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 an elective course for BSW students and Social Welfare Majors, is a required course for undergraduate and graduate students in the Title IV-E Program, and is an elective in the Child, Youth, and Family Welfare focus area. 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; system- and family-level prevention models; policies that relate to or affect child maltreatment rates; cultural issues in child maltreatment; and issues unique to particular subgroups (e.g., families in poverty, gay and lesbian parents or children).

This course is not intended as a specific forum for clinical training in working with children, families, or systems that deal with child maltreatment issues, but will expose students to current practice strategies, cases, and ethical dilemmas that face practitioners in social work settings. 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 SW settings that deal with child development and child protection.

III. Course Competencies & Practice Behaviors & Assignments

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<tr>
<th>Competencies Addressed in Course</th>
<th>Practice Behaviors Addressed in Course</th>
<th>Assignment(s) Measuring Behavior</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.1.2: Apply SW ethical principles to guide professional</td>
<td>* Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts.</td>
<td>Turning Stones Reaction Paper &amp; Values Exercise</td>
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<td>Practice Area</td>
<td><strong>2.1.3: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments</strong></td>
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<td>* Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.</td>
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<td>* Identify &amp; synthesize multiple sources of knowledge to understand policy/practice issues related to advanced practice;</td>
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<td>* Identify and evaluate models of assessment, prevention, intervention and evaluation that are appropriate to advanced practice;</td>
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<td>* Utilize effective communication skills with diverse [parties] related to advanced practice</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 for each course are listed as required or recommended. Additional recommended readings may be given by the instructor and/or be posted from time to time on the course website (Learn@UW).

Week One
*Monday, June 16, 2014
Introduction and overview of course
What does child protection work look like and societal expectations of families?

In our first class, we will introduce ourselves, go over the course syllabus, and review the instructor’s and students’ expectations of each other. We will also view a film on emergency child protection work. Our discussion of the film and required readings will include highlighting ethical dilemmas and ambiguities in CPS practice and on strategies to improve CPS practice. We will also briefly review the history of child protective services and explore societal expectations of parents.

In-class film:
Frontline: Failure to Protect, Part Two. Public Broadcasting Service (PBS).

Required Reading:
Chapter 48-Wisconsin Children’s Code
How the Child Welfare System Works

*Wednesday, June 18, 2014
Topic: Defining, measuring, and identifying child maltreatment
We will consider various issues related to defining and identifying child maltreatment. We will review and discuss the Wisconsin statutory definitions of abuse and neglect, the principles and origins of mandatory reporting, and discuss the influence of societal and personal values on definitions of child maltreatment. Class discussion will also include examination of how power inequities impact child protection policy and practice. Differences in “risk” vs. “safety” assessment will be highlighted.

In-class exercise: Comparison of state risk/safety assessment instruments

Required Reading:
Recommended Reading:

**Topic:** Scope and trends in maltreatment
Today we will also 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.


**Required Reading:**

Recommended Reading:

**Week Two**
*Monday, June 23, 2014*

**Topic:** Prevention of child maltreatment
Today we will first review the results of the Values Assessment exercise you completed with a partner. During this class we will explore prevention from an evidence-based perspective. 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. We will examine alternative/differential response initiatives that aim to prevent child maltreatment for those children at lower 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.

**Required Reading:**
Topic: Parenting: socioeconomic status, culture, and race and ethnicity

Before diving deeper into an exploration of child maltreatment, it is important to consider the construct of parenting or care-giving, 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 focus on race and class given the over-representation of African American children and poor children in child welfare systems. In addition, we will identify several cultural practices that can be confused with maltreatment.

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

***VALUES EXERCISE DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS***

*Wednesday, June 25, 2014

Topic: Neglect

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.

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

**Topic: Physical abuse**

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 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. A short in-class film will help shed light on how to identify physical abuse in practice.

**In-class film:** Visual Assessment of Physical Child Abuse and Neglect for Non-Medical Professionals. American Humane Association.

**Required Reading:**


**Recommended Reading:**


**Week Three**

*Monday, June 30, 2014

**Topic: Sexual Abuse**

This session will include discussion on controversies in defining sexual abuse, the primary theories and risk factors associated with child 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. A discussion of the impact of intra-familial sexual abuse on non-abused siblings will be explored as well. An in-class film shows survivors of childhood sexual abuse telling their stories.

**In-class film:** Breaking Silence. Aquarius Productions.

**Required Reading:**

Saewyc, E.M., Skay, C.L., Pettingell, S.L., Reis, E.A., Bearinger, L., Resnick, M., Murphy, A., and

**Recommended Reading:**

*Wednesday, July 2, 2014

**Topic: Substance abuse and child maltreatment: Prenatal drug and alcohol exposure, and effects of substance abuse on parenting**

Today’s class is designed to increase your 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. We will also explore how the use of various types of substances affects parenting/caregiving behaviors. We will also watch an episode (“Sandra”) from the Television Show “Interventions,” and discuss the unique challenges of substance-abusing parents in the child welfare system.

