



Course Syllabus

Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Strength-Based Intervention and Prevention

Psychology or Special Education 359/559
Undergraduate or Graduate, **1 or 3 hrs of credit**

Instructor of Record: Dr. Steve Van Bockern

Note: This seminar extends over a four day period and incorporates large group and breakout sessions.

Course Description

Participants will understand a reclaiming philosophy that is grounded in positive, strength-based thinking and skills related to work with troubled and troubling youth. In this approach, intervention and prevention sees problem situations and perceived deficits in children as learning challenges and opportunities.

The reclaiming philosophy is embodied in the Circle of Courage® model. It is explained in the book Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future written by Drs. Larry Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg and Steve Van Bockern. The Circle of Courage® model suggests that belonging, mastery, independence and generosity are key needs of all children. Those needs are the bases of resiliency research. When those needs are met, children and youth generally do well. When adults move beyond the limits of traditional control psychologies to a psychology for building resiliency, those needs are more likely to be met. The course offers ideas and strategies to build relationships with children and their care givers, to foster responsibility instead of blind obedience, to help children master personal and academic competence and to find ways children can find value in their lives.

Participants will examine leading-edge prevention and intervention practices that show promise of enhancing positive outcomes in high-risk children and adolescents. Participants will examine current knowledge about a wide range of contemporary problems associated with at-risk youth and education, treatment and youth work. The course suggests protective factors such as individual traits and skills, cultural factors, and support from family, peers, school, and others in the social environment effect student outcomes.

Faculty

The Instructor of Record is Dr. Steve Van Bockern, professor of education at Augustana College. Other instructors are leaders in such fields as psychology, special education, education, counseling, social work, and youth development.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will examine both positive and problematic characteristics manifested by youth along with appropriate interventions to foster resilience and responsible behavior.
2. Participants will explore essential components of quality programs for challenging youth.
3. Participants will study a wide range of issues that children and families face.
4. Culture and how it can contribute to youth development will be explored.
5. Participants will gain new insight into youth problems by learning to listen to youth at risk who are involved in the process of change and who are consumers of "at-risk" services.

6. The course will examine concepts and skills and how those skills and concepts can be applied including the following:
 - a. Skills in counseling and discipline management based on building student responsibility
 - b. Developing skills at transforming negative youth cultures and creating positive learning environments.
 - c. Utilizing research on youth development as a method of fostering pro-social, altruistic behavior.
 - d. Employing "brain friendly" teaching alternatives and other effective learning environments.
 - e. Discovering ways of capitalizing on diversity.
 - f. Helping children and families develop risk-avoidance skills and positive social behavior.
 - g. Examining new paradigms and alternatives in education and treatment with a focus on the Circle of Courage® model.

Course Requirements

Participants who successfully complete the following requirements earn one (1) **or** three (3) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate workshop credit, graded with an A-F letter grade. Students may choose to be graded satisfactory or unsatisfactory but must request this in writing. The criteria for S/U grades are as follows: graduate students must earn a grade of B- or better to receive an S; undergraduate students must earn a C- or better to receive an S.

All requirements are to be submitted within 30 days of the last day of the course to your instructor. Your instructor will let you know if they prefer a hard copy or an electronic copy. **Requesting a grading extension:** If additional time is needed to complete the work, a one-time extension may be requested. Contact your instructor to get permission for an extension. Work will be due no later than the middle of the next semester (March 15, July 15 or October 15). If the work is not submitted by the due date, a grade of F is automatically given.

Undergraduate 1 semester hour

1. **Participation:** fully participate in all sessions
2. **Notes:** take notes on a contemporaneous base during the seminar.

Undergraduate 3 semester hours

1. **Participation:** fully participate in all sessions
2. **Notes:** take notes on a contemporaneous base during the seminar
3. **Exam:** read the book Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future by Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern. Complete a multiple choice check-out exam on key concepts and competencies. This check-out can be found at www.reclaiming.com.
4. **Research paper:** Write a 3-5 page library paper on some idea/content shared in the course.

Graduate 1 semester hour

1. **Participation:** fully participate in all sessions
2. **Notes:** take notes on a contemporaneous base during the seminar.
3. **Exam:** read the book Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future by Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern. Complete a multiple choice check-out exam on key concepts and competencies. This check-out can be found at www.reclaiming.com.

Graduate 3 semester hours

1. **Participation:** fully participate in all sessions
2. **Notes:** take notes on a contemporaneous base during the seminar.
3. **Exam:** read the book Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future by Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern. Complete a multiple choice check-out exam on key concepts and competencies. This check-out can be found at www.reclaiming.com.

4. **Literature review:** Write evaluative essays on five articles from the journal, *Reclaiming Children and Youth* or other scholarly publications on youth development. The summaries should be a minimum of two pages each.
5. **Research paper:** Write a library research paper, 5-8 pages in length, minimum of five resources on some topic shared during the course.

Registration

Registration happens at the time of the course. Students will complete a registration form indicating a desire for graduate or undergraduate credit; one or three hours of credit and whether the workshop will be taken for psychology or special education credit. Payment is due at the time of registration.

Cost

Payment is due at the time of registration. One of hour of credit, either graduate or undergraduate is \$150.00 (US dollars). Three hours of credit, graduate or undergraduate is \$300.00 (US dollars).

Cash is not accepted. Checks, money orders and credit cards are accepted (except American Express) payable to ***Reclaiming Youth International***.

Grading and Transcripts

After final grades are submitted, the students receive a grade report from Augustana. If the student wants an official transcript, it must be requested in writing by the student to Augustana College Office of the Registrar, 2001 S. Summit Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57197, or Fax to 605-274-4450.

For questions or concerns, please contact Reclaiming Youth International at bookstore@reclaiming.com or call 605-647-2532.