



Course title:	Child Welfare System	
Course #/term:	SW 627, Section 001, Winter 2023	
Classroom:	1804 SSWB	
Time and Place:	Wednesday, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM In-Person	
Credit hours:	3	
Prerequisites:		
Instructor:	Monica Sampson, LMSW	
Pronouns:	[She, her, hers]	
Contact info:	Email: smonica@umich.edu	Phone: [248.840.6145]
	You may expect a response within 48 hours	
Office:	N/A	
Office hours:	By appointment (Zoom Link Provided in Canvas)	

1. Course Statement

A. Course description

This course will focus on the evolution and development of child protection in the United States. The goal of the course is to provide students with an understanding of how state governments think about the adequacy/appropriateness of parenting, the safety of children, when and how child protection agencies get involved with families and what the evidence says about such involvement. We will discuss the origins and implementation of major child welfare policies and we will review practice innovations and some of the most pressing challenges facing child welfare systems today. A common theme throughout the course will be the intersection of child welfare and poverty, race, gender, identity and trauma. The course will cover policies and practices from both micro and macro perspectives and students will learn how child welfare systems collaborate (or at times fail to collaborate) with other allied systems of care (e.g. community mental health, juvenile justice, substance abuse).

B. Course objectives and competencies

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

- Understand the relationship of becoming a client in the child welfare system to poverty, racism, disadvantage and discrimination.
- Use this understanding to be able to critically analyze a spectrum of interventions used with children and families.
- Conceptualize and describe issues and interventions in child welfare problems from direct practice, community, administrative and policy perspectives.

- Demonstrate knowledge about research findings as they relate to a range of child maltreatment and child welfare issues, policies and programs.
- Demonstrate knowledge about the relationship of child maltreatment and child welfare to other social problems.
- Demonstrate and understanding of child welfare from various stakeholder perspectives.

Course Competencies

- Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior
- Understand diversity and difference in practice
- Understand how to engage in practice informed research and research informed practice
- Understand how to engage in policy practice
- Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities

C. Course design

This course will make use of lectures, guest lectures, discussion, media and small group exercises. Students will demonstrate their knowledge acquisition by means of class participation, weekly responses to assigned readings, written assignments and a class presentation focused on a specific child welfare issue. The class will also spend time interacting with service providers and possibly observe dependency court hearings.

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. Through the use of 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.

2. Class Requirements

Text and class materials

There is no required textbook for this class. Readings, videos, and podcasts will be posted on Canvas at least one week prior to the class session in which they will be discussed. Each session's reading assignments will be placed in modules to coincide with the week's lessons. Reading may be changed due to guest lecturers or emerging current events that warrant our attention and class discussion. Videos and Podcasts are also placed in the modules. Modules will be divided into sections for easy accessibility:

- **Review** – understand the basic concept of the material. No need to read it in its entirety. This is considered a useful resource for your current and future review.
- **Read** – This material is meant for a deep read for full comprehension and understanding. These are the required readings and will be directly related to the lecture, guest speaker and topic for the week.

- **Watch** – This is required material to enhance learning and understanding by providing real life examples of actual case studies and/or life experiences. All “Watch” videos have trigger warnings on them.

To fully engage in the course, it is expected that students will complete the required readings and/or video viewing prior to the class in which they will be discussed. Reading materials are meant to supplement lecture content. Discussion of readings will be student-led, with prompts and questions from me, therefore it is critically important that you complete the required readings prior to the class session.

Class Schedule:

We will follow the schedule outlined below as closely as possible. Sometimes, the topic or schedule may change due to guest speakers, unavoidable incidents, or through discussions with students regarding what topics they would like to focus on. Whenever possible, schedule changes will be sent to you via email and posted on Canvas in Announcements at least a week in advance.

Locations of Classes will be In-Person. Readings may change! Please be certain to check the Modules on Canvas for the specific week of class.

NOTE: Once Guest Speakers are secured, their information will be captured in Canvas in lieu of the syllabus.

