

# SW4SB3: Critical Child Welfare—from Theory to Practice II

* Jan 11, 2021–Apr 14, 2021 (Thursdays) 11:30am-2:30pm
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* Virtual office hours by appointment
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# Course Overview

## Course Description:

This is an advanced course that helps you develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to undertake child welfare work. Attention is also paid to learning how to do child welfare well, and to developing an understanding of the social and political factors that shape the way child welfare practice is imagined and delivered.

This course (4SB3) builds on the school’s introductory Child Welfare Course (SW 4W03) and the previous advanced course (SW 4SA3) in this series. These courses, and the interconnected field placements, form the school’s Preparing for Critical Practice in Child Welfare Pathway (PCPCW).

## Course Objectives:

At the end of this course you should:

* Have a critical and in-depth understanding of the knowledge child protection work is based upon, and to be able to appropriately apply this knowledge
* Understand and demonstrate the practice skills and attitudes needed in child protection work
* Understand your attitudes, the ways other people experience your attitudes and work (especially when under stress), and ways to adjust as necessary
* Work as a team member, including knowing how to support others, how to ask for support for yourself, and how to critically reflect on your role, contribution, and performance as a team member
* Work under multiple forms of pressure
* Recognize and constructively work with conflict
* Investigate, interview, assess, and work collaboratively in cases of child abuse and neglect
* Recognise issues of risk and be able to formulate safety plans
* Address child protection cases with an open mind and fluid thinking
* Recognise how every way you think is also a way of not thinking
* Work anti-oppressively in a child protection setting

The basic assumptions of this course concur with the broader curriculum context set by the School of Social Work's Statement of Philosophy:

*As social workers, we operate in a society characterized by power imbalances that affect us all. These power imbalances are based on age, class, ethnicity, gender identity, geographic location, health, ability, race, sexual identity and income. We see personal troubles as inextricably linked to oppressive structures. We believe that social workers must be actively involved in the understanding and transformation of injustices in social institutions and in the struggles of people to maximize control over their own lives.*

## Course Format

## This course is synchronous via Zoom in scheduled class time. To take part in this course you need to be available to participate in these Zoom classes and you will need a computer, internet connection capable of streaming video, a microphone, and a webcam. The course will make use of Avenue to Learn (A2L) for course documents, assignments, and communication, so please be familiar with A2L before the course begins. A link to the Zoom class will be made available on A2L before the class begins.

## Expect to spend 7-10 hours a week completing this course; 2-3 hours in the scheduled Zoom class and the remainder engaging with readings and assignments.

Office hours are available by Phone, Zoom or Skype by appointment.

## Required Texts:

This course uses a problem-based learning approach that informs course readings and assignments. As a result, there are no pre-set readings in this course, instead readings emerge from the child welfare practice puzzles the class engages with. As such students are expected to seek out and critically engage with the literature, research, and other forms of knowledge needed to explore and engage with these puzzles. As well, some guest presenters will supply or recommend readings. Expect to read between 2-4 articles a week, plus reading and engagement with media reports, tweets, and other sources, so that you develop and maintain an up-to-date understanding of child welfare knowledge, events and discourses.

# Course Requirements/Assignments

## Requirements Overview and Deadlines

Undertake the following 3 assignments that comprise 50% of the final grade:

1. 10% | Puzzle project proposal (before January 29)
2. 30% | Puzzle project presentation (before March 11)
3. 10% | Participation (ongoing)

For the remainder of your grade, please choose 1 or 2 of the following assignments and weight options below to equal the remaining 50% of the final grade. If selecting one from this list submit between April 1-9. If selecting two submit one between March 19-24 and the other April 1-9 (submit in any order).

1. 15% | Problem statement and response
2. 25-35-50% | Paper
3. 25-33-50% | Creative work

## Requirement/Assignment Details

1. Puzzle project proposal

This project can be done individually or with a partner (both people receive the same grade). In the previous advanced class (4SA3), a number of “puzzles” arose about how to understand and respond to specific child welfare issues. In this assignment, working in pairs or individually, you will select one of these puzzles and research an answer. The assignment begins with discussion in classes 1-2 of this course about the most pressing puzzles that exist. Select one of these puzzles to research. Next, develop and submit a 1-2-page single spaced plan articulating the puzzle you selected and outlining how you will find answers to the puzzle. In finding answers, you should draw on academic research, literature, and other knowledge sources. This proposal will be worth 10% of your final grade. 5% of that grade will be assigned by a student peer evaluation in which your proposal will be evaluated by others in the class, and graded based on the extent to which your proposal captures a puzzle raised in class, and offers a viable plan to seek out related answers that you believe will be useful in practice.

