I. Catalogue Description
This course is concerned with physical, emotional and sexual abuse of children, child neglect and exploitation.

II. Course Overview
Social Work 646 is a concentration elective in the Child, Youth, and Family Welfare Concentration, and a required course for students in the Title IV-E Public Child Welfare Training Program. This course is concerned with the physical, emotional and sexual abuse of children, and child neglect. The course is designed to foster critical thinking about child maltreatment as a social phenomenon. Students will be exposed to conceptual, theoretical, and state-of-the-art empirical literature on the causes and consequences of different forms of child maltreatment; historical and current perspectives on child maltreatment intervention; systems- and family-level prevention models; policies that relate to or affect child maltreatment rates; cultural issues in the identification and assessment of child maltreatment; and issues unique to particular subgroups (e.g., families in poverty, minorities). There is a particular emphasis in this course on the prevention of child maltreatment.

This course is not intended as a forum for clinical training in working with children, families, or in systems that deal with child maltreatment issues. However, students should gain a broad understanding of the scope, causes, ethical issues, and consequences related to child abuse and neglect, and be able to apply this knowledge in a wide range of settings that deal with child development and child protection.

III. Course Competencies & Practice Behaviors & Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies Addressed in Course</th>
<th>Practice Behaviors Addressed in Course</th>
<th>Assignment(S) Measuring Behavior</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2: Apply SW ethical principles to guide professional practice</td>
<td>1. Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts. 2. Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Turning Stones Reaction Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1.3: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments</td>
<td>1. Identify &amp; synthesize multiple sources of knowledge to understand policy/practice issues related to advanced practice</td>
<td>1. Final paper-Analysis of Child Protection</td>
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<td>2. Identify and evaluate models of assessment, prevention, intervention and evaluation that are appropriate to advanced practice</td>
<td>2. Turning Stones Reaction Paper, Leading Classroom Discussion Assignment, Advocacy Project</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Utilize effective communication skills with diverse [parties] related to advanced practice</td>
<td>3. Leading Classroom Discussion Assignment</td>
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<td>2.1.4: Engage diversity and difference in practice</td>
<td>1. Gaining sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values when working with diverse groups.</td>
<td>1. Turning Stones Reaction Paper</td>
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<td>2. Demonstrate an understanding of how culture and values affect diverse conceptualizations and constructions of social problems and solutions in advanced practice</td>
<td>2. Turning Stones Reaction Paper, Leading Classroom Discussion Assignment, Advocacy Project</td>
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<td>2.1.6: Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research</td>
<td>1. Critically evaluate and utilize theoretical and empirical research relevant to the problems and/or populations addressed in advanced practice</td>
<td>1. Leading Classroom Discussion, Final Paper-Analysis of Child Protection</td>
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<td>2.1.8: Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being &amp; to deliver effective social work services</td>
<td>1. Evaluate, formulate and advocate for policies that advance outcomes relevant to advanced practice</td>
<td>1. Final Paper-Analysis of Child Protection, Advocacy Project</td>
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<td>2.1.10c: Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities</td>
<td>1. Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals.</td>
<td>1. Final Paper-Analysis of Child Protection</td>
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<td>2.1.10d: Evaluation</td>
<td>1. Apply research skills to analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions in advanced practice</td>
<td>1. Leading Classroom Discussion Assignment, &amp; Final Paper-Analysis of Child Protection</td>
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**IV. Course Content**
The following is an outline of the topics and required readings to be covered in the course, in order of their presentation. Unless otherwise specified by the instructor, these topics and readings will correspond to the dates in the outline. Please note that all readings listed for each course are required; additional recommended readings will be posted from time to time on the course website. Guest lecturers will be introduced as they become available.

**WEEK 1: November 1**

**Course Overview and Review of Syllabus**

We will introduce ourselves and review the course syllabus. Next, we will complete an in-class exercise to develop awareness of personal values and philosophies related to child maltreatment that potentially influence professional practice.

**Required Readings:**

**PART I: Introduction, scope and trends in CPS**

**Required Readings:**

We will gain a sense of the scope or prevalence of child abuse and neglect, recent trends in the incidence of abuse and neglect, and the various sources used to estimate these trends. We will begin to discuss gaps in our knowledge base about child maltreatment and understand the implications of these knowledge deficits.

**PART II: Defining, measuring, and identifying child maltreatment**

**Required Readings:**


We will consider the various issues related to defining and identifying child maltreatment. We will review and discuss the Wisconsin statutory definitions of abuse and neglect, mandatory
reporting, and discuss the influence of societal and personal values on definitions of child maltreatment. Differences in “risk” vs. “safety” assessment will be highlighted.

The Turning Stones reaction paper will be handed out and is due by the beginning of class on week 2 (Learn@UW dropbox).