**In-class film: Intervention: Sandra. A&E Television Networks.**

**Required Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**

**Topic: Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment**

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.

We will also spend time in small and large groups discussing the book Turning Stones: My Days and Nights with Children at Risk, by Marc Parent.

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:


***BOOK REACTION PAPER DUE BY THE START OF CLASS***

**Week Four**
*Monday, July 7, 2014*

**Topic: Emotional abuse and Evidence-based Clinical Interventions for Maltreated Children**
We will consider emotional abuse; an abuse typology that researchers have found difficult to define and child protection workers have found difficult to assess and substantiate. We will then take a brief look at evidence-based clinical interventions for maltreated children. We will discuss the shortage of clinicians trained in these strategies and discuss ways in which CPS workers could employ aspects of these interventions in their work.

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:

**Topic: Psychobiological Consequences of Child Maltreatment**
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.
Required Reading:


*Wednesday, July 9, 2014*

**Topic: Student Presentations**

On our final day together, students will be given time to present their final papers and recommendations on their selected topics. A presentation of the findings will be prepared and students will present and lead discussion on their topic area. 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.

On this day we will also discuss the lessons learned throughout the course. We will reflect on system issues and how they impact services to children and families. Finally, time for feedback to the instructor on course strengths and areas for improvement will be allotted.

***CLASS PARTICIPATION FORM DUE***

***LAST CLASS TO HAND IN CRITICAL REVIEWS; DUE BY THE START OF CLASS***

**FINAL PAPER (Current Topic in Child Protection) DUE BY THE START OF CLASS**

**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. $16) via online booksellers (e.g. Borders, Barnes and Noble, Amazon, etc.), or may be found in used bookstores. A small number of books are available through the UW library system and the Madison Public library system as well.

Throughout the semester we will incorporate media reports on child abuse and neglect. We will review these samples of media reports on child abuse and neglect. Students are encouraged to share articles and news reports they have found pertaining to the designated week’s topics. The class will discuss how these portrayals do and do not match up with what we have learned.

**VI. Evaluation of Competencies and Practice Behaviors: Assignments, Grading and Methods**

The assignments for 646 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** 15%
2. **Values exercise** 15%
3. **Critical reading review** 20%
4. **Final paper and presentation – Current Topic in Child Protection** 40%
5. **Class participation** 10%

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:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>Outstanding; surpasses expectations in most areas</td>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>76-81</td>
<td>Meets expectations in some areas; falls below in others</td>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;64</td>
<td>Fails to meet minimal expectations in all areas, not acceptable work</td>
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**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 and 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 responsibility 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** (15% of final grade)

   Papers should be 3-4 pages maximum, double spaced, 12-point font, and standard margins.

   Address the following questions in your reaction paper:
   1. 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?
   2. Choose a different case example from the book and describe 2 or more 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 due by or at the beginning of class (8:30am) on July 2, 2014. A grading rubric is available on the Learn@UW course website.
2. “Perceptions of Child Maltreatment” Values Exercise (15% of final grade)

As we will learn in class and from our readings, race, culture, socio-economic status, ethnicity and even geographic location all inform our values on what constitutes child abuse and neglect outside of legal definitions. These values impact not only how we, as social work practitioners proceed in our duties, but impact how policy is made, interventions carried out, legal sanction and even what is reported to authorities by mandated reporters.

Your assignment is twofold:

1) Complete the survey yourself first. Then administer the survey to a person, who is not a member of the class, and who identifies themselves as being another race or ethnicity from your racial or ethnic identity.

2) Compare your responses with that person. Discuss significant differences and similarities and write a short (not to exceed 3 pages, double spaced, and 12 point font) summary of the differences and similarities, if any, and the implications you see for your practice.

This assignment represents 15% of your total grade and is due at the beginning of class (8:30am) on June 23, 2014. You will submit to the instructor the summary as well as the surveys themselves. The partner survey can be done via interview format, but the partner response must be submitted. A grading rubric is available on the Learn@UW course website.

3. Critical Reading Review (20% of final grade)

Papers should be 3-4 pages maximum, double spaced, 12-point font, and standard margins. You will summarize (no more than 1 page) and critique (at least 2 pages) the substantive information in the reading. The critique should include a statement of the strengths (what the authors did well, and why it is important for social work practice) and weaknesses (what they did not do well or failed to do). The content should demonstrate a critical reaction to the reading, not only a summary or statement of delight or disgust re: the content. You are expected to be an intelligent consumer of research content, based on comparisons of related material, your education and experience, and the applicability of the material to your practice.

