



Course title:	Culturally Responsive and Evidence-Informed Assessment with Children, Youth, and Families	
Course #/term:	SW 621, Section 001 Fall 2021	
Time and place:	Wednesdays, 9:00am-12:00pm Class meets 10:00am-12:00pm ONLINE via Zoom PASSCODE: 6212021	
Credit hours:	3	
Prerequisites:	Foundation Essentials or Permission of the Instructor	
Instructor:	Aliyah Masudi, LMSW/MPH	
Pronouns:	She/Her/Hers	
Contact info:	Email: amasudi@umich.edu	Phone: Provided in Canvas
	You may expect a response within 24-48 hours	
Office:	Via Zoom or phone at your request	
Office hours:	By appointment	

1. Course Statement

a. Course description

This course is intended to develop knowledge and skills for practice with children, youth, and families, with special attention to assessment. Students learn about varying approaches to assessment, the various contexts in which assessment takes place, and the assessment skills used with children, youth, and families. Students will be familiar with both strengths and limitations of assessments, and how assessments are used (e.g., in school, juvenile justice, and child welfare forensic assessment) including assessments for intervention recommendations. Students will learn how to evaluate overall functioning, conduct developmental assessments, and make a determination about child, youth and family service needs. Students will learn different models of assessment and the role of interdisciplinary assessments (e.g., medical examinations and psychological testing) in the overall assessment process. Students will also become acquainted with widely used assessment practices with children, youth, and families in terms of initial screening, risk assessment, and structured decision making. Existing evidence for their utility will be explored. Students will also be sensitized to their personal reaction to child and youth demonstrations of trauma and crises. They will be appraised of professional expectations, such as mandatory reporting of child maltreatment, and will learn about the general structure of service delivery to child and youth 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 child-serving systems (e.g., legal system; school) impacting assessment outcomes and recommendations. The diversity of children, youth, and families, in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, class, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and other social identities will be explored. Of particular focus is the over-representation of children of color and the differential response of various child and youth serving systems based upon social identity differences. Students will gain insights about how differences between themselves and client systems affect assessment process including outcomes and recommendations.

b. Course objectives and competencies

- 1) Describe theories that explain child and youth risks and protections.
- 2) Describe the roles and responsibilities of social workers in assessing children, youth and families, including mandatory reporting of child maltreatment, multidisciplinary approaches to assessment
- 3) Describe personal, professional, and societal responses to children, youth and families at risk and their impact on assessment observations, impressions and recommendations.
- 4) Demonstrate knowledge and beginning skills in engaging diverse client systems that reflect knowledge about diversity (e.g., gender, developmental age, socio-economic class, culture, ethnicity, race, religion, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, national origin) and power differentials between themselves and clients.
- 5) Recognize the impact of discrimination based on economic, racial, ethnic, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and other differences on client system presentation during assessment, and of the effect the worker's own personal experiences have their assessment observations.
- 6) Recognize the impact involuntariness has on assessment. including client system relationship with the worker and child-serving system based on past and current initial responses
- 7) Demonstrate beginning ability to conduct individual and family assessments, including assessing parent-child attachment, evaluating overall functioning, and making recommendations consistent with assessment findings.
- 8) Incorporate a perspective that honors clients' strengths as well as vulnerabilities to both assessments and treatment with child welfare clients.

c. Course design

Zoom Meetings (Required)

Zoom link is posted on Canvas. Ensure to log in through your (www.umich.zoom) account.

Passcode: 6212021

Time: **10:00am-12:00pm**

Days: Wednesdays

This course will make use of lectures, demonstrations, discussion, media such as videotaped interviews with clients and individuals, small group exercises, and role plays. 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, youth, and family interview experiences.

d. Intensive focus on PODS

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. By a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self-knowledge, and self-awareness to facilitate PODS learning. Emphasis in this course will focus on teaching students' sensitivity, respect, and competence when working with clients where there are racial/ethnic, cultural, socio-economic class, religious, gender, ability, nationality, and other differences presented by the client system. Case examples will highlight how differences, issues relevant to impoverishment, and involuntariness affect clients' responses to assessment. Students will understand 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. Students will explore the ways in which diversity (e.g., race / ethnicity, socio-economic disadvantage, and gender) are differentially responded to in initial responses, and students will learn that an appropriate role for social workers in oppressive child-serving systems is often that of advocate. In this course students will explore the role of prevention and system disruption in situations in which institutional processes unjustly disadvantage client systems based on social identity differences. To the degree possible, literature and resources will be used that demonstrate evidence-informed practice and students will be taught skills to critically reflect upon practices in which social science knowledge and research findings wittingly or unwittingly demonstrate bias, stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination.

2. Class Requirements

a. Text and class materials

There is not an assigned textbook for this class. All class readings and materials are available on Canvas either for download or via a link. To fully engage in the course topic and become a competent and skilled social work practitioner, it is expected that students will read, watch, or listen to all required materials prior to the class session. On most occasions the materials will be discussed and debriefed during class time. Please come with any questions, comments, or other thoughts related to the material that you've engaged with in advance. The module on Canvas will be opened no less than one week in advance of the class session with the goal of providing that information 2 weeks in advance when possible.

b. Class schedule

Class readings, assignments, and topics are subject to change based on the class's progress, interests, and other factors. Below is an outline of the expected week to week plan. Changes will be communicated via Canvas announcements at least a week in advance and the weekly module on Canvas will reflect the most recent materials and information.

You will find detailed class schedules available on CANVAS. Readings, assignments, asynchronous learnings are all outlined in CANVAS modules. Please review the modules and assignments thoroughly, as they are not outlined in this syllabus.