WEEK 2: November 8

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Turning Stones reaction paper
Paper is to be uploaded to the Learn@UW dropbox by the beginning of class.

PART I: What Does Child Protection Work Look Like?

Required Readings:


We will examine and discuss the NASW standards for child welfare. We will be discussing the different approaches to responding to allegations of child maltreatment. We will further discuss ethical dilemmas and ambiguities in CPS practice and focus on strategies to improve CPS practice. Class discussion will also include examination of how power inequities impact child protection policy and practice.

PART II: Parenting: socioeconomic status, culture, and race and ethnicity

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:

Before delving deeper into an exploration of child maltreatment, it is important to consider the construct of parenting, in general, since it is often within the care-giving context that child maltreatment occurs. We will discuss whether race and socioeconomic class are related to
parenting styles, and whether they influence the judgments we make about others’ care-giving abilities. We will also examine the impact of gender, assessing the mother and father role, as it relates to child maltreatment and involvement within the child protection system.

We will focus on race and class given the pervasive over-representation of African American children and poor children in child welfare systems in the US. In addition, we will identify several cultural practices that can be confused with maltreatment.

**WEEK 3: November 15**

**Prevention of Child Maltreatment**

**Required Readings:**


**Recommended Readings:**


In this segment, we will examine initiatives that aim to prevent child maltreatment for those children at risk for abuse/neglect. We will also explore the difficulty of designing preventive interventions that do what they set out to do: prevent incidents of child maltreatment from happening.

Next, we will examine specific child abuse and neglect prevention strategies: home-visiting programs, parent education, interventions in early childhood and school settings, etc., and discuss the strengths/weaknesses of the approaches.
Week 4: November 22

PART I: Sexual Abuse

Required Readings:

This session will include discussion on controversies in defining sexual abuse, the primary theories and risk factors associated with childhood sexual abuse victimization, and an overview of normative and atypical sexual behaviors in children. We will also address issues in sexual abuse disclosure by a child, and the role of non-offending caregivers upon disclosure.

PART II: Neglect

Required Readings:


Neglect is one of the most difficult forms of maltreatment to define, and can be more easily confused with poverty than other forms of maltreatment. We will discuss several typologies and causal theories of neglect, the role of poverty in child neglect, and current perspectives on “failure-to-thrive” as it pertains to child neglect. We will also consider the risk and protective factors for child neglect that are identified in empirical literature.

WEEK 5: November 29

PART I: Physical Abuse

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:
In this half, we will focus on physical abuse including a review of common visual signs of abuse and various conditions and folk remedies that may be confused with physical abuse. We also consider various theories of why physical child abuse occurs and discuss how racial and class biases may influence definitions and reports of physical abuse. We will also consider the risk and protective factors for physical abuse that are identified in empirical literature.

PART II: Emotional Abuse

**Required Readings:**

We will consider emotional abuse and educational neglect; two abuse typologies that are individually assessed in some, but not all, states.

**Week 6: December 6**

**PART I: Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment**

**Required Readings:**


In this class session, we will review the prevalence of co-occurring domestic violence and child maltreatment, and the mechanisms linking domestic violence to various forms of child maltreatment. We will also focus on how CPS handles cases of alleged maltreatment when domestic violence is a co-occurring factor, and controversial “failure-to-protect” child welfare policies.

**PART II: Substance abuse and child maltreatment**

**Required Readings:**

**Recommended Readings:**


In this segment, we will discuss the state of the knowledge base on the effects of prenatal substance exposure on the fetus and developing child. We will also consider the debates on child welfare policies related to mandatory reporting of substance-exposed infants and universal screening for fetal substance exposure. In addition, we will explore how the use of various types of substances may affect parenting/care giving behaviors.

**WEEK 7: December 13**

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: Analysis of Current Topic in Child Protection**

Paper is to be uploaded to the Learn@UW dropbox by the beginning of class.

**PART I: Consequences of child maltreatment**

**Required Readings:**


One of the most exciting emerging areas of child maltreatment research relates to our increasing understanding of the psychobiological sequelae of child maltreatment, and how childhood stress and trauma relate to subsequent health and mental health outcomes in children and adults.

**Part II: Evidence-based interventions for maltreated children**

**Required Readings:**


In this portion, we will take a brief look at evidence-based interventions for maltreated children. We will further discuss the emerging concept of trauma-informed care and its implication for services to maltreated children.

**Week 8: December 20**

**Part I: Secondary traumatic stress and the child welfare professional**

**Required Readings:**


As child welfare professionals, we are often directly and personally affected by the emotional stressors that accompany our day-to-day work. Not only does secondary traumatic stress have a personal impact on professionals, but also on the agencies and clients we work with. We will discuss secondary traumatic stress and individual coping skills and social support strategies that the research shows will help professionals minimize the negative impact of secondary traumatic stress.