1. Puzzle project

Present puzzle project results to class and also submit a written summary of findings (more details on A2L). This assignment is worth 30% of your final grade with 5% being a peer evaluation (using the same peer evaluation process as described above) on you delivering the answers (insofar as they exist) to the puzzle you set out to explore.

1. Participation

Ongoing participation and engagement with the class and materials. This means contributing to a constructive learning environment, helping the class to think critically and thinking outside the box, being open to reflecting on and sharing your own thinking on course content, undertaking readings in advance, welcoming and engaging with guests, sharing and responding to comments and making space for other to do the same. This is worth 10% of your final grade.

1. Problem statement and response

This assignment mirrors a new assignment in 4W03 (that you have not had the opportunity to undertake), but in 4SB3 it will be graded at an advanced level. In this assignment make a 5-10-minute video of a monologue in which you explain reasons for child welfare involvement to one of the parents from the group assignment movie. In real life you would never engage in a monologue with a client, your conversation would always be interactive and will involve listening and responding, but you might practice a baseline plan of what to say in front of a mirror. This assignment mimics that process. More details will be provided in class.

1. Paper

Write a paper on doing child welfare well. The paper is expected to draw on up-to-date research and critical sources. Discuss the paper plan with the instructor in advance.

1. Creative work

Complete a creative work that explores how to do child welfare well. The work is expected to draw on and be informed by up-to-date research and critical sources. Discuss this plan with the instructor in advance.

# Assignment Submission and Grading

Form and Style

Unless stated otherwise, assignments should:

* Be typed and double-spaced and submitted with a front page containing the title, student’s name, student number, and the date. Number all pages (except title page).
* Be uploaded as in Microsoft Word or RTF format and uploaded as a single file named with the student’s lastname–firstname–assignment number, so for example the file for assignment 6 would be your lastname-firstname-6.doc (or docx or RTF).
* Make use of relevant professional and social science literature and other bodies of knowledge.
* Be referenced and formatted in accordance with the current edition of American Psychological Association (APA) publication manual with particular attention paid to font size (Times-Roman 12), spacing (double spaced) and margins (minimum of 1 inch at the top, bottom, left and right of each page)

Submitting Assignments & Grading

Assignments are to be uploaded to the appropriate A2L drop box before midnight on the date specified for submission. If you experience technical difficulties uploading, contact McMaster e-support, if still unable to upload, e-mail a copy of the completed assignment to the instructor before the deadline to avoid late penalties.

Group assignments will receive a common grade for all group members (i.e. all members of that group will receive the same grade). It is the entire group’s responsibility to facilitate and ensure the full participation of all members, assignments that are incomplete or compromised because of a lack of participation, or because of groups disbanding, will be the responsibility of the entire group. In very rare circumstances, the instructor may adjust the grade of individuals in a group based on a member’s lack of participation in the group process or based on the group excluding someone in the group from full participation.

If you have accommodations related to group assignments, please contact the instructor to discuss ways we can support your participation in this aspect of the course.

### Privacy Protection

In this course, we will be using A2L and Zoom. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss with the course instructor. All assignment submissions and grades will be managed electronically via A2L.

### Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

# Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to contribute to the creation of a respectful and constructive learning environment.

Students should read material in preparation for class, attend class on time and remain for the full duration of the class. A formal break will be provided in the middle of each class, students are to return from the break on time.

Please check with the instructor before using any audio or video recording devices in the classroom.

### Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes. If you anticipate difficulty with this, please speak with the instructor. Missing a substantial number of classes often results in essential course requirements not being met (these must be met to pass the course). Students who are close to missing 20% of classes must contact the instructor to discuss.

### Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty, please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf)

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

* Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
* Improper collaboration in group work.
* Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

Authenticity/Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

## Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster’s use of Turnitin.com please go to [**www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity**](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

### Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the *Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities* (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

### Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s *Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities* policy.

### Accessibility Statement

The School of Social Work recognizes that people learn and express their knowledge in different ways. We are committed to reducing barriers to accessibility in the classroom, and working towards classrooms that welcome diverse learners. If you have accessibility concerns or want to talk about your learning needs, please be in touch with the course instructor.

### Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office *normally within 10 working days* of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

### Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, including lectures by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

The School of Social Work requests and expects that:

* Instructors inform students about what they will record, when they will record, and what they will do with the recording
* Students who wish to record contact the instructor first. This is so the instructor can inform the class when permission has been given to a student to record (the identity of the student will be kept confidential by the instructor).
* Recordings by students are used for personal study only, and not shared with anyone else, and are deleted when no longer needed for personal study
* There will likely be times when students or guest speakers share personal or sensitive information. In this circumstance we expect everyone to stop recording. The instructor (or student or guest sharing) may also ask for recording to stop, and we expect everyone to respect such a request.

### E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, they may not reply.

### Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

### Extensions and Incomplete Courses

Extensions

All instructors understand that life situations sometimes make it very difficult to hand in an assignment on the date it is due. If you need more time to complete an assignment, talk with your instructor – in advance of the assignment deadline! Once you and your instructor have agreed on a new due date, it is your responsibility to submit your assignment on time. If you find yourself unable to meet deadlines in more than one course, please reach out to Tammy Maikawa, Administrator (millet@mcmaster.ca ) or Sandra Preston, Undergraduate Chair (prestosl@mcmaster.ca ). We are here to support you to think about options (such as reducing your course load) that can take the stress off and contribute to your success in the program overall.

Incomplete courses

If you are not able to complete all of your assignments by the end of term, you have the option of contacting the instructor to request an Incomplete (INC) on the course. If the instructor agrees, (taking into account the amount of outstanding coursework and the time it will likely take to complete), the instructor will enter the grade you have so far in the course (the default grade) and the course will appear in Mosaic as INC (incomplete).

The School’s requirements for completing courses depend on a) the nature of the course (whether it is a foundation course\*, or a social and political context course) and b) when you are hoping to start placement. For example, a student who has an incomplete in a foundation course cannot start placement. Please see the [Policy on Extensions and Incompletes in the BSW Program](https://socialwork.mcmaster.ca/resources/general-school-policies/policy-on-extensions-and-incompletes-october-2017.pdf) for more details.

At approximately 52-60 days after the end of term, the Mosaic system will automatically change an INC to the default grade. Depending on the default grade, this might affect your standing or progress in the program.

*As always, if you have any questions or concerns about your progress in the program, please connect with Tammy Maikawa, Administrator (**millet@mcmaster.ca* *) or Sandra Preston, Undergraduate Chair (**prestosl@mcmaster.ca**).*

Course Weekly Topics and Readings

Topics are finalized and corresponding readings established in weeks 1 & 2. Guest presenters will be added to the course schedule, along with readings and sources materials they recommend, when their presentation dates are finalized. The scheduled class dates are as follows. This schedule will be posted on A2L and updated as the schedule content evolves.

Week 1: Thursday Jan 14, 2021 at 11:30am-2:30pm

Week 2: Thursday Jan 21, 2021 at 11:30am-2:30pm

Week 3: Thursday Jan 28, 2021 at 11:30am-2:30pm

Week 4: Thursday Feb 4, 2021 at 11:30am-2:30pm

Week 5: Thursday Feb 11, 2021 at 11:30am-2:30pm

READING WEEK Feb 15-19

Week 6: Thursday Feb 25 at 11:30am-2:30pm

Week 7: Thursday Mar 4, 2021 at 11:30am-2:30pm

Week 8: Thursday Mar 11, 2021 at 11:30am-2:30pm

Week 9: Thursday Mar 18, 2021 at 11:30am-2:30pm

Week 10: Thursday Mar 25, 2021 at 11:30am-2:30pm

Week 11: Thursday Apr 1, 2021 at 11:30am-2:30pm

Week 12: Thursday Apr 8, 2021 at 11:30am-2:30pm