*Your Child*, Chapters 15, 16, and pp. 425-428; or  
*Your Adolescent*, Chapters 16, 17, and pp. 339-342.

**Finals Week: May 1 – May 7**

Readings: No readings; no discussion posts this week.

Notes: *Submit the last set of journals by Friday, May 5 at 9 pm.*

*Your final evaluation from your site supervisor and your evaluation of the site placement are due by Friday, May 5 as well.*