
Risk Assessment and Interviewing Skills (SW 5484)

University of Minnesota School of Social Work

Child Abuse Prevention Studies: <http://www.mincava.umn.edu/caps>

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Course Instructors

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January 2002 - May 2002 on Wednesdays, 5:10 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Course objectives

Social Work 5484 is the fourth and final course in the Child Abuse Prevention Graduate Level II Certificate Program. It is expected that a student in this upper division class will have completed the Level I CAPS courses or be well grounded in child maltreatment knowledge through experience and or knowledge. This is an interdisciplinary course for all professionals interested in preventing child maltreatment. The focus of the course will be on building skills in child maltreatment risk/resilience assessment and best practice forensic and clinical interviewing methods. The philosophy of the course is based on ecological theory and the notion that we will miss important opportunities for change if we only focus our attention on assessing risk of child maltreatment without similarly assessing capacity or protective factors and processes. The course requires an evidence based approach to child maltreatment and thus requires students to link macro/micro practices to relevant theory, research or practice wisdom by developing innovative assessment tools and interviewing skills. It is likely that students successfully completing this course will be better able to structure child maltreatment interventions, and better able to implement effective program and policy decisions. This is a "hands on" learning course requiring active participation. In this course the student will:

- Examine contemporary child maltreatment risk assessment methods
- Compare risk assessment tools today
- Organize child maltreatment research by calibrating risk/resilience
- Construct a strength based, culturally sensitive risk assessment guide

- Understand ethnographic, strength based interviewing principles and methods in forensic and clinical settings
- Develop effective culturally competent interviewing practices relevant to child maltreatment and family violence

Course format

This 15 week course meets weekly on Wednesdays from 5pm - 8pm beginning January 23rd, 2002. The class format will use multi-modes of instruction including lectures, videos, overheads, role play, simulated demonstrations, videotaped interviewing, guest lectures as well as small and large group discussion.

Feedback: Students are asked to evaluate each class session. This assists the instructor in meeting student needs and problem solving classroom issues.

Course expectations for students

1. Attendance and participation are critical to this skill building intensive course. Attendance will be taken. Absence or tardiness will be reflected in the course participation grade.
2. Complete required readings prior to the assigned class.
3. Complete assignments on time. Late assignments will not be accepted without prior notice to the instructor.
4. Provide constructive feedback as part of an on-going assessment of the course.

Course expectations for instructor

1. Provide atmosphere within the classroom that is respectful and conducive to learning.
2. Organize course material in understandable manner.
3. Provide individualized assistance and consultation to students concerning course expectations, content, or assignments at their request.
4. Encourage and facilitate classroom discussion.
5. Share enthusiasm for the course subject and student learning.
6. See further expectations in this syllabus under "Creating a Supportive Learning Environment".

Attendance

The class meets weekly for one semester. Students are expected to attend each class. If there is an emergency, contact instructor or TA.

Readings

There is no text for this course. There is a reading packet, available at the St Paul Bookstore and on reserve at the St Paul campus library.

Course requirements

Grading is similar to most graduate courses: organization, clarity of ideas, creativity, and evidence of ability to distinguish research, method, and theory are all part of instructor consideration in assigning point value to student work. APA style is required of all written work.

About grades

The grade of "A" denotes superior performance that is both consistent and outstanding. This student demonstrates an ability to master the key course concepts and critically analyze the prevention implications. The grade "B" denotes good, steady, adequate performance with excellent understanding of key concepts and implications for prevention. The grade "C" denotes a performance that is acceptable but likely inadequate to complete CAPS certificate program. The grade "D" denotes unacceptable work and the student will not be able to complete the certificate program. The grade "F" denotes failure: an unacceptable performance and an inability to demonstrate understanding of the material. "P" (PASS) denotes a grade of A-C.

Incompletes

An Incomplete is discouraged. If an incomplete is necessary, students are required to make this request before the end of the course and a written contract with the instructor indicating completion date before end of next quarter, is mandatory. Failure to do so will result in a grade being submitted based on the work the student did for the course. Incompletes not completed by the end of the following semester automatically convert to an "F".

Grade criteria

As indicated above, the criteria for doing assignments in this course are generally those of any graduate level course. Organization, clarity of ideas, ideas supported by data, creativity, and evidence of an ability to apply course learning are some of the criteria for grading. Submission of work which is not one's own will result automatically in no credit for the course.

Grading scale:

- 93-100% . . . A
- 90-92% . . . A-
- 87-89% . . . B+
- 83-86% . . . B

- 80-82% . . . B-
- 77-79% . . . C+
- 73-76% . . . C
- 70-72% . . . C-
- 67-69% . . . D+
- 63-66% . . . D

Students will be graded on the following: (Points listed are possible points only.)