Date/Time	Agenda	Required Readings & Assignments
Week 1 9-1-21 @ 10:00am	Module 1: Introductions and review of syllabus	Posted on Canvas
Week 2 9-8-21 @ 10:00am	Module 2: Biopsychosocial Assessment and Cultural Humility	Posted on Canvas
Week 3 9-15-21 @ 10:00am	Module 3: Assessment Purpose, Methods and Ethical Practice	Posted on Canvas
Week 4 9-22-21 @ 10:00am	Module 4: Developmental Factors for Children and Youth (and their Impact on Assessment)	Posted on Canvas

Date/Time	Agenda	Required Readings & Assignments
Week 5 9-29-21 @ 10:00am	Module 5: Assessment and Intake Planning	Posted on Canvas
Week 6 10-6-21 @ 10:00am	Module 6: Building and Maintaining Rapport	Posted on Canvas
Week 7 10-13-21 @ 10:00am	Module 7: Assessing for Trauma	Posted on Canvas
Week 8 10-20-21 @ 10:00am	Module 8: Mandated Reporting and Other Ethical Dilemmas	Posted on Canvas
Week 9 10-27-21 @ 10:00am	Module 9: Assessing for Suicide and Other Risk Factors	Posted on Canvas
Week 10 11-3-21 @ 10:00am	Module 10: Assessment with LGBTQ+ Children and Youth	Posted on Canvas
Week 11 11-10-21 @ 10:00am	Module 11: Assessment in Interdisciplinary Settings	Posted on Canvas
Week 12 11-17-21 @10:00am	Module 12: Current Events and Issues Impacting Children and Adolescents	Posted on Canvas
Week 13 11-24-21	Thanksgiving Break	Thanksgiving Break
Week 14 12-1-21 @10:00am	Module 14: Current Events and Issues Impacting Children and Adolescents	Posted on Canvas
Week 15 12-8-21 @10:00am	Module 15: Moving from Assessment to Intervention	Posted on Canvas

c. Assignments

Detailed rubrics will be available in Canvas three weeks prior to the due date.

Assignment	Due date	Percent of overall grade
Active Participation and Attendance	Ongoing	40%
Self-Assessment on Cultural Responsiveness and Implicit Bias and Reflection Paper	September 15, 2021 at 11:59pm Submit via Canvas	10%
Assessment Critique of Standardized Assessment Tool Paper and Presentation [Group Project]	October 6, 2021 at 11:59pm Submit via Canvas	20%
Mandated Reporting and Minor Consent Laws Presentation	October 20, 2021 at 11:59pm Submit via Canvas	10%
Document an Assessment from a Movie or on-line example assessment video [Group Project]	November 10, 2021 at 11:59pm	20%

d. Attendance and class participation

Attendance and participation accounts for 40% of your final grade. Attendance at weekly synchronous class sessions is required and the expectation is that all students will not only be present but also actively participate. The preference is that your camera is turned on during class unless you have a particular reason to have it off. Active participation requires that you complete all assigned readings before class and come prepared with questions and comments about the readings to share with others.

- Participation can look like:

- Speaking/contributing during class discussions
- Chatting in during class
- Responding to polls
- Responding to prompts via other media
- Reporting out from small groups during class
- Having questions for guest speakers
- Continuing to the discussion Board

As described in the MSW Student Guide ([Policy on Class Attendance](#)) attendance in all class meetings is required. Students who miss more than 2 classes will receive a full letter grade deduction at the end of the semester.

If because of an emergency you miss a class, please contact a classmate to get the notes, handouts, or other materials. You will be able to find the readings, handouts, and assignment instructions on the Canvas website for this class. Alternate assignments or individual meetings for missed classes may be available to support students who must unexpectedly miss class due to an emergency. Please contact me ASAP to make these arrangements.

e. Grading

Please review the following MSW Student Guide policies:

[Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#)

[Student Grievance procedures](#)

[Policy for grading in special circumstances](#)

[Testing and grading from CRLT](#)

A 100-point system is used in this course. At the end of the semester, the points earned will be translated into letter grades according to the following formula:

A+ 99-100

A 95-98

A- 91-94

B+ 87-90

- B 84-86
- B- 81-83
- C+ 77-80
- C 74-76
- C- 70-73
- D- D <69 (no credit)

Incomplete grades will be given in rare circumstances. Students are expected to plan ahead in starting assignments and to keep up with the coursework throughout the term. Any unusual circumstances that may impede a student's progress in the course should be discussed with the instructor as soon as possible.

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated; confirmation of these behaviors will be reported to the Associate Dean for Educational Programs' office and will likely result in a failing grade for the course. Students are expected to do your own original work.

f. Class Recording and Course Materials

Additional information on class recordings can be found the [Recording and Privacy Concerns FAQ](#):

Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording being done. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. If the instructor chooses to record a class, they will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on the course management website. On days when classes are recorded, students will be notified a recording is occurring. Class recordings and course materials may not be reproduced, sold, published, or distributed to others, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the instructor.

g. COVID-19 Statement

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. Your participation in this course is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including [properly wearing a face covering in class](#) and compliance with the [University COVID-19 Vaccination Policy](#). Other applicable and additional safety measures may be described in

the [Campus Maize & Blueprint](#). Your ability to participate in this course may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the [Office for Institutional Equity](#) and those seeking an exemption related to the vaccination requirement should submit an exemption request through [WolverineAccess](#). I also encourage you to review the [Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) and the [COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

h. Health-Related Class Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a doctor's note) for medical excuses is *not* required.

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: <https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources>. They include:

- *Safety and emergency preparedness*
- *Mental health and well-being*
- *Teaching evaluations*
- *Proper use of names and pronouns*
- *Accommodations for students with disabilities*
- *Religious/spiritual observances*
- *Military deployment*
- *Writing skills and expectations*
- *Academic integrity and plagiarism*