



Course title:	Attachment Theory in Clinical Practice
Course #/term:	SW 746, Fall 2021
Time and place:	November 13 and 20, 2021; 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
Credit hours:	1
Prerequisites:	None
Instructor:	Julie Ribaldo (you can call me Julie or Professor Ribaldo), Clinical Professor
Pronouns:	She/her/hers
Contact info:	Email: <a href="mailto:jribaldo@umich.edu">jribaldo@umich.edu</a> Phone: 734-936-4949 I will do my best to respond within 2 working days. If you do not hear from me, please re-contact me.
Office:	2710
Office hours:	It is easiest to make an appointment
Required Texts	PDFs will be available in Modules

## Pandemic Statement:

You are in the MSW program during 2 major pandemics – Covid-19 and the long-standing pandemic, now undergoing a national reckoning, of racism and oppression. I hope we will strive to treat ourselves and each other with compassion and grace, while also encouraging our collective growth. There will be glitches along the way. The course outline is my best attempt to help you predict what the class holds in store for you.

## Course Description

Understanding the implications of early relationships on adult functioning can assist in providing adult psychotherapy in ways that can assist to repair individuals' capacity to form and maintain healthy adult relationships. Using attachment theory as the foundation, this course will address relationship-based interventions in interpersonal practice with adults.

## Course Objectives

Students will understand:

- The theoretical construct of attachment patterns
- The clinical correlates of adolescent and adult attachment organization

- How to use an understanding of the dynamics of attachment to inform clinical thinking and intervention

## **Attention to Diversity and Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppressive Practice**

Attending to equity, inclusion, race, power, privilege, and oppression is crucial to understanding how societal inequities impact infants and young children. We will attempt to understand our own lenses, and how they shape what we see and don't see, ask and don't ask, consider and don't consider. I do my best to carefully curate readings to help us see and hear a variety of voices. It is my hope to co-create, with you, an atmosphere of curiosity, humility, and openness when we hold small and large group discussions of the readings and asynchronous and synchronous material. Additionally, if you find materials that you think would be helpful for the class, please send them to me so I can post them! Finally, I welcome the opportunity to grow and learn. If I fail to address a topic, or say something insensitive, please let me know. We are all learning and growing together.

## **Course Agenda and Reading Requirements**

### **Class One Agenda**

- Attachment Theory
  - Development of Attachment and Internal Working Models
  - Organized Attachment Patterns
  - Disorganized Attachment
  - Adult Attachment Patterns
- Prep for Class One  
**See Module 1**

### **Class Two Agenda**

- Adult Attachment Patterns
  - Emotion Regulation and Security
  - Therapist as a Safe Base
  - Application to Specific Clients
- Prep for Class Two  
**See Module 2**

**Assignment** (applicable for students taking course for MSW degree, not CEUs)

Will be discussed in class - see assignment tab for initial information  
Attendance and Participation for the full two days is required to pass the class.

**Suggestions for future reading:**

Holmes, J. & Slade, A. (2018). Attachment in therapeutic practice. Sage Publications.

Obegi, J.H. and Berant, E., (2009). Attachment theory and research in clinical work with adults. New York: Guilford

Wallin, D.J., (2007). Attachment in psychotherapy. New York: Guilford. Available on e-links through UM:

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/umich/docDetail.action?docID=10188990> (Links to an external site.)

Levy and Johnson (2019). Attachment and psychotherapy: Implications from empirical research. *Canadian Psychology*. 60, 178 –193. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/cap0000162>

## **Links to CSWE Practice Behaviors**

### **Practice Behavior 3**

- Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments
- Distinguish, appraise and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge and practice wisdom
- Demonstrate effective oral and written communication
- Analyze models of assessment, prevention, and intervention

### **Practice Behavior 4**

- Engage diversity and difference in practice
- Recognize and communicate understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences
- Gain sufficient self-awareness manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups

### **Practice Behavior 7**

- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment
- Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention and evaluation
- Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment

### **Practice Behavior 10**

- Engage, assess, intervene and evaluate...
- Use empathy and other interpersonal skills
- Collect, organize and interpret client data
- Select appropriate intervention strategies

## **Relationship of the Course to Ethics and Values**

Social work ethics and values will be addressed within the course as they pertain to issues related to working with clients in a relationally based intervention. Awareness of transference,

countertransference, and the necessity of reflective supervision will be highlighted as ways to maintain appropriate boundaries and to prevent compassion fatigue.

We will look at how attachment is understood across cultures and the role of cultural humility in exploring the attachment-related needs and behaviors of clients.

## **Accommodations**

If you need or desire an accommodation for a disability, please let me know as soon as possible. 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 that you make me 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 disclose your disability, I will (to the extent permitted by law) treat that information as private and confidential. Also, please notify me if religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

## **Additional School and University policies, information, and resources:**

<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

## **Credit Hour Expectations**

The United States Department of Education requires that academic institutions develop a written credit hour policy that conforms to the definition of a credit hour. More recently the University of Michigan has instructed us that our School must create such a policy. The School of Social Work definition of a credit hour formalizes compliance with federal expectations and assists with consistency through the School of Social Work. As such, the School of Social Work utilizes a ratio of one hour of classroom instruction to two hours of out-of-class activity. Specifically: One credit is equal to approximately 45 hours of total work over the seme