COURSE TITLE: Practice Seminar in Child Welfare & Maltreatment: Assessment and Treatment

DIVISION NUMBER: 778
COURSE NUMBER: 730     Sections 1&2    Winter, 2014
CREDIT HOURS: 3 credits
PREREQUISITES: None
LOCATION: B770 SSWB
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1. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is a methods course intended to develop skills for child welfare practice, with special attention to child maltreatment. Students learn about the various contexts in which child welfare practice takes place and the skills and modalities that are used with children, youth, and families who are the focus of child welfare intervention. This course will prepare students to work with diverse client populations and will help them appreciate the imbalance of power between client and professional. Understanding the needs and responses of involuntary clients is an integral part of the course. Relevant evidence-based practices are taught and child welfare policies and practices are subjected to critical review.

2. COURSE CONTENT:

This course will cover the following areas: 1) personal, professional, and societal responses to children at risk for maltreatment, 2) diversity in the child welfare population and skills for working with diverse client populations, 3) client issues and responses to child welfare intervention, including power differentials and involuntariness, 4) theories that explain child maltreatment and their social construction, 5) assessment strategies to be used with children and adults with child welfare issues, 6) interventions employed in the child welfare system and the evidence or lack thereof to support them, and 7) evidence-based treatment strategies used with traumatized children. This course will focus on practice issues, especially poverty, parenting, child behavioral problems, mental health, trauma and substance abuse.

Students will be sensitized to their personal reaction to child maltreatment. They will be apprised of professional expectations, such as mandatory reporting of child maltreatment, and will learn about the general structure of service delivery to child welfare clients, which constitutes the context within which they will provide services to clients.

Sensitization to the roles of power and privilege of professionals as they relate to both children and their parents is an integral part of the course. In addition, the course will address the sometimes conflicting needs of children and families and legal system impact on child welfare practice, as assessment and the various methods of treatment are taught.

The diversity of child welfare populations, in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, class, and sexual orientation will be covered. Of particular focus is the over-representation of children of color and the differential response of the child welfare system based upon class. Students will be made aware of
how differences between themselves and clients of child welfare services affect service delivery. These differences will include race, developmental status, economic status, education, gender, and physical well-being.

Client issues will include several concerns. First, students will become cognizant of different impacts and implications, depending upon who is defined as the client (e.g., the child, the parent(s), or the family). Second, students will learn to appreciate the impact of the involuntary nature of many social worker-client relationships in the child welfare system. How services are perceived by clients and how involuntariness affects choices in interventions will be examined.

The first semester of the 730 sequence focused on assessment. This course – give the focus on practice – also deals with some assessment. The knowledge students will acquire about assessment will include evaluating children, adults, and families who are involved in the child welfare system, with attention to what children and families bring to the child welfare system from their diverse perspectives. Students will learn how to evaluate overall functioning, conduct developmental assessments, and make a determination about the likelihood of child maltreatment and other endangering behaviors. This material will be presented as it related to treatment planning and monitoring treatment progress.

Students will learn about different approaches, such as cognitive behavioral, trauma focused, and multi-systemic theoretical frameworks and interventions. Social contextual factors that have led to a preference for these approaches will be addressed. Students will also learn about interventions, such as parenting instruction, parent aids, solution-focused therapy, intensive family preservation services, and wrap-around services as programmatic approaches with child welfare clients. Although the spectrum of intervention strategies used in the child welfare system is covered, attention is drawn to which ones are evidence-based.

Students will learn how to evaluate direct practice, for example, by using single subject design and standardized measures, such as the Child Behavior Checklist, the Child Sexual Behavior Inventory, the Trauma Symptom Checklist, and the Child Dissociation Scale. They will also become acquainted with outcome criteria employed in the child welfare system (e.g. re-abuse of a child, re-referral to child protective services, and permanency. Finally, they will be given tools to critically evaluate programs.

3. COMPETENCIES:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the roles and responsibilities of social workers practicing in child welfare, including mandatory reporting of child maltreatment, multidisciplinary approaches to child maltreatment, assessment, case management, and therapeutic roles, as well as statutory requirements related to case management within the child welfare system. (EP2.1.1)
2. Be knowledgeable about how differences between themselves and their clients can affect perceptions of clients. (EP 2.1.3)
3. Demonstrate beginning skills in engaging diverse clients that reflect knowledge about diversity and power differentials between themselves and clients. (EP2.1.4)
4. Recognize the consequences of the involuntary nature of the client’s relationship with them as service providers, of the impact of economic, racial, ethnic, gender, and other differences on their relationships with clients, and of the effect of their personal experiences on their practice in child welfare. (EP 2.1.9)
5. Demonstrate beginning ability to conduct individual and family assessments related to child welfare, including determining the likelihood of child maltreatment, evaluating parent child attachment, evaluating overall functioning of clients, setting appropriate treatment goals, and making case management plans. (EP 2.1.10a-d)

