



## Course Syllabus

**SW 790-007**

**Theory and Practice of Infant Mental Health**

**SS 2016**

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Office hours -

Monday 12:30 - 1:30

### **Course Domain and Boundaries**

This is an *introductory* course on the relationship between theory and practice in infant mental health. It is intended for graduate students in Social Work, Education, Nursing and Psychology. Its purpose is to furnish a conceptual framework, based upon recent developments in attachment theory, for understanding how the emotional qualities of the infant-parent dyad influence the infant's development, the parent's capacity to give care, and finally the professional's state of mind regarding the family. Emphasis is given to how the experiences of early childhood persist over time, and how they are summoned up again by the presence of a baby. This understanding becomes in turn the basis for learning how to plan a treatment approach that takes into account the family's capacities for change.

### **Specific Knowledge and Skill Objectives**

The students should learn:

- A. Theories of the relationship between early parent-infant interaction and subsequent development.
- B. Consequences of failures or disruptions of the attachment process for both parent and child.

- C. Strategies for effective intervention to strengthen early attachment.
- D. Transference and countertransference issues pertinent to infant mental health work.

## **Class Agenda**

### Day One

- Morning –
  - Class Introductions; course parameters
  - Attachment Theory
- Afternoon-
  - Attachment Theory
  - Adult Attachment Interview

### Day Two

- Morning –
  - Assessment - Observing infants and parents – what do we look for; what do we see?
  - Strategies for intervention
  - Infant-Parent Psychotherapy
- Afternoon-
  - Strategies for intervention
  - Watch, Wait and Wonder
  - Working Cross-culturally
  - Transference and Countertransference

## **Reading Requirements (All readings available in the Files tab of Canvas)**

### **In prep for Class One:**

- Fraiberg, S., Adelson, E., Shapiro, V., (1975). Ghosts in the nursery: A psychoanalytic approach to the problems of impaired infant-mother relationships. *Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry*. 14: 387-421
- Zeanah, C., Berlin, L, and Boris, N., (2011). Practitioner Review: Clinical applications of attachment theory and research for infants and young children. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 52: 819–833.
- SSP – Scoring (just peruse – no need to read in depth)

### **Optional (but helpful for paper)**

- Lyons-Ruth, K & Jacobvitz, D. (2008). Attachment disorganization: Genetic factors, parenting contexts and developmental transformations from infancy to adulthood. In J. Cassidy & P.R. Shaver (Eds.) *Handbook of Attachment, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition* (pp. 666 – 697).

### **In prep for Class Two:**

- Weatherston, D. (1995). "She does love me, doesn't she?" *Zero to Three*, February/March 1995.
- Seligman, S. (1993). Why How You Feel Matters: Countertransference Reactions in Intervention Relationships. *The Signal*. Vol. 1, No. 2
- **ANY one of the following chapters (most are brief) from Case Studies in Infant Mental Health:** Pp. 27-39 (Ulrich Chapter - single mother and 5 month old), pp. 67-84 (Crockett Chapter – pre and post-natal work mo. with FASD) and pp. 187-199 (Weatherston Chapter – isolated young mother who had spent years in foster care, pre and post natal work).

### **Additional Suggested Reading:**

Kermoian, R. and Leiderman, P. H. (1986). Infant Attachment to mother and child caregiver in an East African community. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*.

Hoffman, et. al. (2006). Changing Toddlers' and Preschoolers' Attachment Representations: The Circle of Security Intervention. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 74, 1017-1026. (Focus on the introduction and intervention sections the most).