



COURSE TITLE:	Practice Seminar in Child Welfare & Maltreatment: Assessment and Treatment
DIVISION NUMBER:	778
COURSE NUMBER:	730
CREDIT HOURS:	3—per semester; total 6 hours
PREREQUISITES:	None
LOCATION:	Elective Methods

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. The first term will focus on assessment and the second on treatment.

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 upon practice issues, especially poverty and parental problems in families in the United States, Canada, and Western Europe.

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 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. They will learn different models of assessment and the role of medical examinations and psychological testing in the evaluation process. They will also become acquainted with widely used assessment practices in child welfare, such as screening, risk assessment, and structured decision making. Existing evidence for their utility will

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, for example, re-abuse of a child, re-referral to child protective services, and permanency. Finally, they will be given tools to critically evaluate programs, such as wrap-around services and parenting instruction.

3. Competencies:

CURRENT COURSE OBJECTIVES LINKED TO CSWE EP 2.1 COMPETENCIES
AND ADVANCED PRACTICE BEHAVIORS:

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.

EP 2.1.1—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
EP 2.1.3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
EP 2.1.10(a)–(d)—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

2. Be knowledgeable about how differences between themselves and their clients can affect perceptions of clients.

EP 2.1.4—Engage diversity and difference in practice.
EP 2.1.7—Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

3. Demonstrate beginning skills in engaging diverse clients that reflect knowledge about diversity and power differentials between themselves and clients.

EP 2.1.4—Engage diversity and difference in practice.
EP 2.1.10(a)–(d)—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

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 2.1.1—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
EP 2.1.3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
EP 2.1.4—Engage diversity and difference in practice.
EP 2.1.7—Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

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 2.1.10(a)–(d)—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
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6. Incorporate a perspective that honors clients’ strengths as well as vulnerabilities to both assessments and treatment with child welfare clients.

EP 2.1.1—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
EP 2.1.2—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

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 2.1.1—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
EP 2.1.2—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
EP 2.1.3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
EP 2.1.4—Engage diversity and difference in practice.
EP 2.1.10(a)–(d)—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

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 2.1.6—Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
EP 2.1.10(a)–(d)—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

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, videotapes, and short papers about their 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.

SYLLABUS

SW 730, SECTIONS 001 & 002:
CHILD WELFARE AND CHILD MALTREATMENT: ASSESSMENT &
TREATMENT; FIRST TERM 2012

Instructors: Robert M. Ortega

Offices: 2796 SSWB

Telephone numbers: 763-6576

Email: rmortega@umich.edu

Office hours: Mon 9am-12pm; Tuesday 1pm-3pm; other times by appointment

Meeting time and place: Mon., 2:00-5:00; B780 SSWB

In general the design of this class will be lecture & small group exercises followed by discussion. The exception to this format will be the two sessions when students interview children. On this day, students will be in small groups for 3 hours. Guest lecturers are invited to structure their own sessions.

Child Welfare and Child Maltreatment: Assessment and Treatment is a methods course intended to develop practice skills in child welfare, with special attention to child maltreatment. The course 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. 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.

This practice seminar was developed as part of a specialized curriculum in child welfare. It is a requirement for students receiving Child Welfare Scholarships from the School of Social Work, students whose field placements are at the Family Assessment Clinic, and students pursuing a Child Welfare Certificate. The course addresses practice across levels of intervention.

The practice seminar is open to other students. The course is focused on evidence-based practice skills for working in child welfare.

This seminar will meet over two terms, Fall and Winter, for a total of six hours course credit. Students enroll for 3 credits per term.

The first term provides an orientation to working in the field of child maltreatment and focuses on child welfare practice, policy, and assessment. 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. Almost all of the required reading for Fall term is on this website. Students will be expected to read these materials prior to coming to class.

To spare students the cost of a Coursepak, the instructors will make available copies of materials not on the website. Students need both sets of required materials. Material for the course can also be found in Faller, K.C. (2003). *Understanding and assessing child sexual maltreatment*. Sage Publications and Faller, K.C. (2007). *Interviewing children about sexual abuse: Controversies and best practice*. Oxford University Press.

