1. Course Description:

This methods course is intended to develop practice skills in child welfare, with special attention to child maltreatment. This course will prepare 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. Ethical issues for social workers, in particular, the sometimes conflicting needs of children and families and legal system impact on child welfare practice, will be addressed, as the various methods are taught. The first term will focus on assessment and the second on treatment.

2. Course Content:

This course will cover the following areas: 1) personal, professional, and societal responses to children at risk, 2) client issues and responses to child welfare intervention, 3) theories that explain child maltreatment, 4) assessment of children and adults with child welfare issues, 5) interventions employed in the child welfare system, and 6) treatment strategies used with traumatized children. This course will draw upon practice in the United States, Canada, and Western Europe.

In the realm of personal, professional, and societal responses, 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 students will be taught about the general structure of service delivery to child welfare clients, which constitutes the context within which they will provide services to clients.

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), the family, or the child protection system). 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. Third, 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.

The knowledge students will acquire about assessment will include evaluating children, adults, and families who are involved in the child welfare system. 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.

Students will learn about different approaches, such as ego psychological, cognitive behavioral, trauma focused, and family systems theoretical frameworks and interventions. They 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.

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, for example, re-abuse of a child, re-referral to child protective services, and permanency. Finally, they will be given tools to critically evaluate programs, such as wrap-around services and parenting instruction.

3. Course Objectives:

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

1. Understand the roles and responsibilities of social workers practicing in child welfare, including mandatory reporting of child maltreatment, multidisciplinary approaches to child maltreatment, assessment, case management, and therapeutic roles, as well as statutory requirements related to case management within the child welfare system.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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 ego psychological, cognitive behavioral, trauma focused, and family systems. 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.

5. 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.

4. 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 two hours a week. Students will demonstrate their knowledge acquisition by means of videotapes and short papers about their child welfare practice.

5. 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 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 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. Major emphasis will be placed on 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.
6. Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:

Issues of values and 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.
SYLLABUS

SW 730: CHILD WELFARE AND CHILD MALTREATMENT: ASSESSMENT & TREATMENT; FIRST TERM 2002

Instructor: Kathleen Coulborn Faller
Offices: 2704 SSWB; 113 555 S. Forest
Telephone numbers: 763-3786; 998-9702
Email: kcfaller@umich.edu
Office hours: Tues., 4:30-6:30 at 555 S. Forest; Thurs. 5-6:00 at 2704 S. University by appointment at 2704 SSWB
Meeting time and place: Tues., 2-4:30; 555 S. Forest

Child Welfare and Child Maltreatment: Assessment and Treatment is a methods course intended to develop practice skills in child welfare, with special attention to child maltreatment. The course 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. Ethical issues for social workers, in particular the sometimes conflicting needs of children and families and legal system impact on child welfare practice, are addressed, as the various methods are taught.

This seminar was developed as part of a specialized curriculum in child welfare. It is a requirement for FIA Part-time Child Welfare Specialist students and students receiving the School of Social Work Child Welfare Fellowships, including those whose field placements are at the Family Assessment Clinic, and is open to other students. The course is focused on direct practice skills for working in child welfare.

This seminar will meet for two and a half hours a week over two terms, Fall and Winter, for a total of three hours course credit. Students enroll for 1.5 credits per term. The course and course assignments are graded Satisfactory, Marginal, Unsatisfactory.

The first term provides an orientation to working in the field of child maltreatment and focuses on case assessment procedures. The second term addresses treatment techniques and case management issues and is taught by Laura Sanders, M.S.W., A.C.S.W. Case discussions and illustrative case examples are an integral part of the course. Opportunities to practice intervention skills are provided.