Meeting Date	Pre-Assignments	Topic/Agenda (I am still securing guest speakers)
Week 1 1/4/23	Review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s Protective Services Manual TOC • Children’s Foster Care Manual TOC • Adoption Services Manual TOC Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus 	Course Introduction and Overview Assignment Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested Guidelines for Class Participation
Week 2 1/11/23	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory Reporters of CAN Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IL_DCm4ShBI&t=1s 	Mandated Reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/Mandated_Reporter_Training_Guide_727442_7.pdf
Week 3 1/18/23	Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPS A Guide for Caseworkers 	Policy Foundation for Child Welfare

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Evolution of Federal CW Policy through the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Contemporary US Child Welfare System(s) • Child Welfare for the Twenty-first Century: Historical Evolution of Child Welfare Services. <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Orphan Trains • The Orphan Train Movement 	
Week 4 1/25/23	<p>Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plastic Brain: Age of Opportunity <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michigan YAVFC Policy <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trials of Gabriel Fernandez I 	<p>A Youth's Perspective/Aging out of Foster Care</p> <p>Video: Youth Voices: Supporting Adolescents in Foster Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Assignment Due: Critical Issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification Write Up Due in Canvas by 9:00 AM
Week 5 2/1/23	<p>Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protective Services Policy Manuals • Child Maltreatment as a function of cumulative family risk • Child Maltreatment 2020 <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguishing between poor/dysfunctional parenting and child emotional maltreatment. • Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect: Signs and Symptoms • How do Parent Partner programs instill hope and support prevention and reunification? 	<p>A Parent Perspective</p>

	<p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broken Child (Trigger Warning) https://vimeo.com/121545540 	
<p>Week 6 2/8/23</p>	<p>Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disparities and Disproportionality in Child Welfare: Analysis of the Research <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black Families Matter: How the Child Welfare System Punishes Poor Families of Color Influence of Race and Socioeconomic Status on the Diagnosis of Child Abuse: A Randomized Study <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trials of Gabriel Fernandez II 	<p>Racial Disparities</p>
<p>Week 7 2/15/23</p>	<p>Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovations in child welfare intervention for caregivers with SUD and their children Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment: A Research-Based Guide <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substance Abuse and Child Maltreatment Cases Involving Substances (PSM 716-7) <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trials of Gabriel Fernandez III 	<p>Substance Abuse and Maltreatment</p>
<p>Week 8 2/22/23</p>	<p>Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MiTEAM Practice Model Manual: Appendix A: DV Guide for Caseworkers (p.208-250) Domestic Violence Packet <p>Read:</p>	<p>Domestic Violence and Maltreatment</p> <p>Courtroom 1st Observation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> verbal class report assignment due in Canvas by 11:59 PM

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection in Families Experiencing Domestic Violence • Intersection of Child Maltreatment & IPV • It's Not Enough to Mean Well <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trials of Gabriel Fernandez IV 	
Week 9 3/1/23	Spring Break	Retreat and Relax
Week 10 3/8/23	<p>Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparison of Experiences in Differential Response <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differential Response: A Primer for Child Welfare Professionals • Social innovation in child and youth services <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trials of Gabriel Fernandez V • Child Abuse and Neglect: https://www.pbs.org/video/wkgb-connections-child-abuse-and-neglect/ 	<p>Innovative Interventions</p> <p>Critical Issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worksheet Due in Canvas by 9:00 AM
Week 11 3/15/23	<p>Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Maltreatment and Termination of Parental Rights: Can Behavioral Research Help Solomon • Grounds for Involuntary Termination of Parental Rights • The Cumulative Prevalence of Termination of Parental Rights for US Children <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Court: Petitions, Hearings, and Court Orders (PSM 715-3) • Termination of Parental Rights – Ethical Issues and Role Conflicts 	<p>Court involvement/Termination of Parental Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The timing of termination of parental rights: A balancing Act for Children’s Best Interest. <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtroom Etiquette: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4IPnG1HMkBg • Getting Ready for Court Part 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCkVArsby5g • Getting Ready for Court Part 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nV6Wjr-qoFI 	
Week 12 3/22/23	<p>Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forensic Interviewing Protocol • Licensing Rules for Foster Family Homes <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Guide for caseworkers • Michigan guide for investigations <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trials of Gabriel Fernandez VI 	Physical Abuse and Neglect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Week 13 3/29/23	<p>Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ombudsman Program: https://www.michigan.gov/dhhs/0,5885,7-339--352739--00.html • Annual Report: https://www.michigan.gov/documents/oco/Annual_Report_2020_720334_7.pdf • Dwayne B Complaint Vs. State of Michigan • Dwayne B Settlement <p>Read:</p>	Predictive Analytics in Child Welfare Ombudsman

