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

DIVISION NUMBER: 778

COURSE NUMBER: 730 Section: 001 Winter, 2020

CREDIT HOURS: 3 credits (Part II; Seminar total credits: 6 hours)

PREREQUISITES: None

LOCATION: B798 SSWB; Monday 6-9pm

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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.

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 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 (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.
**Competencies:**

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

1. Be knowledgeable about how differences between themselves and their clients can affect perceptions of clients. (EP 2.1.3)
2. Demonstrate beginning skills in engaging diverse clients that reflect knowledge about diversity and power differentials between themselves and clients. (EP2.1.4)
3. 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)
4. 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)
5. Incorporate a perspective that honors clients’ strengths as well as vulnerabilities to both assessments and treatment with child welfare clients. (EP 2.1.3)
6. 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)
7. 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)

**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.

**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.

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.

**CANVAS WEBSITE**

The course will have a Canvas website. As a student enrolled in the course, you will automatically have access to the website of SW730 Section 001, 2020.

The syllabus, key dates and all 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 hard copies of these case materials.

**Course Accommodations:**

If you have difficulties understanding readings, assignments, or participating in discussion for linguistic, cultural or other reasons, we invite you to discuss them with us as soon as possible so we can explore ways to facilitate your active participant in class.

If you need or desire an accommodation for an ability challenge, please let us know at your earliest convenience. Many aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities and the way that the course is taught can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress throughout the semester. The earlier you make us aware of your needs the more effectively we will be able to use the resources available to us such as the services for Students with Disabilities, the Adaptive Technology Computing Site, and the like. If you do decide to formally disclose a disability (via ADA), we will (to the extent permitted by law or SSW policy) treat that information as private and confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office at G664 Haven Hall, (734) 763-3000, (734) 615-4461 (TDD), (734) 619-6661 (VP). You are especially encouraged to contact our own Office of Student Services any time you are in need of additional support or accommodations (Email ssdoffice@umich.edu ).

Regarding religious observances, the University of Michigan, as an institution, does not observe religious holidays yet every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate religious obligations if observances conflict with academic requirements. Absence from classes or examinations for religious reasons does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the period of absence. Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or other assignments as a consequence of their religious observance will be provided with a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete such academic responsibilities.
It is a student’s obligation to notify us well in advance (at least one month) if religious observances during the semester conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments.

Regarding student mental health and wellbeing, the University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and https://caps.umich.edu/ during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (734) 764-8320 and https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs, or for alcohol or drug concerns, see www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources.

**Grading** [Grading Policy for Academic Courses (Faculty Manual - Standard 7.05)]

A grades are given for EXCEPTIONAL individual performance and mastery of material. The use of A+, A, and A- should distinguish the degree of superiority w/ perfect attendance equal to an A.

B grades are given to students who demonstrate MASTERY of the material. B+ should be used for students who perform just above the mastery level but not in an exceptional manner. B- should be used for students just below the mastery level.

C grades are given when mastery of the material is minimal. A C- grade is the lowest grade which carries credit.

D grades indicate deficiency and carry no credit.

E grades indicate failure and carry no credit.

**Incomplete grade for course:** Incomplete grades are given only when it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the stated time limits of the course. The student must formally request an incomplete from the instructor prior to the final week of classes.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

We adhere to high standards of academic integrity. Please familiarize yourself with the Rackham Academic and Professional Integrity Policy (http://www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/policies/academic-policies/section10), which defines The Roles and Responsibilities of Graduate Students and Forms of Academic and Professional Misconduct.

Any student caught plagiarizing or cheating in any way will earn a failing grade in this course and may be expelled from the University of Michigan. Other forms of Academic and Professional Misconduct include a wide range of behaviors, such as abuse of confidentiality and obstruction of the academic activities and scholarly research of another (e.g., harassment, intimidation, or tampering with data, records and notes).
The Library Research Guide on Academic Integrity in Social Work is also available at http://guides.lib.umich.edu/swintegrity.

Course Requirements

In this seminar there are 6 requirements:

- Attendance (5%) / Participation (10%)
- Self-care Activities Assignment (5%)
- Intro Questions Assignment (15%)
- MLK, Jr. Reflection (15%)
- First Exam (25%)
- Second Exam (25%)

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

A sign in sheet will be passed out each class. It will be your responsibility to sign in. 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 the instructor as soon as possible. Missing more than two class periods requires a meeting with an instructor. This is a practice skills course, which means attendance 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. midterm and final 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 promote an environment where everyone feels comfortable sharing ideas and taking chances as we debate content and practice clinical skills. (Grading is based on attending all scheduled class sessions and active participation).

Required: Self-care Activities Assignment: Identify 5 self-care activities you currently engage in to maintain “personal - professional balance”. [Grading will be credit / no credit and credit will be based on completeness of assignment. Incomplete assignments may be returned for revisions.]