COURSETOOLS WEBSITE
The Seminar has a Coursetools website. The URL is:

http://coursetools.ummu.umich.edu/2003/fall/intp/730/001.nsf

or to the student gateway site at

http://coursetools.ummu.umich.edu/mycourses
Most of the required reading is on this website. Students will be expected to download those materials from the web and read them. To spare students the cost of a Coursepak, the instructor will make available copies of materials not on the website. Students need both sets of required materials. Most of the material for the course can also be found in Faller, K.C. (2003). *Understanding and assessing child sexual maltreatment*. Sage Publications.

PowerPoint overheads for most sessions will be passed out at the beginning of each class.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. **Students must attend class.** Time spent attending this class is greater by one third than in other courses for the number of credit hours. However, there is a compensatory decrease in reading and written work. This means attendance is crucial to understanding the content of the course. Students should make class attendance a priority. When class must be missed, the student must have a valid excuse. Three unexcused absences will automatically result in a grade of marginal.

2. **Do the reading before class and be prepared to discuss it.** This will not be a great burden because there will not be extensive reading. Except for a limited number of handouts, material is available on the Coursetools website.

3. **Participate in class discussions and exercises.**

4. During the first term, there will be some short written assignments and a **case application written assignment.** The case history and questions to be addressed will be posted on the website during the first week in November. There will be a video that will be made available for students to watch after class. **Students are to work individually on this assignment.** It will be graded Satisfactory, Marginal, Unsatisfactory.

5. During the second term, there will be a project that involves doing a **videotape of an intervention** with a client, preferably a child. **You should let your field placements know that this will be one of your class assignments when you interview for your placement.** If you take this class, it is important that you have a placement that will allow you to videotape. Those students in unusual situations in which they have no clients can negotiate with the instructor an alternative assignment.

**Sept. 7**

**Session 1**

**Course requirements**

**Presentation on Accessing the Coursetools website**

**Counter-transference issues**

**A child-centered approach**

**Video:** Scared Silent narrated by Oprah Winfrey

part 1

**Small group exercise on counter-transference**

**Reading:** Faller, *Child sexual abuse: Intervention and treatment issues*,
chapter 1—Orientation to working in the field of child sexual abuse (students not expected to have read this before the first session)—on the Coursetools website.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT! For Sept. 14, turn in a paragraph describing what you think your counter-transference issues are related to working in the child welfare field. Consider the framework used in the class presentation.

Sept. 14

Session 2

Ethnicity and assessment of child maltreatment

Case example: Salvation Army case
Co-presenters: Melnee D. McPherson, M.S.W., M.A., Ph.D.

Reading: Faller, Interviewing In Child Welfare Practice: Issues In Cultural Competency And Child Sensitivity—on the Coursetools website
          Fontes, L. Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 10—on the Coursetools website.
          Dunkerly & Dalenberg, Secret-Keeping Behaviors—on the Coursetools website.
          Terao, Borrego, & Urquiza, A reporting and response model for culture and child maltreatment—on the Coursetools website.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT! There are 4 case examples at the end of the outline on Interviewing In Child Welfare Practice: Issues in cultural competency and child sensitivity. Select one of these cases and respond to the “Issues” queries and make an interview plan. The assignment should be about a page in length. It is due Sept. 30.

Sept. 21

Session 3—Kathleen in Australia

Medical identification of child abuse—Elaine Pomeranz, M.D.

Reading: Smith et al., Understanding the Medical Diagnosis of Child Maltreatment—on the Coursetools website.
Skinmaps—on the Coursetools website.

Sept. 28

Session 4

Mandated agencies and child maltreatment

Child maltreatment reporting statute
Role of children’s services
Role of law enforcement
Role of the courts
Role of treatment agencies
Reading: *A coordinated response to child abuse and neglect*, Chapter 2—linked & on the website
http://www.calib.com/nccanch/pubs/usermanuals/foundation/chaptwo.cfm

Note: This reading assignment comes from one of the volumes in the CANUSER Series. These volumes can be downloaded in their entirety from the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect website. This is a very valuable and FREE source of information.