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Practical Framework for Considering the Use of Predictive Risk Modeling in Child Welfare • Predictive Analytics in Child Welfare: An Introduction for Administrators and Policy Makers <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Abuse and Neglect S29E33 https://www.pbs.org/video/s29-e33-child-abuse-and-neglect-k4wb9p/ • Children’s Ombudsman reform to go before MI Senate: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzXPUEwUYjs • Ombudsman: CPS did not follow policy in neglect case: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UifRWtlgRHE 	
Week 14 4/5/23	<p>Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection Law <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maltreatment in Care (PSM 714-5) <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reality of Foster Care (TEDx) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hIHV9ou4DCg • Foster Shock : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXCByofJ9D0 	<p>Maltreatment in Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class will end after the guest speaker today to give you an opportunity to complete your project. <p>Critical Issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final report due by 9:00 AM • Initial Group Deliverables
Week 15 4/12/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Class Evaluation 	<p>Courtroom 2nd Observation: assignment due in Canvas by 11:59 PM</p>

a. Grading and Assignments

Coursework and Assignments

This course uses Canvas as a resource for all course readings as well as for detailed explanations of assignments and instructions for the submission of assignments. Assignment descriptions and readings for each class, as well as grading and class announcements can be found on Canvas. Required reading will be posted to Canvas at least one week prior to the class for which they are required. Please review the site carefully and visit it frequently for updates.

All assignments will be posted on Canvas with a more in-depth explanation and the grading rubric. If you have any questions about an assignment, please feel free to reach out to me with your questions prior to the due date of the assignment.

Assignment	Due date	Percent of overall grade
Critical Issue Identification Write Up	Week 4 1/25/23 by 9:00 AM	15%
Court Observations: (2 separate Child Welfare Hearings)	Fluid Due Dates: Weeks 8 & 15 1 st hearing due by 2/22/23 11:59 PM 2 nd hearing due by 4/12/23 11:59 PM	20%
Critical Issue Worksheet	Week 10 3/8/2023 by 9:00 AM in Canvas by one member.	15%
Critical Issue Class Presentations	Week 14 (4/5/23) & Week 15 (4/12/23) In Class Everyone must turn Presentation in on 4/5/23 by 9:00 AM on Canvas or in Class.	45%
Attendance	Weekly by 9:10 AM	5%

Assignments at a glance:

Court Observations- Individual Assignment Due 2/22/22 & 4/12/22 (20% of final grade):

This assignment requires students to attend (remotely or in person) and observe two family court (child welfare related) hearings. Most hearings are public. Contact your local court and request a docket for a local judge/referee. Identify two hearings you wish to attend (ensure these are two different hearing types).

During this observation, you should consider the following questions:

- What was the purpose/type of hearing?
- Who was present (roles only, no names). Was everyone represented by council?
- Did it appear everyone had a grasp on why they were present and what they hoped to accomplish?
- What might it feel like to be in court as a parent, a child, a judge/referee, an attorney, and a caseworker?
- Did everyone have an opportunity to be heard or represented?
- What did you think worked well in terms of the judiciary? What would you change?
- Are circumstances and proceedings easy to understand?
- Did you notice any issues related to culture (e.g. social class, race, language, sexual orientation, age etc.)?
- Give your overall impression of the courtroom experience.

