Current Issues in Pregnancy and Birth

Fall 2013

UNST 421-577

CRN 14161

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Course Description: This winter we will begin a partnership with Insights Teen Parent Program. In addition to exploring pregnancy, birth and parenting from the unique perspective of teen parents, we will be assisting Insights with their Future of Fathers Project. In our work, we will address such questions as:

* How do we identify and engage teen fathers, and fathers of children born to teen mothers, in parent programs?
* What does fatherhood involvement look like for different families during adolescence and beyond?
* How do school programs encourage and support parental involvement by fathers?

University Studies Goals  
UNST goals fall into four categories: social and ethical responsibility, inquiry/critical thinking, communication and the variety of human experiences (diversity).  Application of these goals to this course are detailed below.  
  
Course Goals\*: By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Explain the unique physiological, economic, and social aspects of pregnancy during adolescence. *(critical thinking, social and ethical responsibility)*
2. Discuss ways in which teen pregnancy and parenting is or is not supported by medical practices, school polices and facilities, community support and cultural norms. *(critical thinking, diversity, social and ethical responsibility)*
3. Identify pregnancy and parenting resources available to teen parents in the Portland area and be able to discuss how they differ in who and how they are able to serve. *(diversity)*
4. Explore perspectives on teen parenting within your personal community and reflect on factors that influence these viewpoints. *(critical thinking, social and ethical responsibility)*
5. Utilize research methods to help the community partner answer questions concerning the involvement and needs of teen fathers and fathers of children born to teen mothers. *(communication, critical thinking)*
6. Develop communication skills and facilitate information sharing between the community partner and the public regarding resources for teen parents *(communication)*
7. Analyze the efforts to both prevent unintended pregnancy and support young parents as outlined in *Healthy People 2020. (critical thinking, social and ethical responsibility)*
8. Organize and communicate project results to the community partner. *(communication)*

\*(UNST goals are designated in *italics*)

Course Activities

* Tour the Insights Teen Parenting Program headquarters to become familiar with the program and resources they use to support teen parents,
* Meet with men in the community actively working to support young fathers to learn about available resources and barriers these programs face
* Talk with individuals that became parents or gave birth during adolescence to identify common achievements and challenges and options for young parents
* Facilitate communication with community groups, schools and families to invite fathers to participate in a teen father focus group
* Develop ways to encourage father participation in focus groups (incentives, outreach, etc)
* Utilize qualitative and quantitative research methods in question development and assessment of qualitative feedback from focus groups for Insights Teen Parenting Program
* Participate in all classroom discussions and experiential activities pertaining to the course
* Write weekly reflection papers, read assigned articles
* Work in small groups to complete the course final project

Community Partner  
The community partner for this course is Insights Teen Parenting Program.

*“Because we know teen parents can be great parents”*

Since 1979, the mission of Insights has been to “provide positive options for young families while empowering young parents to take positive control over their lives”. Insights is a program of Janus youth and provides education and support services in many areas including: parenting support and education, domestic violence education, housing assistance and case management, home visits utilizing the Parents as Teachers curriculum through the Healthy Start and Supporting Early Emerging Development Skills (SEEDS) programs and child welfare and foster care case management.

**Our Contacts:**

Tiffany Tucker Insights Program Director ttucker@insightstpp.org

Reflective writing   
The purpose of the reflection papers is 1) to explore the connections between the course content, readings and work with your own life experiences and 2) to connect your experiences in the class with the University Studies goals.  Each assignment should be thoughtful and thorough, **approximately one to two pages in length (typed and single spaced).  Hard copies please.**  
There will be a total of 8 reflection pieces.  Writing assignments will be given in class each Monday and will additionally be posted on Desire to Learn--each reflective writing piece will be due at the start of class the following Monday.  **Late papers will lose 20% credit unless prior arrangements have been made.**  I will do my best to have them graded and returned within one week.  **No late papers will be accepted for credit after the assignment has been handed back.**  
Reflection papers are worth 12.5pts each.  The rubric is detailed on D2L but generally is as follows:  
Reflection paper responds completely to the writing prompt         4pts  
Paper well organized, correct spelling and grammar utilized             3pts  
Paper demonstrates critical thinking and consideration of the topic    3pts  
Paper integrates other ideas and components from the course,    
 other courses you are taking or from your own life experiences        2.5pts  
  
  
Readings

Reading assignments will be discussed every week in class. For **each** assignment, please provide a short (1-2 paragraphs) write up of your impressions of the article or reading selection **due at the beginning** of class. This allows me to know your personal thoughts on the subject even if they are not expressed during our discussion. Each write-up is worth 10pts. **Please submit on D2L.**

Final Project  
Details of the final project will be presented by the community partner, but in general will involve working with Insights to conduct a parallel focus group for teen dads not necessarily associated with Insights. This focus group will enable the asking of general questions about the teen father experience that may have been removed from the Insights list of focus group questions. The project will require communication with schools, community groups and families to invite and encourage father participation. Additionally, once the focus groups have been conducted, students will assist with assessment of the qualitative data gathered, comparison of data gathered from each group and communication of results and recommendations to the community partner. Dependent on our findings, the final project may also involve using our results to produce materials to be used in outreach or training for future parenting programs.