Reporting requirements—on the website; linked to the Michigan Family Independence Agency website;

Juvenile Court flowchart—on the Coursetools website

Video: Sacred Silent—part 2
Discussion if we have time

Oct. 5

Session 5

Models for assessment
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional maltreatment

Institutional abuse

Case example: Sherry

Reading: Faller, Indicators of child abuse—on the Coursetools website
Faller, Indicators of child sexual abuse—on the Coursetools website
Faller, Models of assessment (child maltreatment)—on the Coursetools website
APSAC Guidelines Psychosocial Evaluation of Suspected Sexual Abuse in Children—on the Coursetools website
APSAC Guidelines on Investigative Interviewing in Cases of Alleged Child Abuse

Oct. 12

Session 6—Gathering data from children

Abuse focused questioning
Media for interviewing children
- Anatomical dolls
- Anatomical drawings
- Free drawings
- Gingerbread drawings

Case example: Stephanie

Reading: Michigan Forensic Interview Protocol—on the Coursetools website
Faller, Focused Questions for Interviewing Children about Maltreatment and Traumatic Experiences—on the Coursetools website
Faller, Child Interviewing When Sexual Abuse is Suspected—on the Coursetools website

Oct. 19  Session 7—study day; no class

Oct. 26  Session 8--Assessing and interviewing young children.

Case example: Four year old girl

Reading
Lyon, Speaking with children: Advice from investigative interviewers—on the Coursetools website
Parental behavior, harm to the child—on the Coursetools website
Faller, Important developmental milestones—on the Coursetools website
Denver Developmental Screening Test—on the Coursetools website

Nov. 2 Session 9--Gathering data from children’s caretakers
Developmental history
Medical history
Mental health history
Peer relationships
School performance
Abuse specific information

Illustrative case example
Role play of an interview

Faller, Interview data gathered from the mother—on the Coursetools website
CSBI, CBCL—handouts
Trauma Symptom Checklist for Young Children—on the Coursetools website

Nov. 9  Session 10 Interview exercise
Mary Ortega to assist
Interview exercise--select students interview real children

Form for evaluating child forensic interviews—handed out in class

**Nov. 16**  
**Session 11**  
**Interviewing maltreating parents**  
Assessing overall functioning  
Assessing for problem areas of functioning

**Final paper case example available on the website; video of family available**

**Case example:** Murray

**Reading:** *Child sexual abuse: An interdisciplinary manual*, chapter 7——on the Coursetools website.  
Faller, Interview data gathered from the offender—on the Coursetools website  
Family Assessment Clinic, Guidelines for taking a sexual history—on the Coursetools website  
Faller, Screening for Child Maltreatment: Parent/Adult Interviews—on the Coursetools website

**Nov. 23**  
**Session 12**  
**Decision-making**  
Was the child abused?

**Case example:** A case

**Reading:** Faller, Decision-making in child sexual abuse—on the Coursetools website.

**Nov 30**  
**Session 13**  
**Family Assessment**  
Parent-child interaction  
Family functioning

**Case example:** H case

**Reading:** Faller, Parent-child interaction: Assessment and treatment—on the Coursetools website.

**Dec. 7**  
**Session 14**  
**Risk & safety assessment**

**Reading:** Michigan FIA, Safety Assessment & Structured Decision-making—linked; [http://www.mfia.state.mi.us/olmweb/ex/cfp/713-11.pdf](http://www.mfia.state.mi.us/olmweb/ex/cfp/713-11.pdf)
Case example: Who hurt the baby?

Dec. 14  Session 15—Assessing for substance abuse, mental illness, and domestic violence in parents

Case example: Ronnie

Reading: Co-occurrence of substance use, mental health problems, and domestic violence—on the Coursetools website.
Substance abuse assessment—on the Coursetools website.

Paper due

Celebration of the end of the term at Prof. Faller's. Dec. 16 at 7:00; 1613 S. University—across from Angell School.