Write a brief observation (2 pages) and be prepared to possibly share your observations with the class during class discussion. 10 points each.

Child Welfare Critical Issue- Group or Individual Recorded Presentation Due Dates below: (75% of final grade): This assignment allows students to identify a Critical Issue in the Child Welfare System, conceptualize and describe the issue and interventions from direct practice, community, administrative and policy perspectives. Analyzes the problem, critiques existing policies and services, and makes recommendations. (Hint, the critical issues are outlined in the weekly topics)

- This will be a three-part assignment. See Canvas for details of each assignment.
- Part one – Critical Issue Identification (15 points) **Due Week 4**
- Part two – Critical Issue Worksheet (15 Points) **Due Week 10**
- Part three – Critical Issue Final Presentation (45 points) **Due Week 14**

This assignment may be completed as an individual assignment or a group assignment. There will be no class time used to create your groups. If time permits, there may be opportunities to work on this project during class. Details for this assignment are posted in Canvas.

b. Attendance and class participation (5% of final grade)

Attendance is expected at each synchronous class and any asynchronous activities that you may be assigned and is extremely important because the discussions that occur in class cannot easily be replicated outside of the classroom from simply reading the assigned materials. Participation in class discussions, in class exercises, and small group discussions is expected and will contribute to your final grade. Participation means grounding your comments and analysis in the readings and other class materials – not simply offering your general opinion on a topic. If you experience difficulties in participating in discussions for technological, linguistic, cultural, or other reasons, please meet with me to explore ways in which you can become an active participant in class. If you need to miss a class, please email me at smonica@umich.edu to let me know you will be missing a class. We can discuss what needs to be done to make up for the missed class. Please refer to the [Policy on Class Attendance](#) found in the MSW Student Guide.

c. Grading

Final grades are based on 100 percentage points. Letter grades are assigned to point totals according to the following scale:

Assessment Classification	Range	Grade	Grade Point
Excellent Work	94-100	A	4.0
(above course expectations)	91-93	A-	3.7
Good Work	88-90	B+	3.3
(meets course expectations)	84-87	B	3.0
	81-83	B-	2.7
Poor Work	78-80	C+	2.3
(meets minimal course expectations)	74-77	C	2.0
	71-73	C-	1.7
Failing Work	0-70	F	0.0

The criteria for each grade are as follows:

- A Mastery of subject content, demonstration of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in completion of the assignment. The difference between A+, A, and A- is based on the degree to which these skills are demonstrated.

- B+ Mastery of subject content beyond expected competency, but has not demonstrated additional critical analysis, creativity, or complexity in the completion of the assignment.

- B Mastery of subject content at level of expected competency – meets course expectations

Four Notes on Grading:

1. Class attendance and class participation are essential for this course. Therefore; you are expected to attend, to be prepared, and to make reasonable contributions. It is your responsibility to get materials, handouts, or class notes from one of your classmates if you are unable to attend a class.
2. It is best not to assume you will receive an “A” in this course. I grade on a relative, not absolute, grading scale. Since virtually all of you were “A” students as undergraduates there will be a natural and necessary redistribution at the graduate level.
3. In general, I do accept challenges to grades. However, challenges must be in writing (not verbal); must be specific; and must be based on substantive arguments (or mathematical errors) not on nebulous references to “fairness.” I

reserve the right to re-read, and re-grade, the work in its entirety in the case of a challenge. The grade may be adjusted upwards or downwards.

4. Here are some reference links regarding grading:
 - o [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#)
 - o [Student Grievance procedures](#)
 - o [CRLT Testing and Grading](#)

General Expectations for Written Work. Written work will be evaluated in relation to how well it addresses the topic and the clarity of the presentation. It is important to follow assignment instructions carefully. Please edit your work. If possible have someone proofread for you. Spell checkers and grammar checkers are useful, but not as reliable as a human reader. Please note I do grade on the quality of the writing. Clear writing is generally aligned with clear thinking.