PowerPoint overheads for most Fall class sessions will be passed out at the beginning of each class.

GRADING

Written products will be graded for organization and writing quality as well as for substantive content. The grading criteria for the School of Social Work are roughly as follows:

- A+=extraordinary work that could not be improved upon.
- A=exceptional, excellent work.
- B+=very good; the expected grade for good students who work hard.
- B=good.
- B-=not so good; marginal for graduate school performance.
- C+=below the standards of graduate school performance.

Approximate percentages of your grade for Fall are as follows:

- Class attendance—15%
- Class participation, which should reflect knowledge of the reading—10%
- Countertransference exercise—0%
- Cultural responsiveness /child sensitivity exercise—10%
- Midterm assessment skills exam—20%
- Reflection paper—20%
- Case application; final project—25%

PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY

One of the fundamental ethical values of social work is protecting client confidentiality. In this class, 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.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

If you need an accommodation for a disability, contact us 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 us, we will treat that information as private and confidential.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Students must attend class. Students should make class attendance a priority. A sign in sheet will be passed out each class. **Please do not come late, leave early, rejoin the class late after break, or miss class without a valid excuse.** This is a practice skills course, which means attendance is crucial to understanding the content of the course. Three excused or unexcused absences will automatically result in a meeting with me. A pattern of lateness will automatically result in a reduction of your grade.
2. Do the reading before class and be prepared to discuss it. This will not be a great burden because the reading will be directly relevant to the class session. Except for a limited number of handouts, material is available on the CTools website. To access readings, click on Resources on the CTools website. Each session's reading assignments are in a separate folder, which is marked by session number.
3. Participate in class discussions and exercises. Remember part of your grade is dependent on class participation. These participations will include an interview simulation with a child.
4. During the first term, there will be short written assignments, a midterm exam which is primarily short answer, a reflection paper, and a case application final written assignment. For the case application, the case history and questions to be addressed will be posted on the website two weeks before the assignment is due. There will be videos that will be shown in class and will be made available for students to watch after class. Students are to work individually on all assignments. Students can re-write the reflection paper or the case application to improve their grade, if the grade received is a B or lower.

The reflection paper may be on: 1) the Statewide Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, 2) the Fauri Memorial Conference, or 3) attendance at a seminar or presentation focused on child welfare or child maltreatment issues. Information about relevant events will be posted on the CTools website in the Resources Folder under Reflection Paper Resources. Students who are unable to attend ANY event should see me. The reflection paper should address:

- 1) summary of presentation, 2) most significant aspects of what you learned (i.e., key lessons learned), 3) applications at the micro and macro levels of child welfare practice, and 4) how you will use lessons learned in your career as a social worker. This outline is consistent with artifacts for ePortfolios.
5. Students are encouraged to develop an ePortfolio, which can showcase their work not only in this course, but also during their pursuit of their MSW. An introduction to ePortfolios can be found at: <https://www.ssw.umich.edu/ofi/modules/Putting-Your-Portfolio-Together/>

Sept. 8

Session 1

Course requirements

Presentation on Accessing the CTools website

Counter-transference survey

Counter-transference issues

Coping with difficult course content

A child-centered approach

Video: Scared Silent narrated by Oprah Winfrey

Part 1

Group discussion

Scared Silent Part 2

Group discussion

Small group exercise on counter-transference

Students will break into small groups and discuss: 1) similarities and differences between the two offenders, 2) the prognosis for re-offending for each offender, 3) their different reactions to each offender, and 4) reason for their different reactions

Wrap-up—whole class—both sections

Reading: Faller, *Child sexual abuse: Intervention and treatment issues*, chapter 1—Orientation to working in the field of child sexual abuse (students not expected to have read this before the first session)-- on the CTools website.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT! For Sept. 19, turn in a paragraph describing what you think your counter-transference issues are related to working in the child welfare field. Consider the framework used in the class presentation. Describe any strategies you think you might need to cope with the content of this course (e.g., with child physical abuse, child neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, institutional abuse, and child welfare policy) This assignment will not be graded and will not be returned.