6. Incorporate a perspective that honors clients’ strengths as well as vulnerabilities to both assessments and treatment with child welfare clients. (EP 2.1.3)

7. Demonstrate beginning mastery of intervention and treatment skills. Students will know how to intervene at a range of levels, such as individual, family, environmental, and system. They will develop beginning mastery of appropriate treatment approaches, derived from different conceptual frameworks, for example cognitive behavioral, trauma focused, and multi systemic. In using these approaches, they will know how to take into account differences based on age, class, culture, ethnicity, race, religion, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, national origin, and gender. (EP 2.1.5 EP 2.1.6, EP 2.1.7, & EP 2.1.10a-d)

8. Demonstrate beginning ability to evaluate intervention and treatment and revise interventions based upon evaluations. They will also be able to critically evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of specific child welfare programs and interventions for particular client populations. (EP 2.1.2)

4. COURSE DESIGN:

This course will make use of lectures, demonstrations, discussion, media such as videotaped interviews with clients and individuals impacted by child welfare intervention, small group exercises, and role plays. This course will span two terms meeting three hours a week. Students will demonstrate their knowledge acquisition by means of class demonstration, written responses to assignments, participation in class discussion, in-class assignments, and videos about child welfare practice.

5. RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES:

- **Multiculturalism and Diversity** will be addressed by teaching students sensitivity, respect, and competence when working with clients where there are racial, cultural, ethnic, class, religious, gender, or nationality differences. Case examples will highlight how differences and being poor and involuntary affect clients’ responses to the child welfare system, the therapeutic relationship and the success of interventions.

- **Social Justice and Social Change** will be addressed by teaching students that children are at a fundamental disadvantage in systems that are controlled by adults. The role of power and privilege will be a theme throughout the course. The child welfare system is not necessarily designed to first address the needs of clients, but may be constructed to be convenient for professionals. In addition, the economically disadvantaged and racial minorities are differentially responded to by the child welfare system. Hence, students will learn that an appropriate role for social workers in the child welfare system is often that of advocate.

- **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation.** The full spectrum of interventions in child welfare will be taught in this course. The course will cover the role of prevention of child maltreatment, through early intervention and through treating the effects of child maltreatment so that they do not repeat themselves in the next generation. Similarly, students will learn that philosophically, if not in reality, child welfare intervention aims to promote child well-being and to prevent child maltreatment.

- **Behavioral and Social Science Research** that relates to child welfare will be at the center of the material taught in this course. Empirically based practice will be taught, which necessarily implies reliance on social science knowledge and research findings.
6. RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO SOCIAL WORK ETHICS AND VALUES:

Issues of values and ethics of a social work professional working in child welfare, using guidelines such as NASW Code of Ethics, will be an inherent part of this course. Students will learn that the child welfare field requires stalwart social workers who will put issues of the child’s best interest first, even though the stance may at times be unpopular. In addition ethics as they relate to mandated reporting, client confidentiality, and decisions about who the client is (child, parent, family) will be addressed.

SEMINAR BACKGROUND
Child Welfare and Child Maltreatment: Assessment and Treatment seminar is a two-semester seminar, Fall and Winter, intended to develop practice skills in child welfare, with special attention to child maltreatment. Students enroll for 3 credits per term.

This practice seminar prepares students to practice in the child welfare field by teaching them about the various contexts in which child welfare practice takes place and the skills and modalities that are used with children, youth, and families who are the focus of child welfare intervention. The course is focused on evidence-based practice skills for working in child welfare. Ethical issues for social workers, in particular the sometimes conflicting needs of children and families, the state, and the legal system impact on child welfare practice and are addressed, as the various methods are taught.

The first term provides an orientation to working in the field of child maltreatment and focuses on assessment and case management procedures. The second term addresses treatment techniques and case management issues. Case discussions and illustrative case examples are an integral part of the course. Opportunities to practice intervention skills are provided.

CTOOLS WEBSITE
The course has a CTools website. As a student enrolled in the course, you will automatically have access to the website of SW730 Winter 2014.
All of the required readings for Winter term are on this website.

PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY
One of the fundamental ethical values of social work is protecting client confidentiality. In this seminar, you will view some videos of real clients. Each client has signed a written release to allow his or her case materials to be used for educational purposes, and their names are always changed on the case materials. For some of the case examples, you will read written material before the class. Keep these materials confidential; do not share them with others who are not in the class; when the course is over, please destroy these case materials.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
If you need an accommodation for a disability, contact me as soon as possible. It is possible that aspects of the course can be modified to facilitate your learning process. There are resources available to help us to meet your needs including Students with Disabilities, the Adaptive Technology Computing Site, etc. If you disclose a disability to me I will treat that information as private and confidential.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In this seminar there are 5 requirements:

(a) Attendance (13%) (point per class)  
(b) Participation (13%) (point per class)  
(c) MLK event write up (4%)  
(d) First Exam (35%)  
(e) Second Exam (35%)

In this section, an “A+” = 100%; “A”= 95-99%; “A-”= 90-94%; “B+”= 85-89%; “B”=80-84%; “B-”= 75-79 pts.; “C+”= 70-74%; & “C”=Below 70%.

Required - Attend and participate (A&P) in each session.

A sign in sheet will be passed out each class. Please do not miss, come late or leave early without informing the instructor. If unanticipated circumstances arise that prevent you from attending or cause you to arrive late or leave early, you must notify me as soon as possible. Missing more than two class periods requires a meeting with the instructor. This is a practice skills course, which means attendance and participation is crucial to understanding the content of the course. In addition, some of the material considered essential to achieving the objectives of the seminar (e.g. first and second exam) will only be presented in class. Do the readings before class and be prepared to discuss them with the faculty and fellow students. Like all graduate courses, the quality of this class depends on active participation from students. We seek to create an environment where everyone feels comfortable sharing ideas and taking chances as we debate content and practice clinical skills.

(Specific details for each part will be discussed in class and described on c-tools) (EP 2.1.1, EP 2.1.2, EP 2.1.3, EP 2.1.4, EP 2.1.5, EP 2.1.6, EP 2.1.7, EP 2.1.9, & Ep 2.1.10a-d)

SEMESTER OUTLINE

Session 1 (1/13): Establishing a frame of reference: – A look at normative development  
Session 2 (1/20): MLK Jr. Observance, no class, but attend event and brief write up  
Session 3 (1/27): Microskills in Clinical Practice  
Session 4 (2/3): Culture and Child Maltreatment, Implications for Practice  
Session 5 (2/10): Motivational Interviewing  
Session 6 (2/17): Multi-Systemic Therapy  
Session 7 (2/24): FIRST EXAM, in class (covers sessions 1-6)  
Session 8 (3/3): Spring Break, no class  
Session 9 (3/10): Trauma and Trauma Focused CBT in Child Welfare  
Session 10 (3/17): Trauma and Trauma Focused CBT in Child Welfare  
Session 11 (3/24): Parent Child Interaction Therapy  
Session 12 (3/31): Reflective Practice and Supervision, Practice Evaluation  
Session 13 (4/7): Triple P (and other parenting interventions)  
Session 14 (4/14): Engaging Reluctant Clients and Closing Cases  
Session 15 (4/21): SECOND EXAM, in class (covers sessions 9-14)
INDIVIDUAL WEEKLY READINGS

Complete prior to class

Session 1 (1/13): Establishing a frame of reference: A look at normative development, trauma and context (specifically poverty)

Child Treads (2013) The Five ways Poverty Harms Children
http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs177/1101701160827/archive/1116180077449.html


Session 2 (1/20): MLK, Jr. Observance

There is no class this week. However, you are required to attend at least one event (held here on campus or some other city/campus). You are required to write up a brief reflection on this event. Two pages. Will review specifics in class.

Session 3 (1/27): Microskills in Clinical Practice


Session 4 (2/3): Culture and child maltreatment: Implications for intervening


Session 5 (2/10): Motivational Interviewing


Session 6 (2/17): Multi-Systemic Therapy


*May have one additional reading assigned by guest speaker

Session 7 (2/24): FIRST EXAM, in class (covers sessions 1-6)

Session 8 (3/3): Spring Break

Session 9 (3/10): Trauma and Trauma Focused CBT in Child Welfare


Session 10 (3/17): Trauma and Trauma Focused CBT in Child Welfare

Children’s Bureau (2012) Trauma focused CBT for Children Affected by Sexual Abuse or Trauma.

Session 11 (3/24): Parent Child Interaction Therapy

Session 12 (3/31): Reflective Practice and Supervision and Evaluating Practice


*Will have one additional reading assigned by guest speaker

Session 13 (4/7): Triple P (and other parenting interventions)


Session 14 (4/14): Engaging Reluctant Clients and Closing Cases


Rooney, R. (2009) Strategies for work in involuntary clients. Chapter 1

Session 15 (4/21): SECOND EXAM, in class (covers sessions 9-14)