You will be working in small groups for the final project.   Most of the work will occur in the classroom during scheduled class hours.  However, there may be occasional needs for groups to work outside of class during day time hours (to meet with community groups for example).  In that case, a work day will be assigned to allow for maximum scheduling flexibility.  Additionally, you will need to communicate with the community partner, instructor and group members through phone, e-mail and in-person contact throughout the term to ensure success of the final project.  

This is a 6 credit capstone course, which assumes there will be approximately 12 hours of out-of-class work during the course of the class.

Grading Scale  
Attendance/participation in class activities   40%  
10 Readings and write-ups    20%  
8 Reflection papers            20%  
Final project                  20%  
  
There is no final exam for this course.  Peer and self-review will be taken into account when calculating your final grade for the term.

Class etiquette  
Attendance is a key part of this course and is essential to your success and that of your group.  **One absence may be excused.**   Due to the nature of the course, beginning class on-time is essential to our work. Arriving late(after the first 10 minutes) will result in a respective percentage of attendance/participation points deducted for the day unless otherwise arranged with the instructor**.**

Please keep all electronics on silent or vibrate. Computers should be used for class related work only. I recognize that situations occasionally need to be responded to immediately--if you need to respond to a text or phone call, please leave the classroom to do so. Thank you!

Course Reading Materials  
*Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approach.  John W. Creswell. Sage Publications. 2008.* Additional copies are available through the UNST library and on the shelves in the library.

All additional reading will be posted on-line through D2L.

On-line Resources  
The course syllabus, reflective writing prompts, articles for the class and other resources will be made available on-line via Desire to Learn.  To access D2L, you must have a PSU ODIN  account.  Your D2L ID name will be the same as your ODIN user name and your password is the last 4 digits of your PSU Student ID number (or your ODIN password).  Log into the course by going to http://www.psuonline.pdx.edu.

Students with Disabilities  
Please see me if you have a disability that may require some modification to the course.  I will work with you and the Disability Resource Center to arrange needed support.    
  
Plagiarism  
Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in no-credit for the assignment.  If you are using quotes or referencing the work of others, please be sure to appropriately cite your sources.  Please see me if you are unfamiliar with how to cite a source.

Weekly Calendar (please note: subject to change)

Week 1

Monday 30th: introduction to course and community partnership

Wed. Oct. 2nd: Who are teen parents? Examining trends in the US and abroad, Physiological differences, birth outcomes

**Due: Reading #1 Approaching the adolescent-headed family: a review of teen parenting**

Week 2

Mon. 7th: Exploring the dilemma: preventing unintended pregnancy and supporting teen parents

**Due: Reflection #1 Service Learning**

**Due: Reading #2 What’s the problem with teen pregnancy? What’s the problem with policy?**

Wed. 9th: meet with Insights Teen Parent Program at their location: 711 SE Ankeny 10:45

Week 3

Mon. 14th: panel of guests that were pregnant/parents when they were adolescents—please arrive a couple of minutes early!

**Due: Reflection #2: Tour of Insights**

Wed. 16th: establish project groups, begin group work

**Due: Reading #3 Social Support during adolescent pregnancy: piecing together a quilt**

Week 4

Mon. 21st: meet with Art from Insights

**Due: Reflection #3 Panel Reflection**

Wed. 23rd: project work time

**Due: Reading #5 Research Review: Teenage pregnancy and parenthood: the role of fathers**

Week 5

Monday 28th: Relationship between domestic violence and pregnancy/teen pregnancy

**Due**: **Reading #4 Rapid repeat pregnancy and experiences of interpersonal violence among low-income adolescents**

**Due: Reflection #4 Developing questions and research tools**

Wed. 30th: meet with Shanne Sowards from Squires/ project work time

**Due: Reading #6 Adolescent parenthood through educators’ eyes**

Week 6 \*\* possible tour of PACE program North Clackamas SD 14211 SE Johnson Road  
Milwaukie OR 97267 on either Monday or Wednesday

Mon. Nov. 4th: portrayal of teen pregnancy and parenting in the media

**Due: Reflection #5 Teen pregnancy in the media**

**Due:** **Reading #7 Absent fathers as providers: Race/Ethnic differences in support for adolescent mothers**

Wed. 6th: open work day—focus group this week?

Week 7

Mon. 11th: No Class Veteran’s Day

Wed. 13th: Individual student check-ins/project work time/reflection #6 in class

**Due: Reading #8 Roles of living arrangements and grandmother social support in adolescent mothering and infant attachment**

Week 8

Mon. 18th: project work time

**Due: Reflection #6 group work organization**

**Due: Reading #9 Breastfeeding Intentions Among Pregnant Adolescents and Young Adults and Their Partners**

Wed. 20th: presentation of work to the class

Week 9

Mon. 25th: project work time

**Due: Reflection #7 Postpartum support for young families**

Wed. 27th: Project/presentation work time

**Due Reading #10 Perceptions of teen pregnancy among high school students in Sweet Home, OR**

Week 10

Mon. Dec. 2nd: Project/presentation work time/final edits

Wed. 4th: Project/presentation work time/final edits

Final Presentation: **Wed. Dec. 11th 10:15-12:05 Location TBA**

**Due: Final Reflection**