**PART II: Brief presentations of final paper and class wrap-up**

In our last session, students will be given time to discuss their final papers. Students will provide a brief presentation of the findings of their papers. We will then discuss strategies for disseminating this information to the policy and practice community, and for integrating these results into future practice with families at risk for child maltreatment. Finally, time for feedback to the instructor on course strengths and areas for improvement will be allotted.

**V. Texts and Reading Materials for the Course**

Readings are available through the Learn@UW site at the UW-Madison. Periodically, I will post additional articles to the course website—these readings will be recommended rather than required. Other course material (e.g., handouts, further instructions on course assignments, etc.) will be posted to the course website. It is essential that you check the course website frequently for both required and recommended course material.

The book, *Turning Stones*, by Marc Parent, can be purchased (approx. $10) via online booksellers (e.g. Ebay, Barnes and Noble, Amazon, etc.), or may be found in used bookstores in your area.
VI. Evaluation of Competencies and Practice Behaviors: Assignments, Grading and Methods

The assignments for SW646 offer some flexibility so that each student can focus their coursework on topics of personal and/or professional interest. However, the issues covered in every week of class are likely to be relevant across interest areas, and students are expected to read weekly material ahead of time, come to class with questions and comments, and participate in class discussions. Please see section VII: Attendance Policy for details on how missed classes will affect your grade.

Students will be evaluated on the following assignments:

1. Turning Stones reaction paper 20%
2. Advocacy project 20%
3. Leading classroom discussion 20%
4. Final paper-Analysis of Current Topic in Child Protection 40%

Grades are not assigned on a curve. There are no extra credit or make-up assignments. Points earned on each assignment and your final grade will be assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>Outstanding; surpasses expectations in most areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>88-93</td>
<td>Surpasses expectations in many areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82-87</td>
<td>Meets minimum expectations in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>76-81</td>
<td>Meets expectations in some areas; falls below in others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-75</td>
<td>Falls below expectations in most areas, not acceptable graduate work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-69</td>
<td>Below expectations in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;64</td>
<td>Fails to meet minimal expectations in all areas, not acceptable work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note about grading: Your goal for this and other courses should be to make the most of your learning experience, and not to simply “get an A.” Your expectations about the grades you receive on assignments should be wholly based on (1) the extent to which you respond to assignment objectives, (2) the quality of your writing (to include grammar, spelling, organization, and clarity), (3) your ability to demonstrate critical thinking, and (4) your level of effort and engagement with the course and assigned material. If there is something about an assignment that is unclear to you, it is your job to bring this to my attention. Grade expectations should NOT be based on what you have received in other courses—this is never a legitimate argument for appealing a grade. If you have an issue with a grade that you receive in this course, please document the reasons for your appeal in writing with specific attention to the four points raised above and I will give your appeal my careful attention.

Assignments

1. **Turning Stones Reaction Paper (20% of final grade)**
Papers should be 3-4 pages **maximum**, double spaced, 12-point font, and standard margins.

Address the following in your reaction paper:
1. Discuss how this book impacted you emotionally and cognitively. (Be specific about the
particular points that caught your attention and your reactions to them). Discuss how this book will impact your professional responses to children and families with similar issues.

2. Choose one case example from the book. Using this case, identify and describe one striking ethical dilemma related to CPS work. How might you have dealt with these issues similarly or differently? Why?

3. Choose a different case example from the book and describe the CPS systemic factors that affected the investigation. How might the investigation process have been changed in the absence of these systemic influences? Suggest one or more potential solutions for the systemic factors you identified.

This assignment is to be uploaded to the Learn@UW dropbox by the beginning of our Week 2 class. A grading rubric and additional assignment information is available on the Learn@UW course website.

2. Child Welfare Advocacy Project (20% of final grade)
Examples of potential advocacy topics include: Access to healthcare for children in foster care, access to early intervention (0-3) services, recruitment of foster care parents, etc. Papers should be 3-4 pages maximum, double spaced, 12-point font, and standard margins. Papers must address the following elements and site all sources:

1. Define the issue
2. Describe who is affected and how they are affected
3. Identify causes of the issue
4. Identify and outline a proposed solution

Advocacy topics must be approved by the instructor by Week 3. This assignment is to be uploaded to the Learn@UW dropbox by the beginning of our Week 6 class. A grading rubric and additional assignment information is available on the Learn@UW course website.