The articles that count toward this assignment must be empirical in nature (rather than conceptual or theoretical only). Those with asterisks (*) in the syllabus are considered empirical. The critical reading reviews are due at the beginning of the class session in which the reading will be discussed. If you miss this deadline, you must choose a different week on which to base your critical review. Adherence to the APA rules for citations is expected (recent updates to the APA form can be obtained at http://www.apastyle.org/manual/whats-new.aspx ) It is your responsibility to understand the rules for book, magazine and on-line source citations. Details on this course assignment and a grading rubric will be posted to the course website. This assignment is due no later than the beginning of class (8:30am) on July 9, 2014.

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 pertinent 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 3-4 page single-spaced memorandum.
Students will also be required to complete a presentation on their topic. The in-class presentation should be 15-20 minutes for each student. Details on this course assignment and a grading rubric will be posted to the course website.

This assignment is due at the beginning of class (8:30 am) on July 9, 2014.

5. **Class Participation (10% of final grade)**
Your grade for class participation is based on attendance, active participation in class discussions, and the quality of your participation (i.e., you need to demonstrate that you are prepared for class and have thought critically about the weekly readings and topics of discussion).

**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.
- 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 or 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**

**Academic Misconduct:**
Please note the following definition of academic honesty. “Academic honesty requires that the course work (drafts, reports, examinations, papers) a student presents to an instructor honestly and accurately reflects the student’s own academic efforts. UWS14.03 cites that (among other things) Academic Misconduct Subject to Disciplinary Action includes an “act in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation”. Examples include, but are not limited to: “cutting and pasting text from the web without quotation marks or proper
citation; paraphrasing from the web without crediting the source, using another person’s ideas, words or research and presenting it as one’s own by not properly crediting the originator, etc.

Reading Assignments:
Students are expected to have read all assigned material prior to the class date under which the readings are listed above. Reading and critically evaluating what you have read is necessary so that you can learn, actively participate in class discussions, and successfully complete written assignments.

Written Assignment Policy:
All written assignments are to be either typed or computer-generated. Please format these assignments using one-inch margins, double-spacing, and a Times New Roman 12-point font. Always include a cover sheet (not counted as one of the required pages) with the title of the paper, your name, the date turned into the instructor, course number, and course title (do not put this information on the first page of your paper). All assignments should be checked thoroughly for correct spelling and grammar.

Late Assignment Policy:
The assignments listed above are due at the beginning of the class period on the date specified. Students who believe they have a legitimate reason for turning in a late assignment should contact the instructor prior to the due date. Unapproved late assignments will be marked down three points for each day they are late.

Student Accommodations:
If you require accommodations to obtain equal access to this class or to any assignments that I may give, please contact me as soon as possible. I want all my students to have an excellent learning experience.

Technology in class:
A minimal level of external distractions is essential to a productive learning environment. Cell phones and iPods are not to be used in class, and laptop computers/tablets/iPads are to be used only for unobtrusive note-taking (and only if there are no complaints from classmates). If you choose to use a computer in class, you cannot have a web browser open at any time.

Attendance & Class Participation Policy:
Class attendance is required of all students. Attendance is defined as arriving on time, staying through the entire class, and leaving only for scheduled breaks. In order for you and your fellow classmates to benefit from this course, attendance and active participation are expected. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class and I will note your level of participation. If you are unable to attend class, please email me prior to class so that you can receive an excused absence; you may receive one per semester. Four points will be deducted from your grade for each unexcused absence incurred.

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. The following is a list of expectations of student’s display of personal integrity.

- Please turn off cell phones before entering the classroom.
- Respect another person’s viewpoint with which you may disagree.
- Respect another student’s right to be heard.
- Read the material and be prepared for class.
- Actively participate in classroom discussion.

If you have a concern that needs to be brought to the class’s attention, please speak with this instructor.

In addition, the course will serve as a forum:

- To further students’ awareness of the complex nature of child maltreatment and how this complexity engenders ethical issues and affects professional work with children and families;
- To encourage further development and awareness of personal values related to child maltreatment that potentially influence professional practice;
- To appreciate the roles of historical, societal, and cultural values intertwined with child maltreatment, with a particular emphasis on those related to race, class, religion, gender and sexual orientation;
- To enhance skills to become a critical consumer of research and media stories of child abuse and neglect;
- To consider the role of poverty in the etiology of child maltreatment;
- To learn about common risk and protective factors for different forms of child maltreatment;
- To gain sensitivity about the impact of child maltreatment and social welfare policies on diverse groups of children and families (e.g., from various racial and ethnic backgrounds, gay and lesbian persons, single parents); and
- To pinpoint gaps in our knowledge base of child maltreatment and understand the implications of these knowledge deficits on our professional practice with children and their families.