Participation: 20 points

Students are expected to attend every session and to be prepared to discuss the reading assignments or present assignments due for class. This course requires extraordinary student involvement during class and outside class. The 20 points reflects that commitment.

Three main projects:

Risk assessment project:40 points

Due March 6, 2002 This is a group project hopefully for those interested in the same domain of child maltreatment or family violence. Guidelines for the project: Evidence based approach.

- Analyze of disciplinary connection to child maltreatment and /or family violence: 5 points
- Support risk and protective factor research/theory: 10 points
- Develop a 3-5 factor Risk/Resilience Assessment Tool: 15 points Present tool in a 8-10 page paper Defend your assessment tool in class presentation
- Practice applicability of the tool itself: 10 points

Analyze an existing interviewing tool:20 points

Due April 10, 2002 Acquire a copy of the interviewing tool currently being used by a Twin Cities Agency that matches your area of interest.

Guidelines for the project:

- Present your tool to the class on April 10th. Bring copies of the tool for each class member (unless there are copy rights in place).
- Using the research presented in class, defend the strengths and weakness of this interviewing tool. For instance: Is this an empirically valid tool? Does it assess both risk and resilience? etc...

Written analysis of your in-class interview: 20 points

Due May 8, 2002 The majority of class time on May 1st will be spent practicing the interviewing skills we have been discussing. This assignment requires a 2-3 page paper critiquing of one of the interviews you conduct.

Creating a supportive learning environment philosophy

This class operates with the following values:

- Clear work responsibilities of students and instructor as listed in syllabus
- Instructor will prepare materials congruent with class objectives
- Students will complete class readings and assignments prior to class
- Respect for others
- Recognition and sensitivity toward diversity is required
- Creation of a safe atmosphere for open discussion and learning
- Special needs of students and faculty will be embraced and accommodated
- Instructor commitment to share enthusiasm for the subject

Perfume and scent policy

Please refrain from wearing scented personal care products. This request is made in order to accommodate those disabled by Environmental Illness. Persons who wear scented products in classrooms and other relatively small enclosures will be asked to refrain from doing so.

Disability

Students with special needs such as hearing impairment, sight impairment, need for interpreter, audiotape, alternative syllabus and course material format, physical needs, or other need which might enhance student learning, please let your instructor or TA know so that we may accommodate you. the University of Minnesota has a Disabilities Service Office at (612)625-8281 which has been helpful to others.

Course Schedule

Class one - Wednesday January 23, 2002 Introduction to risk assessment

Class one objectives:

- Introduction to the course

- Syllabus and course expectations
- Introduction to instructor and fellow classmates
- Explore students interest in child maltreatment
- Establish importance of course content
- Overview of:
 - History of child maltreatment and family violence
 - Theories of child maltreatment
 - Review major research and theory regarding risk and protective factor contributing to the likelihood of child maltreatment and family violence
 - How Resiliency Theory is applied to risk assessment
 - Using an ecological framework for understanding child maltreatment
 - IPC model of assessment

Readings for class one: No readings for this session

Class two - Wednesday January 30, 2002 Risk assessment

Class two objectives:

- Define Risk Assessment
- Review the history of Risk Assessment in child maltreatment and family violence
- Identifying the purpose of Risk Assessment tools today
- Look at the ethics involved in using Risk Assessments
- Understand Micro vs Macro risk assessments
- Know the difference between face validity and empirically based risk assessment
- Begin to look at some of the types of Risk Assessments: Child Abuse Potential
- Inventory, Child Well-Being Scales and Parent Stress Inventory

Readings for class two: Cicchinelli, L. (1995). Risk Assessment: Expectations and Realities: The APSAC Advisor 8 (4), 3-8.

Daro, D. (1995). The Use of Risk Assessment in Child Abuse Prevention. The APSAC Advisor 8 (4)11-.

Milner, J.S. (1995) Assessing physical child abuse risk: The child abuse potential inventory. Clinical Psychology Review, 14, 547-583.

Milner, J.S. and Crouch, J.L. (1997). Impact and detection of response distortions on parenting measures used to assess risk for child physical abuse. Journal of Personality Assessment, 69 (3), 633-650.

LaFiosca, T. and Loyd, B.H. (1986). Defensiveness and the assessment of parental stress and anxiety. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 15 (3), 254-259.

Class three - Wednesday February 6, 2002 Strengths based assessments

Guest speaker: Jane Gilgun, University of Minnesota

Class three objectives:

- Understanding the significance of assets in models of risk assessment
- Develop guidelines for developing strength based assessment tools
- Enhancing positive outcomes by developing evidence based intervention from risk assessments

Readings for class three: Gilgun, J. (1999). CASPAR: New Tools for Assessing Client Risks and Strengths. Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services, 450-459

Gilgun, J., Klein, C., and Pranis, K. (2000) The significance of resources in models of risk. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 15 (6).