3. Leading Class Discussion of Assigned Reading (20% of grade)
For this assignment, you will facilitate discussion of one class reading. You will be allotted 10-15 minutes of class time. You must: 1) summarize the key points, themes and/or findings from your reading, 2) identify why this information is important for CPS and/or child welfare practice and 3) formulate at least 3 questions based on the reading that will stimulate lively, insightful classroom discussion. In addition, this assignment requires you to turn in a 1-2 page maximum, doubled-spaced, standard margin briefing paper that includes the required information above and your discussion questions. Briefing papers must be uploaded by Learn@UW by the beginning of class on the day you facilitate discussion. A grading rubric for this assignment will be available on Learn@UW by week 2 of class. Students will sign up for a reading during the first week of class.

NOTE: Your grade is based on your oral presentation in class NOT what is stated on your briefing paper, i.e. if you did not say it, even if it is in your briefing paper, it does not count. This assignment measures your ability to analyze a reading and communicate it efficiently and effectively to others and to initiate thoughtful discussion of the material.
4. Final Paper-Analysis of Current Topic in Child Protection (40% of final grade)

This assignment requires you to complete a review of the research literature on a current topic in child protection (a list of topics will be provided by the instructor). Students will then make recommendations to improve current child welfare practice. The format for this assignment is a 7-8 page, double spaced, 12-point font, and standard margins. This paper will be due at the beginning of class on week 7. Students will also be required to report to the class your recommendations on improving current child welfare practice. The presentation will be a brief, 5 minute presentation that summarizes your paper and your recommendations. Time will be allotted during Week 8 in class. Details on this assignment and a grading rubric will be posted to the course website by week 3.

Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Attend class weekly and read required materials prior to the lecture class. Please see Section VII of this syllabus for the attendance policy.
- Attend and actively participate in in-class discussion, including any on-line discussions initiated by the Instructor.
- Turn off all cell phone tones and pagers during class (set them to vibrate) and to refrain from taking calls, ”tweeting”, texting, using instant messaging, sending or responding to any social networking or email venues during class, or using the internet for anything other than directed class work. You will be able to check messages during breaks each class session. (If you experience a personal or family crisis, please notify the instructor upon arriving for class or beforehand that you may need to respond to a call during class.)
- Complete all assignments as required.
- Respond to any requests by the instructor to re-write assignments due to deficiencies in the written product, including grammar and APA style requirements.
- Advocate for yourself and present any questions or concerns to the instructor that may require the instructor to adjust her presentation to enhance learning for all.

The instructor is expected to:

- Be available to students to answer questions and to respond to student concerns.
- Begin and end classes on time.
- Create a comfortable and open atmosphere conducive to learning.
- Assure that course objectives are met.
- Assure that the classroom and course materials are accessible (per ADA requirements) to all students.

VII. Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Attendance

Due to the accelerated nature of courses in the University of Wisconsin-Madison Part-Time MSW Program, students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and to arrive on time.

Promptness
Prompt arrival to all courses is required.

- Instructors may take actions they deem appropriate if a student is consistently tardy
- Instructors may also consider a significantly late arrival or early departure as an absence

**Absence**

To ensure a quality educational experience, students must attend and participate in classes.

- **Attendance** will be taken at each class and students’ level of participation noted
- **Excused & Unexcused Absences:**
  - The first unexcused absence will result in a student’s grade being dropped one full grade
  - The second unexcused absence will place the student at risk for failing the course
  - On a case by case basis, it is left to the instructor’s discretion as to what is defined as an excused absence as well as to determine appropriate follow up plans

- Additional graded make-up work appropriate for the content missed may be assigned for excused and unexcused absences. Students in SWS 646 will be required to complete a 6-page reaction paper on the missed week’s readings. Students are responsible for completing any class requirements for the day missed, and for obtaining from a fellow classmate any assignments, materials, and communications missed due to absence, late arrival, or early departure.

- Students who **must** be absent due to inclement weather or other emergencies should contact the instructor prior to the start of class to be considered for an *excused* absence.

- **Inclement Weather Policy**
  - If there is inclement weather across the Program area, students will be expected to check their email prior to leaving for class to confirm whether classes are cancelled.
  - If classes are not cancelled but an individual student concludes he/she cannot safely travel to reach his/her class site, the student must contact his/her instructor(s) regarding his/her plan to not travel. This absence will be considered excused and makeup work may be assigned.
  - If classes at one or both sites are cancelled by the Program Director and Co-Director, then no makeup assignment will be required for those respective students; however, the class time will be rescheduled. The Program Coordinator will notify students by email within 72 hours of the cancellation regarding the planned class day/time additions.

**Student Behavior Policy**

In order to learn, we must be open to the views of people different from ourselves. Each and every voice in the classroom is important and brings with it a wealth of experiences, values and beliefs. In this time we share together over the semester, please honor the uniqueness of your fellow classmates, and appreciate the opportunity we have to learn from each other. Please respect your fellow students’ opinions and refrain from personal attacks or demeaning comments of any kind. Finally, remember to keep confidential all issues of a personal or professional nature discussed in class.