Required: Response to Intro Questions (Due January 27) [Grading will be credit / no credit and credit will be based on completeness of assignment. Your response to the three tasks in this assignment must include at least three references using APA citation format. Incomplete assignments will be returned for revisions]:

- Assume a parent says to you: “I was told my child was likely traumatized by their abuse; what does traumatized mean?” Write a one-paragraph script of what you might SAY to the parent as a response to the question “what does traumatized mean?” (NOTE: I am not asking for a summary of the literature; I’m asking you to tell me what you might say (i.e., words you might use) although it must be consistent with a defensible description of trauma and based on the literature!
- Offer a minimum of five core components of trauma-focused interventions.
• Identify at least five requisite clinical competencies essential for implementing effective, trauma-informed interventions.

The following websites will be very helpful in completing this assignment:

http://www.cebc4cw.org/assessment-tools/measurement-tools-highlighted-on-the-cebc/
https://www.nctsn.org/treatments-and-practices/trauma-treatments/overview

**Required – MLK, Jr Reflection (Due 2/3):** Reflect on an experience you had either as an observer of or participant in an MLK, Jr. or related event. In your reflection, (a) Describe the event (date, location, presenter(s)); (b) summarize the event – what was it about and what did it have to do with child maltreatment – and include discussion of the experience in the contexts of equity, inclusion and implications for social justice (DE&I). (3) Describe three “take away” points that enhance your knowledge or skills for working with maltreated children and/or their families from a DE&I perspective. [Grading will be credit / no credit and credit will be based on completeness of assignment. Incomplete assignments may be returned for revisions]

**Required – First Exam (3/16) – Covers course content through 3/09** [Grading will be letter grade, consistent with the SSW grading policy. A study guide will be provided.]

**Required – Second Exam (4/20) – Covers course content from 3/23 through 4/13** [Grading will be letter grade, consistent with the SSW grading policy. A study guide will be provided.]

**SEMESTER OUTLINE**

Week 1 (1/13): Establishing a frame of reference for child maltreatment treatment

Week 2: (1/20) MLK, Jr. Day of Celebration

Week 3 (1/27): Culture, organizational culture, and child maltreatment: Implications for practice

Week 4 (2/3): Family engagement and mental health needs of children, parents and substitute care-takers in child welfare: Implications for practice

Week 5 (2/10): Risk factors and child maltreatment: Implications for treatment

Week 6 (2/17): Child-focused interventions (e.g., Cognitive-Behavioral, EMDR, Play, Adventure) & micro-skills in practice

Week 7 (2/24) Working within complex family systems

Week 8 (3/2) **SPRING BREAK – No class**

Week 9 (3/09) Working within complex family systems (cont.)

Week 10 (3/16) FIRST EXAM (Covers Sessions through 3/09)
Week 11 (3/23): Trauma and Trauma Focused Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment in Child Welfare (Part I)

Week 12 (3/30): Trauma and Trauma Focused Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment in Child Welfare (Part II)

Week 13 (4/6): Other Treatment Modalities (e.g., Use of Groups) and Working with Offending Child / Adolescent Clients

Week 14 (4/13): Engaging reluctant clients, closing cases, & prevention

Week 15 (4/20): SECOND EXAM (Covers Weeks 11 through 14)

INDIVIDUAL WEEKLY READINGS

WEEK 1: Establishing a frame of reference for child maltreatment treatment

Bicknell-Hentges, L & Lynch, J.J. (2009, March) *Everything counselors and supervisors need to know about treating trauma*. Paper based on a presentation at the American Counseling Association Annual Conference and Exposition, Charlotte, NC.


WEEK 2: MLK, Jr. Observance-(Please see special instructions.)

WEEK 3: Culture, organizational culture, and child maltreatment: Implications for practice


**WEEK 4: Family engagement and mental health needs of children, parents and substitute care-takers in child welfare: Implications for practice**


Parenting a child who has experienced trauma (CW Information Gateway Family Fact sheet for families 2014)


**WEEK 5: Risk Factors and child maltreatment: Implications for treatment**

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


**WEEK 6: Child-focused interventions (e.g., Cognitive-Behavioral, EMDR, Play, Adventure) & micro-skills in practice**


Handbook of Child Sexual Abuse Ch 10 pp229-250 Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing.pdf


**WEEK 7: Working within complex family systems**


Mason et al (2013) Functional Family Therapy (FFT) in Family Therapy Review: contrasting contemporary models

Henggeler et al (2012) Empirically Supported Family Based Treatments for Conduct Disorder and Delinquency in Adolescents. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*


**WEEK 8: SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS SESSION**

**WEEK 9: Working within complex family systems (cont.)**


**WEEK 10 (3/13): FIRST EXAM (Covers Sessions through 3/09)**

**WEEK 11: Trauma and Trauma Focused Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment in Child Welfare (Part I)**


**WEEK 12: Trauma and Trauma Focused Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment in Child Welfare (Part II)**


**Week 13: Other Treatment Modalities (e.g., Use of Groups) and Working with Offending Child / Adolescent Clients**

Handbook of Child Sexual Abuse Ch 18 pp401-428 Clinical considerations when children have problematic sexual behavior.pdf

Handbook of Child Sexual Abuse Ch 21 pp469-485 Understanding and treating adolescents With illegal sexual behavior.pdf


**WEEK 14: Engaging reluctant clients, closing cases, & prevention**


**WEEK 15: SECOND EXAM, (Covers Weeks 11 through 14)**