Holder, W., and Lund, T. R. (1995). Translating Risks to Positive Outcomes: Outcome-oriented Case Management from Risk Assessment Information. The APSAC Advisor , Vol 8 (4), 20-24.

Class four - Wednesday February 13, 2002 Cross cultural considerations when using risk assessments CPS and mandatory reporting laws

Class four objectives:

- Cultural Competence in Assessment Tools
- Assessing suspected child maltreatment in practice
- Mandated Child Abuse reporting
- Practice assessing for child maltreatment using case examples and role plays

Readings for class four: Cross, T. (1989) Cultural Competence Continuum.

Hutcheson, J.J. and Black, M.M. (1996) Psychometric properties of the Parenting Stress Index in a sample of low-income African-American mothers of infants and Toddlers. *Early Education and Development*, 7 (4), 381-400.

Pecora, P., and English D. (1995). Selected Multicultural Guides for Child Maltreatment Risk Assessment. *The APSAC Advisor*, Vol 8 (4), 24-27.

Wattenberg, E. and Boisen, L. (1994). Assessing risk in neglecting families: The search for community standards. University of Minnesota Center for the Studies in Child Welfare.

Class five - Wednesday February 20, 2002 CPS: What happens after you make a 'report'?

Guest speaker: Deborah Ladson from Hennepin County CPS

Class five objectives:

- Understand the role of the child protection system in child maltreatment and family violence
- Assessing risk for domestic violence
- Assessing chemical use and its impact on child maltreatment and family violence

Readings for class five: Dore, M., Doris, J. M., and Wright, P. (1995). Identifying substance abuse in maltreating families: A child welfare challenge. *Child Abuse and Neglect*. Vol 19, pp531-543.

Minnesota Legislature (1998) Minnesota child protective services: A program evaluation report. Minnesota Legislative Auditor Report, pp36-38.

English, D. and Pecora, P (1994) Risk assessment as a practice method in child protective services. *Child Welfare* (82), 451-473.

Class six - Wednesday February 27, 2002 Community assessments

Guest speaker: Cari Michaels, Director of CAPS, University of Minnesota

Class six objectives:

- Understanding the importance of macro level assessment
- How to assess the risks and needs of a community
- Understand why community assessments are important to the child and family
- Look at the advantages of pre and post assessment

Readings for class six: Korbin, J., Coulton, C., and Furin, J. (1995). A neighborhood based approach to risk assessment. *The APSAC Advisor*, 8 (4), 9-11.

Class seven - Wednesday March 6, 2002 Class presentations

Class seven objectives:

- Present group project
- Defend thinking in class presentation
- Produce paper explaining the tool and rationale

Readings for class seven: **No** readings for this class

Class eight - Wednesday March 13, 2002 Linking risk assessment and interviewing

Class eight objectives:

- Review the history of interviewing in child maltreatment and family violence
- Understanding the importance of interviewing - What are the various reasons for doing interviews
- Ethical issues involved in risk assessment and interviewing children
- Understand the different uses of interviewing
- Understanding the link between assessment and interview. How interviews can enhance assessment and why they are often crucial
- Strength based interviewing

Readings for class eight: Alquist, A. (1996). Strength based interviewing: A primer for for interviewing adults and children. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota School of Social Work.

Anderson, H., and Goolishian, H. (1992). The client is the expert: A not knowing approach to practice. In S. McNamee and K.J. Gergen (Eds.). Therapy as social construction. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, pp25-39.

DeJong, P. and Miller (1995). How to interview for client strengths. Social Work, 40 (6), 729-736.

Kvale, S. (1996). Ethical issues in interviewing. In Interviews: an introduction to qualitative interviews. (pp109-123). Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.

Saywitz, K. and Goodman, G. (1996) Interviewing children in and out of court: Current research and practice implications. APSAC Handbook on Child Maltreatment (pp297-318). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Class nine - Wednesday March 27, 2002 Interdisciplinary interviewing

Guest speaker: Barb Hiltz, Corner House

Class nine objectives:

- Understanding the role of professional practice: Interdisciplinary interviewing skills in law enforcement, social work, mental health, schools, hospitals, etc.
- Investigative vs therapeutic interviewing
- Forensic interviewing of children and adults
- Professional testimony in court

Readings for class nine: Meyer, J. (1992). Legal implications of interviewing children who may be abused or neglected. In *Legal issues in child abuse and neglect*. (pp.30-41). Sage.

Faller, K.C. (1996). Interviewing children who may have been abused: A historical perspective and overview of controversies. *APSAC Advisor*, 1 (2), 83-96.

Henry, J. (1997). System intervention trauma to child sexual abuse victims following disclosure. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 12 (4), 499-512.