Due Dates

Due dates will be posted on Canvas. All assignments must be submitted to the appropriate folder on Canvas by the posted deadline. Exceptions to the due dates will require prior permission. I have spread the required assignment throughout the semester in order to avoid a large final assignment. Because each assignment really does have an impact on your grade, please do let me know if you foresee a problem with a due date.

Social work students can receive individual writing assistance from Betsy Williams, Writing Skills and Study Skills Coordinator, through the UM SSW Career Services office. Students may schedule an appointment and bring a draft of their paper (at any stage) along with the text of the assignment and any questions or concerns they may have. Email ssw-cso@umich.edu or call 734-763-6259.

I may re-evaluate the submitted work, and/or I may ask you to complete additional work in order to bring the work up to standard in order to adjust your grade.

Please consult the MSW Student Guide policies on [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#) as well as [Student Grievance procedures](#) and the [policy for grading in special circumstances can be referenced using these links.](#)

d. Class Recording and Course Materials

Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without my advance written permission. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to me in advance of any recording being done. If permission is granted, the audio and/or video recording is to be used only for the student's personal instructional use. Such recordings are not intended for a wider public audience, such as postings to the internet, social media or sharing with others.

Even when permission to record has been given, I reserve the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. Due to the sensitive nature of the topics we will be discussing, there will be several times when a recording in process will be stopped and where I will require any students who are recording to cease recording so that we may have an open and honest discussion.

When I choose to record a class, I will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on Canvas. 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. . Additional information on class recordings can be found the [Recording and Privacy Concerns FAQ](#):

Class Discourse

Discussion of child welfare, child abuse and neglect can be an emotional topic and could serve to trigger painful memories or create anxiety in students due to any number of factors. Discussion of child maltreatment necessarily involves risk, divergent points of view and conflict. It is imperative to respect differences in perspective and seek to understand those differences. While my goal is to ensure that the classroom is a safe learning space, discussion, and the growth and learning that arises from it, can sometimes be uncomfortable or invoke an emotional reaction to the topic being discussed. I hope that all students work with me to create and foster a learning environment that promotes social justice, inclusion, equity and thoughtful coverage of the subject matter.

This is an opportunity for all of us to engage in professional discourse and to broaden our mutual development of cultural humility. We will examine how the structure of current programs and policies designed to prevent or to address child maltreatment have evolved from and still reflect biases and negative beliefs about various populations or social identity groups. Disagreements are expected and are welcomed as long as we respect diverse opinions and one another and refrain from attacking or insulting others. For some topics, I will structure a formal debate format in order that multiple sides of an issue are clearly heard and rebutted. I may also ask you to take the opposite side of an issue from what you might normally prefer. This is to help you expand your thinking about the topic, solidify your point of view and help you understand what the opposition to a position you may wish to take may be thinking, thus the better prepared you are to address that opposition.

I believe that all of us are learning together, and as such, I will ask many questions of you in class. Through dialog and careful consideration of issues, you will learn how to create, evaluate and analyze the child welfare system in simple and complex forms, and to think carefully about the issues at hand. I ask questions to prompt thinking, to provoke reaction and to help you hone your point of view. Remain open to evidence presented, which may conflict with your own personal viewpoints and perspectives. I expect you to be engaged in the course material and contributing questions and comments in class discussions. Your class participation score is not solely dependent upon how frequently you speak in class, rather on the quality of your

participation, your attention to the subject matter and your willingness to engage with the subject matter.

Protect confidentiality

One of the fundamental ethical values of social work is protecting client confidentiality. In this seminar, you will be exposed to conversations or environments that involve real individuals and real families. You will be expected to keep class materials/activities confidential.

e. 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](#).

f. 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*