Sept. 15

Session 2-- The swing of the pendulum in child welfare: Family preservation versus child safety, permanency, wellbeing

Child maltreatment reporting statute—you are a mandated reporter

What is child maltreatment?

Video: Case example: TBD Safety or family preservation?

Small group discussion—questions in the case materials

Reading:

A coordinated response to child abuse and neglect, Chapter 2—What are the philosophical tenets of child protection?

linked on the CTools website
<http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/usermanuals/foundation/foundation.pdf>

Note: This reading assignment comes from one of the volumes in the CANUSER Series. These volumes can be downloaded in their entirety from the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect website. This is a very valuable and FREE source of information.

Case history / Background to the case

Faller, The Early Assessment Project: Lessons Learned From Implementing an Innovation—on the CTools website

Michigan Child Protection Law--Reporting requirements—on the website; linked to the Michigan Department of Human Services website;
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/DHS-PUB-0003_167609_7.pdf
Juvenile Court flowchart—on the CTools website

Sept. 22

Session 3--Cultural humility and child welfare

Cultural humility versus cultural competence
Multiple identities and intersectionality
How a cultural humility approach can help in child welfare

Case example: Sheree and her children
Small group discussion related to Sheree and cultural humility

Multiple identities and intersectionality

Pie exercise

Example James

Reading: Faller, Interviewing in Child Welfare Practice: Issues In Cultural Competency and Child Sensitivity—on the CTools website
Dunkerly & Dalenberg, Secret-Keeping Behaviors— on the CTools website.
Ortega, R.M. & Faller, K.C. Cultural Humility: An approach to working with diverse families in the child welfare system—on the CTools website

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT: There are 4 case examples at the end of the outline on *Interviewing In Child Welfare Practice: Issues in cultural competency and child sensitivity*. Select **two** of these cases and respond to the “Issues” queries and make an interview plan. Each response should be about a page in length.

Alternative assignment, having viewed the video of James,
1) Describe his multiple identities – include your vision of his PIE;
2) Which social identities does James indicate as the most salient?
3) How might James’ social identities impact upon him as a social worker?

The assignment is due Sept. 29.

**Sept. 29 Session 4--- Conflicting Federal policy and practice implications?
 ICWA, ASFA, and MEPA**

Race, ethnicity, and sovereignty
How do these issues play out in a State like Michigan?

Case example: TBD

Reading:

Faller, Models of assessment (child maltreatment)—on the CTools website

Case history

Vandervort, The Indian Child Welfare Act

http://www.ssw.umich.edu/public/currentProjects/tpcws/articles/legal_ICWA.pdf

Introduction to ICWA (Youtube):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJCqeauLvY8>

Mendez & Vandervort, The Multi-ethnic Placement Act

http://www.ssw.umich.edu/public/currentProjects/tpcws/articles/legal_MEPA.pdf

Faller, Guidelines for assessing parents and children regarding placement preferences

http://www.ssw.umich.edu/public/currentProjects/tpcws/articles/placement_preferences.pdf

Oct. 6 Session 5--Gathering data from children

Interview structure

Abuse focused questioning

Case example: TBD

Reading: Michigan Forensic Interview Protocol—linked to the CTools website

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/DHS-PUB-0779_211637_7.pdf

APSAC Investigative Interview Protocol—on the CTools website

Lyon, Speaking with children: Advice from investigative interviewers—on the CTools website

Oct. 13 Session 6—Fall study break; no class

Oct. 20 Session 7—Media for interviewing children

Free drawings
Anatomical dolls
Shared paper interview method
Anatomical drawings
Gingerbread drawings

Case example: TBD

Reading

Faller, Media in interviewing children—from Faller, *Interviewing children about sexual abuse: Controversies and best practice*, Oxford University Press—on the CTools website

First Child Interview exercise

Mary Ortega, L.M.S.W., A.C.S.W. to assist

Interview exercise--select students interview real children

Reading: Orbach, Y., Hershkowitz, I., Lamb, M., Sternberg,, K., Esplin, P., & Horowitz, D. (2000) Assessing the value of structured protocols for forensic interviews of alleged child abuse victims. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 24(6), 733-752—linked to the CTools website

Short midterm exam; handed out in class; due Nov. 4

Michigan Statewide Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect is Oct. 27 & 28 at St. John's Conference Center, Plymouth, MI.