Sternberg, K., Lamb, M., Orbach, Y., Esplin, P., and Mitchell, S. (2001). Use of a structured investigative protocol enhances young children's responses to free-recall prompts in the course of forensic interviews. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 86 (5), 997-1005.

Warren, A. and Woodall, C. (1999) The reliability of hearsay testimony. How well do interviewers recall their interviews with children? *Psychology, Public Policy and Law*, 5 (2), 355-371.

Class ten - Wednesday April 3, 2002 Interviewing children

Class ten objectives:

- Building rapport with children
- Understanding interviewing from a developmental perspective
- Qualities of effective interviewing
- Effective questioning skills
- Dealing with difficult interviews: the non-verbal child, the aggressive child, the scared child or the resistant child
- Children's memory: how they remember and suggestibility

Additional assignment for this class: Bring in 3 topics of interest to children today. Find out what's "hot" for 4-6 year olds, 7-10 year olds and 10-12 year olds.

Readings for class ten: Garven, S., Wood, J., Malpass, R., and Shaw, J. (1998). More than suggestion. The Effect of interviewing techniques from the McMartin preschool case. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83 (3), 347-359.

Garbarino, J. (1989). Guidelines for interviewing children. In *What children can tell us: eliciting, interpreting, and evaluating information from children*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Lepore, S. and Sisco, B. (1994). Distorting reports and interpretation of events through suggestion. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79 (1), 108-120.

Perry, N. (1992). How children remember and why they forget. *APSAC Advisor*, 5 (3), 1-13.

Reed, D. (1996). Findings from research on children's suggestibility and implications for conducting child interviews. *Child Maltreatment*, 1 (2), 105-120.

Snow, B. and Sorenson, T. (1991) How children tell: The process of disclosure in child abuse. *Child Welfare*, 7, 3-15.

Class eleven - Wednesday April 10, 2002 Interviewing Children

Assignment number two due: Present your interviewing tool

Class eleven objectives:

- Understand Cognitive Interviewing
- The use of drawing in child interviewing
- Cognitive Graphic Interviewing
- Expose the class to a wide variety of interviewing tools

Readings for session eleven: Alquist, A. (1996) Child maltreatment. Domestic violence. The cognitive graphic interview. University of Minnesota.

Butler, S., Gross, J., and Hayne, H. (1995) The effects of drawing on memory performance in young children. *Developmental Psychology*, 31 (4), 597-608.

Gross, J. and Hayne, H. (1999) Drawing facilitates children's verbal reports after long delays. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, 5 (3), 265-283.

Hayes, B. and Delamothe, K. (1997). Cognitive interviewing procedures and suggestibility in children's recall. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 82 (4), 562- 577.

McCauley, M. and Fisher, R. (1995). Facilitating children's eyewitness recall with the revised cognitive interview. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 80 (4), 510-516.

Saywitz, K. and Snyder, L. (1996). Narrative elaboration: Test of a new procedure for interviewing children. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 64 (6), 1347-1357.

Class twelve - Wednesday April 17, 2002 Interviewing adults and families

Mystery guest speaker: working with resistant and/or non-voluntary clients

Class twelve objectives:

- How is interviewing adults different than children or is it?
- Tips for working with specific types of families: resistant families, scared families, or voluntary vs. non-voluntary
- Deciding who to include in the interview
- Understanding some of the cautions of interviewing families

Readings for class twelve: Additional readings may be added at a later time.

Class thirteen - Wednesday, April 24, 2002 Interviewing across culture

Panel presentation?

Class thirteen objectives:

- Understanding the role race and culture play in interviewing
- Understanding the role of gender in interviewing
- Dealing with other challenges such as interviewing with the use of an interpreter
- Ethnography

Readings for session thirteen: Holland, T.P. and Kilpatrick, A.C. (1993). Using narrative techniques to enhance multicultural practice. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 29, 303-308.

Thornton, S. and Garrett, K. (1995). Ethnography as a bridge to multicultural practice. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 31, 67-74.

Dunkerly and Dalenberg (1999). Secret keeping behavior in black and white children. In K. Coulborn Faller (Ed.), *Maltreatment in Early Childhood: Tools for Research-Based Interventions*. (pp.13-35). Binghamton, NY: Haworth.

Class fourteen - Wednesday, May 1, 2002 Interviewing labs

Class fourteen objectives:

- To be able to put class learning into practice
- To begin to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the interview
- To begin to look critically at your performance

Readings for class fourteen: No Readings for this session

Class fifteen - Wednesday May 8th, 2002 Last class! Final assignment due

Class fifteen objectives:

- Continue to practice evaluating the effectiveness of an interview
- Continue to look critically at your own interviewing skills

Readings for class fifteen: No readings for this session