

THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON
COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES AND HUMAN SERVICES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
FALL 2010
CHILD WELFARE I

Instructor: Pam Reid, MSSA, ACSW, LISW-S
Phone number: (330) 379-1877 (until 10/29/10)
No campus phone number
Office hours: By appointment only
E-mail address: pjreid@uakron.edu

COURSE RATIONALE AND DESCRIPTION

This course is the first of a two-course series that provides the knowledge, concepts and fundamental skills needed for beginning level practice in public and private child welfare. The course focuses on interventions to protect children from abuse, neglect and sexual abuse by strengthening, supporting and empowering their families. The course is organized around four themes. **First**, content is provided on the mission and scope of child welfare practice, articulating the underlying philosophy and values that drive child welfare practice and addressing cultural and relationship issues when working with families. **Second**, the course provides conceptual and practical information on identifying child maltreatment, assessing family needs and strengths and determining both immediate and long term risk to children of future maltreatment. **Third**, information is presented on case planning and applying a casework model to working with families. **Fourth**, content is presented on interviewing skills in a child welfare setting, especially as these skills relate to family assessment and case planning activities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completing this course, students will:

1. Understand the mission and scope of child welfare services. This includes being familiar with the historical roots of child welfare, the legal base of practice, the definition of “family centered” practice, type of maltreatment, and the roles and responsibilities of the child welfare agency.
2. Have beginning knowledge and skill in developing a casework relationship with families, understand the dynamics of resistance and be able to discuss how cultural factors of the client and the worker can influence that relationship.
3. Know the principles of risk and safety assessment, be familiar with models used to assess risk and safety, how to conduct a safety and family assessment and understand how to draw accurate conclusions from the information collected.

4. Be able to develop an intervention plan, know how to engage the client in the service delivery process and understand the importance of community and multidisciplinary involvement and collaboration.
5. Learn how to conduct interviews that engage families, reduce resistance and involve families in the assessment and planning process.

RECOMMENDED TEXT

Rycus, J.S. & Hughes, R.C. (1998). *Field Guide to Child Welfare (Volumes I & II)*. Washington, DC: CWLA Press & Columbus, Oh: Institute for Human Services

HANDOUTS

Numerous handouts will be referenced during class. You may access the handouts at: www.uppua.org. Follow the link to the University of Akron, University Partnership home page, click on *info*, then *handouts*. You may also access the syllabus at this website.

SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS

Supplemental readings may be assigned from a variety of sources. Please see the bibliography for additional readings.

TEACHING/LEARNING METHODS

Content presentation methods may include lecture and discussion, group presentations, role plays, visual and written assignments.

The professor reserves the right to modify and/or change assignments based on the needs of the class.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT'S BEHAVIOR

Each student is expected to attend class on a regular basis. Students are responsible for acquiring any content missed.

The students in the School of Social Work program are expected to be familiar with and follow the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics while a student in the School of Social Work. Some subject matter may be controversial and while students

may vary in their strength and support for a certain position, it is expected that all students will be tolerant of other's viewpoints and will develop an ability to listen and understand each other's perspective. In addition, students are expected to develop the ability to help clients develop their own views perspectives and rather than the student imposing his/her values and opinion on the client.

CELL PHONES

Cell phone usage and texting during class is not permitted.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTS

There will be 2 tests during the semester and 2 written assignments, plus an on-line assignment. Grammar and sentence structure are an integral part of the grade of any paper in this class. Papers turned in late will be dropped one letter grade for each day. Papers are to be typed and double spaced. **Please staple your papers.** Papers held together by paperclips will not be accepted.

On-line assignment	due August 25	10 points
Assignment #1 Values paper	due September 29	30 points
Mid-term exam	October 20	40 points
Assignment #2	due November 15	45 points
Test #2	December 1	45 points
Attendance and in class participation		30 points

COURSE CONTENT

THE COURSE SYLLABUS AND ALL HANDOUTS CAN BE FOUND AT THE FOLLOWING WEBLINK: www.uppua.org

IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE ACCESSING THIS LINK, PLEASE NOTIFY THE PROFESSOR IMMEDIATELY.

Section VI

13-15	Defining case planning	221-409	1
	Engaging families in the case planning process		4,5,6,7,8,9
	Technology of Case planning		10,11,12,13,14,15,16,18
	Reassessment and case review		
	Caseworker's role in the casework relationship		

Take Home Assignment due August 25

Take home assignment can be found at: www.uppua.org it is called "Child Welfare Values and Principles".
Please read the document and turn in page 27, making sure to put your name at the top of the page.

Assignment #1 Values Paper due September 29

Child Welfare workers regularly conduct the business of child welfare in the client's home. This can present its own unique challenges, especially in light of your own values. Consider the following questions and respond with a well-thought out paper 3-5 pages in length.

What values were/are important to your family of origin? How would you identify your culture and the impact it has on your life? What was it like growing up in your home? Was your home messy or neat? Who was responsible for keeping the house in order? Who was the disciplinarian in the home? Who earned the wages in your home? Did you grow up in a one parent or two parent home or some variation? How do you think your understanding of family will impact your ability to work with a family that is different than yours? What do you think might be a problem for you when doing a home visit? Are you fearful of going into someone else's home? Please explain.

Assignment #2

due November 15

Many times during the intake process, child welfare caseworkers must make initial assessments based on limited information and a single contact with the child and family. Interviewing a non-voluntary and resistant client requires special skills and a clear focus on the part of the caseworker to be successful in gaining needed information to determine if a child is safe in his/her home environment.

You will be asked to develop a plan for an intake assessment. The plan should include, but not be limited to the following:

Whom would you interview?

In what order would you interview?

What factors you might need to consider?

What types of family dynamics you would look for?

What type of documentation you would need to validate risk and the need to validate safety?

Also discuss:

How would you introduce yourself?

How would you explain your presence?

What external resources would you utilize?

What background information will you need?

How would you assure the immediate level of risk of the children?

What questions will you need to ask and in what order to determine risk?

You will receive your case assessment during the week of November 1st.

You will need to be able to make a final recommendation regarding the case study assessment. Additional details of this will be provided at the time of receiving the case assessment.