There is a fee this year (unlike previous years). Please contact Martha Kerr (763 0215) or [mailto:markerr@med.umich.edu], Coordinator of the UM Child Protection Team if you have any questions. You can also register online: <http://www.canconferenceuofm.org/>

Oct. 27 Session 8— Gathering data about children's functioning from children's caretakers

Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist
Friedrich Sexual Behavior Inventory
Briere Trauma Symptom Checklist for Young Children

Second Interview exercise

Mary Ortega, L.M.S.W., A.C.S.W. to assist

Interview exercise--select students interview real children
Form for evaluating child forensic interviews—handed out in class

**Nov. 3 Session 9-- Medical identification of child abuse—Bethany Mohr,
M.D., Medical Director of the Child Protection Team**

Reading: Smith et al., Understanding the Medical Diagnosis of Child Maltreatment—on the CTools website.
Skinmaps—on the CTools website.

**Nov. 10 Session 10-- Interviewing parents of children in the child welfare
system**

Developmental history
Medical history
Mental health history
Peer relationships
School performance
Abuse specific information

Illustrative case example: BJ

Reading: Faller, *Child sexual abuse: An interdisciplinary manual*, chapter 8—on the CTools website.
Faller, Interview data gathered from the mother—on the CTools website
Download and review the four screening instruments at <http://www.ssw.umich.edu/public/currentProjects/tpcws/articles.html>
Review the two video segments on the Training program for child welfare supervisors on screening for domestic violence and screening for substance use at <http://www.ssw.umich.edu/public/currentProjects/tpcws/permanencyPlanning/>

Nov. 17 Session 11-- Interviewing maltreating parents Mad Dads

Assessing overall functioning
Assessing for problem areas of functioning

Case example: TBD

Reading: *Child sexual abuse: An interdisciplinary manual*, chapter 7—on the CTools website.
Faller, Interview data gathered from the offender—on the CTools website
Francis, K. & Wolfe, D. (2008). Cognitive and emotional differences between abusive and non-abusive fathers. *Child Abuse & Neglect* 32, 1127-1137—on the CTools website.

Dubowitz, H. (2006). Invited commentary: Where's dad? A need to understand father's role in child maltreatment. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 30*, 461-465.

Family Assessment Clinic, Guidelines for taking a sexual history—on the CTools website

Faller, Screening for Child Maltreatment: Parent/Adult Interviews—on the CTools website

Nov. 19 Fauri Memorial Conference This is a daylong conference on Child Welfare and Youth Violence. It will take place from 9-5pm in the Educational Conference Center.

Nov. 24 Session 12--Comprehensive family assessments

Background material

Adult interviews

Child interviews

Medical evaluations

Psychological assessment

Integrating all the information

Case example: TBD

Reading

Children's Bureau request for proposals to provide Comprehensive Family Assessments—on the CTools website

Framework for Comprehensive Family Assessments—on the CTools website

Dec. 1 Session 13--Risk & safety assessment

Actuarial and consensus based risk measures

Measure developed by the National Resource Center on Child Maltreatment

Case example: Who hurt the baby?

With **Mary Ortega, L.M.S.W., A.C.S.W.**

Reading

Schwalbe, C. (2008). Strengthening the integration of actuarial risk assessment and clinical judgment in an evidence-based framework. *Children and Youth Services Review, 30*, 1458-1464.

Michigan DHS, Safety Assessment & Structured Decision-making—linked; <http://www.mfia.state.mi.us/olmweb/ex/PSM/713-11.pdf>

Child Protection Field Guide—on the CTools website

Final paper case example available on the website; video of family available; due Dec. 12

Dec. 8 Session 14—Assessing parent-child interactions

Parent-child interaction

Family functioning

Case example: H case

Reading: Faller, Parent-child interaction: Assessment and treatment—on the CTools website.

Final case example paper due Dec. 12.